

Spain curbs “body image” advertisements on television

Spain has stepped up its first fight against what the government sees as forces that push girls into anorexia or bulimia, with the introduction of law banning so-called “cult of the body” advertising on television before the children’s watershed hour.

Peddlers of plastic surgery, slimming products and some beauty treatments will not be allowed to be advertised before 10 p.m.

The ban is extended to other advertisers who transmit a message to children that what matters most is how they look, or that their chances of success are linked to the type of body they have. The ban comes in a new broadcasting law that has been approved by the lower chamber of parliament and is reviewed by the upper house.

It states: “Broadcasters cannot carry advertisements for things that encourage the cult of the body and have a negative impact on self-image such as slimming products, surgical procedures and beauty treatments which are based on ideas of social rejection as a result of one’s physical image or that success is dependent on factors such as weight or looks.”

Spanish legislators decided that the dangers posed by slimming products were worse than those posed by, for example, alcoholic drinks. Wine and other alcoholic drinks can be advertised during children’s viewing time - to the disgust of some consumer groups.

It makes no sense that slimming products have been banned when alcohol, which is for adults, has not. Consumer groups also complained that the new law is not powerful enough and there would be enforcement problems. The intentions are great but without sanctions they will be useless, this is the general opinion in Spain.

1. Comprehension exercises (2 points)

1.a. According to the text (0.5 points)

- a. Slimming products and some beauty treatments will not be prevented from advertising before 10 p.m.
- b. Slimming products and some beauty treatments will be banned before 10 p.m.**
- c. Slimming products and some beauty treatments will be forbidden after 10 p.m.

1.b. The new law has been (0.5 points)

- a. ratified by the lower chamber of parliament**
- b. ratified by both the lower and upper chamber
- c. ratified by the upper house.

1.c. Alcohol can be advertised before 10 p.m. which some consumers don’t like
(Answer “true” or “false” AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

- TRUE - Wine and other alcoholic drinks can be advertised during children’s viewing time – to the disgust of some consumer groups.

1.d. According to Spanish legislators, slimming products are more dangerous than alcohol.
(Answer “true” or “false” AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

- TRUE - Spanish legislators decided that dangers posed by slimming products were worse than those posed by alcoholic drinks.

2. Do the following grammar exercises according to the instructions given (2 points)

2.a. Fill the blank with the proper form of the verb SPEND (0.5 points)

- At the moment, too much money **is being spent** on luxury items.

2.b. Finish the following sentence so that they both have the same meaning (0.5 points)

- These mountains inspired many artists.
- These mountains were **the inspirations for many artists.**

2.c. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one (0.5 points)

- I wish I had gone to bed earlier last night.
- If only I **had gone earlier last night.**

2.d. Write the appropriate preposition (0.5 points)

- When I have a problem, I usually rely **on** my best friend.

3. Identify in the text ONLY FOUR words from their definitions (1 point)

- A medium that disseminates via telecommunications. (**broadcasting**)
- The act of insuring observance of or obedience to. (**enforcement**)
- Prohibition. (**ban**)
- Inspire with confidence, give hope to. (**encourage**)
- Performed with great precision. (**surgical**)
- The act of applying force in order to move something away. (**push**)

4. Write a summary of the text of about 30-45 words (2 points)

5. Write a composition of about 100-150 words on ONLY ONE of the following topics (3 points)

5.a. Weight and looks are essential to succeed in our society, do you agree?

5.b. Give your opinion about the following topic: "Tobacco, alcohol and all kind of drugs should be banned."