

PSA! Grade 7 & 8

Pre-production

Introduce a given topic, theme or strand and the concept of the PSA (public service announcement). Play sample PSAs. Highlight conventions such as taglines, slogans, strategies, and use of conventions and techniques. Draw special attention to camera angles.

Student Planning

Have students find partners or form groups of 3. Assign them the task of choosing from a list of sub-topics. Then, give them a PSA planning sheet or template and have them plan their script. Make sure they are somewhat detailed and specific in this process; planning a movie saves time and increases the chance of a coherent final product. The plan must include elements beyond mere dialogue; there should be direction notes, and information about things that will happen in the editing stage as well (sound effects, music, etc.)

Production

Once the script is complete, have the students rehearse their script. Model a shoot for them; you may even do a mock shoot, wherein you show how a director directs, where a camera person stands, and the cues the actors need to respond to. When they are ready to shoot, prepare the camera and space. For the most time-efficient method, do this in the regular class setting. If you have extra supervisors and cameras, you may move this outside or to other locations; this method is more complex and will require after-school time and other accommodations. Complete shooting, while making sure to do several takes from different angles. When shooting is complete, edit the footage using iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, or Adobe Premiere.

Example:



Presentation

Present the movies in a festival style setting. Invite parents and other classes.

Reflection

Have students write reviews for movies. Have the filmmakers write self-evaluations of their own works.