A MESSAGE FROM...

**Aim**
- To evaluate whether the educational value of sponsored teaching resources outweighs their marketing messages.

**Outcome**
- Students assess sponsored teaching resources used in the school and present findings to appropriate school bodies.

**What you need**
Copies of Actionpage: *A message from...* selection of sponsored teaching resources being used in the school, eg posters, teaching packs, multimedia; further examples of teaching materials produced by TNCs (see Resources p187).

**What you do**
- Divide participants into small groups. Explain that there is concern that many sponsored teaching materials offer little educational value and are mainly product placement.
- Their task is to use the Actionpage to evaluate some examples of such resources.

**Whole group discussion**
Ask groups to feed back on whether the educational value outweighs the marketing messages.
- Have you found examples of blatant marketing or product placement?
- Have you found examples of more subtle marketing or product placement?
- Do references to the activities of the sponsor aid understanding of processes, issues etc?
- Do any materials imply that the sponsor is superior to its rivals?
- Do you think the material is hiding certain information from you?
- Do any materials admit to criticism of their sponsor’s operations?
- Do you think you are affected by such marketing?
- What do you think motivates sponsors to fund such materials?
- What restrictions should there be on the use of sponsored materials in schools?

**Key ideas**
See *The bottom line* p44.

![Illustration of teacher and student discussing multiplication or addition](https://via.placeholder.com/150)
**Actionpage: A message from...**

- Use this questionnaire to judge the balance between education and marketing in this teaching resource. Some questions may not be relevant.

- Title

- Age group & curriculum area

- Who is the sponsor?

- How clearly is the sponsor indicated?

- Who wrote and published the resource?

- Is there any mention whether the material has been tested in schools?

- Give examples of where the material does not give a balanced view of an issue or acknowledge the existence of alternative views:

- Give examples of where no distinction is made between factual statements and expressions of opinion:

- Give examples of stereotypes that are used – of relationships, religion, age, disability, gender, race:

- Give examples of messages that encourage children to pester adults about buying a specific firm’s products or services:
- Give examples of any incentives to children to eat an unhealthy diet or take part in unsafe/unhealthy activities?

- How does the material promote the sponsor's market interests, e.g., case studies, photos, use of logos?

- How does the material acknowledge the sponsor's business interests?

- What messages about the sponsor does this resource communicate?

- Do you think the educational value outweighs its marketing messages? Please list reasons.