

# Adding up to success



## MATHS IS A FEMINIST ISSUE.

That's what we believe at Good Housekeeping. It's an area where today's otherwise super-successful young women are still lagging far behind the men. Lack of confidence is part of the problem, with 41% of girls saying they are no good at maths, compared with 24% of boys. But there is also a feeling that somehow it is okay to be hopeless at maths because it is boring and unfeminine. This image problem was

highlighted by Superwoman author Shirley Conran when she recently launched her own maths course in GH. It's tailored to appeal to young women, and she calls it Money Stuff to reflect her point that giving up on maths is a financial handicap in the long run.

So how do we change popular opinion? How do we convince teenage girls that succeeding at maths widens their choice of career, and means they are more likely to progress to finance and boardroom jobs that so often still go to men? As a step towards rebranding the subject, GH asked three leading advertising agencies to create an advert that makes girls think differently about maths. One that would engage and excite them - and we hope in the long term, empower them. The results are on the next few pages, along with a short explanation of the designer's thought process behind each one. Now it's over to you - and the teenage girls in your life - to decide which one works best and to share your thoughts. The debate starts here...

### THE AGENCY:

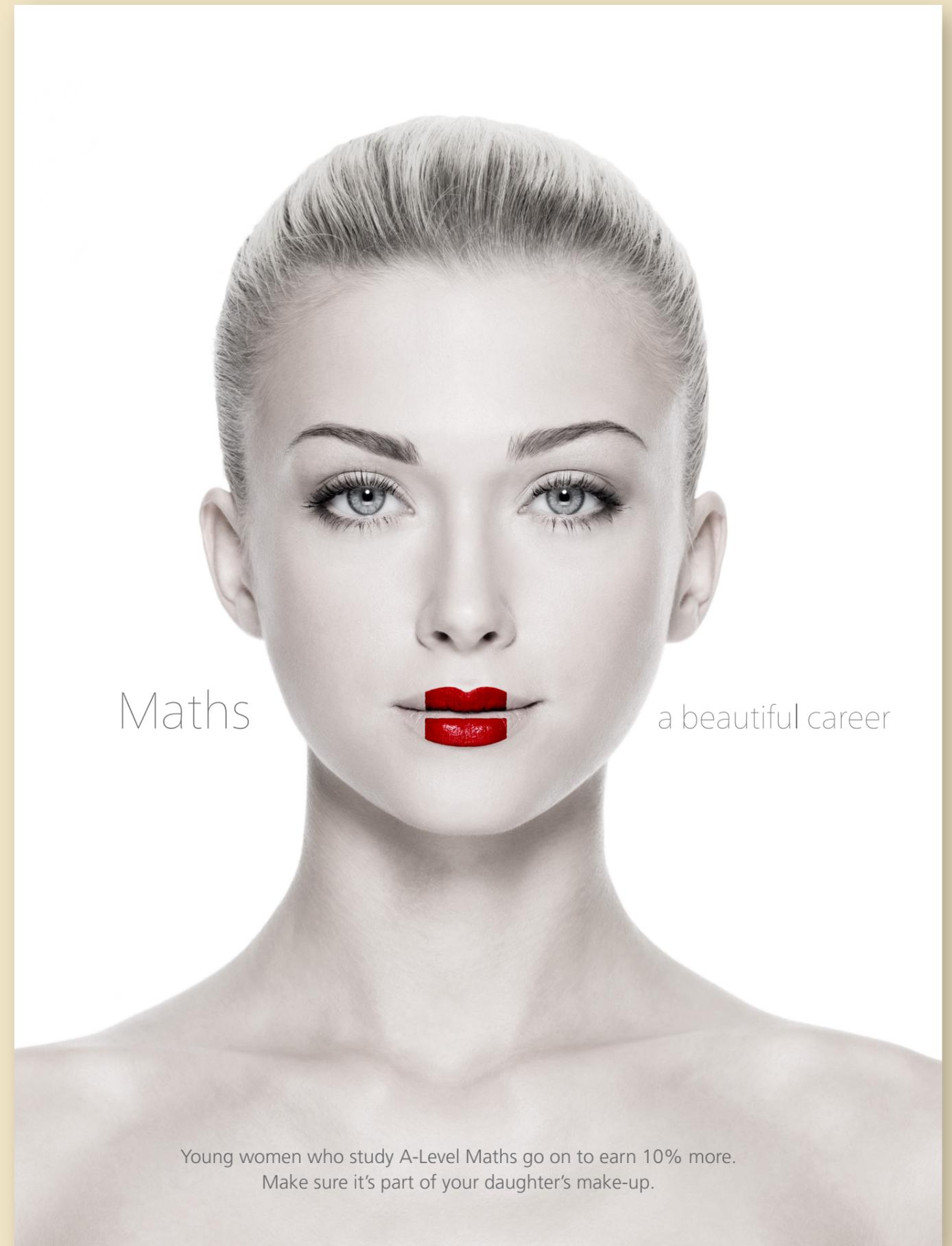
**MBA**

### THE CONCEPT:

▶ 'Maths has always been seen as a subject for the boys with the weird haircuts and bottle-top glasses,' says Graham Kerr of MBA. 'But nobody has really looked beyond that to see that a solid grounding in maths can open many doors to a whole variety of businesses, many of which are "creative". Our job is to inject some glamour into maths.

'We've taken the familiar image of a beautiful girl and disrupted the viewer with something unfamiliar. Nobody expects to see an "equals" sign replacing lipstick. Our campaign line: "Maths = a beautiful career" is also meant to shine a light on the potential for doing well in the subject. With figures suggesting that girls with a maths A-Level can earn 10% more than their peers, we want them to consider it seriously and become "equals".'

★ Tell us which ad is your favourite - and why - at [facebook.com/goodhousekeeping.co.uk](https://www.facebook.com/goodhousekeeping.co.uk)



ADD CONFIDENCE

SUBTRACT FEAR

MULTIPLY  
OPPORTUNITIES

DIVIDE

AND

CONQUER

MASTER THE  
NUMBERS AND  
GO GET IT GIRL

THOSE WITH A MATHS A-LEVEL EARN 10% MORE THAN THOSE WITHOUT

Stick this on the fridge as a daily reminder that the only thing stopping the teenage girl in your life from excelling in maths is the belief that she can't.

**Rubbish**

at

**Maths**

**Girls are rubbish at maths.** The truth is girls are just as good at maths as boys, but we have been led to believe the stereotype. It's time to challenge our perceptions and **remove the label.**

FEATURE: MOYA SARNER. PORTRAIT OF SHIRLEY. CAMERA PRESS. FOR MORE DETAILS OF HER MATHS COURSE, SEE MONEYSTUFF.COM

THE AGENCY: **LIVITY**

THE CONCEPT:

▲ 'We wanted the design to be bold and colourful, using symbols from maths in a graphic way so the subject seems relevant, younger and cooler,' says Kate Brundle, of youth marketing agency Livity. 'The intention is to appeal to girls and also to the mothers, aunts and

teachers who may be the gatekeepers of their decision making. That's why we added the line down the side, as a reminder that there is nothing stopping the teenage girl in your life from excelling at maths. Stick the poster up at home and reassure her she can do it brilliantly!'

THE AGENCY: **FOREVER BETA**

THE CONCEPT:

▲ 'We were inspired by the work of conceptual artist Barbara Kruger, who addresses cultural constructions of power, identity and sexuality using black and white images with striking captions,' says Laura Dixon of advertising and innovation company Forever Beta. 'This style allows her message to resonate

in a powerful and provocative way, which we thought would be perfect for this campaign. We've been inspired by the opportunity to speak to young women about embracing maths. We want girls not to conform to the stereotype or use it as an excuse, but to feel confident, empowered and to stand up and remove the label.' □