MUCKRAKER—Get Your Hands Dirty: Public Service Announcement (PSA)

Upton Sinclair was declared a “muckraker” for his valiant efforts in digging in the dirt, aiming for the public’s heart, but hitting it in the stomach. He exposed the hidden scandal and corruption of institutions which took advantage of the ignorant public. Moreover, he did more than open the public’s eyes; he went to the extent of offering solutions and writing in such a way that he motivated people to act on their emotions and push for reform. For example, in *The Jungle*, Sinclair uses the Rudkus family to illustrate how immigrants were taken advantage of, used like animals until they had nothing left to offer, and forced to attempt survival in an empathetic city of corruption. Jurgis is Sinclair’s vehicle—his puppet—in showing how this can all be resolved: the acceptance of and move towards Socialism. Sinclair believed a Socialist community would be a utopian community. He may not have succeeded in converting people’s political views, but he did expose the truths of the meatpacking plants; and, as a result, President Theodore Roosevelt prompted further investigation leading to the Pure Food Drug and Act of 1906. ***Literature can and does make a difference.***

Your mission is to investigate and research what you believe to be an ill of society. Brainstorm what you think really needs to be reformed. Perhaps it is a commonly debated issue; maybe it is something that you are aware of that is not known to many. It is completely okay if your views are not popular. Do some muckraking. It can be a global, national, or community issue—whatever it is, it needs to be something that impacts you in *some* way. If Sinclair did not really care about his subject, do you think his message would have been convincing enough to cause major change? Essentially, this is your argument in which you make your audience aware, attempt to get them to care, and move them to do something about it. Convince your reader that this is something the public needs to be aware of and ***demand a call to action.***

**PRESENTATION MODE:**

To expose your issue to the public, you must create a **presentation** that includes text and images that **enhance** your argument. Prepare your public service message for a captivated audience who is curious to learn more about your perspective on this issue.

**Options:**

1. Google Slides
2. Prezi

**RESEARCH:** Find at least **3 reputable sources** that provide the “muck”—the details about your issue. These should all be from DIFFERENT organizations/websites (articles from databases such as EbscoHost and Google Scholar are best; though, you are not limited to these). Educate yourself so you can better educate and inform your audience.

The content of your PSA will include:

* Statistics
* people’s “stories”
* testimonies from people who are “in-the-know”
* and proposed solutions

Yes, we want your voice and perspective, but the research will support your perspective to add credibility to your argument.

**YOUR ARGUMENT:**

No matter the mode of presentation you choose, you will need to include your actual argument. Your writing should include all of the following elements in the most logical order for your argument:

* First, grab your **audience’s attention**. Think about your issue and what words, sounds, and/or images would ***immediately*** demand people’s attention and make them care/curious. Consider a thought-provoking question, a startling statistic, a moving story/situation (can be made-up/hypothetical, personal, or from one of your sources), or a quotation that makes jaws drop and hearts skip a beat. Play on your audience’s emotions. You get no second chance at a first impression.
* How will you make clear what you believe to be true about your issue? Make your **solid claim** about **what the issue is, why it is a problem, and why it matters to the audience** very early.
* **Expose** the issue. What is the root of the problem? Present the **who, what, where, when, why,** and **how**.
* Use **Pathos--**likely your most influential type of argumentative appeal: make your audience **feel something**. Stories or scenarios that illustrate the seriousness of the situation can make people care—especially if they can easily see how the issue affects them and/or the people they love. These stories/scenarios can be hypothetical, personal, or factual from your research.
* The **language** you choose makes all the difference in setting the **tone** of your message to put your audience in the **mood** that you want them in. Do you want to excite them? Frustrate them? Frighten them? Sadden them? The words you choose will serve as your tool in incorporating pathos to make your audience feel something. Reflect on how Sinclair carefully chose his language to make his readers feel something—like his personification of the cold that the Rudkus family experiences in chapter 7. Write with feeling. Read it aloud to determine if it has the impact you intend. Remember, IT IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT YOU SAY BUT HOW YOU SAY IT.
* Use **Ethos**, which helps to develop your **credibility** so that your audience believes in you enough to believe the information you provide. You will develop ethos by…
* Citing at least 3 of your reputable sources in your PSA (verbally or on screen)
* Quoting experts or reputable people the audience may be aware of
* Speaking with confidence and conviction
* Preparing a presentation that is polished in every way—errors and incomplete elements give the audience doubt about one’s credibility
* Use **Logos** to persuade your audience through **logic**: evidence, examples, statistics, analogies, and reasoning.
* **Organize** your ideas so that your audience can follow along and so that your ideas **crescendo** towards the end to really move people. Think about and plan for that point that will make a difference—the **Significance** of your PSA.
* Conclude by **Demanding Change**. Consider your target—what do you really want your audience to do? What change do you want to see happen? Tell your audience what they need to do, avoid doing, or stop doing. How do they need to start thinking? How will reform change lives or the community or the world? Explain how to achieve this change and how it will benefit society. Be assertive. Be direct. ***Use your Voice***.

**PLAN SHEET CHECKLIST**

Issue:

Why does this issue matter? Who does it impact?

Claim:

What do you demand or want to see change? This is your **conclusion**—*keep the end in mind*!

Source 1:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Key details from source 1:

Source 2:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Key details from source 2

Source 3:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Key details from source 3

How will you grab your **audience’s attention** at the very beginning?

What specific information are you using to stir your audience’s **emotions (pathos)**?

What **emotion(s)** are you hoping to tap into? How do you want the audience to feel?

What specific information are you using to develop **credibility (ethos)**? Who are you citing/quoting?

What specific information are you using to **logically** persuade your audience **(logic)?**

What will be your **crescendo**—your line(s) of ***SIGNIFICANCE*** that really impacts the audience?

Write your **3 most powerful lines** here—the lines in which your **language** is *deliberatively descriptive*, where your words really have an *impact*, and/or *poetically profess the truth*.

**IMAGES**

What images does the audience NEED to see?

Image:

Why?

Image:

Why?

Image:

Why?

Image:

Why?

Image:

Why?

**RUBRIC Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**The PSA includes…**

\_\_\_\_\_/3 an effective **attention-getter**

\_\_\_\_\_/5 a well-articulated and argumentative claim exposing **what the issue is, why it is a problem, and why it matters to the audience**

\_\_\_\_\_/5 a consistent **focus** on a clearly defined and relevant issue

\_\_\_\_\_/6 **3 reputable sources** cited and copies submitted (no more than 1 website)

\_\_\_\_\_ /3 **pathos** to appeal to the audience’s **emotions**

\_\_\_\_\_/3 **ethos** to appeal to ethics to demonstrate **credibility**

\_\_\_\_\_/3 **logos** to appeal to **logic** through **reason**

\_\_\_\_\_/6 a significant conclusion that makes a clear plea for action—demand for change—so that the **audience is** **well aware of what the PSA is asking of them**

\_\_\_\_\_ /10 **images** that are carefully chosen, expose the issue, and support the argument

\_\_\_\_\_/10 a **well-prepared presentation** that is polished with no textual errors and enhances the argument as well as keeps the audience’ attention

\_\_\_\_\_/6 your argument within the presentation that demonstrates **careful editing** (spelling, grammar, mechanics)

\*\*\**Presentation will not be evaluated until a script is submitted.*

*\*\*\*There will be a 10% reduction in grade for every day late.*

***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/60***