

Activities*

*pre- and post-production

Community interviews

appalshop

What it is: This activity allows young people to CONNECT WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS while building their technical skills, teamwork abilities, and interviewing techniques. This activity works best after the group has a solid understanding of basic video production, editing, and interviewing.

What you need: Video camera, microphone, headphones, audio cables, tripod, and editing equipment

How long it takes: 4 hours

What you do

1. Break the full group into small groups of three participants.
2. Ask the small groups to brainstorm people in the community who would have an interesting story to tell and who would be good storytellers. Have the groups select one community member to go and interview. Advise groups to choose someone who they have easy access to (e.g., someone who has time today, someone who lives or works close by, someone who would be willing to come down to the video training site for an interview).
3. Give groups time to set-up the interview (using the phone or going to the community member's home or work-place if they are nearby) and to prepare interview questions. Instruct groups to formulate 3-5 questions and to plan on creating a video that is approximately three minutes long.
4. Then have the groups determine crew roles, desired shots and composition, and a location for shooting.
5. Give the groups equipment and time to go out and conduct their interviews.
6. When groups return, have them edit their footage into three minute pieces.
7. Let each group present their work. Allow them a few minutes before they screen their video to share any thoughts or give any context to set up the piece.
8. After all the videos have been screened, lead a discussion to elicit discoveries using questions such as:
 - i What was the easiest part of this activity? The hardest? Why?
 - i What would you do differently for your next interview?
 - i What did you learn from the stories you just viewed?
 - i Do these stories change the way you think or feel about the storyteller/community? How?
 - i What stories would you want to share with the interviewees? With the community?
 - i Why might it be important for community members to share stories?
9. Wrap up by discussing how this activity helps build community understanding and self-awareness. Talk about the importance of sharing stories and highlight ideas the group came up with for personal stories they would like to communicate to the community.

Video poem

perpich high

What it is: This activity encourages personal storytelling by asking participants to SHARE THEIR OWN CONNECTION, experiences, or responses TO A selected POEM. It is designed to use as part of a media arts high school curriculum.

What you need: Digital video camera, Mini-DV videotapes, Mac Computer with Final Cut Pro software for editing

How long it takes: 3 weeks for 90 minutes each day

What you do:

Week One

1. Introduce the video poem project: a 1-2 minute poetic videotape based on expressive images in conjunction with an original poem. Describe the assignment as an activity that explores that relationship between text and symbolic images by assembling imaginative images with a poem selected by participants. Mention that the poem which youth select should have some personal and meaningful connection to them and that at least two digital effects should be used in the structure of the piece that adds meaning to the text or image. Encourage experimenting with color, composition, and lighting and suggest that music or sound collage be used for the entire piece including the opening and end credits.

2. Show and discuss examples of video art to stimulate thinking about ways to use text and symbolic images within a poetic narrative (e.g., Gary Hill, O Superman by Laurie Anderson, Dan Reeves). Also show and discuss examples of commercial media that draw upon text and symbolic images to convey messages (e.g., commercials with graphic elements in moving text; magazine ads for text/image composition).

3. Have the students write or find a poem to use for their video. (Note: this part of the project is an excellent way to collaborate with the English department at your school or an after school program that works with youth and creative writing.) The short poem should be written down and brought class before the first videotaping begins.

4. Instruct participants to collect 10 symbolic or expressive images using the list below. Students will need a few class periods to videotape the symbolic images (based on their selected poem) on their school campus, in the school studio, or at home if they are able to check out a camera. They should be encouraged to bring interesting props and use experimental lighting effects.

Experiment with lighting, composition, camera angles, and movement to go with the mood of the poem. Choose at least five of the ten from the following list:

- j Use small camera light to follow subject's movement
- j Close up using a strange camera angle
- j source movement only
- j Reflection of movement
- j Sideways shot
- j Silhouette
- j Dramatic lighting where lighted parts seems to emerge from surrounding dark areas.
- j Use highly saturated colors
- j Create depth by using an object or subject in the foreground and a contrasting subject in the background
- j Gesture

Week 2

5. Have youth log and capture the 10 symbolic images they collected. Then instruct them to do the following:

- j Print out the open window of the browser of the log
- j Place ten 4-second images randomly on the timeline
- j Experiment with digital effects on the images
- j Render and save at least five effects on the project

Logging and capturing the work usually takes about one class session. Another session is usually necessary to place ten 4-second images to the timeline especially for those students who have never worked with non-linear editing

Video poem

before. Experimenting with digital effects on the images is not difficult but it takes time to discover the possibilities for future use.

6. Demonstrate the use of motion key frames, transitions, drop shadow, scale, wireframe and matt color. Then have students make a list of possible colors, motions, or compositions that could represent the meaning of the poem or some aspect of the poem. For example, if the poem talks about birds flying away then the student could have the words in that line fly away outside of the frame as if they were birds. Students with a poem about water might use the filters that make the blue/green text wavy like water. A poem with a bad relationship could have words that break apart.

7. Get participants to experiment with text. Using their selected video poems, create a text only video project that includes at least two different size fonts, two colors, and two font styles. To encourage experimentation, ask youth to do the following:

- i Use motion key frames at least once
- i Use Image & wireframe to change the location of the font to a corner
- i Use title safe area to place the text
- i Select a matt color for the background
- i Change the length of each clip to create variation in word or phrase rhythm
- i Use at least two transitions
- i Change scale at least once from 0 to 100% (use motion keyframes)
- i Use drop shadow (in motion tab) at least once

Working with text in motion can be difficult at first. This exercise usually requires two or three 90 minute periods to complete.

Week 3

8. Have youth work on their final experimental video poem project by taking the following steps:

- i Select an original poem to be used for the text that has personal meaning
- i Storyboard and shoot a sequence of images to express the poem (they can use some of the images from the previous exercises)
- i Log material and print browser window
- i Edit video material, including at least 15 images and two digital effects
- i Add beginning title and end credits
- i Add sound effects or original music to the piece including the opening and end credits

By the time students begin their final project, they have really gotten to know the meaning of their chosen poem because they have shot some images for it during week one and used it again for the motion text exercise during week two. A storyboard of their final project should be made either as a homework assignment or during part of class period. They need to select their theme (based on the same poem), two digital effects to enhance the meaning, and which images they want to videotape to go with the text and how they might place it compositionally. Collecting the final images could take place over a few days or a weekend if they can take the equipment home. Editing the footage takes about five class periods.

9. Spend the final session viewing and discussing the completed video works. Questions to stimulate critical reflection include:

- i What makes the piece successful?
- i What aspects of the piece could be changed to make it better?

10. Ask students to respond to the following questions individually in writing toward the end of the final session and then, as homework, type up a formal description of their video that includes basic descriptive information as well as a brief interpretive or analytical view of the piece that is 3-5 sentences long.

- i List five adjectives that describe your video.
- i Describe the theme.
- i Describe the opening and closing shots and their relationship to the sequence.

Video poem

- ¡ How do the digital effects relate to the theme?
- ¡ List and describe why the colors are used in the videotape.
- ¡ List three ways the image related to the text in a symbolic way.
- ¡ Describe the meaning of the piece and how you respond to it personally.

11. Wrap up by highlighting any common themes, key ideas, or discoveries. Conclude by mentioning that this activity encourages personal storytelling by asking participants to share their own connection, experiences or response to a selected poem.

One minute video

sonr

What it is: This exercise helps youth think about their lives-their trials and tribulations-and go through the process of making a short personal video. It encourages media makers to DRAW UPON THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES TO FIND THEMES FOR VIDEOS.

What you need: Your Life Story and One Minute Video handouts (see attached), a short video made by a youth video maker that addresses personal or political issues (e.g., "From Birth Till Today" by Oscar Fregoso), storyboard sheets, paper, pens.

How long it takes: 8 hours, 15 minutes (one 15-minute session, and four two hour sessions for 4 consecutive days)

What you do:

Session 1 (15 minutes)

1. Explain to youth that their assignment for the following session is to share their "life story". Pass out the Your Life Story handout and tell them that they need to answer the questions listed, thinking about what challenges they have faced in their lives. They will need to bring in one page of written responses about their life to the next session.

Session 2 (Two hours)

2. Begin the next session asking youth if they found it easy or difficult to respond to the questions and write up their life story? Then introduce the idea of using life stories as a basis for making personal videos. Show an example of a short personal video made by a youth video maker and lead a discussion about the issues raised in the piece. Some questions to facilitate this discussion include:

- j What were some of the challenges this person experienced?
- j What are some things they have learned in their life?
- j How was this video different from other videos you've seen on this subject (e.g., news reporting on teen issues)?
- j What is the value of telling this personal story for the audience?
- j What is the value of telling this personal story for the video maker?

3. Explain to youth that their assignment is to make a one-minute video about one aspect of their life. It can be something personal they've experienced, something that gives them great joy, or anything that they think is significant in defining who they are. They can use photos from their life, videotape images that illustrate this experience, bring in objects that are significant to them, and use music or voiceovers. Then give them time to reread the "life story" they brought to the session and identify a theme or issue from their writings that they want to focus on.

4. When participants have all selected a theme or issue for their video, pass around the One-Minute-Video handout. Ask them work through the handout, making notes to articulate their video project in terms of theme, visual images, music and voiceover.

5. Next introduce the concept and practice of storyboarding. Pass out storyboard sheets and give participants time to create storyboards illustrating the types of images and audio they intend to record for their video. Remind them that they are working to create a one-minute video so that they probably only need to select 10-20 photos, images, or objects they can bring in to videotape and a short paragraph of writing for the voiceover. After they have worked on their storyboards for 15 minutes have them split up into groups of three and share their projects so far.

6. Wrap up this session by asking youth to bring images, photos, objects, and music they need to make their videos. Have them refer to their storyboards for ideas on what they need to gather and bring to the next class.

Session 3 and Session 4 (Two hour sessions each)

7. The following session, youth come in with the images and music they need for their one-minute life story assignment. They then videotape their images working in the groups they were divided into the day before.

One minute video

8. When groups are finished shooting (about an hour), they can begin editing projects (we use the iMovie editing program and have 3 people sharing each computer, rotating as people reshoot, revise, etc.). Briefly explain how to use the iMovie program to groups of three as they finish shooting, then have them start editing. First they load their images into iMovie, then assemble them in order, and finally they record and add their voiceovers and music. Group members help one another to ensure that the pieces are coherent, and that the voiceover and music illustrate the theme of the video.

9. When all projects are complete, they are recorded to tape. Screen and discuss each video with the entire group using questions like:

- i What is the main theme of the video?
- i How did they articulate their theme with video...and audio?
- i What techniques did they use?
- i What things need to be clarified?

10. After viewing and discussing everyone's work, ask the group to identify common themes in the various videos. This is a good time to connect personal issues with larger events happening in our society, depending what issues are chosen.

11. Wrap up by mentioning how this exercise demonstrates that our own lives are often more interesting and complex than we think they are, and that often the best stories are the ones that are closest to home. Conclude by noting that most personal concerns are linked to larger issues in society and the benefit of using video to bring people together to better understand shared challenges.

Your Life Story

Your assignment is to write one page about who you are. The point of this exercise is to help you start thinking about your interests, your background, things important to you, and challenges you have faced, so that when you make your first video, you will have something to work from.

The following questions are starting points - use them to get started writing about yourself and see where you go. You don't need to answer each and every question. Try to stay focused on talking about yourself and what makes you unique.

1. Where were you born, and where did you grow up?
2. What kinds of things did you like to do growing up?
3. What are your current interests? How did you develop them?
4. Talk about your family - who does it include and what do they mean to you?
5. Talk about your friends - have you had them as friends a long time? What do you do together?
6. What is your neighborhood like? What do you like about it?
7. What is your cultural background? What does it mean to you? Do you do anything to stay connected to it?
8. What challenges have you faced so far in your life - what have you learned from them?
9. What do you like to do for fun?
10. What is a unique or exciting experience you've had?
11. What is your favorite place to be?
12. What people have guided/inspired you in your life?
13. What things do you most value in your life?
14. What are your plans for the future? What do you think about events happening in the world? How do these events affect how you live your life?

One Minute Video

This one-minute video will be about you. Pick a challenge you have experienced, something that brings you joy, or otherwise defines you. You will need to pick out 10-20 pictures and/or objects that relate to you, and the area of yourself that you are focusing on, or find video images that illustrate this aspect of you. You can also bring music that is important to you. You will also need to write a short voiceover describing this topic to your audience.

1. Describe what you want to focus on about yourself for this video project.
2. List ideas for pictures or objects that you can bring in tomorrow.
3. Describe any music that you'd like to include in your video autobiography that you can bring in tomorrow.
4. On the other side of this paper, write down a rough draft of the voiceover you have in mind.

Activities*

*pre-production

Home

children's media project

What it is: This activity helps participants relate to one another, appreciate different perspectives, and START THINKING VISUALLY.

What you need: Copies of selected excerpts, (suggested: Junot Diaz, Drown; Sapphire, Push; Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway; Rick Moody, Garden State; Paule Marshall, Brown Girl, Brownstones), storyboard sheets, journals, paper, pens

How long it takes: 1.5 hours

What you do:

1. Introduce the title and topic of the activity: Home, this is where I live. Explain that the concept of home is something that is larger than four walls, bricks and mortar. We're talking the streets and the signs and the people and the trees here. Everything that adds up to your idea of home. Home can be a country, a state, a state of mind, the feeling you get cruising down the road in the family car. It's physical space but it's not defined by numbers and dimensions, it's defined by those sharing it. Home is where we may feel most ourselves. Home is where our roots have cracked through the pavement. Let participants know that in this activity the idea of home will be explored in two ways, through words and through visuals.

2. Give participants different samples of stories written about home (see attached examples) and ask them to alternate reading aloud the different excerpts, reading no more than a paragraph at a time. Once everyone that wants to read a section has done so, ask participants to discuss what the pieces had in common, getting eventually to the theme of home.

3. Lead a short discussion of what "home" means to the participants. Ask for a volunteer to be the recorder of the session, taking down notes on big flipcharts or a chalkboard. Some questions to generate discussion include:

- j What does home mean literally?
- j What can it mean conceptually or symbolically?
- j How does the media encourage us to think of "home," "home-land," "home-makers" etc.?

4. Give participants time to write down answers to the following questions in their journals or on blank sheets of paper. They should be encouraged to define an idea of home that suits them, i.e., they do not have to define home literally in terms of the house that they live in. Some questions to help get the pen rolling:

Describe your home.

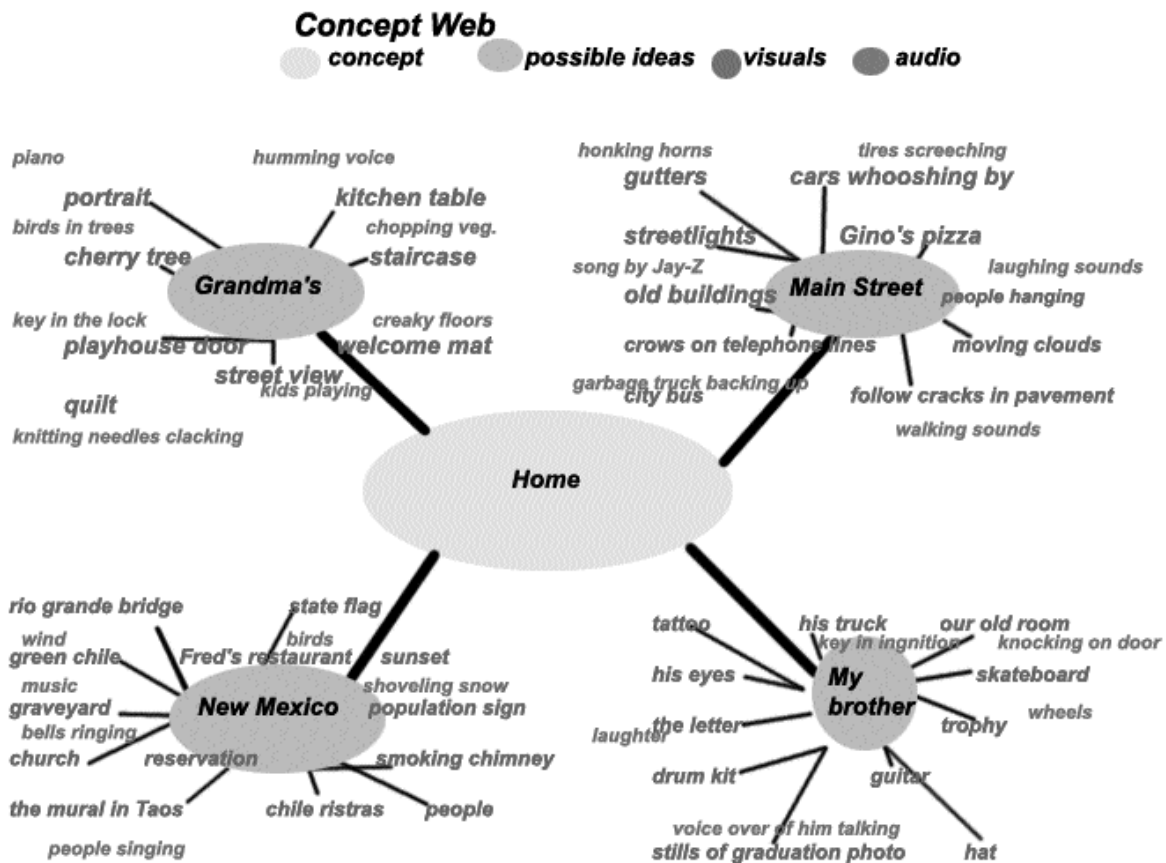
- j What does my home smell like?
- j What do the walls feel like?
- j Where is the warmest place to sit?
- j What noises do I hear through the walls?
- j What things do I encounter as I walk from the front door to my bedroom?
- j What is the password?
- j How would my home be described by someone else? How do I describe my home?
- j What is the first thing you see when you open your eyes in the morning?
- j What is the first thing you hear?
- j What is the taste of home?
- j What kind of music is playing?

5. At the end of the writing period, ask students to share what they have written. Elicit comments from the group on the similarities and differences they note in their peers' understanding of "home".

6. Hand out storyboard sheets and blank pieces of paper to each participant and ask them to consider: "How could I describe my home without using any words?" Then have the participants answer that question with a concept web. Explain and demonstrate that a concept web is drawn by taking a single word or concept from their previous writing exercise and placing it in the middle in a circle, with lines drawn out from the circle to where they can write down possible visual depictions of this word or concept (see illustration next page).

Get participants to create a few concept webs to brainstorm ways to describe their home using images and sounds. After they have brainstormed ideas through making the concept webs, ask participants to string together 10 images

Home



and 5 possible sounds that might describe their homes onto the storyboards. Some ideas to get the pens rolling:

Images:

- i Pick an image as small as a thumbnail, a small detail that depicts your home.
- i Pick a pattern, or a color that reminds you of home.
- i Trace a line through your home -example: the edge of the kitchen table, the wear in the carpet to the bathroom, the mortar in the brick.

Sounds: family voices, washing machine, birds, traffic, etc. etc.

7. Have participants form groups of 4, where each participant must "pitch" her/his storyboards to the rest of the group for feedback and sharing.

8. Wrap up by reviewing how this exercise encourages personal storytelling. For example, mention how the exercise allows participants to think about where they are from, and where they draw their strengths and comforts. Comment on how the activity also creates opportunities for participants to start expressing themselves creatively in a visual language that is different from the ones they are constantly inundated with in mainstream media: "Man, isn't it refreshing to express your own idea of home instead of being fed the lame corporate ideas of what a family is you see on TV." Conclude by saying "Thank you for sharing your thoughts and images, that rocked" or something to that effect.

Activities*

*production

Audio scavenger hunt

mnn youth channel

What it is: This activity introduces audio collection techniques and THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUND IN MEDIA. Participants receive a list of concepts and emotions and have an hour to find sounds in the neighborhood that evoke the concepts or emotions on the list.

What you need: Video camera, microphones, cables, headphones, handout listing concepts and emotions for scavenger hunt

How long it takes: 3 - 4 hours

What you do:

1. Demonstrate to the group how to hook up microphones, audio cables, and headphones to a video camera.
2. Go over the different types of microphones and their distinct pick-up patterns. Show proper microphone placement for sound recording. Engage group in discussing which microphone might work best depending on what they are trying to record (music, a speaker, ambient sound) in different recording conditions (on the street, in a crowded room, in the studio).
3. Brainstorm and list different types of sounds they usually hear in films or videos (like music, sound effects, dialogue, etc.). Go back to the different ideas they noted and have them give specific examples (such as music = scary music in a monster movie; sound effects = rain drops in a pond on a discovery channel nature show, dialogue = Will & Grace having an argument). Then ask the group to discuss what purposes these different sounds serve (as in scary music warns you someone's in big trouble, sound effects give texture to the shot, dialogue tells you what people are thinking).
4. Tell them they are going to be doing an audio scavenger hunt to collect sounds like those they just discussed for a video full of action and drama.
5. Break them into teams depending on number of cameras and students. Two per camera is best but if that is not possible three or four per camera will work. Give each team a list of concepts and emotions (see below) and tell them that their task is to collect sounds that represent or evoke the concepts and emotions on the list. If you have 4 or more groups, you may want to give half of them one list and the other half a different list in order to make the final discussion more varied and interesting.
6. Give teams one hour to do their sound scavenging. Instruct them to focus on sound collection not on video images and to stay within a few blocks of the training site.
7. When they return, screen each group's tape without any video images. While listening to the sounds, ask the other groups to guess which concept/emotion the presenting team was trying to achieve through the recording, what type of video would include this sound, and what might be the purpose of using this sound in a program. Then they can guess what they think is actually making the sound they are hearing. Many will be surprised to find out what was actually recorded. They will usually want to view the tape again, this time with video.
8. After screening all the work, ask participants to share any difficulties they had or creative methods they used to get the sounds they recorded. Mention that the exercise demonstrates how to use concrete sounds for abstract ideas. Wrap up by asking the group to comment on how the activity might help them more effectively convey their own ideas to an audience through creatively using sound. Conclude with any final comments on the link between creative use of sound and powerful personal storytelling.

by Ann Theis

(handout attached)

Audio Scavenger Hunt Handout

Using your imagination and creativity to collect sounds from the list of concepts using a video camera and the appropriate microphone. Brainstorm ideas for possible sounds with your teammates. Take turns recording each sound.

What is the sound of:

Work

Joy

Water

Youth

An Emergency

Time

Love

Destruction

Danger

Silence

No pre-recorded sounds (from TV or Radio)! No words or talking!

Be sure to use headphones to ensure the highest quality sound. Practice moving the microphone around the subject until you find the best direction and angle for capturing sound. Let the camera roll for 30 seconds. Remember to include 5 seconds pre-roll and 5 seconds post-roll. Record video but don't focus on it, concentrate on the audio.

What democracy looks like phillips community television

What it is: This production activity encourages teamwork and creative problem solving skills by having youth work in groups to respond to key questions USING IN-CAMERA EDITING TECHNIQUES.

What you need: Video cameras, videotapes, external microphones, TV/monitor and VCR or cable to hook video camera to TV/monitor

How long it takes: 2 - 3 hours

What you do:

1. Engage the full group in a discussion of the question "What does it mean to live in a democracy?" and talk about what "democracy" means to the participants. After the general discussion let the group know that they will have the opportunity to explore this question through video production.
2. Explain and demonstrate how to do "in-camera editing" (i.e., each shot is recorded in order and exactly the length it needs to be, shoot it as you want the finished video to appear, do not rewind the tape while creating the video, etc.). Let them know that some black video must appear at the start and the end of the project and show them how to achieve this effect by covering the lens.
3. Break full group into small groups of 4 to 5 participants.
4. Tell the groups that they are to now answer the question "What does it mean to live in a democracy?" and may respond to this question in whatever video format they want (e.g., skit, PSA, interviews, experimental, video poem, etc.) as long as they use "in-camera editing" and create a piece that is no longer than two minutes.
5. Have the groups spend time discussing how they would like to answer the question and what production roles each of them will have. Give them at least an hour to plan and then shoot their video responses.
6. After everyone has finished shooting, bring participants back together and then have each group present their finished video response. Lead a discussion about how each group chose to answer the question. In this discussion, highlight how participant's choices are linked to their personal histories, philosophies, or lives and comment on the usefulness of tapping into one's own experiences to make powerful and creative media.
7. Discuss how the "in-camera editing" technique really forces media makers to be very precise about how they create their shots and how it makes one think of the way editing works to convey meaning to an audience (putting one type of shot together with another type).
8. Wrap up by asking participants to share what they have discovered through the activity about themselves or the topic. Elicit ideas on how participants might use these discoveries in future media productions.

by Michael D. Hay

Something important the learning commons

What it is: This exercise helps participants get hands-on experience with video equipment and BUILD CRITICAL VIEWING SKILLS WHILE SHARING STORIES about key experiences in their lives. It works best in small groups of 6-12 people.

What you need: Camcorder, microphone, audio cables, tripod, headphones

How long it takes: 2 hours

What you do:

1. Ask participants to think of something important that happened to them or someone they know during this past year (alternately, you can leave out "during this past year" and let people come up with an important experience sometime in the past). Give them a few minutes to consider the question and to come up with an experience to share with the group.
2. After each person has had time to come up with a response, ask for the following volunteers to serve as the crew: director, camera operator, sound person, production assistant, talent. Go over the roles and responsibilities of the different crew positions (or review them if you've already covered this information). In this exercise, the talent is asked to share her/his important experience in 1-2 minutes during the videotaping and the production assistant is responsible for giving the talent time cues (e.g., countdown, 30 seconds left, wrap it up).
3. Have the crew work together to videotape the talent speaking to the camera about their important experience. Let the crew know that the director needs to decide on and convey what type of shot, framing, and camera movement s/he wants to the camera operator before videotaping. Have the video camera patched into a monitor so that the whole group can see what the cameraperson is seeing and doing.
4. After videotaping the first round, rewind and playback the video and use it as a way to build participants thinking and vocabulary regarding mediamaking. For example, ask questions about composition, lighting, microphone placement, where the talent is looking, and camera movement. While exploring the technical elements of the piece, talk about cinematography, aesthetics, and creative production strategies. Also take this opportunity to answer any technical questions and give further additional demonstrations. Use this playback and discussion to focus on the production elements; spend time talking about the content elements later.
5. Continue the videotaping process with the rest of the participants by rotating crew positions until everyone has had a chance to perform every position and share an experience. Review and playback videos after every three or four participants share a story to keep people engaged and to draw attention to various production strategies, personal stories, and learnings.
6. When all the videotaping is completed, have participants form a whole group to discuss their learnings from the exercise. First, focus on the production aspects by asking questions such as:
 - i What stood out to you in telling your story on camera? How might you use your experience when you go and videotape someone else telling their story?
 - i What did you discover about communication in doing this exercise?
 - i What would you have done differently as either a crew person or as talent telling the story?
 - i What else did you learn about video production in doing this activity (e.g., cinematography, lighting, camera movement, microphone placement, etc.)?
7. Next, ask the group to explore their personal or group insights by asking questions like:
 - i How does it feel to share your important experiences with others?
 - i What is it like to listen to other's important experiences?
 - i Did you hear any common themes in the stories? What do you make of that?
 - i Are the stories you heard similar or different than the stories you hear on TV? Explain.
 - i What stories did you hear today that you'd like to hear more about on TV? Why?
8. Wrap up the discussion by thanking the group for sharing their personal experiences and highlighting any key technical or group learnings. Mention how this exercise demonstrates we can mine your own history for compelling stories and messages.

by Jesikah Maria Ross

Editing with others' eyes

community tv network

What it is: In this activity students explore how "NON-FICTION FOOTAGE CAN BE MANIPULATED AND HOW STRUCTURE CAN DETERMINE AUDIENCE RECEPTION by editing 5 minutes of raw documentary footage according to an assigned viewpoint (e.g. disagree with main interview subject, agree with protestors point of view, demonstrate a pro-business perspective on this issue, convey an environmentalist perspective to this policy, etc.).

What you need: 5 minutes of raw documentary-style footage on a topic relevant to the participant's lives or concerns (footage must be ambiguous in its viewpoints or express opposing viewpoints as well as contain B-roll), video editing systems (if not available, can also do paper edit), TV/monitor and VCR or necessary cables to screen footage

How long it takes: 1.5 hours to 2 hours (1.5 hour if doing a paper edit; 2 hours if editing)

What you do:

1. Screen 5 minutes of raw documentary footage.
2. Group participants into teams of 2-4. Let them know that their next task will be to look at the footage they just viewed but this time from a particular vantage point. Tell them that they will have the opportunity to edit the footage (on paper or video) according to a particular viewpoint.
3. Give each group a handout that assigns them a different "viewpoint" to convey through editing the raw footage that they just screened. Instruct them not to share their "viewpoint" with other groups.
4. Screen raw documentary footage again, instructing students to take notes on contents of footage (logging) in preparation for the group's task of structuring and editing the raw footage.
5. Have the groups move to different parts of the room and begin to discuss how they might structure and edit the raw footage according to their assigned viewpoint. If they are doing a paper edit only, give them 30 minutes to discuss ideas, take notes, and lay out their editing plan. If editing, give each group a copy of the footage and allow 30 minutes for discussion and note taking and 30 minutes for editing.
6. When participants have completed their tasks, bring all groups back together. If small groups worked on a paper edit only, have one member of each group read their team's edit plan without revealing the "viewpoint" and then facilitate a dialogue about the plan among the full group using questions below. If small groups edited a final product, have each group screen their work and facilitate a dialogue about the piece among the full group using questions below. Be sure to have the group discuss most of the following questions before revealing the assigned viewpoint.

Questions for the full group

- j What (if anything) strikes you as unusual about this edit plan/video?
- j What transitions/structural aspects seem most logical or objective?
- j What transitions/structural aspects seem most subjective?
- j Are any transitions/structural aspects included for purely aesthetic reasons?
- j Does this edit give you a new viewpoint on the subject? Did you notice things that you didn't think of when you first watched the footage?
- j Where do you think you might see this version of the footage? (e.g. on the news, etc.)
- j What do you think this group's assigned viewpoint was?
- j Who in "the real world" might edit this footage in this fashion?
- j What are you discovering through this conversation about the different ways people can tell a story?

Questions for the small group whose work was just discussed

- j Do you think your choices were interpreted correctly? Why/why not?
- j What was most difficult about this activity?
- j What did you learn from this activity?
- j How might what you've learned enable you tell a more compelling story?

7. Wrap up by discussing the power of editing (and structure in general) to determine the perceived viewpoint of a piece. Emphasize how media makers often edit work based on their own opinions and sometimes don't consider

Editing with others' eyes

other viewpoints that might enrich their product and their understanding of topics. Comment on the common themes that arose when the groups discussed what they learned. Conclude by asking the group to identify how they can use what they learned in this exercise when making videos that reflect their personal stories.

Video chronicle

out north

What it is: This activity encourages a creative dialogue between an INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL STORY AND HER/HIS PEER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE STORY. In this exercise, a participant shares an experience that had an emotional impact on her/him and the rest of the group relates to this story by choosing and editing video imagery to accompany the narrator's tale.

What you need: Nonlinear editing system & software (Final Cut Pro, iMovie, or Premiere), video camera with microphone, videotape that contains imagery that is lyrical, symbolic, and concrete (e.g., wheat field in the breeze, flowing river, bird in flight, smashed car, people walking)

How long it takes: 4 hours

What you do:

1. Ask for a volunteer who would be willing to share a personal story about an experience that had an emotional impact on her/him. Give the participant who volunteers a few minutes to think about or jot down some ideas of how they will briefly tell the story. While the storyteller is preparing, engage the rest of the group in setting up the video camera and preparing to record the short story.
2. Have the storyteller share their personal experience into a camera microphone (e.g., have them close to the microphone and not necessarily in front of the lens).
3. Using a nonlinear editing system, lead the full group in going through videotape of collected images and capturing video clips to accompany the narrative. During the process of viewing and capturing video clips, engage the group in discussing the appropriateness of each clip in terms of its emotive, metaphoric, contextual, and/or illustrative relationship to the story. Include in this discussion ideas about the difference between imagery that has a metaphoric relationship to the story and imagery that illustrates the story literally.
4. Have the full group to organize captured clips into bins by type or category.
5. Then give group members time to edit video on top of the audio narration, taking turns (individually or as teams) using the editing system, perhaps each person or team working on a specific portion of the story. One person or team should be "continuity control" and edit beginning and end segments or edit transition segments.
6. Screen the finished piece as a group, discussing with the narrator ways in which the group was able to enhance the emotive impact of the story and add layers of meaning. Ask the narrator to relate her/his feelings about the finished work.
7. Wrap up by noting the how engaging in a creative dialogue can often help media makers create more powerful and imaginative pieces.

by Kelly Wilbur