



Beluga Balancing Act

DAYS 3-4: PREPARING FOR THE PSA

Students learn about the intent and components of a PSA through discussion and by viewing examples. In small groups, students plan their own PSA about their assigned population of beluga whales by creating a storyboard.

Preparing for the PSA

1. Tell students they are going to create a PSA about their beluga whale population. Explain that PSAs are intended to educate and raise awareness about important issues.
2. Ask students if anyone thinks they have seen a PSA. Based on their responses, have students share what they know about PSAs and describe those that they have seen.
3. Discuss the intent and purpose of a PSA, what makes one effective, and what kinds of organizations produce them. Be sure to touch on the following points about what constitutes an effective PSA:
 - usually 30 seconds long
 - engages the viewers
 - gives accurate facts
 - proposes a specific action or actions regarding a certain issue
4. Have the class view two or three sample PSAs to learn firsthand about their elements and structure. See the following Web sites for some examples:
 - PSA about the plight of the world's amphibians, by Amphibian Ark, Conservation International, and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (30 sec.)
http://newsinfusion.com/video_details.php?videoid=210
 - Ocean awareness PSAs by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Department of the Interior (30 sec. each; click on "Helping Out" or "Amazing" on the right-hand side of the Web page)
<http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=369>
 - California "Thank You Ocean" video (1 min. 11 sec.)
<http://www.thankyouocean.org/>
 - Environmental Protection Agency's "Fight" PSA, about asthma (30 sec.)
<http://www.epapsa.com/campaigns/fight/>
5. Have students answer the following questions about each PSA viewed:
 - What techniques does the producer use to grab your attention?
 - What is the issue being addressed?
 - What is the recommended action/s the producer is suggesting?
 - What audio and visual tools make the PSA more powerful?

6. Facilitate a class discussion about the students' answers to the above questions. Based on the discussion, list on the board some of the main points about what makes an effective PSA.

PSA Storyboard

1. Tell the students that before they create their PSA, they are going to use their research to create a storyboard. Tell them that a storyboard is a layout of the images and accompanying narration they will use in their PSA.
2. Go over the rubric with the students so they know what is expected for the project.
3. Hand out a copy of the Storyboard student handout to each student. Using the Storyboard handout, students can summarize and organize the images and text for their PSA. Simple sketches or drawings in the boxes on the storyboard represent the images and photos they will use. The lines beneath the boxes are used to write the narration that goes with that image. Photos for use in the PSA can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.pbs.org/kqed/oceanadventures/educators/library/>. Students may also wish to shoot their own photos for use in their projects.
4. In their small groups, have students begin to plan their PSAs. What do they want to tell people about their population of belugas? What is the issue they wish to address? What is their recommended action? A class discussion may be useful in helping students think about recommended actions. Ask students what actions in their own lives contribute to the issues facing belugas. What specific changes could they make to help protect belugas and their environment? What do they want to encourage people to do to make a difference?
5. Instruct each group to decide who will do the narration for their PSA. For homework, they are to practice reading their narration slowly and clearly.

For the complete lesson of "Beluga Balancing Act," handouts and additional resources, visit <http://www.pbs.org/kqed/oceanadventures/educators/seaghosts/belugabalance.html>

CREDITS

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