

Lesson Plan

Public Service Announcement

Book: *Vaccines*

Series: Focus on Current Events

Level: Voyager

Objective

To help students explore how public service announcements organize and disseminate facts, and to have them create PSAs of their own.

Supplies

- *Vaccines* book
- Access to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “Print Resources” web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>
- Access to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “Social Media Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccinations” web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/vaccination-toolkit.html>
- Large sheets of paper
- Markers or colored pencils

Before the Activity

Read through the *Vaccines* book, or assign it to students to read on their own. Pull up the “Print Resources” web page in your web browser. Scroll down the list of print resources and right-click on the following four links to open them in new tabs:

- School Located Vaccine Clinics: Get Back to Seeing Friends
- School Located Vaccine Clinics: Get Back to My Favorite Activities
- The COVID-19 Vaccine: As essential as you are
- You are Essential

Pull up the “Social Media Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccinations” web page in a separate tab.

Activity

The “Print Resources” web page features many posters and flyers created by the CDC to encourage Americans to get the COVID-19 vaccine. As a class, look at the four flyers in their separate tabs. Have students discuss the following questions:

- What features do these four flyers have in common? (Possible Answers: a person looking at the viewer and smiling, the sentence “I got my COVID-19 vaccine,” a statement from the CDC and a link to the CDC’s website, a colorful photograph and limited text, etc.)

- What messages do you think the flyers are trying to convey? (Possible Answers: Safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are ready, and people should get them to protect their families and return to the activities they enjoy doing.)
- Do you think the flyers do a good job of sharing those messages? (Answers will vary.)
- What other mediums could people use to share these messages? (Possible Answers: People could write news articles or letters to the editor. They could create and perform skits. They could make announcements on TV or on the radio.)
- Who is the intended audience of these flyers? How do you know? (Possible Answers: The first two flyers are for young people or perhaps the parents of young people, since they show school-age children talking about topics that children care about, and they also include the information that a COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 12 years and up is available. The second two flyers are for essential workers, since they show people at work and include the word *essential* on the flyer.)
- Why don't the flyers include more information? Wouldn't more information be better? (Possible Answers: People can look at these flyers and get their messages very quickly. More information might just get confusing. Or, people might not have the time or attention to read longer text.)

As another example of a form that PSAs can take, students can look through the “Social Media Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccinations” web page. On this web page, the CDC has sample posts that users can spread on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These posts are divided by topic, such as vaccine benefits, vaccine safety, and vaccine hesitancy, and each post has a slightly different message.

Explain that students are going to create public service announcements about vaccines. A public service announcement, or PSA, is a message that is delivered to the public free of charge in order to inform people of a social issue and perhaps change their behaviors. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were many PSAs about wearing masks and practicing social distancing. Divide students into groups of three. In their groups, students will create PSAs about vaccines. They should consider the following questions as they create their PSAs:

- Who is our intended audience for this PSA?
- What is our message?
- How can we best spread this message?

Each group's PSA can take any form. Students may use the large sheets of paper and markers or colored pencils if they like. Students should incorporate information from the book into their PSAs.

Toward the end of class (or at the next class meeting, if more time is needed), invite groups to share their PSAs. As part of their presentations, groups should explain which format they chose for their PSA and why, who their intended audience was, and what message they wanted

to spread. After all groups have presented, invite students to share their thoughts on the various PSAs. The following questions can be used to guide the discussion:

- Which formats were most effective in presenting the information? Why?
- What are the pros and cons of different presentation formats?

Evaluation

Could students work in groups to create well-organized and informative PSAs about vaccines?

Could students identify the pros and cons of different presentation formats?

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' speaking and listening standards, grade 5 (SL 5.4, 5.5).