

- 1 a. You are going to read an article about young people and advertising.

Before you read, in pairs discuss the following.

- What sort of advertisements interest you? Do you have any favourite ads?
- How do advertisers try to persuade us? Can you think of any adverts which make use of the following techniques?
 - celebrities • catchy slogans
 - music ('jingles') • science
 - repetition • humour
 - mystery • surprise • wit

b. Now read the article. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

- 1 Research shows that, compared with the previous generation, young people today are
- A better informed.
 - B more worldly-wise.
 - C less perceptive.
 - D more sensitive.
- 2 Advertisements aimed at the present young generation
- A are technologically sophisticated.
 - B are making use of old techniques.
 - C are becoming more subtle.
 - D are using a variety of new techniques.
- 3 Young people seem to believe that costly advertising
- A means the product is probably overpriced.
 - B makes no difference to the popularity of the product.
 - C does not inspire consumer confidence.
 - D is the mark of a good quality product.
- 4 According to Stuart Armon, youngsters today pay more attention to an advert
- A if its message is immediately obvious.
 - B if it gives them something to think

Those CRAZY Kids

The perception of today's youngsters as media-savvy cynics could hardly be further from the truth. Instead, this generation of keen consumers may turn witty advertising into an endangered species. *Julia Day reports.*

The youth of today are cynical, media-savvy, seen it all, done it all, wouldn't-be-seen-dead-in-the-T-shirt types who appreciate only the most achingly trendy adverts, TV shows and magazines, right? Wrong: that was the last generation.

Today's youngsters don't 'get' clever ads, are not in the least suspicious of commercials, don't know the difference between newspapers' political stances, or TV channels, and they don't mind admitting it. In short, they are not half as media, marketing and advertising literate as we might have thought, according to new research commissioned by five media groups.

As a result media companies and advertisers are going back to basics to arouse the interest of 15- to 24-year-olds with instant impact messages, plain product pictures, bigger posters, annoying jingles, celebrity endorsements and repetitive ads. Today's youth are a far cry from today's thirty somethings who grew up as commercially-naive kids.

Now a lifetime of MTV, the Internet, dawn-till-dusk advertising and PlayStation gaming has created a generation so used to being bombarded with fast-turnover information, they filter it instantly without paying much attention to its meaning. "This is a generation of thoroughbred consumers," according to Stuart Armon, managing director of the company that conducted research into the habits of the nation's youth. "Previous generations were suspicious of advertising, they might have liked ads, but they wouldn't necessarily buy the product. But this generation has been consuming since they were born. They don't see any reason to be suspicious," says Armon.

One young panellist in the focus group research embodied this attitude: "If the advert is good, you think their product will be good because the more they can spend on advertising, the more money they are obviously getting for their product." Armon says the trend has become more pronounced over the seven years that the continuous tracking study has been running, but has reached a peak in the latest round of interviews with 600 youngsters.