



DRIVING QUESTION

How can tone, style, and rhetorical strategies be adapted to influence an audience in the digital age?

PROJECT SUMMARY

While the Shark Tank project emphasizes professional persuasion for investment, this project focuses on digital persuasion for awareness and advocacy. Students will act as influencers who design a campaign around another cause they care about. They will research the issue, identify a target audience, and experiment with tone (serious, urgent, humorous, inspirational) to maximize impact. Their campaigns will take the form of social media posts, infographics, or short videos, culminating in a showcase where their work is presented as a live “social media feed.” This allows students to practice audience awareness, rhetorical flexibility, and creative communication,,,skills different from the business-pitch persuasion of Shark Tank.

REAL-WORLD CONTEXT

Students explore the authentic world of social media advocacy, where individuals use rhetorical strategies to influence peers and communities. Unlike Shark Tank, which mimics investor presentations, this project reflects the everyday persuasive environments students actually navigate online.

PRODUCTS & AUDIENCE

Students created a digital campaign and showcase event.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

- “It helped me work more on editing.”

NC PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE SKILLS GAINED

 **COLLABORATION**

 **ADAPTABILITY**

 **COMMUNICATION**

 **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

 **EMPATHY**

 **CRITICAL THINKING**

 **LEARNER'S MINDSET**

TEACHER REFLECTION

“This project successfully helped students understand how the audience, purpose, and tone shape effective arguments in real-world contexts. Students demonstrated strong engagement when translating research into persuasive messaging designed for a specific platform and audience. If I were to repeat this project, I would spend more time modeling how credibility and evidence function differently in digital spaces, but an “aha” moment was seeing students realize that persuasion requires strategic choices, not just strong opinions.”