

# PURCHASING AND PACKAGING

**Grades:**

5 – 6

**Time Allotments:**

Teacher preparation: 45 minutes

Lesson and Activity: One to three 45-minute periods (depending on teacher)

**Vocabulary:**

Consumerism

Packaging

Purchasing

**Integrated Curricular Areas and Corresponding Core Curriculum Content Standards:**

Science: **5.1:** (G4) 1&4

Social Studies: **6.5:** (G4) A2 (G6) B1 (G8) B6

Fine Arts: **1.1:** (G6) B1-2&4

**1.2:** (G6) D1&5

**1.3:** (G6) D1-2

**1.4:** (G6) B1-3

Technology: **8.1:** (G8) B6-7

Life Skills: **9.1** (G4) A2, E3-4

**Content Objectives: Students will be able to –**

1. Describe reasons why people make certain purchases;
2. Identify personal preferences regarding packaging design; and
3. Identify strategies for how to make decisions about purchases and packaging.

**Process Objectives: Students will –**

1. Compare and contrast differences and similarities between packaging in terms of design, materials used, and types; and
2. Create design, text and marketing slogans and logos for packaging of a product.

**Materials:****Preparation:**

Ask students to bring in one box from home that was used for packaging. (Examples include medium-sized boxes from shoes, cereal, gifts, crackers or clothing. Jewelry boxes are too small and anything larger than a box for a ream of paper is too large)

**For Teacher:**

Chalkboard and chalk or chart and markers

Samples of packaging using advertisements from magazines, coupons, newspapers, etc.

Roll or large sheets of blank white paper

Extra used boxes (just in case)

Scissors – one per student  
Glue sticks – one per student  
Crayons, colored pencils and/or colored markers  
Pencils

**For Student:**

One used box brought in from home  
One pair of scissors  
One glue stick  
One piece of large white paper

**Anticipatory Set:**

- Discuss the following situation and questions with the students:
  - *Pretend you are buying a certain item. You're at the store and there are choices to be made regarding this item – there are three types and you can only buy one of them. What factors do you think would determine or influence your decisions about this purchase?* List their suggested factors on the board. These could include peer ownership or influence, brand, color, cost, size, performance, etc.
  - *How does the design of an item's packaging influence you? What aspects of a package's design do you look for when making a purchase?* Add these factors to the list. Place an "X" next to a factor already listed each time it is mentioned. Such factors could include size, convenience to open, color, appeal to age group, appeal to female or male, etc.
  - *When people comparison shop what are they looking for between brands?* Add any new factors to the list or continue to place "X's" next to factors already listed. New factors could include ingredients or where the product was made

**Teacher's Presentation or Modeling:**

- Lay out the advertisements collected for this activity in the classroom and ask students to examine each for the design of the packaging, along with labeling and slogans. When possible, compare name brands or compare a name brand with a generic item. Have them discuss the differences and similarities between packages, along with noting their personal preferences
- Explain to them that during this lesson they will focus on people's reasons for making specific selections and purchases and how challenging it is to include packaging that can protect the environment by having an environmentally-friendly design
- Make sure that every student has a box to work with, either brought from home or by using one provided by the teacher
- Pass out items for students to cover and design their box (scissors, glue, paper). Have them cover the entire box with white paper, using glue to seal the edges and corners. Demonstrate what must be done by covering a box with them

**Guided and Independent Practice:**

- Explain the following directions to the students:
  - Have students identify a product that their box could be used as packaging for
  - They are to design the package for the product using all sides, top and bottom of box

- It is optional to list ingredients but they must focus on slogans, characters, logos, promises, color and design
- Have them also consider whether internal packaging would be needed, if additional external packaging would be necessary, what these extra pieces would be made of, if the box can be recycled and if the box is made from recycled materials. Explain that their box design must be made from at least one recycled material and part or all of it must be recyclable
- Students within small groups or in front of the entire class should share final package designs. In either situation students could vote on the packages that they find most appealing or creative. They must also vote on which one would have the least impact on the environment in terms of solid waste issues

**Closure:**

- *Pretend your closest friend has difficulty making decisions regarding purchasing because a lot of packaging is appealing. Your assignment is to think of the “Top Five” pieces of advice (in priority order) you would give this person that should help them make practical and thoughtful decisions about how they decide what to buy*
- Have students share aloud their highest and lowest priority pieces of advice
- Have them discuss the relevance of “environmentally-friendly” packaging – that is, packaging that is minimal in terms of waste, uses recycled materials, has recyclable components, etc.

**Assessment:**

- Completion of box packaging and design;
- Completion of “Top Five” pieces of advice for purchasing; and
- Participation in group discussion and responses to questions from teacher.

**Extensions:**

- Have students visit different commercial Web sites to examine their design and marketing strategies and how each site attempts to appeal to public interest
- Students using PhotoShop software (with little or no waste generated) could perform the design portion of this lesson. The teacher can create a template for a box and the description of a single product that the box would be used as packaging for. The students then would design the box images and "create" the finished product. To extend the lesson further, non-participating students, teachers or parents could then “buy” the box that they find most appealing