Writing Assignment:
Analyze an Advertisement to Gain Control of Your Money and Your Mind

"Real life isn’t much like the ads we see on TV and in magazines. There isn’t a pill that can make us thin. There isn’t a mouthwash that will make someone fall in love with us. Teens are the targets of billions of dollars of ads each year,” according to the website SchoolFamily.com, causing many young people to “waste their money or even put their health at risk.”

Your assignment is to look through a couple of magazines (especially fashion or “life-style” magazines). Notice the full-page or half-page glossy advertisements.

Select one or two advertisements to analyze: In your analysis, address some or all of the following questions:

- Who is the target audience for this ad, and how can you tell?
- How is the advertiser trying to make the product appealing? Look at the details.
- What information given is factual?
- What information is left out of the ad?
- Where could you go to get more accurate and complete information about the product?
- What are the potential gains or risks for the consumer from this advertisement or from the product itself?
- What are the potential gains or risks to the environment? To your community?

Present your analysis in ESSAY FORM (800 - 1,000 words in MLA Format):

Introduction: Identify the product or service being sold and the magazine that it appeared in. Also in the introduction briefly describe the content of the ad (what are the images and the key words?). In the last sentence of your introduction, state your overall assessment of the ad’s intent (your main point, or thesis).

In the body of your essay, you will include four (or more) fully developed TEA paragraphs. You can use the questions above to formulate your Topic sentences (the answers to the questions). The Evidence supporting the topic will come from the details of the ad itself (images, text, special effects). After presenting the evidence, you will Analyze it by explaining how the evidence helps to support your overall assessment of the ad.

Your concluding paragraph is your chance to reinforce your main point. Don’t be afraid to get passionate. Consider especially the last two questions when formulating your conclusion.