

Creating a Public Service Announcement for Trout Protection

Description:

This lesson will help students understand how to effectively communicate scientific information to the public in a visually appealing manner through the creation of public service announcements (PSAs).

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about waterways in the New York City watersheds and the health of those ecosystems
- To understand effective science communication tactics
- To learn about dangers to the health of trout and cold-water fisheries

Vocabulary:

Cold-water fisheries, conservation, endangered species, extinction, extirpation (local extinction), overfishing, public service announcement (PSA), riparian buffer, stewardship, water quality (ammonia, dissolved oxygen, pH, nitrate, phosphate, temperature, turbidity), waterway

Materials:

- Poster board/large sheet of paper
- Markers, colored pencils, and/or crayons
- Writing utensils
- Watershed Health and Management Presentation

Background Information:

Public service announcements (PSAs) have long been used to educate audiences about various topics to generate awareness or change public opinions and/or actions.

This PSA activity is designed to center around the protection of our resident trout. Trout are an indicator species, meaning that they are extremely sensitive to changes in their environment and water quality. As an indicator species, trout are very useful for understanding if a cold-water stream is healthy. If there is a robust population of trout, we can conclude that the stream must be very healthy. In NYC, we know our drinking water is healthy in part because there are thriving populations of trout in the upstate watershed streams and rivers.

While the native brook trout are not endangered in New York, it is still important to protect them from various threats, such as pollution, deforestation, and overfishing. There are some populations that can become endangered locally, even if they are not endangered at a state or national level. Trout living in the Croton, Catskill, and Delaware Watersheds are living in our drinking water. Therefore, threats to them could also result in threats to us.

Method:

- Review what types of conditions trout need to survive and thrive and brainstorm some

threats to their survival using the Watershed Health and Management Presentation.

- Show students examples of the PSAs.
- Break the students up into groups of 3-4 and have them work together to brainstorm the message for their PSA for stream conservation. They can sketch it on a piece of paper.
- Distribute the poster boards (one per group). Allow the students to use writing utensils, markers, colored pencils, and/or crayons to create their PSAs. Once completed, each group should present their PSAs to their classmates.

Discussion:

- Which topic did you choose for your PSA? Why?
- Were you inspired by any of your classmates' PSAs? Why?
- Why might PSAs be important for conservation?

Extension:

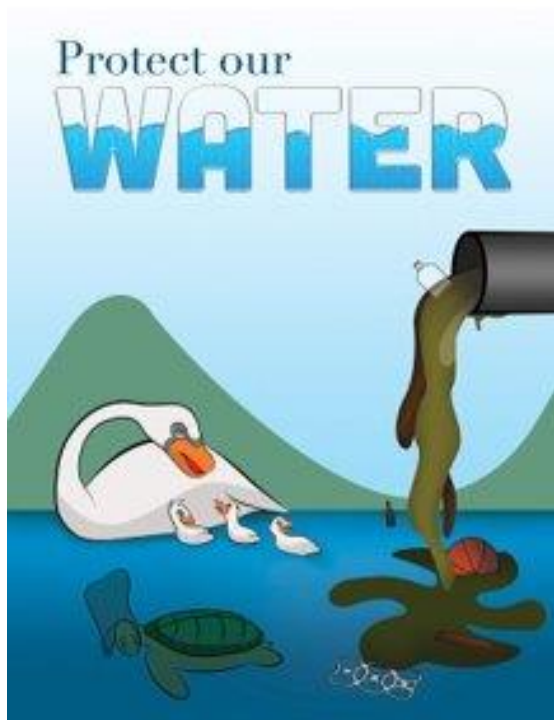
- Deepen students' understanding of the NYC and watersheds drinking water supply by exploring the [NYC Watershed Virtual Tour](#) or additional resources in the [NYC DEP Education Modules](#).
- Have students hang up their PSAs in the classroom or school hallway to generate discussion amongst other students in the school about the information.
- Have students send letters including their PSA to a local council member to support environmental conservation efforts.
- Create a panel of teacher judges to choose a PSA competition winner and provide a prize.

NYC Department of Environmental Protection

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For more information visit www.nyc.gov/dep

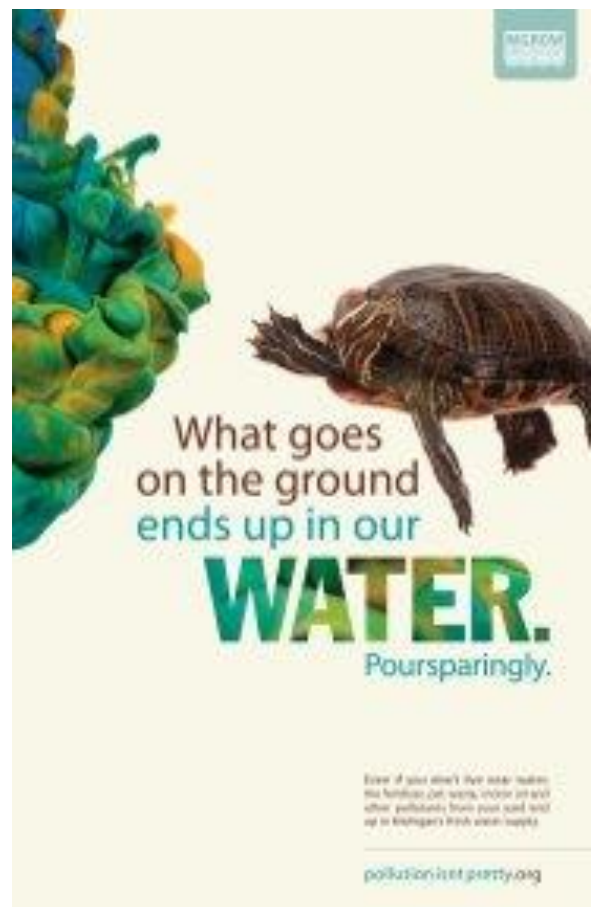
Examples of PSAs



Johan Colon



Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles



Pollutionisntpretty.org