Research and screenwriting

Activity Overview

Research and screenwriting are an integral part of the pre-production workflow. Use this activity to introduce writing for video best practices and how to use Adobe Story in the screenwriting process.

Note: Portions of this activity align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: [1.1]

Activity Objectives

Project management

• Researching and selecting a story focus
• Developing a script

Design skills

• Creating an original work

Research and communication skills

• Conducting research
• Writing scripts
• Writing in active voice
• Writing interview questions
• Planning strategies to guide inquiry
• Using voiceovers
• Gathering content and synthesizing ideas

Technical skills

Adobe Story

Writing a script

Project Assets

• *Guide:* Assessing content
• *Guide:* Writing tips [2.1]
• *Guide:* Story creation tips [2.1]
• *Adobe Story guide:* How to use Adobe Story to write scripts

Background preparation resources

Technical and content information

ISTE NETS*S Standards for Students

Adobe Certified Associate objectives

Activity Steps

1. Introduce research and screenwriting as integral parts of the pre-production process. Remind students of where research and screenwriting fit in the overall video production workflow.

2. Discuss the need to research content for film projects. Discuss the importance of evaluating the validity, currency, and bias of the content they research, specifically when they find the information on the web. Using the *Assessing content* guide, discuss the following:

    • Content bias

    • Content currency

    • Content source

    • Content corroboration

2. Discuss how scripts vary depending on the type of video project or film they are working on. Scripts can be as simple as a short narration to a full-length feature film with complex storylines and multiple characters. Use the *Writing tips* guide [2.1] and discuss how writing for video is different from writing for print and review and discuss the best practices for writing for video.

3. Discuss various types of writing scenarios, including:

    • Interviewing subjects for a news story, public service announcement, documentary, and so on, and how to create compelling questions.[2.2]

    • Use the *Story creation tips* guide [2.1] and discuss the best practices for creating interesting broadcast pieces.

    • Explain that the script writing process is the time to consider all the elements of the design of a film.[1.4, 2.2] When writing scripts, students need to consider the premise, story synopsis or log line, character bios, and the use of extras in their film.

    • The practice of creating an outline of their scripts and then several drafts based on the clips, shots, and assets they have collected and reviewed before finalizing their script.

4. To prepare your students to write a short script, discuss the following:

    • Many writers begin with an outline or a treatment of their story ideas to then turn into a script.

    • To write an effective script you must know your characters and it's useful to create full character bios for each main character.

    • It can be helpful to create a log line for your script – a brief summary of a video project that includes the synopsis and the basic plotline.

    • It can be helpful to create a synopsis for each scene of the film.

5. Ask students to watch one of their favorite films and think about the following:

    • How is the story introduced?

    • How are the characters introduced?

    • What is the conflict in the story or what conflicts did the characters face?

    • How is the conflict resolved to end the story?

6. Now, that they have seen how another film does this, using the same questions, ask students to create a brief outline or treatment of their script. Alternatively they can use an existing treatment they created for a video project they are currently working on and apply these questions to the treatment.

7. Distribute the *How to use Adobe Story to write scripts* guide and introduce students to the interface and functions of Adobe Story as a tool for writing a script, character bios, log line, synopsis, and schedule.

8. Using Adobe Story and their treatments ask students to create a draft script for a video project they are currently working on.

	0 – Does not meet expectations	3 – Meets expectations	5 – Exceeds expectations
Draft script	Absent or incomplete.	Draft script is directly related to the topic and footage. Students have thoughtfully reviewed and revised scripts prior to submitting for approval.	Draft script is well written, clear, and concise and directly relates to the topic and footage. The topic has been researched. Students have thoughtfully reviewed and revised scripts prior to submitting for approval.

Background preparation resources:

• To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, visit Adobe TV: http://tv.adobe.com
• For more teaching and learning resources on the topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: http://edex.adobe.com/.

Screenwriting

• Write a simple script with Adobe Story tutorial: http://www.adobeforacademics.com/tutorials/523.
• Sample scripts from newscasts to use with students: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/6180944.stm.
• Advice for writing for broadcast: www.cybercollege.com/tvp006.htm.
• Study guides and activities for screenwriting: www.oscars.org/education-outreach/teachersguide/screenwriting/index.html.
• Introduction to screenwriting: http://thescriptlab.com/screenwriting.

ISTE NETS*S Standards for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

ISTE NETS*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

1. Creativity and Innovation

    Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

    b. create original works as a means of personal and group expression.

2. Communication and Collaboration

   Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

   b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

3. Research and Information Fluency

   Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

   a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.

   b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.

   c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.

4. Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

   Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:

   a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

   Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations. Students:

   a. understand and use technology systems.

   b. select and use applications effectively and productively.

Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives

1.4 Demonstrate knowledge of the production planning and management process.

2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to organize and plan a video sequence.

2.2 Identify general principles for video shooting.

For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: http://edex.adobe.com/.