

# GO FOR REAL™

Help educate teens and tweens about smart shopping habits

## DEAR TEACHERS AND YOUTH EDUCATORS,

The shopping habits of teens and tweens have a powerful impact on the economy, but their buying power is often limited by their income. For this reason, many young people are on the hunt for a bargain. It is important to teach this age group how to make smart buying decisions early on as they become more independent. After all, purchasing counterfeit products could risk their health, and the well-being of those around them.

Counterfeits or fake products are not only made carelessly, but also tend to break easily or fall apart. Many fake products contain toxic ingredients, and fake electronics can contain faulty wiring, leading to injuries and even death.

To help educate teens and tweens about the damage caused by counterfeits and the benefits of buying genuine goods, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) created the **Go For Real™** campaign, featuring McGruff the Crime Dog®. This free program created with curriculum specialists Young Minds Inspired, complements the campaign and will help students learn how to identify and avoid fake goods by becoming “Dupe Detectives” and practice smart shopping and buying habits.

The easy-to-implement activities support English Language Arts, Health, and Family and Consumer Sciences learning standards and feature important tips that students can take home to share with their friends and families.

Please share this program with teachers in your school and youth educators, and let us know your thoughts on the program by visiting [ymiclassroom.com/feedback-go-for-real](http://ymiclassroom.com/feedback-go-for-real).

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley  
Editor in Chief  
Young Minds Inspired

For questions, contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at [feedback@ymiclassroom.com](mailto:feedback@ymiclassroom.com).



### Target Audience

Middle school students in English Language Arts, Health, and Family and Consumer Sciences classes

### Program Components

The following materials are available at [ncpc.org/goforreal](http://ncpc.org/goforreal) and [ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real](http://ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real):

- This two-page educator's guide
- Four reproducible student activity sheets
- Digital **Go For Real** trivia game
- Standards alignment chart
- Online feedback form

### Program Objectives

- Raise awareness of the dangers of purchasing fake products and teach students how to keep themselves and their families safe
- Teach students how to identify fake products and why it's important to purchase real products

### How to Use This Program

Download, photocopy, and distribute the four reproducible activity sheets, or share the PDFs digitally. Students will need internet access, markers, paper, and other media to present their ideas. Have students share their completed sheets with their families to raise awareness about the dangers of counterfeit goods.

## ACTIVITY 1: KNOW THE RISKS

In this activity, students will learn about the dangers of purchasing and using fake goods, including the very real risks these products can pose to their health. They will also learn that it's true that you get what you pay for and that real products are thoroughly researched and tested to ensure their effectiveness and safety.

Ask the students if they've ever heard the saying, "You get what you pay for." What does it mean? Let the students share their ideas, and then explain that it usually means that products purchased for a low price won't work well because they are carelessly made. But it's worse than that: Often, cheap products are fake, or counterfeits, and they can even be downright dangerous. Not only that, but the profits these criminals earn may go towards funding even more illegal activities like gun and gang violence or even child labor and kidnapping.

Explain that counterfeits are cheap imitations of brands we trust. Counterfeits are not generic brands.

Pass out the activity sheet and review the directions. When finished, have the students share their answers to the last question. Answers will vary.

**Extension Activity:** Tell the students to come up with their own saying like "You get what you pay for" to warn others about the dangers of purchasing and using fake goods. They could even create a graphic or logo to go with it!

## ACTIVITY 2: DON'T BE DUPED

In this activity, students will learn how to be smart shoppers by identifying clues that point to fake goods. Afterwards, they will apply their knowledge by reviewing an advertisement for a counterfeit name-brand backpack.

Tell the students that the best way to avoid being duped into purchasing dangerous products is to be a Dupe Detective! Counterfeiters often leave clues that you can decode. Those clues tell you that the product is poor quality and possibly even a dangerous fake.

Have the students pair up or form small groups to brainstorm what some of those clues might be. Ask them to share their ideas and write them on the board. The clues might include product descriptions that have spelling or grammatical errors; photos that are stock images rather than real product photos; very low prices; shoddy construction; high pressure advertising that makes you feel that if you don't buy an item right now, you won't be able to get it again; and either no reviews or lots of completely positive reviews. Pass out the activity sheet and review the instructions together.

**Answers:** misspelled words (mony), grammar errors (sentences 2 and 3), pressure sales tactics (sentence 4), very low price, and a stock photo.

**Extension Activity:** Have students put their knowledge into action. Play a "four corners" game. Label the corners of the classroom "purchase", "don't purchase", "not sure", and "not enough information". Then, read some online ads. Have the students decide whether to purchase the product or not by going to the corresponding corner.

Reinforce your students' Dupe Detective skills with a fun, interactive whiteboard activity at [ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real](http://ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real)



## ACTIVITY 3: THINK FOR YOURSELF

In this activity, students will analyze real-life scenarios to help aid their decision-making processes and empower them to make smart buying decisions.

Ask students to share whether some of their favorite social media influencers or YouTubers have ever posted a "how to" video on finding and purchasing fake products. Or perhaps they have even had someone in real life tell them where they can get fake goods. Ask questions to guide the discussion, such as: *How did the video or friend make you feel? Were you tempted when you saw the video? Is it less tempting to buy fake goods now that you know about the dangers they pose to you and others? Do you think social media influencers should be promoting potentially dangerous fake products? Why or why not?* Answers will vary.

Distribute the activity sheet and review the directions. After students complete the activity, discuss each scenario and encourage students to come up with similar scenarios on their own.

**Extension Activity:** Ask the students to imagine that their favorite Youtuber or influencer is promoting a dangerous fake product. What could they write to them in an email or comment that could persuade them to change their mind?

## ACTIVITY 4: SPREAD THE WORD

In this activity, students will learn what a Public Service Announcement (PSA) is, evaluate NCPC's newest **Go For Real** PSA ([ncpc.org/goforreal](http://ncpc.org/goforreal)), and create their own.

Tell the students that they are going to view a public service announcement or a PSA. Explain that a PSA is a way to communicate important information to a targeted audience. After viewing the **Go For Real** PSA, ask students to identify and discuss the intended audience (pre-teens and teens), the message it communicates (don't buy cheap, fake products), and the call to action: "You're Smart. Buy Smart."

Pass out the activity sheet and review the directions. Students can draft their PSAs individually or work in small groups. When they have completed the activity, have students present their PSA ideas to the class.

**Extension Activity:** Have students "pitch" their best PSA ideas to other students at your school, then have them report on which ideas seemed to work best and why.

**Teachers** — McGruff wants to know your students' ideas for a new campaign! With the help of a parent/caregiver, they can share their ideas in an email to [McGruff@ncpc.org](mailto:McGruff@ncpc.org). Their ideas might even get featured on [McGruff.org](http://McGruff.org)!

## Additional Resources

Check out [ncpc.org/goforreal](http://ncpc.org/goforreal) for additional resources to help reinforce the program messaging, including a toolkit with reference materials and activities, online games, and a **Go For Real** TV series.

And, go to [ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real](http://ymiclassroom.com/go-for-real) for a new digital trivia game your students can play as a group or on their own to test their buying smarts.



# KNOW THE RISKS

Buying fake goods might seem like a good idea at first. After all, who doesn't like to score a great deal on electronics, makeup, or a trendy pair of sneakers? But when you take a closer look, you'll see that you didn't score anything—you struck out.

Fake products, called counterfeits, are cheap imitations of trusted brands. Fakes are often poorly constructed, usually don't work well, can even be hazardous to your health, and don't last as long. That video game controller you bought for less could contain faulty wiring and even shock you—or worse. That makeup you bought could contain toxic ingredients such as rat poison or uric acid—which is found in urine! And those trendy sneakers on "sale" are likely to fall apart the first time you wear them. Clothing and shoes are the most commonly counterfeited items.

Real products are manufactured in safe environments. They are thoroughly researched for effectiveness and are repeatedly tested for quality and safety. Counterfeits are not.

## FIND THE FACTS

1. What are the risks of buying fake goods? Include at least two.

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2. What are the benefits of buying real products? Include at least two.

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3. Read "McGruff's Tip". Were you surprised by this fact? Why or why not?

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### MCGRUFF'S TIP

McGruff and Scruff here! Technology is a terrific tool for learning, keeping in touch, or just having fun! But did you know that fake electronics can be dangerous to your health? It's true.

Faulty electronics cause more than 70 deaths and 350,000 serious injuries every year. Don't risk your health for a fake and dangerous knock-off—make sure you spend your hard-earned money on the real deal!

To find out more about the dangers of fake products, go to [nccpc.org/goforreal](https://nccpc.org/goforreal).

# DON'T BE DUPED

Look at the backpack ad below. How many clues can you find that this advertiser is selling a fake? Write a one-paragraph *Dupe Detective Report* explaining why the ad is for a fake product.

**SUPER & COOL**

**NEW ARRIVAL**

**BACKPACK**

**LOW PRICE TODAY!**

Tonny Hilfiger backpacks are best ones to buy for your mony.

**ONLY \$6.98**  
U.S. DOLLARS

**ORDER NOW**

www.super&cool.com

Call To Find Out More  
**+00 123 456 789**



## MCGRUFF'S TIP

McGruff and Scruff here! Don't fall for fake ads! Be a Dupe Detective when shopping and pay close attention to clues that tell you not to spend your hard-earned money on counterfeit products. Share what you know with friends and family so they can be Dupe Detectives, too!

To find out more about the dangers of fake products, go to [ncpc.org/goforreal](http://ncpc.org/goforreal).

## DUPE DETECTIVE REPORT

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# THINK FOR YOURSELF

Everyone loves a bargain! These days, it can seem that everyone is eager to tell you how to get the best bargains around. But is it really a bargain if you're buying a fake?

Read the scenarios below. For each one, evaluate the potential risks of purchasing a fake product. Think for yourself about health and safety concerns and the economic and social consequences of counterfeiting. Write a short paragraph explaining why you would **Go For Real™** instead.

**SCENARIO 1:** A friend shares a great bargain on a new tablet, but the price seems too good to be true.

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**SCENARIO 2:** A social media influencer posts a "how to" video on easily obtaining fake luxury makeup. It's not sold in the United States and there is no information about safety testing.

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**SCENARIO 3:** Your favorite TikToker shows off a pair of "name brand" sneakers that he got for cheap on a strange website.

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## MCGRUFF'S TIP

McGruff and Scruff here! Don't be fooled by someone on social media—or even someone you know—who is trying to sell you on purchasing potentially fake goods. (Maybe unintentionally.) Think for yourself. Click or walk away!

To find out more about the dangers of fake products, go to [ncpc.org/goforreal](https://www.ncpc.org/goforreal).

# SPREAD THE WORD

It's time to show off what you've learned about avoiding fakes! Follow the steps below to create your own **Go For Real™** public service announcement (PSA).

1. Choose a goal. What message do you want to get across? Think back to the things you've learned in the previous three activities.
2. How will you present your PSA? Select a medium, such as creating a poster, shooting a video, or putting together a digital slideshow.
3. Research what information you want to include in your PSA. Visit [nccpc.org/goforreal](https://nccpc.org/goforreal) for facts you can add to your message.
4. Write and edit your PSA. It helps to have a friend or two look it over! Make sure you end with a call to action.

Sketch and write your ideas below. Then create your PSA. When you are finished, share it with the class.

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## MCGRUFF'S TIP

McGruff and Scruff here! Learn more about the dangers of fake products and being a Dupe Detective by visiting [nccpc.org/goforreal](https://nccpc.org/goforreal). Shop smart and stay safe!