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ACTIVITY : 50 MINS

Choosing an Audience

As publishing teams finalize their unit projects and prepare for publication, they now select a target audience for their magazine. Teams envision a simple but effective action their target audience can take that will positively impact the ocean plastics crisis. Finally, they make a plan to reach out to their target audience and invite them to the publication presentation.

GRADES

6 - 8

SUBJECTS

Conservation, English Language Arts, Experiential Learning, Social Studies, Civics, Economics

CONTENTS

2 PDFs

OVERVIEW

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For the complete activity with media resources, visit:
http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/choosing-audience/

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DIRECTIONS

Plastics: From Pollution to Solutions unit ***driving question****: How can humans solve our plastic problem in the ocean?*

Pollution Solutions lesson ***driving question****: Which solutions to the plastic problem are the most promising?*

1. Guide the class to shift their focus from a global problem to local solutions.

- Ask students if they have ever heard the phrase "Think globally, act locally" and have them discuss what the expression means.
    - Responses will vary but should get close to the idea that while it's valuable to think about how problems affect the whole world, it's important to make a difference in your own community.
- Tell students they have learned about global solutions, and now it's time to develop their own local solution. Fortunately, they now know all about the problem and the most promising solutions—but the rest of the community may not be as well-informed about the plastic problem.
- Ask: *Who in our community can help us tackle this problem?*
    - Possible responses:
        - Local businesses and restaurants that use and distribute single-use plastics to customers.
        - Schools and school systems that generate plastic waste and/or do not participate in recycling programs.
        - Local government, which can make rules and restrictions about the types of plastics they will allow people to buy, sell, use, and recycle.
        - Individuals and families who buy plastic products.

2. Help teams design their *Call to Action* for a specific audience.

- Distribute one *Call to Action Graphic Organizer Example* and one *Call to Action Graphic Organizer* to each publishing team.
- Prompt teams to review the example and then debrief as a class to ensure students have a clear understanding of how the process will narrow their team's focus and lead to a *Call to Action* that is specific and achievable.
- Advise teams that a good target audience is one you have some kind of connection to. Target audiences should be large enough that they can make a meaningful impact, but not

so large that they won't pay attention to students' voices.

- Guide teams through the *Call to Action Graphic Organizer:*
  - Step 1: Teams choose and highlight a target audience and fill in the bubble below their target audience, as in the example.
    - Teams may need to conduct further research to find the name of a contact person or describe their local government. This can be assigned for homework if class time is limited.
    - Ask one member from each team to share their chosen target audience and explain why they think that person or organization will be able to help them make a difference.
  - Step 2: Teams make a plan for initial and follow-up contact in two different ways.
  - Step 3: Choose a target plastic.
  - After teams have discussed and chosen a target plastic, ask a different team member to share and explain their choice to the class.
  - Before proceeding to Step 4, point teams in the direction of resources that relate to their target audience. Prompt them to read through the following websites and look for inspiration about what kinds of local actions they can suggest to their target audiences:
    - Fellow students or school administrators: *Kids Against Plastic*
    - Local government: *A Running List of Action on Plastic Pollution* and *Plastic Bag Ban Locations*
    - Local businesses and restaurants: *Ocean-Friendly Restaurants* and *A Running List of Action on Plastic Pollution*
    - Families or other consumer-oriented actions: *You Can Help Turn the Tide on Plastic. Here's How.*
- Step 4: Describe the current behavior of the target audience with the target plastic. Have students describe the positive and negative consequences of current behaviors as well, including any reasons that people in the target audience might choose to use the target plastic currently.
- Step 5: Prompt teams to imagine the desired future behavior of the target audience with the target plastic.
  - Monitor teams' progress on this step. Provide feedback so that teams understand their *Call to Action* should be short, specific, and strongly worded in order to be most effective.

    - When teams finish Step 5, have one member from each publishing team share their target audience and desired future behavior.

- Remind students that people often resist change and that they have real reasons for doing so. Facilitate discussion as a class or within teams:

    - *How will your proposed change positively impact the plastics crisis?*
    - *Why might people not want to make this change?*
    - *What negative impacts could result from making your proposed change?*
    - *What other obstacles might your Call to Action encounter?*

3. Conclude with a plan to contact their target audience.

- Tell students that when their magazines are complete, they need to be read by their target audience. Remind them of the final due date for their magazine and explain that on that date, members of the target audience will be invited to the class to read and respond to students' work.

    - Ask: *How and when will you invite your target audience to our class?*

        - Possible responses:

            - We will visit their office after school tomorrow.
            - We will send them an email invitation right now!
            - We will tag them on social media this evening.
            - We will call their office phone number after school.

    - Ask: *When you invite them, what will you say?*

        - Possible responses:

            - We will introduce ourselves and explain our project.
            - We will tell them the date of our final presentation.
            - We will tell them the name and address of our school.

- Revisit the class *Know and Need to Know* chart to update existing questions and add new ones as publishing teams shift their focus to final production.
- Although the graphic organizer will not be included in the final magazine, it will be useful for writing the *Call to Action for Readers* in an upcoming activity, so publishing teams should store their completed *Call to Action Graphic Organizers* in their project folders with other important documents.

Tip

Step 2: In this activity, student projects begin to diverge significantly. Projects of this nature can be difficult to manage, especially because the level of support from administrators and the availability of resources can vary widely from school to school. Ultimately, it is up to you to determine how much freedom and responsibility to give students in designing their projects. For example, you may decide to have all of your publishing teams focus on the same target audience to maximize and streamline their efforts.

Step 3: This is an excellent opportunity in the unit to partner with a social studies teacher, guidance counselor, or librarian. These partners at your school and in your community may be able to help your students better understand how laws are passed in your municipality and which individuals or organizations in the community could be valuable partners.

Step 3: Students with an interest in local business may also need assistance with research, outreach, and preparation. Once they have chosen a business, how do they contact the owner? How should they respond if the owner is resistant to their argument? What information can they provide to overcome objections, and is information sufficient? It may be helpful to research similar businesses that have taken comparable measures.

Step 3: To learn more about the spectrum of authenticity in project-based learning, read *What Does it Take for a Project to Be "Authentic"?* To learn more about successful examples of taking learning beyond the walls of a classroom, read *Gold Standard PBL: Public Product*.

Informal Assessment

The *Call to Action Graphic Organizer* and students' justifications of their decisions provide evidence of their ability to gauge positive and negative impacts, to design solutions, to consider the needs of individuals and society, and to tailor their message to a target audience.

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

- Conservation
- English Language Arts
- Experiential Learning

Social Studies

- Civics
- Economics

Teaching Approach

- Project-based learning

Teaching Methods

- Brainstorming
- Cooperative learning
- Experiential learning

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
  - Information, Media, and Technology Skills
    - Information Literacy
  - Learning and Innovation Skills
    - Communication and Collaboration
    - Creativity and Innovation
    - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
  - Life and Career Skills
    - Initiative and Self-Direction
    - Leadership and Responsibility
    - Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- 21st Century Themes
  - Civic Literacy
  - Environmental Literacy
  - Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking Skills
  - Applying
  - Creating

- Science and Engineering Practices
  - Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

• **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9:**
Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
• **WHST.6-8.2:**
Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
• **WHST.6-8.4:**
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

• **Engineering Design:**
MS-ETS1-2. Evaluate competing design solutions using a systematic process to determine how well they meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.
• **ETS1.B: Developing Possible Solutions:**
There are systematic processes for evaluating solutions with respect to how well they meet the criteria and constraints of a problem.
• **Science and Engineering Practice 7:**
Engaging in argument from evidence

Preparation

What You'll Need

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per pair, Color printer

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

SETUP

The *Call to Action Graphic Organizer* and *Call to Action Graphic Organizer Example* should both be printed double-sided, with one copy per publishing team.

The *Call to Action Graphic Organizer Example* should be printed in color, if possible, to increase clarity and readability of the highlighted sections.

GROUPING

- Small-group work

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Going public is one of the distinguishing features of project-based learning that makes it truly authentic and impactful for both students and the community. In short, going public means that the audience for students' work is not confined to their own classroom. They share their work with other community members, who can provide meaningful feedback about students' ideas, suggestions, and concerns. A public product is a powerful motivator for students. In order to publish a product that they can present to outsiders, students understand that they must hold themselves and their teams to a high standard in terms of scientific information, written quality, and artistic design.

Prior Knowledge

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Recommended Prior Activities

- Autopsy of an Albatross
- Follow the Friendly Floatees
- Magazine Design Workshop I
- Magazine Design Workshop II
- Plastics Aplenty
- Seaworthy Solutions

- The Life Cycle of Plastics
- The Ocean Plastics Pollution Solutions Contest

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
activist	*noun*	person who strongly and actively supports an issue or point of view.
audience	*noun*	observers or listeners of an event or production.
ban	*verb*	to prohibit or not allow.
behavior	*noun*	standard of conduct.
community	*noun*	social group whose members share common heritage, interests, or culture.

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