



LESSON PLAN

Level: Grades 1 to 6
About the Author: Elizabeth Verrall, Media Education Specialist, FWTAO

This lesson has been adapted with permission from the Federation of Women Teachers' Association of Ontario (FWTAO) Curriculum Insert 1994 Vol. 12 No. 5. Toronto, Ontario, May/June 1993.

Teaching TV: Television Techniques

Overview

This lesson is one of a five-part unit that provides teachers with ideas for teaching TV in the elementary classroom. In this lesson, students create their own media productions to learn how television uses technology and film techniques to communicate meaning.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate:

- understanding and use of basic techniques used to create effective fixed images
- understanding and use of basic techniques used to create effective sound
- appreciation of the role of techniques in producing effective media images and sound

Preparation and Materials

- Cardboard camera frames
- Video recorder
- VCR and television

Procedure

A variety of techniques are employed in the creation of media messages. Media communicate through sound technology and the use of both fixed and moving images. Photographic cameras, video cameras, computers and other technologies may be employed to create audio-visual messages.

With a little assistance, students can create special effects similar to those used on television.



Activities

TV Techniques

- Discuss various techniques used in TV production. View a TV show and have the students look for these techniques:
 - Video camera tricks
 - Special effects
 - Camera angles
 - Body language
- Showing the passage of time through techniques such as:
 - characters seem to eat more than one meal
 - a change from day to night
 - a change of clothing
 - dialogue
 - flashbacks
 - change in weather

Calling the Shots

- Demonstrate to students various camera shots, moves and angles. Show a program segment in which they are effectively used.
- Use the pause button in order to draw attention to the shots. Allow students to try practicing the shots with a cardboard camera frame.

Putting It Together

For younger students:

- Using students as models, videotape individual students using different lighting, angles, body language, etc.
- Play the tape and discuss student responses to each of these effects.

Or

- If students are able, permit them to film classmates in different ways.

For older students:

- Review how to properly use a video recorder.
- In small groups, let students practice setting up shots and using the camera. (If cameras are limited, the camera can be passed around from group to group while scripts and storyboards are being created.)



- Have students storyboard and prepare a script for a simple one- or two-minute-long scene. (This could be something as basic as two people meeting on a street, an exchange between a kid or teen and a teacher, etc.)
- Have them record three versions of their scene:
 1. In the first version, have students perform the scene according to the script.
 2. In the second version, shoot the same scene using different camera angles, lighting, body language, tone of voice, etc.
 3. In the third version, omit the dialogue and use sound effects or music and camera angles to create meaning.
- Have students present their videos to the class, explaining the changes they made in each selection and the effects they used, and what they were trying to achieve.
- As a class, discuss the audience response to each of the videos.

Evaluation

- Evaluation can be based on completed storyboards; completed assignments for the visual novel; recognition of similarities and differences between TV stories and books; contributions to class discussions.

