

'Pressing' climate issues

Analysing persuasive language, ethics and credibility

Year Level:	10	Subject:	English	Topic:	Analysing, interpreting and implementing persuasive language
Duration:	2 x 50 minute lessons Lesson 1 Introduction and writing Lesson 2 Presentation	Curriculum:	<p>Content description codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VC2E10LY07: integrate comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring, questioning and inferring to analyse and interpret complex and abstract ideas • VC2E10LY09: review, edit and refine their own texts and the texts of others for control and coherence of content, organisation, sentence structure, vocabulary, and/or visual features to achieve particular purposes and effects, and reflect on these processes • VC2E10LY02: deliver structured spoken texts for particular purposes, experimenting with formality in deliberate consideration of an audience, using features of voice and multimodal or digital elements 	Climate Topics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate communication • Climate change impacts • Misinformation • Sustainability

Brief Overview

Students will work in groups representing different types of companies or organisations to prepare statements for a mock press conference. Each group will receive a brief with their organisation's profile, motives and key message, alongside a real-world example of a press release from a similar organisation highlighting key language techniques. One student from each group will act as their organisation's spokesperson, presenting their statement and responding to investigative questions from classmates acting as journalists. Through this activity, students will explore how language is used to convey messages, shape perception, and influence understanding of environmental issues.

Learning outcomes

Learning Intention

Students will examine how language is used by different organisations to shape public perception of climate issues.

Success Criteria

- Analyse and interpret persuasive language techniques used in real-world examples
- Review and edit written statements to ensure clarity, coherence, and persuasive effect
- Deliver a structured spoken statement using appropriate tone, formality, and multimodal elements for the intended audience

Introduced climate science concepts	Presumed knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossil fuel emissions • Resource depletion • Waste management • Greenwashing 	<p>VC2E9LY05: analyse and evaluate how language features are used to explicitly represent values, beliefs and attitudes</p> <p>VC2E7LE06: create texts that experiment with literary language features and devices encountered in texts</p> <p>VC2E9LY08: create different types of texts, written and spoken, that present a point of view and advance, illustrate or expand ideas, including texts that integrate print, multimodal and/or digital elements in deliberate consideration of an audience</p>

Teaching materials and resources				
Tool ID	Student/teacher	Tool and link	Overview	Source
R0	Teacher	Glossary of climate terms	This document provides teachers with a glossary of key terms relevant to this lesson plan	Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub
R1	Teacher	Lesson PowerPoint	PowerPoint slides with lesson content and activity instructions for students to follow, includes speaker notes	Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub
R2	Teacher + Student	Video - Banana Boat sunscreen ad (15 seconds)	Banana Boat sunscreen ad claiming the product is 'reef safe'. This video is used to lead into an example of the greenwashing scandal that followed	Banana Boat (ad acquired from iSpot)
R3	Teacher	Banana Boat case study example	Article providing context on the ongoing Banana Boat 'reef safe' sunscreen scandal that is used as an example in the ppt	ABC News
R4	Student	Company/organisation scenario briefs	There are six briefs that contain an overview of the scenario and an example press release from a real company. NOTE: The companies students are representing are <i>entirely fictional</i> . Research should focus on the <i>industry</i> , <i>not on replicating</i> any real-world company or organisation.	Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub
R5	Student	Devices (laptops or tablets)	Students will require devices with internet connection to allow for researching and creating presentations	–

Lesson outline				
Stages	Description	Tool ID	Slide Number	Time
Part 1: Learning introduction	<p>Teacher: Begin the lesson with the powerpoint (slides 1-7).</p> <p>Aim: To quickly engage students with the topic of greenwashing and public scandals through a short, real-world example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Slide 1 (<i>Optional to show to students</i>): Learning goals ● Slide 2: Title slide ● Slide 3 (<i>Discussion question</i>): Have you ever used Banana Boat sunscreen? ● Slide 4 (video - 15 seconds): 'Banana Boat sunscreen ad' (R2) ● Slide 5 (<i>Discussion question</i>): What happened after? (<i>gauging if anyone knows about the 'reef safe' sunscreen scandal</i>) ● Slide 6: 'Reef safe' scandal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Details provided in speaker notes</i> ● Slide 7: 'Reef safe' scandal continued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did Banana Boat respond? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Details provided in speaker notes</i> <p>Students: Participate in class discussion, no need for note taking.</p>	R1	1-7	5min

<p>Part 2: Activity introduction + text analysis</p>	<p>Teacher: To start the activity, go through slide 8 that gives a brief overview of the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in groups, students will prepare and deliver a two-minute statement responding to their assigned climate-scandal scenario. This will be followed by a Q&A where classmates act as journalists questioning each group’s company and its intentions <p>Change to slide 9 to divide the class into groups for the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are six briefs, split the class into enough groups to cover each one • Once in groups, assign and distribute the briefs to each group <p>When ready to start the activity, change to slide 10 for the first task ‘TEXT ANALYSIS’</p> <p><i>If students get stuck, a list of language technique prompts are included in the speaker notes.</i></p> <p>Students: In their groups, students are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read through the brief assigned to them to learn about their persona and scenario 2. Analyse the real-world example press release provide in their brief and document responses to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify language and literary devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Highlight, annotate, or list the devices used ○ Determine the purpose and audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What is this text trying to achieve? ○ Analyse tone and style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do the language choices create it ○ Examine structure and sequencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How the message is organised 	<p>R1, R4, R5</p>	<p>8-10</p>	<p>20mins</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate credibility and bias <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What's being emphasised or left out? ○ Reflect on overall impact 			
Part 3: Writing the content	<p>Teacher: Once students have finished their analysis, move on to slide 11 for the next step, where they'll begin writing and preparing their press releases/statements (max 1 page).</p> <p>NOTE: Their press release speech should be around 2 minutes long (~100-200 words) + Only 1-2 people per group have to present as the 'spokesperson'</p> <p>When preparing their press releases, students should focus on their assigned persona's 'angle' to influence their writing style and choices.</p> <p>Guides for how each company/organisation should write/sound are included in slide 10 speaker notes.</p> <p>Students: In their groups, students will now write their press releases (max 1 page) and prepare to present them. When creating their press release, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define their purpose and audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Know what they want to achieve and who they're speaking to ● Adopt their persona and tone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Match their group's role (defensive, activist, PR, transparent) ● Plan their structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear opening, supporting points, strong closing, pre-empt questions ● Use identified language techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emotive language, repetition, inclusive words etc. 	R1, R4, R5	11	25mins

	Each group will have two minutes for their spokesperson/s (2 people max), to deliver their statement , followed by four minutes of questions from other classmates acting as journalists.			
Start of Lesson 2 (if split over two single periods)				
Part 4: Presentation (Mock press conference)	<p>Teacher: When starting presentations, switch to slide 12 and organise the classroom with chairs facing the front in rows to replicate a real-life press conference environment.</p> <p>Choose groups at random to present their two-minute statements. Follow each with a four-minute Q&A, where classmates take on the role of journalists challenging or questioning the company's message.</p> <p><i>A list of journalist question prompts are included in the speaker notes.</i></p> <p>Students: When presenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group will choose one or two spokespersons to deliver their two-minute press statement, explaining their company's response to the scenario. • After presenting, they will answer questions from classmates for four minutes, staying in character with their assigned persona. <p>When <u>NOT</u> presenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While other groups present, students act as journalists, listening closely and asking at least one investigative question about a company's message, tone, or actions. <p><u>Optional discussion strategy:</u> <i>Ensure active participation by requiring each non-presenting group to ask at least one question during the Q&A session.</i></p>	R1, R4, R5	12	40mins

<p>Part 4: Learning reflection</p>	<p>Teacher: At the conclusion of their presentations, have students return to their desks and change to the final slide for a wrap up discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Slide 13 (<i>Discussion questions</i>): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What language techniques were most common in positive or honest communication? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did these help build trust or show transparency? 2. What language techniques were used in more deceptive or defensive communication? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did they change the tone or hide responsibility? 3. What are the social or ethical impacts of using these techniques? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How can language shape people's values, beliefs, and attitudes – and even empower or silence certain groups? <p>Students: Participate in class discussion, no need for note taking.</p> <p><u><i>Differentiation discussion strategy:</i></u> <i>Use the 'popcorn discussion' method and call on hesitant sharers first to name the easier or more obvious words/options. Call on extension students when obvious ones have already been said.</i></p>	R1	13	10mins
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Links for further reading

- [Environmental and sustainability claims](#) – ACCC
- [FLICC: the 5 techniques of science denial](#) – Skeptical Science (Dr. John Cook)
- [How language can turn down the temperature of heated climate change discourse](#) – The Conversation