

# Assignment Sheet 3: BADNANA

## URGENT BULLETIN

**FROM:** Badnana (Bereaved Advocates and Determined Nanas Against Noxious Agriculture)

**TO:** Concerned Citizens & Truth-Seekers

**RE:** Counter-Information Campaign Assignment

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## WHO WE ARE

We are a coalition of grandmothers, historians, and survivors who remember. We remember the Banana Massacres. We remember when “banana republic” wasn’t just a clothing store. We remember what corporate banana interests did to Central America, to workers, to communities, and to our own family members.

**They want you to forget. We refuse.**

## OUR FRAME: NEVER FORGET, NEVER AGAIN

Behind every banana is a history of:

- **Corporate imperialism:** US-backed coups for banana profits
- **Labor exploitation:** Massacres, union-busting, poverty wages
- **Chemical warfare:** Pesticide exposure causing sterility and birth defects
- **Environmental destruction:** Rainforest cleared for monoculture plantations
- **Cultural erasure:** Indigenous land theft for banana plantations
- **Health risks:** They’re radioactive! (Yes, really!)

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Create **awareness material** (investigative article, historical exposé, warning pamphlet, documentary script, or educational infographic) that:

1. **Reveals the dark history of the banana industry**
2. **Targets one of these audiences:**

- Young people who don't know the history
- Ethical consumers
- Grocery store shoppers
- Policy makers
- Human rights advocates

### **3. Uses historical evidence and moral weight:**

- The 1928 Banana Massacre (Colombian workers gunned down)
- CIA-backed 1954 Guatemala coup (for United Fruit Company)
- Ongoing labor conditions
- Pesticide health impacts
- Environmental degradation
- The word "banana republic" and its origin

### **4. Employs grandmotherly persuasion:**

- "Let me tell you a story..."
- Moral authority and lived experience
- Disappointment in corporate behavior
- Protective concern for younger generations
- Historical memory as resistance
- "In my day, we knew what these companies did..."

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

### **You've succeeded if:**

- Readers pause before their next banana purchase
- Young people learn history they weren't taught in school
- Your piece generates discomfort with consumption-as-usual
- Readers question corporate marketing messages
- The historical atrocities feel relevant to today

### **You've failed if:**

- The piece feels like ancient history with no modern relevance
- You sound preachy rather than compelling
- Readers dismiss you as conspiracy theorists
- The moral weight collapses into guilt-tripping
- People feel paralyzed rather than informed

# RESEARCH CHALLENGE

Find **3 credible historical sources** documenting banana industry impacts:

- Academic histories of US intervention in Central America
- Declassified CIA documents
- Labor history accounts
- Environmental impact studies
- Worker testimony or investigative journalism

**Critical question:** How do you present heavy historical material without sounding extremist? How do you make 1920s-1950s history feel relevant in 2025?

## REMEMBER

We're not trying to destroy all banana farmers. We're demanding accountability and memory. Grandmas never let anyone forget what matters. The children need to know the truth before they bite into that "convenient snack."

We remember so you can choose.

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**TONE OPTIONS:** Historical exposé, grandmother's warning letter, investigative journalism, moral appeal, educational pamphlet, testimony-based narrative

**DELIVERABLE:** A piece that authentically carries the weight of historical memory and moral concern while remaining credible and compelling.

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*Badnana: Because Some Things Shouldn't Be Forgotten*  
*"We remember. You should know."*

**P.S.** Bring cookies to your presentation. We're grandmothers, after all.