

PRODUCT PLACEMENTS ASSIGNMENT

Select a movie that came out within the last 15 years and that you have seen at least once before. Don't choose the same one that one of your friends is doing. Avoid animated, fantasy, or historical movies, which tend to have fewer product placements. (Can anyone guess why?)

Count the number of times you see a recognizable brand-name product in the movie. For each occurrence, answer the following questions:

What is happening in this scene? (limit responses to one or two sentences)

Does the placement reflect favorably on the product? Is the product associated with "good guys"/"happy feelings," "bad guys"/negative feelings, or a neutral setting?

Could the filmmaker(s) have done this scene effectively without the product? Why or why not?

When you have finished watching the movie and taking notes, discuss the following in a paper.

Does the use of product placements add or distract from the story? Why or why not? Could these stories and scenes have been written to avoid overt product references? Please use examples to illustrate your answer.

Is this form of advertising ethical? Why or why not? (Ethics are rules of conduct accepted by a certain population, rules that everyone is encouraged to follow for the benefit of whole group. If something is ethical, it's the right thing to do. Ethics has nothing to do with whether something is pleasant, expensive, or boring.)

Can you think of a good idea for a movie that does not lend itself to video games, merchandising, and toys, or product placements? Feel free to cite an actual movie as your example.

Did you notice brand-name products in the movie when you first saw it? Did they affect your opinion of the movie?