

PRUEBA: A LICENCE TO SELL

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Modern films and TV shows often feel like long advertisements thanks to product placement. This advertising technique involves using a product in a film or TV programme as if it were part of the story. Product placement owes its success to the invention of the video recorder, as owners fast-forwarded when adverts appeared in the middle of recorded programmes. Video recorders were a problem for advertisers; product placement was the solution.

Today, advertisers receive scripts from producers and then look for products that fit 'naturally' with the story. For example, a studio making a film about a teenager at university might ask for clothes, a laptop computer and a mobile phone for her. The camera could easily focus on all of these objects without greatly damaging the story. The problems begin when nobody worries about the story.

Ian Fleming, who wrote the James Bond novels, gave his hero a 'licence to kill'. Many people say the Bond films have given him a new licence: a licence to sell. When Bond isn't using the latest mobile phones, GPS devices or handheld tablets, he is driving sports cars and flying with airlines that have all been placed in the films for enormous amounts of money. Companies paid \$45 million for their products to appear in the last Bond film. Many Bond fans think there is too much product placement and not enough plot.

It seems that product placement is here to stay. Nevertheless, many critics feel that if TV programmes and films just become vehicles for advertising, audiences will soon look for alternative forms of entertainment.

1. Answer these questions about the text. Use your own words whenever possible. (2 points: 1 point each)

1. What does product placement do to a lot of films and TV programmes?
2. What is a common complaint about product placement in James Bond films?

2. Read the following statements, decide whether they are true or false and justify your answer by quoting evidence from the text. (2 points: 0.5 points each)

1. TV and film producers send scripts to advertising companies so they can find suitable products to go with the story.
2. Product placement contributes to increasing the film production costs.
3. In the future, audiences might consider product placement a reason for finding different types of entertainment.
4. The video recorder allowed people to fast-forward and miss advertisements.



3. Find in the text the word or group of words which match these definitions. (1 point: 0.2 points each)

- a. a commercial
- b. a story
- c. an appliance
- d. a screenplay
- e. formal permission to do something

4. Complete the text using the correct words from the box below. There are two words that you won't need. (2 points: 0.25 points each)

Nowadays we are surrounded (a) ____ advertisements and often we don't actually (b) ____ it. When we watch a film or a TV show we may actually (c) ____ seeing new products (d) ____ the time. Companies hope (e) ____ by exposing us to (f) ____ items that subliminally we (g) ____ remember this item and perhaps even decide to purchase it at (h) ____ point.

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5. Write a composition of between 150–200 words on ONE of the following topics. (3 points)

- 1. Does advertising influence people?
- 2. Where is the best place to see films: in the cinema or at home on DVD, the internet or TV?