Lesson Plan
Producing a PSA

Project Summary

What is a public service announcement? Why are they important? How does it differ from a commercial? By the end of the lesson, students will have followed the steps to create a video and audio digital presentation for a :30 audio and a 1:00 video PSA.

- Total Lesson Time - 6 Hours
- Standards: STN B1.2, B1.5, F1.1-F1.5, F2.1-2.5, F3.1-3.4, F4.1-4.5, F5.1, 5.4
- Subject/Pathway/Industry
    - A/V Technology & Film Career Pathway (CTE)

Performance Objectives

PRE-PRODUCTION GOALS

1. Define what is a public service announcement
2. Follow the steps to write copy for an audio :30 second and 1:00 video
3. Compare and contrast the difference between a PSA and Commercial

PRODUCTION GOALS

1. Students will shoot a :30 second audio PSA
2. Students will shoot a 1:00 video PSA

POST-PRODUCTION GOALS

1. Students will edit a :30 second audio PSA
2. Students will edit a 1:00 video PSA

Project Outline

1. Choose your topic. Pick a subject that is important to you, as well as one you can visualize. Keep your focus narrow and to the point. More than one idea confuses your audience, so have one main idea per PSA.
2. Time for some research - you need to know your stuff! Try to get the most current and up to date facts on your topic. Statistics and references can add to a PSA. You want to be convincing and accurate.
3. Consider your audience. Are you targeting parents, teens, teachers or some other social group? Consider your target audience's needs, preferences, as well as the things that might turn them off. They are the ones you want to rally to action. The action suggested by the PSA can be almost anything. It can be spelled out or implied in your PSA, just make sure the message is clear.
4. Grab your audience's attention. You might use visual effects, an emotional response, humor, or surprise to catch your target audience. Be careful, however, of using scare tactics. Attention getters are needed, but they must be carefully selected. For example, when filming a PSA about controlling anger, a glass-framed picture of a family can be shattered on camera. This was dramatic, but not melodramatic. Staging a scene between two angry people to convey the same idea is more difficult to do effectively.
5. Create a script and keep your script to a few simple statements. A 30-second PSA will typically require about 5 to 7 concise assertions. Highlight the major and minor points that you want to make. Be sure the information presented in the PSA is based on up-to-date, accurate research, findings and/or data.
6. Storyboard your script.
7. Film your footage and edit your PSA.
8. Record your audio script and edit it.
9. Find your audience and get their reaction. How do they respond and is it in the way you expected? Your goal is to call your audience to action. Are they inspired?

Producing Effective Ads
So how do you make an effective commercial or PSA? There are certain storytelling techniques that are effective in getting the message across. Consider the following tips if you're thinking about a commercial or PSA to promote your cause:

1. Be clear. Using both visual and verbal cues, as well as your non-profit name and logo throughout the commercial or PSA can be helpful. Using clear language is also important.

2. Create a story. If you really think about it, the best commercials and PSAs don't just sell something, they tell a story. Your non-profit story could be humorous or heart wrenching, but it needs to be something that the audience can relate to.

3. Think simple. You should keep your storyline simple since you only have 30-60 seconds to get your message across.

4. Use inspiring music. The right music along with visuals can inspire an audience to act. Involve real people. Nothing is more authentic than the people who are affected by a real-life issue your non-profit is trying to resolve. See if the people you are trying to serve want to be involved in your commercial or PSA.

Resources & Equipment
1. Examples of effective PSAs
2. Word or Google Docs for Script
3. Storyboard handout or app
4. Camera, lights, mic, tripod
5. Editing computer with software

Industry Testimony

"Often we are presenting messages to people that are not necessarily things they want to hear, or things they're interested in doing, so we have to be extremely compelling; we have to be truly breakthrough."

- Patty Goldman, Vice President and Research Director at the Ad Council

Assessment
PSA Rubric

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Rubric
PSA Project

Group_____ Period_____

CATEGORY	5	4	3	2	1	COMMENTS
Dramatic Effect	Plot has clear beginning, middle, and end. Dramatic effect builds to climax, then ends with falling action.	Plot has mostly clear beginning, middle, and end. Dramatic effect is generally followed, but wanders in places. Climax of story is clear.	Plot is hard to follow at times and lacks a clear beginning, middle, or end. Dramatic effect is only somewhat followed and actions seem random.	Plot is very difficult to follow and lacks a clear beginning, middle, or end. Dramatic effect is minimally followed and actions are random.	There is no evidence of plot. It is a collection of random actions with nothing tying them together.	
Lighting	Lighting is creative and always suitable to the mood of the scene, and technically superb.	Lighting is mostly suitable to the mood of the scene of the scene and is technically well done.	Lighting is somewhat suitable to the mood of the scene and is technically fair.	Lighting is poorly suited to the mood of the scene and is technically low quality.	Footage is too dark to be seen or overexposed for the majority of the film.	
Camera/ Direction	Shows advanced knowledge and use of camera techniques and highly skilled directing.	Shows excellent knowledge and use of camera techniques and skilled directing.	Shows moderate knowledge and use of camera techniques and skilled directing.	Shows poor knowledge and use of camera techniques and skilled directing.	Shows no knowledge and use of camera techniques and skilled directing.	
Audio	Audio is balanced between dialogue, music and voice over. Audio is clear throughout the video and shows advanced mixing skills.	Audio is mostly balanced between dialogue, music and voice over. Audio is clear throughout the video with some advanced mixing skills.	Audio is somewhat balanced between dialogue, music and voice over. Audio is not always clear throughout video with some mixing skills.	Audio is not very balanced between dialogue, music and voice over. Audio is inaudible in most portions of the video.	Audio is unbalanced between dialogue, music and voice over. Audio is inaudible in significant portions of the video.	
Storytelling/ Script	Complete script for entire film turned in. Uses proper format. Includes all dialogue, stage directions, scene/set descriptions.	Complete script and mostly uses proper format. Includes most dialogue, stage directions, scene/set descriptions.	A partial script turned. Somewhat follows proper format. Missing some amount of dialogue, stage directions, scene/set descriptions.	A partial script turned, maybe late. Rarely follows proper format. Missing a significant amount of dialogue, stage directions, scene/set descriptions.	Did not turn in script at all or what was turned in barely qualifies as a script.	

Continuity	No lapses in continuity are present, or are insignificant. There is consistency among places, objects, and wardrobe.	Small lapses in continuity are present. There is some inconsistency among places, objects, and wardrobe.	Some lapses in continuity are present. Several inconsistencies among places, objects, and wardrobe.	Many lapses in continuity are present. Major inconsistencies among places, objects, and wardrobe.	Video is significantly disjointed. No consistency among places, objects, and wardrobe.	
Creativity	Highly unique, original idea and is well executed.	Somewhat original idea with good execution.	Lacks originality and execution is fair.	Little originality and poor execution.	Idea is not unique in any way and execution is unacceptable.	
Acting/Talent	Acting is consistently genuine and creates realism for the audience.	Acting is genuine most of the time and creates some realism for the audience.	Acting is genuine at some points and creates a little realism for the audience.	Acting is not very genuine and creates poor realism for the audience.	Acting is almost never genuine or plausible.	
Editing	Video moves smoothly from shot to shot using appropriate transitions. Clips are long enough to make the point clear and pacing captures the audience's attention.	Transitions move relatively smoothly from shot to shot and a variety are used. Most clips move at a steady pace. Most clips are edited to remove slack time.	Transitions from shot to shot are fair and not always appropriate. Some clips move at a steady pace but there is slack time.	Transitions from shot to shot are choppy and are not always appropriate. Pacing is slow and there is major slack time.	No real evidence of editing. Clips are too long and do not advance the storyline, or too short and leave out essential action.	
Closeness to Topic	The content includes a clear concept and story, and follows the topic/title.	Content exhibits connections around the concept and story, with minor diversions from topic/title.	Content exhibits some connections around the concept and story, with many diversions from topic/title.	The content leaves the reader with a vague impression of the concept and storyline, with little mention of topic/title.	The content lacks a central concept and storyline, never hitting the topic/title.	
TOTALS						

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK