Natalie Feaser

Polymers and the Environment

Homework 1

Both Petro Pete’s Big Bad Dream and Alison’s Adventure cover the topic of polymers and plastics and how they are part of everyday life. Both the children’s story and the documentary aim to convince the audience to see their point of view.

In Petro Pete’s Big Bad Dream, Petro Pete has a nightmare that everything that is produced from petroleum has disappeared. In the story, Pete is unable to get ice cream at lunch time because the machine is unable to run without petroleum oil. When Pete and his friends are outside for recess they realize the soccer balls, basketballs, and footballs are all missing because petroleum is used in the process of making these synthetics. The takeaway message from this story is that petroleum is used to make many things we use in our everyday life.

The issue with the argument is that the story only cover’s the positive side of petroleum use. The story specifically uses examples like ice cream and toys to put petroleum use in a positive light. This story does not cover the dangers of using petroleum oil. Burning the oil pollutes the air and contributes to global warming and drilling for the oil destroys habitats and can be deadly to animals if there is an oil spill. This story does a great job informing the audience of the many uses of petroleum oil, but it lacks information on the effects of this resource. If the story included this information, it would make the story more realistic and reliable.

In Alison's adventure, Alison Teal takes a trip to the Maldives to show the audience the effects of plastic pollution and how trash makes its way into the ocean. Alison shows a lot of footage of mountains of trash, and she even speaks to locals like a young boy named Madu who lives on the littered islands and Rajeesh, a supervisor who burns the trash and has almost died from the fumes. At the end of the documentary Alison talks about the importance of raising awareness and hopes to establish some recycling facilities in the Maldives to help with the trash problem. Alison then shows that some of the trash, specifically the plastic water bottles can be transformed into clothing items like shorts or bikinis or vests.

Alison does a good job of presenting the issue of pollution, but she is very comical and focuses a lot on her TV fame and silly adventures. Her argument would be more effective if she spoke more about the solutions to the problems and maybe took the viewers to a recycling plant and showed the process of turning the plastic water bottles into clothing.

Each of these sources want to raise awareness and convince their respective audiences to agree with them. Both pieces of media can improve their messages to give clearer information and help educate people of the reality of using petroleum oil and the issue of pollution in the Maldives.