



2016 Alexandria Earth Day

"Choose to Reuse -- Your Choices Matter"

Public Service Announcement Competition

Call for Entries:

The City of Alexandria's Earth Day celebration will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2016 from 10 am to 2 pm on the Lenny Harris Memorial Fields at Braddock Park, adjacent to GW Middle School, 1005 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301. The Earth Day Planning Committee is excited to offer this contest that aims to provide students with an opportunity to express themselves clearly, organize their ideas and have confidence by creating a public service announcement (PSA). Typically non-profits receive free PSAs when there is a gap to fill on a radio station's daily schedule. The ability to write and deliver a message which conveys a complete thought in 30 seconds or less is the reality of both broadcast and personal communications. The emphasis of this contest is based on an audio presentation of a PSA for radio. By competing in this contest, students will learn valuable life skills in effective communication that they will use throughout their lifetime.

Theme:

The theme of Earth Day 2016 is "Choose to Reuse – Your Choices Matter." Team leaders should encourage their students to produce imaginative PSA spots by using their creativity to promote this Earth Day theme from their own understanding of what it means to choose to reuse (repurpose) discarded items.

Guidelines:

- Each school may submit a "Public Service Announcement Entry Form" for a *maximum of three (3)* "PSAs" to be judged.
- Each PSA should be a maximum of 30 seconds per spot, and should be prepared using the "How to Prepare an Audio PSA" as reference. Be creative; think about creating a jingle or limerick.
- It usually takes about 75 words to create a 30 second PSA.
- Five (5) points will be deducted for every five (5) seconds beyond the 30 second time allotment.
- Students will deliver their audio PSA spots secluded from view; therefore, gestures and visuals will neither be seen nor judged.
- Scoring of the audio PSA will be based on the content and delivery of the material only.

Judging:

- Each entry will be judged using the "Public Service Announcement Score Sheet."
- The Danish awards system will be used to score this contest: Blue ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 90-100 points; red ribbons awarded to competitors earning 75-89 points; white ribbons awarded to competitors earning 74 points or less.

Deadline:

Entry forms must be **received** through email by Reggie Morris (rbmorris@vt.edu) or Lee Ann Tardieu (lee.ann.tardieu@acps.k12.va.us) no later than Friday, April 8, 2016. Questions? Please either email or phone Reggie at 703-746-5547 (office) or 571-481-7202 (cell), and Lee Ann at 541-761-8110 (cell).



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How to Prepare a Public Service Announcement

Whether it's an idea, a product or a service, the suggestions below work the same way. Try to avoid using sound effects or music unless it actually adds something to the PSA; it's easy to go overboard and detract from the message with "too much extra stuff." If using a music background, don't make it recognizable, or people will pay more attention to the music than the message; it is illegal to use music that is copyrighted without permission.

Writing Notes for the Preparation of PSAs:

- Type in double or triple space, and avoid using all capital letters as they will be difficult for you to read in quantity. It's important that you be able to pronounce everything correctly, so use the phonetic spelling for difficult words.
- Use the **AIDA Formula** for writing copy:
 - **A - Attention:** *Get the listeners' attention* -- use a striking, interesting or unique statement that doesn't sound like all the other PSAs. This can be a sound effect or it can be a question.
 - **I - Interest:** *Create Interest* -- now that you have the listeners' attention, it is time to elaborate on or clarify the statement by creating interest for whatever it is you're selling.
 - **D - Desire:** *Create Desire* -- now that you have the listeners' interest, create a desire for the idea or product.
 - **A - Action:** *Get the listeners to act on the desire you've created.* How should they utilize the idea or product?
- Balance your sentences and keep them simple; avoid long or short, choppy sentences.
- It's best not to use abbreviations as the word they represent may not come to you as they are being spoken.
- Use contractions whenever possible. Do **NOT** use contractions when you wish to emphasize a certain word.
- Simplify numbers or statistics by using generalizations such as: about, nearly, almost, at least, approximately.

Delivery Tips:

- Practice. Read your PSA out loud to a listener who will give you suggestions on how you can improve your delivery.
 - Is it the right length?
 - Does it sound like something you would hear on the radio?
 - Is the headline (initial statement) catchy and interesting?
 - Edit your PSA carefully to be sure all of the information is correct.
- Place the microphone directly in front of you. This position is called, "on the beam."
- Speak clearly in a normal, conversational and friendly tone. Think of yourself as talking to one or two persons on the other side of the microphone -- not to the microphone itself. This means that you won't shout into the microphone because you wouldn't shout at your friends at that distance.
- Use your natural voice. Speaking close to the microphone makes the voice sound more pleasing and gives "presence" to your voice.
- Project your personality. Sell your audience on the point you're making. Be persuasive; enthusiasm and sincerity will help convince the listeners that you believe in what you're saying.
- Talk at a natural speed, but avoid monotony. Vary the pitch and volume of your voice to get variety, emphasis and attention. Take breaths between units of thoughts rather than randomly.
- Make your voice pleasant; a smile on your face will put a smile in your voice. Watch enunciation and pronunciation.
- Radio broadcasters typically sit down with their elbows on the table while they are on the air. A person in such a seated position tends to have a conversational style of delivery. When sitting, hold your copy in front of you. If you look down to read, your air passage will not open enough to allow you to breathe correctly.
- Try to avoid standing as it may trigger platform habits such as vocal projection or pacing.



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Public Service Announcement Competition Entry Form

Each school/organization may submit up to a maximum of three (3) PSAs, not to exceed 30 seconds each.

School/Organization Name: _____

Student Name(s): _____

Leader Name & Email Address: _____

Grade/Age Group: Elementary (Grades 1-5) _____ Middle (Grades 6-8) _____ High School (Grades 9-12) _____

PSA #1: _____

PSA #2: _____

PSA #3: _____

*****Entry form must be submitted to Reggie Morris or Lee Ann Tardieu no later than Friday, April 8, 2016*****
rbmorris@vt.edu OR lee.ann.tardieu@acps.k12.va.us