



**BRANDYWINE  
RIVER MUSEUM  
OF ART**

## **Design an Advertisement – Visual Arts and Language Arts**

### **Objectives:**

1. Discover what makes an advertisement successful
2. Build visual literacy
3. Assign adjectives to a product
4. Analyze and discuss how an artist uses the elements of art
5. Use the elements of art in an original advertisement to convey a message about a product
6. Design an ad for a product

**Grade Level:** 3<sup>rd</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade

### **Common Core Academic Standards:**

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.B](#) Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.G](#) Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1](#) Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Suggested Images:** N. C. Wyeth's "Coca Cola" advertisements which can be found by searching "Coca Cola" in the N. C. Wyeth Catalogue Raisonné.

1. *"Have a Coke"*, N. C. Wyeth, 1944
2. *Have a "Coke"= How are things goin'?...?*, N. C. Wyeth, 1944
3. *So cool... so cooling*, N. C. Wyeth, 1937
4. Title unknown (boy carrying fishing pole and "Coca Cola" bottles accompanied by a dog, N.C. Wyeth, 1936
5. *Through all the years since 1886*, N. C. Wyeth, 1935

**Introduction:** The purpose of an advertisement is to promote and sell a product. For an ad to be successful, artists need to decide what they want to emphasize about the product to make it appealing for the masses. One way of doing this is to employ the elements of art in the ad, especially line, color and composition.

In the “Coca Cola” advertisements painted by N. C. Wyeth, the artist uses the color red as an important part of his compositions. The reddish-brown soda with its red label stands out in the ads and tells the viewer not only where to look first but also what is most important in each piece. Snow and people are secondary to the actual product. Other red elements are used as a tool to bring attention to the product. For instance, the reddish boat in *Have a “Coke”...* helps to visually point to the coke in the soldier’s hand.

Another method used by advertisers is to use imagery that allows the viewer to make inferences about the product. In N. C.’s *“Have a Coke”* and *So cool... so cooling*, the “Coke” bottles are shown stuck in blue and white snow and ice. With this imagery the viewer is expected to infer that “Coke” is cold and refreshing. In *Have a “Coke”= How are things goin’?...* the viewer is faced with an image of soldiers and fishermen drinking the soda. A probable interpretation is that “Coke” can be enjoyed by all types of people and, because of the inclusion of soldiers, “Coke” is the patriotic choice as well.

**Discovery:** As a class, look at the “Coca Cola” images by N. C. Wyeth and assign adjectives and phrases to the product based on inferences that can be made from looking at the ad. For instance, “Coke” may be cold, refreshing, red, meant for everyone, affordable, patriotic, etc. Now, compare those images with “Coke” ads from today. Do the same adjectives and phrases apply? Is the messaging the same or different now? Do current ads use any of the same elements of art that Wyeth employed? If so how? What other methods do current advertisements use?

**Assignment:** After the students have discovered the elements of a successful advertisement have them create an ad for their favorite drink or other product.

1. Students will write down 10 adjectives or phrases to describe their chosen product.
2. Students will circle the 3 adjectives or phrases that they most want to emphasize in their advertisement.
3. Using markers, paint, and other bright materials, students will create an ad that uses the elements of art, especially line and color, to effectively sell their chosen product.