

Going for the Look – Student Version

In this module you will be asked to evaluate the advertising and hiring practices of several companies.

Items needed to complete the module:

- Article: “Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination” by Steven Greenhouse
- Internet access
- Handouts:
 - Activity 5: Annotations Chart
 - Activity 7: Content and Purpose Chart

Instructions: Complete all of the activities on a separate piece of paper. Label each activity so that it is easy for your teacher to check your work.

Activity 1: Introducing Key Concepts

Look at the following clothing websites and then answer the question below.

www.gap.com

www.target.com

www.ae.com

www.walmart.com

www.abercrombie.com

<http://www.abercrombie.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/Casting?catalogId=10901&storeId=10051&langId=-1> (If website doesn't work- try going to the Abercrombie website

and then click on “Experience A&F” and then on “Do you have what it takes?” Scroll through the headshots of the models representing Abercrombie and Fitch.)

1. What do you notice about the ads themselves? What is being advertised?
2. Who is the target audience for each company?
3. When looking at the Abercrombie headshots, what do you notice about the models?
4. Why do some of the pictures show more of the model's body than the clothing they are supposed to be selling?
5. How are the ads on the Target and Walmart websites different from Gap or Abercrombie?

Activity 2: Quickwrite

Write a paragraph in response to the following question:

Should companies be able to hire only people who project their image?

Activity 3: Surveying the Text

Before you read “Going for the Look,” answer the following questions.

1. What does the title of Greenhouse’s article, “Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination,” tell you about the topic of this article?
2. The article was published in *The New York Times*. What do you expect from an article published by this newspaper? Will it be interesting? Will you be able to believe what the author says?
3. What can you tell about the article by looking at its length and the length of its paragraphs?

Activity 4: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

1. Read the first five paragraphs of the article. What are they about? Now read the last paragraph. Melissa Milkie states, “Whether that’s morally proper is a different question.” What is it that she is wondering about?
2. What do you think this article is going to be about?
3. What do you think is the purpose of this article?
4. Who do you think is the intended audience for this piece? What other audiences might be interested in this topic?
5. Will the article take a position on the topic of hiring people to project a certain image? Why do you think so?

Read “Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination”

Activity 5: Annotations

Complete Annotation Chart – see handout

Activity 6: Thinking Critically Questions

1. Why did Greenhouse tell the story of Elizabeth Nill’s experience at Abercrombie & Fitch? What is your reaction to the story?
2. In the conclusion, Greenhouse quotes a sociology professor, Melissa Milkie, who says, “Maybe companies have noticed that hiring [good-looking people] impacts their bottom line” (paragraph 29). What does this mean? Is it a good justification?
3. Who do you think makes the best argument either for or against hiring for “the look”? Why?
4. Have you observed stores or restaurants that seem to have hired their employees to project a certain image? How do you feel about this practice?
5. Do you think that Greenhouse represents both sides of the argument objectively or does he appeal to the reader’s emotions? Give examples of either the way he is objective or the way he slants the arguments.
6. Stephen J. Roppolo, a New Orleans lawyer, says if employers hire on the basis of people’s looks, they “may inadvertently discriminate in an impermissible way”

- (paragraph 23). Is he implying that the employers are discriminating because they are greedy and want to make a bigger profit? Why or why not?
7. Greenhouse says, “That is where things can get confusing and contentious” (paragraph 8). What does “contentious” mean? What is this paragraph saying about the trend toward hiring people on the basis of looks?
 8. What do you think of the argument that “a guy wants to go hang out in a store where he can see good-looking gals” (paragraph 17)? Do you think that statement is a fair way of making the retailers’ argument?
 9. Greenhouse says, “In doing so [hiring for looks], some of those companies have been skirting the edges of antidiscrimination laws and provoking a wave of private and government lawsuits” (paragraph 8). Do you think you would be justified in suing a company like Abercrombie’s if they turned you down for a job and you thought it was because you weren’t “blond, blue-eyed and preppy”? Why or why not?

Activity 7: Content and Purpose

Complete Content and Purpose Chart - See Handouts

Activity 8: EPT Essay

Schedule a time to meet with your teacher to complete the Timed Practice EPT. You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay about the Greenhouse article. This essay will be scored using the EPT Rubric and is intended to mirror the English Placement Test for California State Universities. The essay *must* be completed in front of a teacher.

Turn in your completed Module Packet when you meet with your teacher for the practice EPT.

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