



Videography: Telling Stories One Shot at a Time

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Essential Question(s)

- How can you use camera shots and editing to tell a story visually?

Summary

In this educator resource, students will learn how to tell visual stories through camera work and editing by planning, filming, and producing a short video using a variety of shot types and composition techniques. They will explore camera setup, shot sequencing, and editing fundamentals, then reflect on their creative choices through peer feedback and class discussion.

Learning Goals

Attachments

- [3-2-1 Feedback—Videography.docx](#)
- [Activity Slides—Videography.pptx](#)
- [Shot Types, List and Scavenger Hunt—Videography.docx](#)
- [Storyboard Template—Videography.docx](#)
- [Video Editing Guide—Videography.docx](#)

Materials

- Activity Slides (attached)
- Shot Types, List, and Scavenger Hunt handout (attached; one per student; print two-sided)
- Storyboard Template handout (attached; one per group)
- Video Editing Guide (attached; one per student)
- 3-2-1 Feedback (attached; one per student per review)
- Cameras
- Tripod
- Editing Software

20 minutes

Engage

Distribute the Shot Types, List, and Scavenger Hunt handout and introduce the lesson by displaying the title slide on **slide 2** from the attached **Activity Slides**.

Transition through **slides 3-4** sharing the essential question and learning objectives with students.

Display **slide 5**. Briefly explain that filmmakers use a variety of camera shots to tell stories visually, just like writers use words. Today, students will become “cinematographers” and break down a scene to understand how it was built. Students will now select a short clip (~1-3 minutes) long from a favorite, school-appropriate movie or tv show that they can find online. To keep things moving, just give them a few minutes to find and select a clip. Once they have found their clip, inform them that they should watch the clip twice, the first time to see the clip as a whole, and the second to pause and analyze each shot. The Shot Type graphic included in the handout can help guide their selection of the type of shot used. Students will fill in the shots in the clip to make a shot list on the Shot List handout.

Once students have had time to create their shot list, transition to **slide 6** and bring them back together for a discussion using the [I Notice, I Wonder](#) instructional strategy. Ask a few students to share about their clips, answering the questions on the slide.

Show **slide 7**. Inform students that to make a scene, you first need a shot list. Once you have introduced them to the shot list as a concept, navigate to this [example shot list](#) from Wonder Woman (2017), which is also linked in Activity Slides. Once there, select “Custom Lists” from the left-hand navigation menu and share with students, going over what information was recorded.

Teacher's Note: Example Shot List

Under “Shot Size”, you may want to point out some of the shot types students will learn more about in the following activities.

- CU - Close Up
- MS - Medium Shot
- WS - Wide Shot

50 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 8**. Place students in small groups of 2-3 depending on the number of cameras available and distribute a camera to each group. Walk students through each of the basic camera functions which are listed on the slide. Give 2-3 minutes for students to explore these controls before transitioning to **slide 9**. Allow students another few minutes to complete the tasks listed on the slide.

Transition to **slide 10**. Let students know they will be going on a scavenger hunt. On the back of their Shot Types handout, students will have a list of seven shot types they must capture around the school. Allow students 25-30 minutes to collect each shot on their scavenger hunt and return to the classroom.

Display **slide 11**. Have students create a folder in a shared space and upload their scavenger hunt shots. Select one or two clips from each group to show and have students evaluate whether the shot captured fits the needed shot type. Ask students what went well in the clip? What did not?

50 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 12** and share the information on shot sequences with students, then transition to **slide 13** to share an example 5-shot sequence.

Continue through **slides 14-21** detailing some common shot types that students used in the last activity with examples. Go through each type of shot and its use. Ask students to provide another example of the type of shot or potential use if they can.

On **slide 22** is a scene from *The Princess Bride* (1987) which exemplifies many of the shot types that have been discussed so far. Pause the clip occasionally to ask for the type of shot being employed and why they think they chose that shot. **Slide 23** includes a scene from *Spy Kids* (2001) which also does a good job of highlighting various shot types if you would like to explore a new scene, but this is optional.

Display **slide 24**. Students will now learn some basics of framing and composition. Share the definitions with students and make sure they understand the subtle difference between the two related concepts.

Move through **slides 25-32**. Going over some guidelines of composition and framing. Be sure to point out the features in each example that follows on the next slide.

Show **slide 33**. On this slide, have students decide whether they think this is an example of symmetry or balance. Ask a few students to share why they think it corresponds to a certain definition.

Teacher's Note: Student Responses

This is actually a good example of both, so through their responses, see if they have a good understanding of the underlying concepts.

50 minutes

Extend

Show **slide 34** and let students know that they will now take shots to tell their own story. Emphasize that the story will need to be told chronologically, each shot must have a purpose, and they need to use a mix of ten wide, medium, close up, cut in, and cut away shots.

Transition to **slide 35** and distribute the **Storyboard Template** handout. Let students know that storyboards are a valuable way to plan out your shots before you start filming. They will practice filling in a storyboard before they start to shoot scenes.

On **slide 36**, share the example storyboard from an animation we made here at the K20 Center. This storyboard shows what words and graphics will be displayed during this section of the video.

Share **slides 37 & 38** with the scenarios that students can choose from. Inform students that they will work with their groups to choose a scenario to film. Place students in small groups of 3-4, and allow time to start storyboarding their shots in their handout, approximately 25-30 minutes.

Once students have had an opportunity to complete their storyboards, it is time to film their scenarios. Give students a full class period or two to film their chosen scenario before reconvening as a large group.

120 minutes

Extend 2

Transition to **slide 39**. Distribute the **Video Editing Guide** that includes a few basics of editing to guide them. You can either go through each step in the preferred program together as a class, or let them try on their own first, providing guidance as they work.

Students should now have time to edit their videos into a short scene. Students will have filmed their scenes as a group, but need to edit individually. Inform them that their final product needs to be at least 90 seconds long, but no more than 3 minutes. It must also have a minimum of ten shots and use at least one each of these shot types that have been previously discussed:

- Establishing
- Wide
- Medium
- Close Up
- Cut-in
- Cut-Away

Now that they know all the requirements, give the students a 1-2 class period to edit their videos.

Teacher's Note: Editing Time

Even short sequences can become a time-sink to edit. Budget as much time as you can towards allowing the students to practice and seek external resources. For example there is a treasure trove of tutorials on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/). If they are having trouble, have them look for guides for their software.

50 minutes

Evaluate

Now it's time to watch the videos. Navigate to **slide 40** and distribute the [3-2-1 Feedback](#) **Feedback** **handout** to the students. Let them know that they will complete one for each video, answering the questions provided.

After all videos have been shown, lead the class in a discussion based on the questions on **slide 41**.

Research Rationale

Kwigira, Njuguna, and Irungu (2024) demonstrate that media/journalism clubs significantly improve students' media literacy by engaging them in real-world journalism, peer review, and ethical media practices. Students developed stronger writing, critical thinking, and source evaluation skills. Mentorship and feedback were key to success. Schools can replicate this model with weekly sessions, guided mentorship, and structured media activities to foster responsible media engagement.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). 3-2-1. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/117>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I notice, I wonder. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180>
- I need a cite for the two videos and the example shot list (Elsa said she would help!)