

Promote Safe Driving: Creating a PSA



INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, students analyze tactics used to design and deliver effective PSA messages and then apply what they learn to create their own PSA scripts for the **Drive2Life PSA Contest**. See the Contest Overview, Entry Form, and Official Contest Rules at ymiclassroom.com/drive2life for details on the contest theme and entry requirements.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Students ages 13 to 19 in grades 6–12

OBJECTIVES

- Analyze tactics used to design and deliver effective public service announcement (PSA) messages and assess the desired behavior change
- Create scripts for informative PSA videos that incorporate research from multiple sources, engage the intended audience, and use various communication techniques to express a clear, accurate message that encourages drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and e-scooter riders to share the road safely.

NOTE: Students create storyboards in this activity as preparation for writing a script not more than two pages for a 30-second PSA to enter in the **Drive2Life PSA Contest**.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS MATERIALS NEEDED

- This one-page teacher’s guide
- Copies of the following sheets for each student:
 - PSA Storyboard Graphic Organizer
 - PSA Storyboard Rubric
- Copies of sample student PSA scripts for students to share:
 - One Decision
 - Not So Funny
- Computer with Internet access to view sample PSAs at nrsf.org/resources/psas. **[NOTE:** Review videos to determine whether they are useful for your group before sharing them with students.]

LESSON DIRECTIONS

1. Introduce students to the idea of a public service announcement (PSA). Explain that a PSA is designed to reach a specific group with a message that will change the group’s behavior. Then ask: *How much impact can a PSA have on our behavior?*
2. As a class, watch and discuss some effective PSAs. Share the NRSF PSAs with the class, or search for other current PSAs.
3. For each PSA, identify the message and discuss: *What tactics were used to communicate the message? Do the PSAs use positive reinforcement to encourage positive behavior or change?*
4. Tell students that they will be creating their own PSAs to encourage drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and e-scooter riders to share the road safely. To get started, they will organize their ideas using a storyboard. Then they will write a script not more than two pages on 8.5 x 11-inch paper for a 30-second PSA video to enter in the **Drive2Life PSA Contest**.
5. Explain to students that a storyboard is a visual way to plot out a video script and story. Movie directors and animators use storyboards to plot out their thinking and ideas.
6. Distribute copies of the PSA Storyboard Graphic Organizer, the PSA Storyboard Rubric, and the sample student PSA scripts.
7. Review with students how to use the PSA Storyboard Graphic Organizer. Explain to students:
 - In the blank boxes, sketch what you want to show on the screen.
 - On the lines underneath, describe what people will hear at that point in the PSA — music, sound effects, dialogue.
 - In the Special Effects (SFX) line, describe any visual effects you have in mind — distortion, blur, and color alteration.Finally, in the “Superscript” line, write any text, such as titles or credits, that you want to show onscreen.
8. Before students begin working, review the PSA Storyboard Rubric. Remind students to use the assignment rubric to guide their PSA.
9. Have students present their storyboards to the class for feedback. Then have them write their scripts (not more than two pages) following the format of the NRSF sample scripts. Remind students that storyboards cannot be submitted as contest entries, only scripts.



nrsf.org

PSA Storyboard Graphic Organizer

Name _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____



Audio _____

SFX _____

Superscript _____

Storyboard Rubric

Component	Does Not Meet Expectations	Approaching Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Message, Audience, and Purpose	The message is unclear. The message leaves no impression on the viewer and is inappropriate for the intended audience. The purpose of the PSA is not clear.	The message is clear. The message leaves little impression on the viewer and some aspects are inappropriate for the intended audience. The purpose of the PSA is clear after initial clarification.	The message is clear. The message leaves an impression on the viewer. The message clearly addresses the intended audience. The purpose of the PSA is clear.	Message is clear and creative. The message leaves a lasting impression on the viewer. The message is clearly targeted to impact the intended audience. The PSA has a clear and universal purpose.
Support and Details	No research, statistics, information, or other details are included in the PSA.	Minimal research, statistics, information, or other details are included. There is no unifying connection between the support and the message.	The PSA is complete with research, statistics, details, and information. The support and details are clearly connected to the message.	The PSA is complete with research, statistics, details, information, and other support for the message. The support and details are comprehensive and connected to the message. Everything in the PSA is there for a reason.
Creativity and Execution	Images, special effects, and superscript communicate basic or already used ideas.	Images, effects, and superscript communicate a general creativity. The PSA incorporates few original ideas.	Images, effects, and superscript communicate some creativity. The PSA incorporates many original ideas.	Images, special effects, and superscript communicate creative ideas and execution. The PSA incorporates innovative and original ideas.

NOT SO FUNNY

The Treatment:

Visual of two teenage girls walking side by side on a sidewalk. One is texting on her cell phone and the other (on the right) is putting on mascara in a hand-mirror with a cell phone cradled to her ear, all the while chatting with each other.

The girl on the right then walks straight into a utility pole, knocking her off her feet. She sits looking stunned while the other laughs loudly at her saying "Oh my God Sarah, that's soooo funny! Ha ha ha ha etc."

Fade to black, girl still laughing.

(in white words):

"Funny."

Fade in:

Repeat visual of the girls doing exactly the same, except one is driving a car and the other is in the passenger seat.

Fade to black and quiet.

Sound of horrific crash, a few silent seconds, and girl frantically yells "Sarah? Sarah?!" (played in echoed voice and fades out to silence).

Fade to black.

(in white words):

"Not so funny."

Words fade out then words fade in:

"Sponsored by The National Road Safety Foundation (NRSF) and NOYS.

- end -

ONE DECISION

Fade in:

A teenager (male or female) is standing on the side of the road. He/she has an arm sling, and shows other signs of injury. It's cloudy, and all is quiet. A white cross covered with flowers can be seen in camera view. Remnants from a long-ago accident are still present. Camera zooms in on the teen's face, as he/she looks up and somberly stares straight at the lens. Off-screen, the teen speaks:

"They say one decision can change a life forever."

White flash.

-All shots from this point onward are in reverse. Sounds of the cars and vocals are played normally, but faded with a slight echo.-

White flash to the backseat of a sedan looking out the windshield. The teenager from before is in the passenger seat, and his/her friend is the one driving. The driver has an open cellphone in his/her hands, texting, over the wheel.

The shot (black and white) is a freeze frame, with the center of the sedan inches from the front corner of a tractor trailer. Slowly, increasing in speed, the scene progresses backwards until the truck can be seen 20 yards away. The sound of brakes and a horn can be heard. The passenger at this point is pointing at the truck, and the sedan is in the middle of the road.

Camera switches to the passenger, with a frightened expression, pointing at the truck ahead. Her mouth moves in reverse, but we hear her faded echoey scream.

"Look Out!"

Time still reverses, and color is slowly starting to return to the scene. She reverses a double-take, and is no longer pointing. Her view is on the driver, with a concerned look. Background ambient sound should start building up until climactic point.

Camera is on the driver, who looks up from the phone after finishing a smirk. His mouth moves, and we can hear his faded voice:

"Amanda says 'hey'!"

The driver looks at the phone a moment, and presses a button and closes it.

Camera is on the passenger now, looking at the driver with a confused expression, then turning to face the road ahead.

The scene is almost back to full speed now, and color is almost fully returned, but it is still in reverse. Camera is on the two as the driver begins to put down the phone.

We can see between the two seats, eye-level close up on the phone as the driver places it between the two. All color is back, the scene is in normal time, and the phone buzzes/rings to signal a new text message.

Our view focused on the passenger, he/she suddenly turns and looks down at the phone, hesitant. Off-screen we hear their voice clearly:

"I made my decision."

Back in the scene, the passenger says:

"Let me get that. You shouldn't worry about it."

and reaches for the phone.

The passenger looks up and smiles. The driver smiles back.

Fade out.

With black (or Blue/White) screen, show possible NRSF logo on bottom with the words "Prevent Distracted Driving" or any variation thereof.

If possible, have the passenger's voice-over read these words.

For a 15 second option, have the entire pre-crash scene in a quick, unchanging reverse. Do not include the passenger's thoughts or the scene that takes place months later.