

MYSTERY AUCTION

AGE 11–16

THIS ACTIVITY EXPLORES:

Critical thinking, marketing pressure and missing information

YOU WILL NEED:

- Six envelopes
- Pitch and reveal cards
- 20 counters, coins or paper tokens for each team
- Paper for recording points

HOW TO SET-UP?

- Match each pitch card with its reveal card. Attach the pitch to the outside of an envelope and place the matching reveal inside.
- Give each team 20 auction tokens. Tokens left at the end do not count towards the final score.
- Do not use Quick Fix as the final envelope, since its catch affects the next auction.

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 MINUTES

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Split the group into teams and give each team 20 tokens.
 2. Hold up the first envelope and read its pitch without revealing what is inside.
 3. Teams bid using their tokens. Bids must increase by at least one token.
 4. The highest bidder pays the tokens and wins the envelope.
 5. Open the envelope straight away and read the reveal.
 6. Add or remove the points shown. Apply any extra instruction before the next auction.
 7. Repeat until all six envelopes have been opened.
 8. The team with the highest points score wins. Unspent tokens have no value.
- If nobody bids on an envelope, open it anyway and discuss what made the teams reject it.

QUICK DEBRIEF

- Which pitch made you want to bid most?
- Did popularity, urgency or appearance affect your choices?
- Did another team's bidding make an envelope seem more valuable?
- Which winning envelope was disappointing?
- What information would have helped you choose?
- Where do smoking, vaping or nicotine promotions use similar pressure?
- How can you pause and check a claim before acting?

KEY MESSAGE

Hype can make an option appear better than it is. Pause, question the claim and look for the information that has been left out.