

## **A Look Back in Time Activity**

### **Print Advertising Across the Centuries**

#### **Overview**

Although advertisements have appeared in print since colonial times, the Industrial Era in the middle of the nineteenth century led to a boom in advertising. The growth of industry and improvements in transportation over the next half century made it possible to ship goods for sale around the country. Increasing choice among similar products also gave rise to the importance of brand-name awareness. In the early twentieth century, however, there were few restrictions on how advertisements could promote products, sometimes leading to overblown claims and products that did not meet promises advertised.

#### **Directions**

Study your assigned historical advertisement carefully. Review the assignment questions, then write your answers on a separate sheet of paper or in a word-processing document. Please include your name and the assignment name on your answer sheet.

## Questions

- 1.** Describe the product that is being advertised and its use(s). Do you think the product can live up to the advertisement's claims? Why or why not?
- 2.** What in the advertisement grabs your attention? Why? If nothing strikes you, explain why.
- 3.** Who is the target audience for the advertisement? How do you know? What other audiences might the advertisement's creators have targeted?
- 4.** To what emotion, desire, or wish does the advertisement appeal? Does the appeal hit home with you? Why or why not?
- 5.** Review the list of advertising persuasion techniques. Which advertising technique or techniques does the advertisement use? Are the techniques effective? Why or why not?
- 6.** Is the product brand name a focus of the advertisement? Why might the advertisement's creators have chosen to highlight or downplay the brand name?
- 7.** Does the advertisement contain an example or examples of differentiation to show how it is better than other similar products? If so, give specific examples. If not, explain why you think differentiation examples might have been left out.
- 8.** What new technologies of the time, if any, does the advertised product employ? In what ways did this use of technology impact the lives of people in the early 1900s?