



## A Social Studies Quick Start Guide For Implementing Digital Video

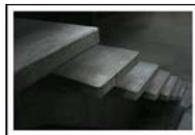
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Congratulations, you have just been hired to become an Executive Producer. Fear not, your new job will have many characteristics of your old job as a teacher. While you will still be expected to lecture, grade, assign homework, fill out paperwork and solve America's cultural and social ills, you will now also lead your students as they become the nation's newest videographers, directors and performers. While your new job will demand much of you, planning, flexibility, technical skills and creativity, the rewards will be well worth it.

As members of City Voices, City Visions, you have committed yourself to using digital video in your classroom. The hard part now becomes in deciding how to do it. With that in mind, I have created this Quick Start Guide for Social Studies Teachers. It is my hope that this guide will facilitate you as you begin to make those hard decisions about timing and your curriculum. There is no one-way explaining how to turn your classroom into a working film studio, there are only suggestions. Prepare for missteps and plan B's, as with anything worthwhile, there is a learning curve. Remind yourself and your students often that there is no such thing as bad production; there is only valuable experience. My other piece of advice before we dive in is to adopt the mantra, "There is no content, but only concept". In order for DV to work, kids need time and multiple exposures; therefore there will be a tradeoff with the amount of content you are able to "cover". I can only say that it's worth it, take deep breathes and wait for the Regents for vindication.

This resource guide is meant to be your ally as you navigate through your DV projects. I have prepared this guide with four digital projects, layered and designed to be implemented in stages across your academic year. While I will provide an outline of the project and links to project resources, we have also made available to you a host of sample projects and rubrics designed by other teachers using DV. These resources are being provided to you with the anticipation that you will steal, patch and harvest them for your own purposes. The supplementary DVD has numerous model examples of each genre; please feel free to preview them with your students as you prepare them for their own projects.

### *Steps to Success*



*There is no one perfect synchronized method for implementing a DV project. There are however certain steps that I would walk through with my class with any DV project. Below is a basic list of agenda items that I typically pay attention to as I progress through a project.*

## I. Modeling Genre and Film Elements

To begin I would explain the genre of film we would be working with as well as a basic outline of what they will be doing. Then I would ask the students to watch a few examples of I-Speaks/Trailers/Commercials (see DVD). Spend time here, asking and fielding a lot of questions. Talk about shots, lighting, voice quality, music and everything and anything that contributes to the meaning making in the DV. Allow your students to “see” all of the layered modes and think reflectively about them. Kids will remember good advice. Whatever project you are on, it is always a good idea to talk about the elements of good film. The more your students think about it and talk about it, the better directors and producers they will be. Optimally, having an edited version of the movie available on your computer to show your kids would provide a dynamic visual guide. Here are some examples of what I would pay attention to. This list is by all means is not complete. It does however represent the essential elements that you as the Executive Producer will need to facilitate. Read them with the knowledge that you will not “teach” these in one sitting, they are pieces of the puzzle that you will examine in stages. Make them part of your conversation as you screen and review your rubric with your students.

- **Framing.** Still frame good shots, discuss what makes the shot powerful. Convey the importance of the close up considering the environment you will be filming in.
- **Interviewing:** If students decide to include interview like footage, review the rule of thirds with them. Once they can visualize their shot in thirds, have them place their filming subject between two of the “columns”. Demonstrate a good interview frame as opposed to a weaker shot.
- **Lighting.** Model how light needs to be behind the lens. If you are viewing a student film and you witness bad lighting, ask the question. If your kids are aware it something that will effect the quality of their work, they will make adjustments.
- **Length.** Kids often have what I call “drunk-wedding” syndrome. It is critical that kids begin DV with a 5 second rule. If they cannot film their concept in less than 5 seconds that must justify it to me. Short shots force meaning making more so than endless shots that go on forever.
- **Voiceovers.** Point out effective voiceovers; demonstrate how you can control the mood with your pitch and pacing. Model the voice over method you have chosen. Whether you are recording onto cameras or directly onto computers you will want to emphasize how to get a clear, crisp voiceover.

## II. Rubrics: What to Assess



Be sure to go over your rubric with your kids. The rubric is as much an instrument of manipulating expectations, as it is a tool of evaluation. By creating a rubric you are given the opportunity to craft the type of project you want your kids to produce. By using the tacit knowledge of media our kids possess with our own presumptions of content expression, the rubric can guide your students to success. Remind students often to have the rubric out when working on their project. Depending on your evaluation methods, students can also use the rubric to “grade” other student projects during the screening. We have provided you with a barrage of choices, however you come up with your rubric be sure to keep the following suggestions in mind.

- **Length.** For an I-Speak, commercial or movie trailer, I would highly recommend the 60 second rule. An Inquiry based video (such as Dateline) might go 2-3 minutes. Nothing more than three minutes, you must put some rope around these projects, without them projects become hazy and undefined. You always reserve the right to be flexible of a kid has a great idea that goes a bit further

- but by stressing a universal rule, you are first providing them with a realistic goal and second, forcing them to make director like decisions which gives the project a sense of authenticity.
- **Genre.** By putting value on the elements of the genre you are working in you are building in success mechanisms. Films in genre allow students and audiences the ability to comfortably pay attention. Include part of your rubric directed to the style, language and mood of your particular genre.
  - **Filming Aesthetics.** Emphasize framed shots, good lighting and the five-second rule. If possible, put a higher value on conceptual, mean making shots (Showing a copy of the Constitution be burned when saying Nixon) over literal shots (Showing Nixon when saying Nixon).
  - **Curriculum Content.** Genre, aesthetics, flow and technological wizardry are great and contribute greatly to the success of any DV. With that being said, it is of utmost importance that we stress that primary purpose of the DV in the classroom is to transmit ideas, evaluations and perspectives in the arena of the Social Studies curriculum. You can accomplish this on rubric by including a broad requirement (Film shines light and understanding on historical ideas) or a more specific requirement (Film includes proper interpretation of four vocabulary terms). Either way, during your screening it will be the content of the film, which your teacher teeth will want to sink into.
  - **Supplementary Categories.** Decide what is important to you as a teacher and find ways to work them into your rubric expectations. You may want to consider written work, credits, group cooperation, storyboarding and/or a presentation for the screening.

### III. Planning Ahead



Before turning on a computer or firing up a camera, you will want to give your students a minimum of two days to plan their film. Storyboards are always a good idea to provide as a resource for planning, whether you include them as a requirement or not is up to you. Many teachers who are beginning their journey as Executive Producers may want to mandate the storyboard; if students know the shot before they pick up a camera it will obviously save time. The only negative with a storyboard mandate is it may limit flexibility. If a student has a breakthrough idea, allow them to venture off the storyboard!

Once a group has settled on their idea/plan you must have a process for screening. In my classroom, I call it the “pitch”. Here, more than anywhere else, is where you wield your influence as the “Executive Producer”. Your job is not to crush ideas or transplant yours for theirs; rather, you are the gatekeeper of professionalism and accuracy. This is your time to push for more content or gently shove a group towards a more realistic endeavor. If a project is doomed to fail, catch it here before it’s too late.

Depending on your own expectations and your amount of available resources, count on a project lasting a minimum of 7 days and as much as 10 days. The more you plan and build in structures to facilitate the DV experience, the faster your project should move along. Check in with any other CVCV teachers in your building, work your projects around each other and share your equipment, more resources means more equipment in the hands of students!

You may also decide to supplement your DV project with mandated written assignments. Depending on the size of the groups and the amount of individual participation, written components of a project may be able to transfer over some of the visual learning that is taking place as well as absorb classroom time for students who do not have their hands in the editing of the project. I have bulleted some examples of written components to DV below.

- Reflection Journals
- Corresponding short questions.
- Student generated DBQ's using the primary resources.
- Student generated multiple choice using their content.
- Thematic Essays
- Research Papers

#### IV) Voiceovers and Music



Before students begin to take live video and fall into the editing process, it is a good idea to deal with the audio first. Laying the voiceover and music will accomplish two important objectives. One, it will pace the video, students will know exactly how long their shots should be. Second, by listening to the voiceover and music selection, students can “feel” the video. If the mood set is face paced and scary, the video will obviously be influenced.

When you decide to import audio, reserve a minimum of two days, other tasks can be accomplished but a minimum of two days will be needed to get all of the groups audio needs completed. You will find there are two basic ways to import audio in the classroom.

- Camera recording is probably your best choice within the confines of a classroom. Once a group is ready to read their script you will give them a camera. Allow them 5 minutes to film themselves speaking into the camera. It is of the utmost importance that you emphasize that the students need to speak clearly and in a raised tone to get a good quality of sound. Students will then import the video clip of them talking, drag it to the storyboard in the computer and extract the audio (Advanced: Extract Audio). This option cuts down on your quieting everyone as long as students have a semi-quiet place to film.
- Your other option relies on your authoritarian voice. The old school method is to have students record directly into their computers. If you have excellent classroom control and willing students, this method can move along a bit more swiftly. An occasional, “QUIET, FILMING”, bellowing from your lungs can give the classroom a sense of urgency and communal togetherness as the class moves towards success. I have found it is a rare kids who wants to be the kink in the rope of a tightly run classroom which is engaged in an authentic video project.

You will also have to make an executive decision related to soundtrack music. For your first few projects I would highly recommend that you require music from [www.freeplaymusic.com](http://www.freeplaymusic.com). The database of music at freeplay is vast, copyright free and organized by genre, mood and tempo. Using copyright music relieves you of many of the burdens that student selected music poses. As students and yourself become more advanced you may want to revisit this question and broaden the net of music you allow.

Be extraordinarily patient when undergoing this part of DV, in many cases, audio is the most difficult task to facilitate, it will take a lot of directing, facilitation and patience on your end.

#### V) Modeling Filming and Editing.



There is no one time where you will be able to “teach” all of the various technological aspects of your DV program. Introducing new ideas and cool tricks is something that should be done at least once each class if not more. Think of modeling as showing the kids a neat trick in a video game. While handing out the video game manual and having the kids read it may be beneficial, it will pale in comparison of playing in front of them. The kids will not “learn” all of the button pressing during this experience but they will “see” what is possible. When the kid wants emulate your model, trust me they will figure out a way to do it. I try to do a minimum of two models per class, one at the start of class and one in the middle. Many times the modeling goes on at a group’s computer when they need help, I then ask someone from that group to show another group. At some time or another I would recommend modeling the following editing elements.

- a) Internet picture import. Emphasize that still images, while sometimes necessary should be discouraged. Whenever possible challenge the student to think of a way to “film” their idea. In I-Movie still images will automatically given the Ken Burn effect, meaning they will do a slow zoom in. Show your class that by going to the Edit: Still Image command when their still image is highlighted, they will be able to kill the zoom in.
- b) Titles. It is important to not only show the kids how to create titles over black and titles over video but how to manipulate the text options. Titles should be used to not only convey important information (title/credits) but also as another mode, which can aid in the crafting of meaning. Take two minutes to show the kids how to flash text on the screen or create a subliminal message, giving them the option will be enough for them to figure it out how to do it later!
- c) Cutting Film. It is of the utmost importance that you model how to cut up film. I would recommend that you do this following the audio import. It is imperative that you model the two major ways of editing film, open apple T and your editing arrows.
  - Open Apple T (Edit: Split Video) I call this one the Battle Axe. When I model this I swing my arm, down like an axe as I cut the clip. Kids remember this one; make it a classroom mantra, “Open apple T! Open apple T! Open apple T!”
  - Your Little White Editing Arrows. Explain it using the word processing idea. Ask the kids if they had written an essay on the computer and wanted to get rid of one sentence, what would you do? The kids respond, highlight it and delete it! (Hopefully) The concept is the same, using those white editing hours you can highlight video! Now you can delete it, or copy and paste it. Be sure to show them a few times this method. One fun thing you may want to do is to film a kid falling and use the editing arrows to copy and paste the fall four or five times. The kids will laugh and start to mentally cut up their own film.
- d) Special Effects. There is no need to model every special effect; the illustration of one or two will be enough for the kids to experiment. Be sure to emphasize either verbally or on the rubric that special effects are important modes and thought should be placed behind every decision. I would highly recommend that you show the kids how to speed up and slow down clips. Beside the fast/slow effect being a tremendous ally when manipulating the mood of the film it also becomes a powerful timing tool.
- e) Transitions. Transitions are the last model I do with my kids as a general rule. Transitions should also be the last editing tools to be used in a project; I call them the digital glue you apply when everything is in place. It is also a good idea to show the kids how to lock in their audio (open apple - L) early on; transitions will shift the timing of the video, only for a second, but enough to throw off critical timing. Besides showing the kids how to do it, talk about how transitions can influence the mood, emphasize cross dissolves, overlaps and simple pushes as good starter transitions.

## Final Thoughts on Modeling

Remember to include video demonstrations at least once a class but more importantly remind yourself and your students of the gaming theory. If we were teaching students how to win a John Madden Football we wouldn't spend a heck of a lot of time in front of the room espousing the functionality of the A/B turbo button. The best way is to let kids be kids, facilitate sharing of information and trying your best to be available on demand, to be the best possible Executive Producer you can be.

Do not feel deflated if your first project goes your expected time line by a day or two. New technologies need time to breathe and patience to set foot. I would imagine the first time a teacher handed out pencils, classrooms were up in arms and professional development seminars were crafted around how to hold the pencil the best way and the optimal sharpening strategies. Thankfully the good teachers of yesteryear stuck with it and got past their pencil anxieties and the world changed. Well it seems today's pencils are digital video camcorders and high tech editing software. The best advice I can give you is, be patient, a willing troubleshooter and a frequent comic. Although it can be stressful, it is only so because the students become invested in their work in a very real and authentic way and they want to produce quality material.

## VI) Layering Through the Year



Deciding when to implement DV and what to build your projects around can be one of the most difficult tasks to undertake. With that in mind, I have created a sample schedule of the types of projects and corresponding curriculum content that would work in a Social Studies classroom. Four sample projects are proposed, each layered in difficulty and spaced across your ten-month academic year. Along with each project is a set of content ideas, which would likely correspond with that part of your year. The four projects and target dates for implementation are as follows.

- 1) **I-Movie in a Day** (Week One/Two): Designed to be implemented in the first week or two of class. As a first year project is can both motivate your students around a Social Studies concept but also introduce them to the I-Movie design and some of the fundamentals of framing a shot. I-Movie in a Day and *Quilt* projects can also be used intermediately throughout the year as a way to keep DV alive in your classroom and “teach” critical concepts in a short period of time.
- 2) **The I-Speak** (Late September): Perhaps the “easiest” DV to construct, the I-Speak is basically a direct translation of text. The text can be student generated or from a primary resource. A good project to “teach” students the basics of filmmaking. Think of Harry Truman’s speech justifying Hiroshima put to classical Mozart with visuals of victims, the Enola Gay, the rocky cliffs of Japan and close-ups of tears flowing down a cheek.
- 3) **The Movie Trailer** (Mid-Late November): “Coming to a classroom next fall, “The Movie Trailer”. Watch as your students craft scripts in the trailer genre highlighting key components of your curriculum. You won’t believe your eyes as your students engage with historical concepts in a very real and authentic way.....” Completely voiceover based, students are challenged to turn a historical concept into a TV or Movie promo. While this project gives students the creativity to write and go in many different directions, it is still text based, allowing you to spend time shoring up the basics. Students have a lot of tacit knowledge regarding this genre allowing them with multiple ways to express new meaning in the Social Studies.

- 4) **UnCommercials** (Late January-Early February): This is a broad and open genre allowing students an endless amount of choices. “Uncommercial” is a term which refers to the educational nature of the genre, we are not selling product but rather ideas. I originally came across the term on a website called, [www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org). Smart, witty ads would be posted to get across a subversive viewpoint regarding mass media. The “UnCommercial” genre allows for a wide variety of student choices. While many students create traditional commercials, students may also decide to create a PSA or political commercial. How remarkable would a political commercial for Napoleon be in a World History course?
  
- 5) **Inquiry Project** (End of the Year): For the last project we leave the gates wide open, the only requirement being the video investigates something of value on the curriculum and two, it fits into some type of genre (although some teachers may reject any glimmer of structure). Many times, students will choose to do a Saturday Night Live spoof or a mock Dateline. Students may also resort back to prior genres, as long as the video delves more deeply into the content and concept. The overarching objective of the inquiry video is for students to approach their subject in very much the same way they would a research paper. Inquiry videos almost always contain a multitude of modes including interviews, montages, voiceovers, titles, and acting.

## I-Movie in a Day (or so)

*(First week)*



Digital Video belongs in the classroom, not the closet, so what better way to start the beginning of the year than with a multimodal bang? The concept of I-Movie in a Day was developed as way to bring DV into the classroom on a more consistent basis, without losing the power of its multimodality. Students are all too well accustomed to the routines of the beginning of the year, they are in a sense, “on autopilot”. Hitting them with DV the first week will not only garnish their precious attention and develop that critical, “buy-in” that we all crave but it will also allow you to begin to talk about your content and the characteristics of good cinematography. In a sense, it is the first time you are showing them the “video game”.

An I-Movie in A Day will require you to create the skeleton of a video with “slots” for students to fill in with live feed shots. With assigned topics, students will come to the front of the room and import their piece of the video. A selected student will control the computer, pressing the import button, cleaning the clip up (with guidance) if necessary and dragging it to the storyboard. Students are doing two things during the meaning chaos of an I-Movie in a Day; they are planning shots, looking for props and brainstorming ideas and they are stopping their planning to watch the filming of other group shots. DO not overtly concern yourself with groups and grades; use their excitement to build the movie as a class. I tell the students that their final movie will be graded against the other classes for a grade, this little bit of artificial competition will only build into the excitement. After a few clips are imported stop the class and show the kids how you are editing the clips. When you get good you can quickly add a special effect and a cool looking transition to add to the wow-factor. With proper planning your class can contribute to the completion of a DV in less than an hour. Once you have attempted an I-Movie in a Day in the beginning of the year you will have the option of developing small projects between your larger genre orientated projects. Lets first take a look at some of the inner workings of the project and then I will provide you will a host of sample ideas.

## Implementing I-Movie in a Day

Your first and most important task will be to come up with the idea itself, more than any other DV project, this one forces you to come up with the bedrock of the video. Ideas do not have to be complex, especially for your first project, in fact I would recommend leaning on projects that allow students to voice some of themselves. Below is a link to a DV I created which narrates and illustrates the nuts and bolts of doing I-Movie in a Day. You will need Realplayer to view this video, if you do not have it installed on your machine, please visit <http://www.real.com/player>.

I-Movie in a Day How to Video

<http://stream.buffalo.edu/shared/gse/cvqv/Imovieinaday.rm>

## The Screening and the Review Video

The screening serves two major functions, it is a fun, student centered viewing of their own creations and it is a vehicle for intellectual discourse. Do not simply allow the screening to become a popcorn eating laugh fest but rather harness the attention and anticipation in the room to ask hard questions and promote discussions. Ask other groups to comment on what they liked about the video and what could have made it better. Students are their own best critics and being professional about the process teaches them how to make better video.

## I-Movie in a Day: First Week Ideas



*The ideas outlined below are just a platform for you to walk out on. While you may decide to use the idea, I would anticipate more often or not, the ideas will propel you to creating your own like-minded projects. The projects I have presented are meant to be flexed, altered, stolen and tweaked, they are not by any means concrete.*

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Early U.S. History



A simple but powerful idea for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade would be an I-Movie in a Day built around the concept, "What is Social Studies"? In many cases elementary education can slight the Social Studies and examining the basic concepts of the study might prove to be both helpful and fun. Divide your class into groups and allow them a day to come up with an answer to the question. Be sure to rotate and allow groups to pitch their idea, while the direction will be determined by the students, you, as Executive Producer, are allowed to steer them. Prior to implementation, create the framework of the video, you can even do it in genre! I recommended creating the opening, the closing and choosing a few possible soundtracks, play them for your students and let them pick the music. Show them the beginning of the video before they begin to plan so they can get a sense of the tone of the video. Have fun creating the skeleton just be sure to include:

- A strong voice over, using your wisdom to introduce the concept of Social Studies and the importance of as an academic subject.
- Fun, paced music. Use music the kids can identify with, it will buy their attention and give the project a hip edge.
- When coming with your own visuals, remember, that you are providing powerful models for the kids. Don't give in to the still image temptation. Be offbeat, film framed, strong close ups and use them to introduce some of the characteristics of good video.

Consider other lead-in sentences, which would motivate your kids to write. Here are some other ideas, which you could incorporate into your I-Movie in a Day:

- "One tradition in my family is....."
- "I wish I could travel to \_\_\_\_\_ because...."
- "America means \_\_\_\_\_ to me."

Whichever direction you decide to go, be sure to produce at least one sample video clip to illustrate the length and type of video that the class will be able to produce.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States History (Civil War-Present)



A good first project for an introduction to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum might revolve around the themes that students explored in the first year of the course in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. You may want to consider keeping it light, lead off your video framework with a simple exploring question. Below are some examples of the types of questions you could build your I-Movie in a Day around;

- "The most incredible thing I learned in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade history was...."
- "America is ....."
- "The best thing about American history is..."
- "The worst thing about American history was...."
- "I couldn't believe it when I learned in US History that..."

All of these questions give students space to create interesting narratives about their learning experiences in US History. Give them a day to brainstorm and write down their filming ideas. You may want to consider creating your own sample clip where you ham it up and frame a visual and conceptual live shot.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History I



i) Considering students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade are new to the high school experience, you may want to develop a video, which asks students to express something about their culture. Imagine a twenty second opening montage (that you develop) with visuals of world landmarks, geography, religious symbols and other examples of cultural expressions with an African drumbeat pacing rhythmically in the background. Your voice enters, defining the textbook definition of culture, as the montage ends you ask, "What is culture?" Students are now assigned with the task of designing their frame and their voiceover. Students may speak on camera or off camera; they may film themselves, other students or props. It may be a good idea for you

to film an example for them. Consider assigning the planning as a first or second day homework assignment, so students come to class armed with their script and filming idea (they could even bring in props). When students are filming their shots be sure to rotate the student editor and cameraman, be also sure to draw attention to the shots as they are being framed. Use this communal filming experience to talk about the elements of good video, don't be afraid to add suggestions regarding lighting, slight camera movements and angles. Ask students often, "What works about this shot?" or "How could we make this shot better"?

2) Another idea rests on more concrete curriculum; geography. As Social Studies teachers we can all be in agreement, that geography is a major element that runs through both Global courses. Create and show your students a montage of geographical features, trumped by Classical fanfare music and a voice over narration explaining the importance of Geography and humans. Break up your geography vocabulary and assign them to small groups. The students, in turn, would come up with a narration defining the term and how it has or could influence history; students would also come up with a corresponding live shot. Not only would this project be fast and furious, the video could serve as a yearlong review resource!

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History II



One advantage of teaching tenth grade is that students come to you armed with a basic knowledge of world history (presumably). Your first I-Movie could serve as a catalyst to reviewing some of the major themes in ninth grade. Write a short thirty second script espousing the Course Description for World History. Layer your voice with visuals and live video of some of the major events/terms from ninth grade. End the video with some type of lead out, "And now from the Sophomore Class of 2007, the great Global Review!" Assign major themes or have students brainstorm and come up with them on their own. Have the students write short 10-second overviews of their theme and come up with filming concept. If you want to make sure kids work within major themes consider the following themes as possible samples.

- Use a lead in such as "One thing I learned about \_\_\_\_\_, was ...." The blank would represent the assigned themes (geography, revolutions, trade, culture, etc)
- Create a video with a telling title, "The Worlds Wackiest World Civilization", work in a lead in; such as, "Coming this spring, a new TV show, "The Worlds Wackiest World Civilization", watch as some of the world's most influential cultures make their mark on human history. Get ready to learn about the \_\_\_\_\_ and how they \_\_\_\_\_.

Another idea to consider is that of one which is more contemporary, dealing with current events. Giving students permission to speak out about a world problem or local concern could prove to be powerful. Your project could serve as a springboard into the very same historical concepts that your course will deal with. Your music choice could be something contemporary as well, earning valuable kid respect. Possible questions to build your I-Movie off of might include, but not be limited, to the following.

- If I was President of the World, I would " \_\_\_\_\_ "
- When I look at the world, I see " \_\_\_\_\_ "
- People should know about, " \_\_\_\_\_ "

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States and History



As students enter their junior year they become much more discerning into what they will buy into, school related. Artificial, top-down projects do not work as well with older students; instead, older students will be much more likely to give their attention to projects laced with a sense of purpose and authenticity. Projects built around straightforward vocabulary and spoon fed ideas will be met with a certain degree of adolescent angst and hesitation. Eleventh graders will expect their work to be put online because they value their time and they value their work done in DV very much like that of professionals. Their work, unlike many other examples of school-work, hold “social value”.

On day one, I ask my kids one question at the end of class. “What is America”? I explain that their voice is as powerful as all of the humans who have come before them in history. The only difference being, voices from the past were recorded and theirs aren’t, until today. I inform them they may say whatever they like, as long as they keep it clean, no judgments. I model some sample frames, showing what it looks like to write on your arm, tie your shoe or drag your fingers through your hair on camera. “Tomorrow”, I tell them, “we film”. No second chances, say it loud and grab your viewer’s attention. I show them the beginning of the video, a steady, driving tempo with forceful titles and a visual introduction, ending with dead silence. All that awaits is their voice, literally.

The “America Is” I-Movie in a Day is short and open ended, allowing students to convey their deeply engrained feelings about the nation that are about take a class on. While the final product will not end up helping your kids pass the Regents directly, the process will not only buy you the attention of your kids but their respect as well.

“America is”, is but one approach to introducing DV to your kids in that first week of school, here are a few more ideas.

- Use a current event to lead off the year, possibly the war on terror or the Iraqi war. Students have strong opinions regarding foreign policy, allowing them to “talk” about it the first week of school may promote debate and crucial “buy-in” Create a introduction sequence with narration over viewing the war and the controversy that surrounds it. Finish by drawing attention to the question of how young people see the war, letting the film end where the kids would pick it up. Students would write short ten second position statements and then come up with a filming idea.
- Draw upon the student’s exposure to U.S. History from 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Create a montage of events from the course with a finishing open ended question. “One thing I learned from 8<sup>th</sup> grade was the United States .....” Tweak this accordingly; the final product could serve as a powerful catalyst to discussion of the perceptions and misconceptions regarding U.S. History.

*Refer to the I-Movie in a Day assignment sheet below for the outline of a basic idea.*

## iMovie in a Day

### Task:

After choosing an essential question, which truly is essential to your curriculum, as a class, you will film the concept of the question using a primary text resource.

### Benefits:

The most obvious benefit is the students acquiring the concept your essential question poses. Other important benefits are the introductory aspects of iMovie and Digital Video work, all accomplished while creating a great video that focuses on your curriculum.

### Items Needed:

One iMac, iMovie, DV Camera(s) 1-2 class periods.

### Prior Knowledge:

An introductory lesson to operating and recording on the DV camera would definitely be advised.

### Procedure:

1. Choose a short 10-15 lined text which is essential to your course. Frame an essential question around the text.
2. In iMovie you will create the framework of the video. Including the essential question, the text and some music. (don't fear by the end of your CVCV institute this will be a breeze)
3. Divide the text up into sections which can be filmed. Show the framework of the movie to the class. Hand out the text with the essential question.
4. After pairing the students, assign them 1-2 sections and give them 10 minutes to figure out how they will film them. (If you only have one camera, this exercise can be done with the camera fire wired directly to the computer. The kids will then have to record their concept in the front of the room, near the computer.)
5. The students will also, in addition to their video work, be required to write a short answer (5 words or less) to the essential question.
6. After filming/prep time, each group will import their video into iMovie and drag it into its place in the movie. The students will then be guided to record their voiceover of the selection. They will then type their EQ answer into the end of the movie. (It is imperative that someone who knows iMovie is facilitating this procedure. Each group should take no longer than 3 minutes with the iMac)
7. Show class the film and reflect on the EQ, video shots and learning.

### Assessment:

The great part of this exercise is the students answer the EQ and record it into the film.

## The I-Speak Project (Late September-Mid-October)



### *What is it?*

An “I-Speak” is a genre of DV in where the student “films” a selected piece of historical text or a self-written piece of literature. The student(s) would record a narration of the text (or find and use the original if possible, add music and edit the final piece into a representation of the chosen words.

### *Why is it the first recommended student project?*

The “I-Speak” is powerful in its simplicity. Since the text itself forms the foundation of the project, attention can be paid to some of the more visual and technological aspects of I-Movie. Optimally, we see the I-Speak being a project, which should be implemented some time in between late September, and mid- October. Other genres will allow a much wider range of choices for students to make in relationship to the curriculum content. It is wise to spend quality time on the nuts and bolts of I-Movie, hence the “I-Speak” allows you to do this.

### *To group or not to group? That is the question.*

Much of this decision will be determined by your access to technology. Before you start your project, coordinate with any other CVCV teachers you may have in your building. If you have a computer lab, sign up for it. Whatever your situation is, work it to the best possible advantage. Whether you allow students to pick their own groups or you assign them would of course rest upon your own professional judgment.

### *What “text” should I have my students use?*

Your first decision as an Executive Producer will be how much creative control you allow you’re directors-in-training to have. My recommendation would be to keep them on a shorter leash for the first few times you implement DV in your classroom. For argument sake, lets work under the assumption that you would like to have the students choose their text from a list of pre-selected works (you having chosen them). Within this scenario you may want to offer groups the ability to “find” or “create” their own text and then have it approved.

It is critically important that you facilitate the choosing of the text; there must be a curriculum litmus test. Your students will be dissecting, investigating, conceptualizing and “playing” with their text for at a minimum a week of time. This must be time well spent. My litmus test for text choices is if it could be a topic on the regents’ essay then it’s almost always a good choice. Avoid content-based topics that lack a connection to a critical theme. By choosing something along the lines of a Chief Joseph talking about Indian removal or FDR talking about the response to the Great Depression allows the student to create layers of meaning through their manipulation of the various modes they are working with. Choosing glossary definitions or dry fact based speeches will fail to create this opportunity for meaning making. This rule hold true throughout the DV projects. You, my friend, *are the gatekeeper.*

# Social Studies Ideas and Links for I-Speak Readings

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Early American History



*Investigating and exploring the words of Native Americans could be a great place to start the year. Here are some links to some great Native American speeches and writings.*

1. Native American Oral Tales and Songs  
<http://members.cox.net/academia/naindex.html>
2. Native American Songs and Chants  
<http://164.116.21.67/sal-poetry/poetry.php>
3. Electronic Text Center: Native Americans  
<http://etext.virginia.edu/subjects/Native-American.html>
4. From Revolution to Reconstruction  
<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/D/index.htm>
5. American Rhetoric Online Speech Bank  
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speechbank.htm>

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: American History (Civil War to Present)



*With the course beginning right in the midst of the Civil War I have provided a flexible lot of links below. Depending on where you would like to focus, I thought text related to Sectionalism, the Civil War itself and Reconstruction would provide you with a wide variety of powerful resources to choose from.*

1. **From Slavery to Freedom: The African-American Pamphles**  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aapchtml/>
2. **Political Speeches and Commentary: 1849-1860**  
<http://members.aol.com/jfepperson/polit.html>
3. **Voices from the Civil War: Newspapers and Editorials**  
<http://www.hstg.org/index.cgi/742>
4. **From Revolution to Reconstruction**  
<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/D/index.html>

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History (The Dawn of Time-Absolutism)



*9<sup>th</sup> Grade presents a unique set of challenges when implementing an I-Speak early on in the year. Quotes about geography or dry definitional type essays about vocabulary just don't cut it. I believe you have a couple of options, which differ a tad from the traditional I-Speak.*

- i) **Thematic I-Speaks.** Use your DV projects wisely and center them around guaranteed thematic essays. For example, a good first project would be belief systems. Religion is constantly used in the essays and having these seeds planted early will only make your job that much easier as you teach the rest of the course. Consider using pieces of sacred texts, religious quotes and other belief system narratives. Having I-Speaks of the major ideas of Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and the host of other world religions online and watched by students over and over and over has to be a good thing.

*I have provided some helpful links to resources that will aid you in your search for appropriate text.*

- **Internet Sacred Text Archive Home**     <http://www.sacred-texts.com/>
- **Religious Text Index**             <http://zarahemla.awardspace.com/>

- 2) **Student Raps.** You may decide to play it a bit more to script and decide the DV experience is worth lets say, something more basic skill orientated like Geography. In this case, be creative and develop an assignment that has the student (group) to write poetically about a term.

Perhaps a Geography Rap. I will do glacier, with great hesitation.

*Slow moving river of ice,  
No game of dice, but a GLACIER, a GLACIER.  
Got more fresh water than anywhere else.  
Go put that on your saltwater selves.  
On one hand you got alpine,  
Forms on mountains not to outshine,  
Continental like ice caps,  
Now that's whack.  
But global warming gots  
My precious GLACIERS deforming, deforming.*

Or perhaps Hammarabi's Code with even greater hesitation.

*Ancient Babylon, ain't no joke.  
Laying down the law on every bloke.  
Along comes Hammy, don't tell me.  
An eye for an eye, will set us free.  
Steal my goat and watch out Sam.  
Government gonna kill ya, bam bam bam.  
Now civilization begins right now.  
By laying down the law, that is how.*

Please do not let my shortened version of a lame rap about Glaciers or Hammarabi's Code deter you or your students. And please do not let Geography be your limit, be creative and explore your curriculum. The only rule is to make it count! Turning student written raps about your curriculum into a virtual "Music Video" would a powerful mnemonic aid, sure to increase student assessment skills.

- 3) **What is Culture?** Considering culture is such an important part of the Global curriculum, you may want to consider something more personal, perhaps beginning with a written assignment. There may be group semantics to work out but imagine a written essay about the cultural diversity of a family or the narrative of a student struggling with two cultures. There are an unlimited amount of these types of assignments in where you could use the narrative of a student's voice and layer it with Digital Video. You may not get the maximum amount of curriculum content you may get in other projects but you will motivate your students and give them a voice, early on in your course.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global II (Scientific Revolution-Current Events)



*For a late September I-Speak project I would recommend using text from the Enlightenment and/or Scientific Revolution. Not only will this project cover important individual contributions to the ideas related to Democracy but it will lock in a thematic essay concerning change. Below are links to text related to those Eras.*

- The European Enlightenment  
<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/ENLIGHT/ENLIGHT.HTM>
- Famous Quotes Throughout World History  
[http://mr\\_sedivy.tripod.com/quotes7.html](http://mr_sedivy.tripod.com/quotes7.html)

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States History and Government



*The I-Speak can be powerful and meaningful when applies to primary documents. While the your first thought might be to dive into Colonial History, skipping a bit ahead to pieces of Common Sense, The Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights may prove to be more applicable. Two projects come to mind when approaching the I-Speak and Primary Resources.*

- 1) The Direct Route. You may decide direct readings and interpretation is the most straightforward approach. You can guarantee yourself that students will be immersed in interpreting their text. Your difficult job is choosing which pieces of these documents you want to assign. If you decide to implement this idea you have the choice to either find the pieces of text yourself or have the groups themselves choose their text after being assigned a broad topic. After teaching the course for many years, I would recommend the following topics as possible assignments.

- Common Sense or some primary resource illustrating the colonial strife held towards England. Other choices would lie in such primary documents as the Stamp Act, The Intolerable Acts or the descriptions of the Boston Tea Party.
- Selected pieces of the Declaration would be a smart choice, specific grievances and the over riding ideas of consent of the governed and natural rights are sure bets for the Regents.
- There are many pieces of the Articles of Confederation that would be smart selections. Any text that illustrated the weakness of the Federal Government or the strength of the states would work.
- The U.S. Constitution would offer the bulk of your selected text. You may decide that the project should only be crafted using the U.S. Constitution, either way be sure to find selections that cover the following
  - a) Flexibility such as the Elastic Clause and the Amendment Procedure.
  - b) Checks and Balance examples from all three branches. It would be a good idea to annotate these and provide them as one assignment.
  - c) Separation of Powers.
  - d) Inter-State Controls – Federalism Mechanisms (Interstate Commerce, Full Faith and Credit)
  - e) Constitutional Requirements
  - f) Constitutional Freedoms. The Bill of Rights themselves offers a palette of excellent curriculum gems.

I have provided a couple of links to the primary documents you would need to find your text.

- The Library of Congress  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html>  
 Primary documents for US History, brought to you by your friends at American Memory.
  - Our Documents  
<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/>  
 A handy dandy search engine, which will bring up hundreds of primary documents relate to American history.
- 2) The Indirect Route. Straightforward textual interpretation can lack a bit of the shine and creativity, so you may decide to have the students create their own pieces of original text. One idea would be to have the students take an original piece of primary resource (The First Amendment) and turn it into a “rap” or “slam”.

*Adding on to our Nation's book,  
 Number one, let's take a look.  
 Balancing the strong arm of the law  
 With the free man's humble paw.  
 Speak out loud, fear none thee,  
 Freedom of Speech sure ain't free.  
 Call out loud to gather round,  
 Assembly is one, we wear no frown.*

I think you get the idea; I will stop in the name of justice and all that is hip with music these days. Be sure to include some time to review the work created by the students, you will want to exercise your power as Executive Producer.

*A sample I-Speak assignment sheet, simple and direct. Avoid micromanaging, as long as the genre is clear and the project supports the curriculum.*

## **Project One: An i-Speak**

[www.nvlearn.org/keithhughes](http://www.nvlearn.org/keithhughes)

Task: Produce a 60 second i-speak. An i-speak is a visual/audio representation of a poem, historical text or some other form of the written word.. You may write the poem/text or choose one, which you credit in your film. Text should capture the essence of a key curriculum concept.

Your film will include the following

- Your voiceover. A reading of the text.
- Music to enhance the mood of your text. ([www.Freeplaymusic.com](http://www.Freeplaymusic.com))
- Live Video. It is my hope you will be using "conceptual" filming as opposed to "literal" filming.
- Special effects, transitions and titles.

Attention should be paid to the following 3 factors BEFORE a shot is taken.

- Lighting. Never in front of you, always behind you. Natural light rocks.
- The Frame. What does the shot look like? Closer to the subject is better than long-range shots. Be steady and don't press the record button until you like what you see. Move stuff around, try different angles.
- SOUND: If sound is important and it may not be, make sure you are no more than 4 feet from your subject and pay attention to wind, crowd noise, etc.... Make sure your subject speaks clearly and LOUDLY.

SO what do you do? Try these steps.

1. Write or pick a poem or text. Read it out loud and time it. Remember 60-90 seconds.
2. Divide up your poem into "shots" Each "shot" will become the visual representation of the words. Remember video rules, pics drool. (Most of the time)
3. Think about what TYPE of music you want. Instrumentals are better than lyric orientated music. Before you pick your fav. Band/music, pick the mood first. (angry, sad, upbeat, happy....) Try [freeplaymusic.com](http://freeplaymusic.com).
4. Shoot and edit.
5. Live a long and happy life.

I'm not a big; "do it this way or else" kind of guy so you have a lot of room to do this YOUR way!

While the rubric below was developed specifically for an I-Speak project, please tweak it according to your specifications and personality!

### THE CVCV RUBRIC for I-Speak

	<b>Oscar Winner</b> 1 Trillion Points	<b>People's Choice</b> 1 Billion Points	<b>Blue Ribbon</b> 1 Million Points	<b>Honorable Mention</b> 1 Thousand Points	<b>A Bag of Rocks</b> Zero Points
<b>Video Footage</b>	<b>DreamWorks</b> Clearly framed shots. 4 or more live shots. Uses concept filming.	<b>Lifetime Movie</b> 4 shots, may not be framed or may be out of focus. OR 4+ all literal shots.	<b>Public Access</b> 2-3 Clearly framed shots	<b>Amateur Home movie</b> 1-3 shots OR may be out of focus or not framed.	<b>Drunk Wedding Video</b> No video, or video, which makes us, feels sick.
<b>Music</b>	<b>Record Label</b> Supports text, no interference with reading.	<b>American Idol Contestant</b> Supports theme, may interfere at times.	<b>Garage Band</b> Does not interfere, but may not support the theme.	<b>Kid with a pot and pan</b> Music doesn't support theme and interferes.	<b>Simon and Garfunkel</b> "The Sounds of Silence"
<b>Voiceover</b>	<b>James Earl Jones</b>  Clear, projects the spirit of the text.	<b>Peter Jennings</b>  While the reading is done with emotion it may contain errors.	<b>Graduation Speech</b>  Voice may lack emotion and contain errors.	<b>Talking to Yourself.</b>  Voiceover is not audible at times.	<b>Greta Garbo</b>  Mute.
<b>Length and Basics</b>	One minute or more. Includes title, CVCV credit and name.	45 seconds, OR may be missing one competent.	30 second OR missing 2 components	15 seconds or missing all components.	1 nana second
<b>Storyboard</b>	Complete.	Complete: 75%	Complete: 50%	Complete: 25%	Complete: 0%

- Complete your assignment sheet for your students—include details of what the digital video should include, timeframe, and workgroups.
- Complete your own project rubric for your students
- Complete storyboard for your response to the project
- Complete the digital video project based on the poem, based on the Music video genre.

# The Movie Trailer Project

(Mid-November-Early December)

## *What is it?*

“Coming to classrooms this fall, an educational masterpiece, a film No Child Left Behind, gave two thumbs up to, PUMP UP THE CONTENT. Watch as gleaming students use their tacit knowledge in this genre to exploit, explain and evaluate your curriculum concepts. You will be amazed as seemingly tuned out adolescents strap themselves to a desk and churn out the most authentic, amazing writing you have ever laid your eyes on. Rolling Stone exclaims, “This is genre to watch out for in the educational arena. Watch out Generation Millennial, the teachers are fighting back”. Starring the students of Buffalo Public Schools and Produced by dedicated City Voices, City Visions teachers. This genre has not been rated. No animals were hurt in the making of this film.”

## *Why this genre now?*

With the exposure to the filming requirements of the I-Speak, students are now ready to produce the backbone of their next video themselves, by writing a script. The script will allow students to begin to visualize the rest of their film, making the storyboarding process extremely doable for a second project. Show your students lots of Hollywood trailers and discuss the language and methods the professionals use. Remind students they are not limited by the movies, television show previews work as well! You can find an assortment of movie trailers at the website below.

- Apple - Movie Trailers  
[www.apple.com/trailers/](http://www.apple.com/trailers/)
- The Internet Movie Database (IMDb)  
[www.imdb.com/Sections/Trailers/](http://www.imdb.com/Sections/Trailers/)

## *Choosing your content and conducting the orchestra.*

Due to the fact that the script in a movie trailer can carry a good amount of information, it is my thought that rather assigning vocabulary terms and smaller chunks of history, it may be a good idea to assign large themes of history to groups. For most of my assignments, I will compile more than enough topics for selection; groups then draw straws for the right to choose first. In addition, groups are always allowed to pitch their own idea for what they would like to cover, the important variable here is I am always acting as the “gatekeeper”. If there is anyway to give the students some flexibility in choosing their assignments, do it. The more ownership you can give the groups over the project, the more authentic and meaningful of a product you will see in return. You may also decide to implement some of these projects at different time periods in the year, whatever the reason is, take the backbone of the project and apply it to the material you are working with. Push creative titles and let the kids have some fun with it! Another hint, make the students aware that by choosing the genre of their “film” they will influence the direction their film goes. Like small grooves along a very complex track, choosing the genre of the “film” can be a constant facilitator of good decisions to come. Hence, if you are dealing with the Elastic Clause, students have more than a few directions they can take. If they decide to take the perspective that the Elastic Clause is a government mechanism which allows for abuse, the theme becomes scary. The title then becomes, “The Elastic Claws”,

the script becomes molded in the “Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>” style, the music chosen is scary. The entire film takes an early shape and influences the way the student creates their film. If, on the other hand, the group decides to present the Elastic Clause as something needed and perhaps heroic, the title becomes, “Elastic to the Rescue”, the music becomes “Superman” and the script takes form. Even if the group decides to be fair and balances, a genre such as a drama or love story can present those pre-drilled grooves, which make this project such an enabler of student success.

I have come up with some suggestions for your grade level based on my conversations with other Social Studies teachers and my own experiences. Fortunately, all teachers are not the same and you very well might find that the way you organize your material differs from my suggestions. No foul, no fumble. More than anything, my outline is meant to demonstrate the amount of material to assign and the scope and breadth of topical assignments.

## Social Studies Ideas for the Trailer Genre

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Early U.S. History



I may be a week or so off but my hunch is that by October you are beginning to dive into the Constitution. The U.S. Constitution, for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, offers some easily digestible content. Rather than nit pick the document, let us come up with five or six major themes, enough for a class project: 1) Flexibility, 2) Individual Rights, 3) Limits on Power, 4) Separation of Power and 5) Federalism. As you can see, big, broad, thematic ideas, which would require groups to spend a few days researching. After gathering their information (consider having students complete a graphic organizer first), students will need two days to write their script and storyboard.

Below are some examples of possible titles of shows.

- Tune into Fox next fall to catch America’s hottest new reality show, “Check That Power”. Watch as different branches of the government compete in amazing games of governmental power grabbing...
- Coming to theaters next spring, “I Gotta be Free”, a telling tale of lows and highs and the American people battle through Judicial Review for the recognition of their individual liberties. Watch as the Government takes down some of its citizens such as Schenk, Korematsu and Plessey. Ride the roller coaster of emotions as heroes emerge in the form of criminals such as Miranda, Gideon and Mapp.

Write examples of “trailer” language on the board, challenge students to add to it as they think up new ones! Before students embark on their projects make sure to show them student examples as well. Remind them of lessons that you have already taught regarding good film and introduce something more advanced. By the third project you will want to start taking the time to model such techniques as reverse motion, repeating short sequences, locking in audio as well as other more advanced editing tools.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States History (Civil War-Present)



By the time October rolls around, it is my assumption that you are nearing the Progressive Age. Combining the causes of the Industrial/Gilded Age with the reforms of the Progressive Age could prove to be a powerful formula. Both themes are weighted heavily on the multiple-choice on the end of the year exam and also a wide variety of relevant essays. There are countless ways to “chop-up” this content, I started a partial list to get your ball rolling.

- Muckraking Shows, “Cooking with Upton Sinclair”, “Bust That Trust with Ida Tarbell”
- Capitalism/Industrial Shows, “America’s Next Social Darwinist”, “Monopoly Madness”
- Immigration Shows, “Nativistic News Hour”, “America or Bust”
- Jim Crow Shows, “The New South Saga”, “Judge Injustice”
- Democratic Expansion Shows, “The Lafollette Follies”, “As These Amendments Turn”

Your students will provide the arsenal ideas as long as you provide a strong framework, good modeling, creative examples and a useful rubric. Unlike other assignments, I make it an absolute requirement that groups turn in their script and obtain approval from the Executive Producer before filming. Plan on a good two weeks for this project to work. Having student immersed in DV for two weeks does not mean that your course has to be put on hold, think about layering the project with thematic essays for homework, short lectures and practice multiple choice. When your class completes this project, you will not only have prepared for the end of the year exams but you will have created a powerful bank of resources for years to come. All of these questions give students space to create interesting narratives about their learning experiences in US History. Give them a day to brainstorm and write down their filming ideas. You may want to consider creating your own sample clip where you ham it up and frame a visual and conceptual live shot. With a decade under their belts of notes, worksheets and lots of structure their right side of their brains sometimes a jumpstart.

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History I



*In selecting topics for Global 9, you want to always be mindful of what would be valuable for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade regents. Spending a long period of time on slices of history may produce stellar videos, but the amount of important themes that will carry over to the exam may be limited. It is therefore a very good idea to concentrate on thematic essay ideas. With such a long span of history to teach, two weeks on Ancient Civilizations would be worth while and students would be immersed in critical elements of the course. There are many avenues you could choose to take when coming with assignments so have fun walking that road. I have thrown a few dirt paths below to get you started.*

- Tune in tomorrow night on NBC to African Idol; discover the ancient secrets of Africa’s oldest kingdoms.
- Don’t miss next falls most praised new show, “Beauty and the Greek.” Watch ten contestants from ancient Greek history try to impress the mythological goddesses of yesteryear.

- Cops: Rome Edition, don't miss the action packed season premier as internal forces corrupt and contaminate one of history most treasured empires.
- Tune in next week to ABC's newest hit, The Middle East Got s Talent.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History II



October and November bring in the nineteenth century and along with it a host of revolutions, wars and struggles. Framing a project around the theme of conflict will provide your students with plenty of tacit experiences and built in motivation to succeed. An added benefit is the theme is found throughout the Regents exam and can carry an infinitive amount of content. Remember to stay broad, rather than assigning the Battle of Waterloo, assign, Napoleon. This project would be perfectly suitable within the confines of a research paper or oral presentation, even if you do decide to run the project by itself, students will need a minimum of two to three days of research time. Do not let this time go to waste, find ways to check the students use of content and constantly challenge them to raise the bar. I have provided a few sample topics to get the show started.

- Coming to Theaters next summer, “Off with their Heads!” A fresh new comedy as the masses of the French underclass rise up and slice and dice the rich.
- Don’ miss next years most anticipated horror film, “Russian Hacksaw Communist Massacre” Watch as Marxism creeps its ideology into the willing hands of armed revolutionaries.
- King Swap. This week on King swap watch the King of England swap Places with the French monarch. You won’t want to miss the confusion and anarchy as the Kings implement rule change week.

As I have written in the past, if this theme does not strike you as worthy or your schedule has you far ahead or behind, do not be afraid to mix it up. The beauty of the Trailer assignment is it is a genre that easily can be laid across any curriculum, concept and time period.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States and History



*As an instructor of United States and History, I spend most of October and November in the 19<sup>th</sup> century working my way to the Civil War. In order to “cover” a lot of material, I would recommend spreading the project from the concept of Manifest Destiny up until the Civil War. Allow your assignments to be broad, you want your students forced to ask and answer large questions about the history and not get caught up in the details of individual events. The following represents a list of possible topics. I will refrain from making up any more fake movie titles; I am confident you can take reins from here in on out.*

- Manifest Destiny. What provoked the U.S. to venture westward? Illustrate the concept with three specific examples.
- Northern and Southern Economies. Explore the differences between the north and south in respect to their economies. How did these difference turn into political issues? How did these issues ultimately lead to the Civil War?
- Abolitionism. Illustrate the growth of the abolitionist movement. Who were the major leaders and events? Describe how political events contributed to their growth and how they ultimately helped to force the question of Civil War.
- Transportation. Explore the methods of transportation prior to the Civil War. How did the government help or hinder their effectiveness. What impact did these transportation systems have on the peoples who used them and stood in their way?
- Compromise. Describe the political issues that forced the US Congress to adopt certain compromises to hold the Union together. Why did the compromises ultimately fail?
- The Election of Lincoln. Describe Lincoln's political beliefs. How did Lincoln regard the question of slavery? What political stances did Lincoln hold which made him a Republican?

I would imagine there is a good seven or eight major themes from the time periods that I did not include. Much of your student's success will be in the structure, guidance and questions you provide for. Let the students know early on that their films meaning is as important as its quality.

*This is a great generic rubric that I use with many different types of projects. One recommendation would be to remove the Concept category and replace it with one that focuses on the trailer script.*

Mr. Hughes iMovie Rubric 100 points Period: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES: \_\_\_\_\_

	20	15	10	5	0
<b>Concept</b> 1. Begin with a question. 2. Answer it with a concept. 3. Write out text in iMovie on back of rubric.	The video begins w/ a question and then answers the question in a <i>creative and imaginative way</i> . (spelling correct, writing handed in on back of rubric)	The video begins w/ a question and then answers the question. (spelling correct, writing handed in on back of rubric)	While the film addresses an important concept there is no title question in the film and/or writing isn't handed in) OR misspelling or bad grammar	The film has a question and writing is handed in yet the film fails to correctly answer the question.	The film has no question and/or the writing is not handed in AND the film fails to correctly answer the question.
<b>Length</b>	30-60 seconds.	20-29 seconds	more than 60 seconds	10-19 seconds	less than 10 seconds
<b>Flow</b> 1. Your video should look good. Visually pleasing. Time it out and make it flow smoothly!	<b>20/20 Vision!</b> The video had excellent flow. Watching it, it just looked good! It was smooth and interesting.	<b>Vision!</b> The video had good flow. While there may of been some technical problems, I could tell what the directors were trying to do.	<b>A bit foggy.</b> You could tell the directors tried to do something, yet their vision was lost. The film may of lost you at times. A bit choppy.	<b>Near-Sighted</b> The film seemed to lack a vision, parts of it may of looked OK but the film lacked any meaningful flow.	<b>Blind!</b> It was like watching a monkey tie her shoes. The film lacked any credible moments, it basically was a train wreck.
<b>Shots</b> 1. You must break your text into at least 6 section (6 shots). 2. The shots (pics or video) should jive with the concept of the text.	The film broke down the text appropriately. (6+ shots) Text flows across shots. Shots are framed and at times <i>conceptual, not just literal.</i>	6+ shots and the text was broken down. Some shots were either too long or too short. The text was complete but may of not flowed at times. Shots are purely <i>literal.</i>	6+ shots and incomplete text. OR Misspellings, grammar errors or text can't be read or understood at times.	<6 shots OR incomplete text.	<6 shots AND incomplete text.
<b>Multimedia</b> 1. Use transitions and music to enhance video. 2. Use 10+ of live video. Frame and plan shots.	Music/Sound enhanced film. 3+ transitions used effectively. 10 seconds + video: great shots!	Music/Sound and 3+ transitions were used effectively. 10 seconds video used. Shots were OK	Music/Sound and 3+transitions used. OK and/or some video (<10secs) video is good.	Missing Music or less than 3 transitions. OR no live video.	No Music AND no transitions.

## Digital Storytelling : Movie Trailer

Teacher Name: **Mr. Pyszczek**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Point of View - Awareness of Audience</b>	Strong awareness of audience in the design. Students can clearly explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students can partially explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students find it difficult to explain how the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Limited awareness of the needs and interests of the target audience.
<b>Point of View - Purpose</b>	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains a clear focus throughout.	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains focus for most of the presentation.	There are a few lapses in focus, but the purpose is fairly clear.	It is difficult to figure out the purpose of the presentation.
<b>Duration of Presentation</b>	Length of presentation was 1-2 minutes.	Length of presentation was 45 seconds	Length of presentation was 30 seconds.	Presentation was less than 30 seconds long OR more than 2 minutes.
<b>Grammar</b>	Grammar and usage were correct (for the dialect chosen) and contributed to clarity, style and character development.	Grammar and usage were typically correct (for the dialect chosen) and errors did not detract from the story.	Grammar and usage were typically correct but errors detracted from story.	Repeated errors in grammar and usage distracted greatly from the story.
<b>Economy</b>	The story is told with exactly the right amount of detail throughout. It does not seem too short nor does it seem too long.	The story composition is typically good, though it seems to drag somewhat OR need slightly more detail in one or two sections.	The story seems to need more editing. It is noticeably too long or too short in more than one section.	The story needs extensive editing. It is too long or too short to be interesting.

Date Created: Apr 02, 2006 06:07 pm (CDT)

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# *The UnCommerical Project*

*(Mid-January-Mid-February)*

The UnCommercial is a genre that is most often associated with that of a good ole' T.V. commercial. We also include in this category, political commercials and public service announcements. All three types of video are short in length, structured to a degree yet open enough to allow for tremendous flexibility. Considering the new elements that this genre offers be sure to model a new technique at least once a day. For the same reasons, if you have not required a storyboard before, you may want to seriously consider doing so now. Commercials, PSA's and political commercials are much more difficult to "wing". Students, who have found success filming as they go along, will run into a new host of problems, better to be safe than sorry.

When I implement this project with my students we spend a full day watching a wide variety of funny commercials, moving PSA's and powerful political commercials. We do this before we watch student films; we do this to raise our expectations with that of the professional world. After spending meaningful time talking about the methods the videos we watch employed, we then watch student commercials. Students are always kind but always discerning in their evaluation. With there new professional eye, they "see" how other students went astray, they alike clap and wave their fists in the air when a student video "nails it".

You can find numerous examples of commercials, political commercials and PSA's below.

- *Classic Apple Ads*  
<http://www.theapplecollection.com/Collection/AppleMovies/movies11.html>
- Extensive Political Ad Database  
<http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/timeline/>
- The Ad Council's Website  
<http://www.adcouncil.org>
- Great list of related links.  
<http://www.google.com/Top/Arts/Television/Commercials/>

## Social Studies Ideas for “UnCommercials”

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Early U.S. History



7<sup>th</sup> Graders can be quite literal, so a “literal” commercial project might be right up their alley. Within the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum it is my estimation that by February you are working your way into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the nation was very much slowly becoming more a nation of urban centers and immigrants and less, “Little House on the Prairie”. Students could research information concerning a technological leap (Cotton Gin, Canals, Railroads, Steam Engine), where once the project ended with a paper and perhaps a crude representation of the product, students can now layer all of their research information into a commercial. Other ideas, which hit the same time era, are listed below.

- *Early National Leaders. Political Ads for Hamilton, Jefferson, Washington and perhaps, Abigail Adams.*
- *Foreign Affairs in the new government (American Neutrality, Louisiana Purchase, War of 1812) Perhaps PSA’s persuading Americans to support a cause (Americans for Neutralizing Napoleon)*
- *Reform. (Jacksonian Democracy, Seneca Falls, Abolitionists) Students could easily turn a reform concept into a product, a message or a candidate.*

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: U.S. History



The Uncommercial genre would fit perfectly into 20<sup>th</sup> century American History. Rather than spend time in foreign affairs, it may be more beneficial to concentrate on domestic/political events of the 1920 and 1930’s. Major ideas related to change and conflict reside in these decades, leaving students with tons of good choices. Once you assign the topics, be sure to work with the groups in their brainstorming sessions, here, more than any previous project, may cause some kids to freeze up. For the first time in the DV process the structure of the video really has not been formatted. They have literally, millions of choices, here is where watching a days worth of ads will come in handy.

- *The Great Depression. Create PSA’s by lobby groups to demand Hoover take action. Americans for Bonus Pay create a tear-jerking ad showing the injustice faced by the Bonus Army, it ends, “So stop Douglas Macarthur and his boss President Hoover, write Congress today and demand the bonus pay be passed.*
- *The New Deal. The New Deal could serve as its own independent project. Turn the New Deal Programs into medicine and have the students create pharmaceutical ads. “Feeling Underemployed? Does the Concert jungle have you down? Well, your day has come. Call your doctor and request a free sample of CCC. One dose of the Civilian Conservation Corps and not only will you feel a paycheck in your pocket and a warm country breeze on your neck but America herself will feel more beautiful than ever.*

- *The Scopes Monkey Trial.* Create an attorney commercial for Charles Darrow or William Jennings Bryan.
- *The Harlem Renaissance and the Great Migration.* Perhaps a travel ad. Touting the cultural and social benefits of Harlem in contrast to how Jim Crow South.
- *Womyn and Social Change.* Students could start a new magazine, “Flapper” and create a commercial selling its subscription.

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global History I



For a 9<sup>th</sup> Grade UnCommercial Project I would recommend one, which focuses on Cultural Diffusion. Whenever you plan on spending more than ten days on anything in Global 9, you must be able to justify it. By aiming your DV arrows at such a big idea which carries over to our world today, you will be guaranteeing that the students’ experiences will pay off at the end of their sophomore year when they take the Regents exam. You literally have hundreds of years to choose from. Before you narrow your assigned content, think about broad thematic topics such as;

- *The Crusades.* What Regents would be complete without a heft amount of points being aimed at this monstrosity of an event? Travel Ads, PSA’s supporting or objecting to the Crusades or even political ads for fictitious politicians (or real) who felt strongly about them. Like the trailer project be sure to give your students a good amount of structured time researching. The film idea is difficult and when students come up with a creative one, that’s great but without the flesh of content you only have a naked cool movie thingy.
- *Triangular Trade:* With this event being connected to exploration, capitalism, genocide and the New World skipping it just doesn’t seem right. Students could sell voyages on famous Explorers ships, create PSA extolling the evils of the slave trade or create political ads for Queen Isabella.
- *Gold/Salt and other Trade Routes.* Exploring the crossovers between Africa and the Middle East could provide for a wealth of creative ideas. Travel guides, important discovers turned into info commercials and political ads for fallen leaders could be both fun and educational.
- *Great Civilizations.* A travel ad for Greece or Rome, a political ad for Cleopatra, the ideas are endless.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Global II



When February rolls around in a tenth grade Global Studies classroom, many teachers are already looking at their calendars. Not only does the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teacher have the drag of reviewing for the entire year before a state assessment, this lucky ducky gets to review for two years of 7 billion years of history (although we skip a lot of the whole big bang, dinosaur, evolution thing). With that in mind, I am going to

venture to say by February you are well into 20<sup>th</sup> century history. A simple, powerful and meaningful project, at this time of the year, would have to focus on large concepts using concrete examples. These commercials should contain the same amount and type of content that you would find in a thematic essay. It is my recommendation that you choose a Thematic Essay topic such as Genocide or Interdependence and assign (or let students pick) 20<sup>th</sup> century ammo. I have listed a couple of thematic themes below along with sample project topics.

- *Genocide.* For such an emotional and important topic, if you decide to go down this path, I would highly recommend you make it a PSA project. Nobody want commercials of Rwanda, rather by using the PSA format, you will be giving kids a megaphone to not only learn, but more importantly speak out about such topics as Darfur, the Holocaust, the Armenian Massacre, the Killing Fields or any one of many more unfortunate examples of human cruelty in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- *Interdependence.* A grand and important current even topic on the Regents. Commercials for free trade, political ads for world leaders or commercials for products, which illustrate interdependence, would all be time well spent.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: U.S. History



For older students, you can feel more comfortable assigning ideas less than direct, defined events/vocabulary words. Timeframe wise, you are working through the Progressive Era at this time in the course, so a reform focused project would give you a lot of good choices. Think about breaking up the era in big chunks; civil rights, big business, the Republican Party, Womyn Rights..... Allow the kids the task of whittling down the content to finding the important trend/concept/lesson that goes with their topic. This “whittling: down process will be difficult at first but in the long run it produces better ideas and a more direct sense of ownership over the product by the students. You might also consider allowing students as much flexibility as possible when picking the type of uncommercial they want to make. In more than a few cases, I have gritted my teeth and nodded a quiet yes when approving a project only to see the final product come back and blow me off my rocker. I have bulleted some related ideas to the Reform Uncommercial.

- *Domestic Policies from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.* Students could turn the Square Deal, Wilson’s New Freedom or the New Deal into 1-800 Commercials. “That’s right order now and we’ll ship you a free trust-busting collector’s edition, hammer.
- *Suggest to your students they consider turning a reformer from American History into a candidate and create a political commercial for them.* Students can run their “candidate” for any office, it need not be President. You could build the entire project around running reformers for high school yearbook categories. Mother Jones, most likely to get in trouble. Upton Sinclair, most likely to go Veggie.
- *Political Commercials would also be an ideal choice for Civil Rights reformers.* Booker T. Washington, WEB Dubois, Fredrick Douglass, Ida Wells, would all be ideal for this sort of project. PSA’s challenging the Supreme Court or Jim Crow, commercials for the New Deal programs, the possibilities are truly endless.

# A Sample UnCommercial Project

## Your UnCommercial Assignment

What is an uncommercial?

An uncommercial is a genre of film which uses the commercial format to sell an idea or concept. While it has been mainly used to draw focus on the humanities and social science issues, it can be used in all disciplines. Our uncommercials will be directed towards curriculum focused concepts.

While we will see a few in class, you may want to check out [adbusters.org](http://adbusters.org) for some online examples. Keep in mind adbusters in a private organization and their work does represent a liberal/progressive bias.

### Brainstorming

We would first like you to begin your project by brainstorming by subject area. What are some essential questions that can accomplish two things. Number one, is it an EQ that is fundamental to my course. Video work should be used working with major concepts, especially in the beginning! Number two, is this an EQ that I can possibly answer using a video. So your first task is to pick an essential question.

### Planning

We will spend some time as a group discussing and modeling some basic Digital video / iMovie planning strategies. Included in this discussion will be filming conceptually, story boarding, film strategies as well as a host of other ideas that will get you fired up.

### Homework

Your first assignment at home will be to really sketch out an idea of what you want your video to look like. If you're stuck, always turn to commercials you have seen and steal them. I won't tell and they can be quite powerful in relaying a concept since they

automatically receive the recognition factor! The rubric calls for 15 seconds of live video, so here is your chance to get creative.

### Work time

We plan on tomorrow being a work session. It is our hope that you will experiment and play and learn. It is also our hope that you will share what you know and learn with those around you. Your video must be completed by the end of Tuesday for a 9 am Wednesday morning screening.

### The DV Rubric

The rubric is posted at: [www.nylearns.org/docs/keithhughes/rubric](http://www.nylearns.org/docs/keithhughes/rubric)

In a nutshell we are asking you in the next 24 hours to put together a 60 second uncommercial answering your essential question. We think the best way to learn is by doing something you will eventually have your kids do. We want this project to be a model for your classroom. Your ad should open with your essential question, followed by 60 seconds of the uncommercial. We expect that you will have the following three components;

- 1) 15 seconds of live video
  - 2) titles and/or voiceovers
  - 3) music which enhances your concept
- \*please check the rubric for the specific assessment tools

## A Sample UnCommercial Rubric

<u>UnCommercial Video Rubric</u>	20	15	10	0
<b>Essential Question/ Curriculum Concept</b>	The video addresses a well formed EQ, demonstrating the EQ's concept.	While a EQ was well formed, the video did not sufficiently answer it.	The EQ does not address a key curriculum concept.	Essential Question?, Concept, what are you talking about?
<b>Live Video</b>	15 second+ Shots are well framed and used effectively. Video uses non-literal concepts.	15+ Shots framed and used satisfactorily. Video is literal.	<15 or 15+ and video is used ineffectively.	Live Video? Is that some kind of new reality show?
<b>Sound</b>	Music is used creatively and in a way that it dramatically enhances the uncommercial.	Music is used to increase the effectiveness of the uncommercial.	While music is included it does not support the uncommercial and may detract from its theme.	Music? Yeah, uhm, ... its, "The Sound of Silence" ... get it?
<b>Information</b>	The answer to the EQ is evident in titles and/or voiceovers. The title and /or voiceovers are clear and dynamic.	The EQ is answered using titles and/or voiceover.	While the video has title and/or voiceover they do not support the EQ's concept.	The titles and/or voiceover are invisible.
<b>Length</b>	The video begins with an essential question and then includes a 60 second uncommercial.	The video begins with an essential question and then an uncommercial that is not 60 seconds.	While the video is 60 seconds it does not have an essential question that opens it.	No essential question and the film is not 60 seconds.

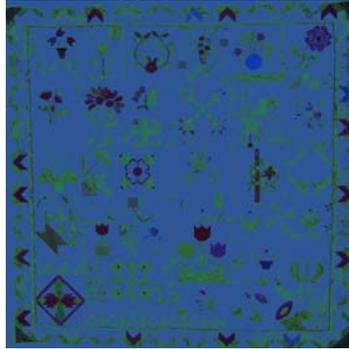
## A Sample Rubric for a PSA

**SAMPLE RUBRIC : PSA Project**  
Follow this rubric to obtain your grade.

	<b>20: Academy Award</b>	<b>16: Bronze Statue</b>	<b>12: Blue Ribbon</b>	<b>5: Bag of rocks</b>	<b>0: Rotten Tomatoes</b>
<b>Overall Effectiveness Video Length</b>	Deeply understood message, Powerful and 30-60 seconds.	Message Received! and 30-60 seconds.	Powerful and Actual Video isn't 30-60 secs	Video lacks a clear message.	Video is a black screen.
<b>Video/Shots  Editing</b>	More than half of the video is of live video. Still images if present must fill screen and be effective. Video is clear, focused and enhances PSA. Attention to angles, lighting, length, distance and concept.  <b>AND</b>  Editing has flow. The video captures and holds the viewers attention. Transitions and/or effects add to powerfulness of ad.	While more than half of the PSA is live video, the video at times may be shaky, out of focus, or otherwise less than professional. <b>OR</b> still images used which distract from the quality of the video. <b>OR</b> Editing is good but may include effect(s) or transition(s) that decreases powerfulness of PSA.	Video is less than half of the video. Video is primarily still images.  <b>OR</b>  Editing is seemingly needed. Film may seem uncut with mistakes and bad video included.	Less than 5 seconds of live video.	No live video
<b>Voiceover/ Narrative  Music</b>	Excellent. Voice(s) are clear and spoken with appropriate mood. No mistakes and timed appropriately. <b>AND</b> Music enhances video.	Good. Voice(s) may be clear but may have technical flaws. Music may distract.	OK Voice(s) are audible but may include noticeable mistakes.	Eeks. Voice(s) track(s) are missing/needed. <b>OR</b> may have major mistakes.	The voice track if played backwards makes you worship the devil.
<b>Credits</b>	Name(s), Class, School, Instructor, Month and Year, cite copyrighted visual material. Can be read and done creatively. <b>AND</b> Credits are done separately (leave pause and/or switch music) from video.	Complete but may be hard to read.	Missing one piece of info.	Missing more than one piece of info.	Invisible.
<b>Information and Tag  Use of Titles</b>	Video has meaningful information/Statistics, which include source. <b>AND</b> Tag is original and appropriate. <b>AND</b> Titles have been utilized effectively.	Video has meaningful information, which goes uncited. Has a decent tag.	Video is missing relevant information /information is confusing or the Tag is missing.	<b>Both</b> a tag and information are missing.	Information is wrong.

## The Quilt

### *An optional methodology for short-term DV Integration*



*The Digital Quilt was an idea created by McKinley High School English teacher, Joel Malley. The basic tenet of the started with I-Movie-in-a-Day. Expanding the timeframe from an hour to a project which could be completed in a relatively short period. Like the I-Movie-in-a-Day project the framework of the video is created prior to the project being undertaken by you, the teacher. Unlike the rapid, in the front of the class, filming of the I-Movie-in-a-Day, the quilt allows students more time to plan and a degree of privacy when they film. Here are a few variations of the quilt process.*

- 1) A project could be spread over the course of a few weeks, with students being assigned major ideas within the realm of a theme in the Social Studies. Students would then be allotted time on one predetermined computer, where they would be responsible for filming their scene and importing it into the framework of the project. If you think of I-Movie as a cartoon strip, you are basically creating the beginning and end of the comic book. The kids will “drop” in their comic strips.*
- 2) Quilts can also be used in correlation with larger more tradition projects. In a wonderful project, entitled, “In the World Today”, Mr. Malley students’ film video statements, which summarized their research papers. Their voice and visual (all of five seconds) in slowly dropped in to create a whole class movie summarizing their research findings.*
- 3) A Quilt can be implemented in a smaller amount of time by focusing on narrower bands of history. For example, after assigning students New Deal programs, students might be expected to write a 10 second narration, recruiting workers for their program. You would then have the clips to build a New Deal Recruitment Video.*
- 4) Rapid-fire interview questions are another way in which you could incorporate student clips into an easy to build, curriculum focused video. Imagine filming a short news style report on a major historical question. “And now lets go down to the street and see how ordinary Americans view the dropping of the atomic bomb to end WWII”*

# the Video Quilt

## What is a Video Quilt?

A video quilt is a side project that students can work on while working on another project. It is a patchwork of different images that students can assemble to provide a comprehensive view of a project.

## What do I need?

- one computer
- students
- drawing or image (from each student)
- words (to be spoken by each student)

## Example?

For example, one week I had my students composing poems about a childhood experience. While working on their poems and discussing imagery, theme, etc., I asked them to write one sentence that would sum up their poem and also find an image that represented their poem. They then filmed their image while speaking their sentence into the camera's microphone. The film was a collection of these images/sentences.

## Ok, what do I do?

1. Set up a computer, microphone, and camera stand in a secluded corner in the room.
2. Devise a writing project that you think would be nicely supplemented by a project such as this.
3. While working on the writing piece (I implement a writing workshop for my major writing pieces), have students travel over to the video station.
  - a. Student A controls the camera and clicks "import"
  - b. Student B, while looking at the image on the iMovie screen, directs the camera person's focus, instructs the camera person to film, and then reads the line into the camera's microphone.
4. After all of the students have filmed, then you must edit out any extra noise, lay some music, and do any other editing that you wish.
5. View the film with your class.

## I have to do the editing?

It depends. I have done projects where the students get rid of any extra sound or video, and then I come along and add music and rearrange the order of the clips. Sometimes I use class discussion to determine clip order and music choice. I have also left all of the editing up to the students on certain occasions. It depends on the situation.

## Have you tried it with anything else other than writing pieces?

Yup. I just split up a short story with my AP students, and the quilt was a collection of their drawings and a line from their section that they thought was important.

I have one  
camera and  
one  
computer.  
Is there  
anything I  
can do?

## Sample Quilt Project

What is a quilt project?

A quilt project is used with the aid of one camera and one computer, in essence students film short “confessionals” based on a preset essential question. Their responses contribute to a larger video concept. As opposed to regular genre projects (I-Speak, Commercials, Movie Trailers), the Quilt’s editing falls onto the teacher’s shoulders although you will quickly find kids eager to devote extra time to facilitate in the editing. The finished projects promote a key curriculum concept using student voices and unique perspectives.

### Examples

1. After completing a research projects on a global problem, students talk on film for 30 seconds commenting on what they learned. After adding some music, titles, special effects and smooth transitions, a video is completed. The video is shown to the class and sparks a lively debate regarding people’s concerns. Students become motivated to do a class video probing solutions.
2. Students, over the course of a unit, take turns “filming” vocabulary/course concepts for the unit being studied. After a little cleaning up of the clips, you add some music and titles. The video is uploaded onto the web and serves as a student filmed study guide.

### Time Management and Assessment

The great thing about a quilt is you can have a long time frame. Perhaps only 4 kids get to film each day. I usually produce a list of available filming concepts and students who sign up first are given first choice. Once kids know their work holds value and is adding to the quality of a “class” presentation they will take it seriously.

A simple rubric posted near the camera can serve well to keep kids focused. You do not want tons of film to edit. Here is an example.

	<b>Academy Award</b> 9 trillion dollars	<b>People’s Choice Award</b> A cool million	<b>Community Theatre Ribbon of Participation</b> A gift certificate to the fruit cake of the month club	<b>I want my money back.</b> A free signup to 100 junk email server lists
Concept Word	Video does an excellent, clear job of expressing the meaning of the term/concept.	Video expresses the main idea of the term, although not in depth	Video attempts to express the correct meaning of the word but the message may be weak or missing.	Video does not address the term or defines it incorrectly.
Length	15-25 seconds	Within 5 seconds of the limit	10 seconds off	Over 35 seconds or under 5
Film	Shots are clear and focused. Sound and Lighting is excellent. Video needs little editing.	Attention is paid to shots. Sound and Lighting do not interfere. Some editing may be necessary.	Shots may be unfocused or “rushed” Sound quality may be weak and/or lighting may interfere with the shot/	An utter mess. It’s amazing you didn’t break the camera. What were you thinking?

# Inquiry Videos



## What is an Inquiry Video?

*An inquiry video is a fancy way of labeling some of the longer, more in depth genres that I did not include in the scheduled video projects. Inquiry videos often blend multiple modes of video and styles, allowing for more opportunities to build meaning into the DV. Here are some examples of Inquiry genres.*

- *Investigative shows such as 20/20 and 60 minutes.*
- *Comedy sketch shows such as Saturday Night Live and MAD.*
- *Entertainment shows like E-True Hollywood or Entertainment tonight.*
- *Reality Shows. In the past we have seen everything from Survivor Reunion Shows to videos based on reality show confessionals.*
- *Game Shows. Be sure to check out the Dating Game, starring the Constitution.*
- *Insert your own genre. Every year CVCV teachers come up with new and exciting genres. So think real hard about watching TV and come up with your new genre.*

*Inquiry videos are very much like DV research projects, while the genres will be recognizable (Dateline, Game Shows, Comedy Sketches); their structure is fluid and requires a commitment to planning. There are a few scenarios where I see inquiry videos being a possibility.*

- *After your first project or two, you might want to allow groups to venture off the chosen genre and try something a bit more advanced. Many times students, who excel in DV and crave a more in depth experience, will approach you and ask about option assignments. You may want to make an announcement regarding the inquiry video assignments, interested and motivated students could then approach you privately.*
- *After using DV in your classroom for a year or two, you may want to consider using the Inquiry Project as an end of the year project. While they are more time consuming and will require some additional modeling and technical training for your kids, their payoff is grand. If you are serious about giving it a try, leave a minimum of three weeks to complete the project.*
- *If your class or school becomes interested in a local or national event, inquiry videos offer the option to respond to that event digitally. This scenario would be more of an extra curricular project; you may find a small group of dedicated students who comes up with a fantastic idea. Wings of Hope, a McKinley video reaction to 9-11, was a spur of the moment decision. Digital Video can thrive outside the confines of a rubric and standards, if you sense it is something that can empower your students, make a move*

# *A Sample Inquiry Assignment and Rubric*

Genevieve

## Multi-Source Inquiry Assignment

**Your task:** For the last few weeks, we have been talking about the following question: "What is injustice?" Now it is your turn to explore this question. Injustice comes in many forms, from everyday, small-scale injustices to historical, large-scale injustices. For this video project, you will choose a situation that is somehow personal for you and research and explore, in an emotional and powerful way, why the situation is unjust.

**Directions:** Using iMovie, create a video inquiry (2-3 minutes) about your topic. Use at least *four* sources of information (see list) to help you create a compelling film about the nature of injustice. You *must* compare your injustice to another in history.

### Step One: Choose a topic.

- a. Pick an example of injustice from your own experience or from history. Choose a situation that is personal for you.
- b. Write at least a one-page journal entry that answers the following questions:
  - What is unjust about this situation?
  - How can I give voice to this injustice? Why do I want to?
  - What emotions are involved in the situation?
  - What other injustice does this relate to?
- c. Your topic must be approved before you move to Step Two.

### Step Two: Storyboard/Plan.

- a. Storyboard your entire project. Your storyboards and research must be approved before you begin Step Three.
- b. Questions to consider:
  - How will you compare your situation to another situation in a meaningful (not surface or literal) way?
  - How will you make your film *personal*? Consider point of view and emotions.
  - How will you get beyond a bland historical text and make your situation come alive?

### Step Three: Shoot/Edit.

#### Due on Screening Day:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Journal entry from Step One.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed storyboards.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed, correct bibliography in MLA format

# Sample Inquiry Based Video Project

Natasha A. Mehta

Grade Level: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade U.S. History and Government  
Unit Plan: The Constitution and Change

Timeframe: 2 weeks

## Materials:

Computer Lab with appropriate Movie editing software  
Class set of Camera with chargers, firewire, tapes and sign-out sheet  
2-3 Classroom computers with Internet access for research/clips  
Copies of Assignment Sheet, Rubric and iMovie permission slip  
Props for filming, including class texts

Necessary materials for this Unit Plan vary on a day-to-day basis. Please refer to the unit timeframe breakdown for more details

## Objectives:

Students will explore different principles of the Constitution and how these principles allow the United States to adapt to change. They will do this through the production of a digital video in an appropriate genre of their choice. The final video will range from 3-5 minutes and should include all of the elements that a thematic essay on the same topic would.

## Assessment:

The final video project will be graded using the attached Constitutional Inquiry Rubric. The final grade for the Constitutional Inquiry is out of 200 points. Students score on the rubric will be doubled to calculate final score. Any other writing assignments associated with this project will be worth a total of 10 possible points each, towards students' fourth quarter grades.

## Prerequisites:

Students have the necessary skills to plan, film, edit and present an original digital video that is content related. They also have the necessary background knowledge to explore the Constitution, and its importance throughout the course of American history, in greater depth.

## Essential Learning Questions:

- 1) What are the foundations of government found in the U.S. Constitution?
- 2) Explain the principles of the U.S. Constitution and how they allow for change
- 3) Explain the various ways the U.S. Constitution is flexible. Relate it to today and other historical instances.
- 4) Explain the various ways the Constitution can be interpreted.
- 5) How does the Constitution protect individual and state rights against possible abuses by the Federal Government?

Multi-Source Inquiry Video Rubric

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Video Footage</b>	-Shots are clearly framed and purposeful/conceptual/evocative -At least 4 live shots	-All 4 shots are not framed or are out of focus, but are purposeful/conceptual -4 shots, but not purposeful/conceptual	-Only 2-3 shots, but clearly framed and somewhat purposeful/conceptual	-1-3 shots that are out of focus or not clearly framed -Shots are not purposeful/conceptual	-No live video footage
<b>Music</b>	-Music is original, relevant, and supports the tone/theme -Music supports all the images of the video in an artistic and thoughtful way	-Music is relevant and supports the tone/theme -Music may interfere with some of the images or other audio	-Music may not be relevant or support the tone/theme -Music does not interfere with images or other audio	-Music does not support theme -Music interferes with images or other audio	-No music used or explanation given for lack of music
<b>Voiceover/Sound</b>	-Clear -Reinforces the text, adding emotion for appropriate affect	-Mostly clear, but some errors -Reinforces the text with emotion	-Some errors interfere with clarity -May not reinforce the text with emotion	-Unclear or inaudible voiceover/sound -Read without emotion	-No voiceover/sound is used or explanation given for lack of sound
<b>Research</b>	-Includes at least four sources -Sources are varied, thoughtfully chosen, and appropriate for the topic -Completed, correct bibliography	-Includes three sources -Sources are somewhat varied and appropriate -Mostly complete and correct bibliography	-Includes two sources -Sources are somewhat varied and appropriate -Bibliography has several errors	-Includes one source -Sources are (obviously) not varied, and not very appropriate -Bibliography is not correct	-Includes no sources. -Includes no bibliography.
<b>Connections</b>	-Incorporates a second injustice that relates to the topic in a thoughtful, conceptual, and emotional way	-Incorporates a second injustice in a somewhat thoughtful and conceptual way	-Incorporates a second injustice, but in a basic and literal way	-Incorporates a second injustice, but in a choppy and confusing way	-Does not incorporate a second injustice
<b>Basics</b>	-Final video is 2-3 minutes  -Storyboard is 100% complete	-Final video is 1-2 minutes long  OR -Storyboard 75% complete	-Final video is 1 minute long  OR -Storyboard 50% complete	-Final video is 30 seconds long  OR -Storyboard 25% complete	-Final video is less than 30 seconds long  OR -No storyboards

systems.

- SS5.C.2E:

Students understand the dynamic relationship between federalism and state's rights developed.

# An Inquiry Project Timeline

<b>WEEK 1</b>	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
	<p><b>Project Introduction</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Copies of Asgnmnt Sheet</li> <li>___ Copies of Rubric</li> <li>___ Computer w/internet</li> <li>___ Video Projector&amp; hkup</li> <li>___ (Chalk)board</li> <li>___ Group Breakdown</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Activity Sheets and Rubric will be handed out and reviewed</li> <li>-Review of Constitution Principles on the board</li> <li>-Viewing of Sample Trailer</li> <li>- Students divided into groups of 3 based on their final grades and notified that they must hand in a paragraph proposal, with group's members names, principles and genre, before the end of class. (This is also written on the board.)</li> <li>- Students given remainder of class to brainstorm and begin scriptwriting process</li> <li>- Collect paragraph proposal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Scrap paper</li> <li>___ 2-3 computers w/int.</li> <li>___ Copies of Storyboard</li> <li>___ Various Props</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras (w/tapes, cords, &amp; sign out sheet)</li> <li>___ Reviewed Proposals with feedback</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review task at hand and notify students of storyboard availability once their scripts have been approved</li> <li>-Hand back proposals and conference with each group as scriptwriting process continues</li> <li>-Make (optional) storyboard available upon conferencing</li> <li>-Sign-out cameras to any groups that have completed and okayed scripts</li> <li>-Bring in Props reminder</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning/Filming</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Scrap paper</li> <li>___ 2-3 computers w/int.</li> <li>___ Copies of Storyboard</li> <li>___ Various Props</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras (w/tapes, cords, &amp; sign out sheet)</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review task and notify students that script must be completed by the end of class</li> <li>- Sign-out cameras and supervise/assist filming process</li> <li>- Students are reminded that they should be brainstorming and storyboarding at home as well. They are also reminded to bring in any props.</li> <li>- Students reminded that permission slips are due Friday (day 5).</li> <li>- Collect cameras</li> </ul>	<p><b>Filming</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Scrap paper</li> <li>___ 2-3 computers w/int.</li> <li>___ Copies of Storyboard</li> <li>___ Various Props</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras (w/tapes, cords, &amp; sign out sheet)</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review task and sign out cameras</li> <li>- Remind students that editing will begin tomorrow and to arrange out of class time to film with teacher if needed</li> <li>- Supervise/assist with filming process.</li> <li>- Collect cameras</li> <li>- Permission slips reminder</li> </ul>	<p><b>Importing</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Reserved Computer Lab</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras w/acc.</li> <li>___ LCD</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model internet archives for music/video and video importing as a reminder</li> <li>- Sign out cameras and cords so students may begin importing voice/video and editing</li> <li>- Model video editing where necessary</li> <li>- Collect permission slips and cameras</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
	<p><b>Editing</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Reserved Computer Lab</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras w/acc.</li> <li>___ LCD</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review task at hand</li> <li>- Sign out cameras and cords so students may begin importing and editing</li> <li>- Model video editing where necessary</li> <li>- Supervise and provide assistant where necessary</li> <li>- Remind students that Wednesday (Day 3) is the last day for editing and to arrange for out of class time if they feel they will not complete</li> <li>- Collect any cameras</li> </ul>	<p><b>Editing</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Reserved Computer Lab</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras w/acc.</li> <li>___ LCD</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review task and remind students that unless they have arranged time out of class to edit they should be uploading by the end of class</li> <li>- Model video editing where necessary</li> <li>- Supervise and provide assistant where necessary</li> <li>- Model video uploading as a reminder</li> <li>- Remind students that tomorrow is the last day for editing and to arrange for out of class time if they feel they will not complete</li> <li>- Remind students to bring in final storyboard for collection tomorrow</li> <li>- Collect any cameras</li> </ul>	<p><b>Editing</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Reserved Computer Lab</li> <li>___ Class set of cameras w/acc.</li> <li>___ LCD</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review task and remind students that unless they have arranged time out of class to edit they should be uploading by the end of class</li> <li>- Model video editing, transitions and titles where necessary</li> <li>- Supervise and provide assistant where necessary</li> <li>- Model video uploading as a reminder</li> <li>- Collect storyboards and any cameras</li> </ul>	<p><b>Screening</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Computer</li> <li>___ LCD</li> <li>___ Anonymous comments handout</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review rubric before screening</li> <li>- Handout comment slips</li> <li>- Begin watching videos in randomly selected order</li> </ul>	<p><b>Screening/Reflection</b></p> <p><u>Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ Computer</li> <li>___ LCD</li> <li>___ Anonymous comments handout</li> <li>___ (chalk)board</li> </ul> <p><u>Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Handout comment slips</li> <li>-Watch remainder of videos</li> <li>- Remainder of time will be spent on either a discussion or written reflection, depending on quality of work</li> </ul>

## *The Giant Genre Glossary*

S.Miller-5/06

### Genres for Student iMovie Projects

- iMovie in a period/Short takes**—students portray small pieces of a text or different perspectives on an idea/concept to answer an Essential Question; pieces are imported as live feed into the structure (title page, key concepts) of the iMovie already created by the teacher. After every group imports their piece, the iMovie is played to represent the concept or idea (e.g., line/texture in art, symbols in English, parallelism in math). These short movies are usually the introduction to digital video production based on envisioning something important for the specific group (I teach because...).
- iSpeak or text interpretation video**—video interpretation of primary historical text or other written text representing an important idea for the class (e.g., Gettysburg address, Bill of Rights, Diary entry from Anne Frank, final paragraph from a novel or short story, the balance of nature.)
- Poetry videos**—a visual/audio interpretation of a favorite/selected poem to communicate the overall meaning of the poem. Often uses music as well as spoken word performance. Based on the Music video genre, often using similar symbolic visuals and recurring patterns.
- Uncommercial**—30-60 second ad to sell a key idea/concept related to curriculum. Often re-uses taglines or structures from commercial TV ads, but appropriates them for very different purposes. Based on television advertisement genres. (e.g., The First Amendment, Priceless).
- Public Service Announcements**—a short video aimed at persuading viewers to take specific action for personal or public good. Based on television PSAs (This is your brain, this is your brain on drugs). Can be used in any subject area (These are the effects of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: If you're pregnant don't drink. If you've experienced date violence, you are not alone. Contact...)
- Movie trailer**—A 30-60 second advertisement for an idea, concept, book using the fast-paced genre used for advertising movies. Emphasis in Book Trailers on characters, setting & the tensions/conflicts. Historical movie trailers can highlight the key elements of an event or time period (For Coloreds Only: Jim Crow Coming to a Theater near you.) Science Movie Trailers highlight and dramatize elements of a new unit (Photosynthesis...Coming soon to a biology class near you.)
- Re-enactments/dramatizations**—enacting a scene, an event, a vocabulary word, a concept through a short sequence of interactions to demonstrate an interpretation. These could include talk, frozen poses, music, narration, words on screen, props, symbolic items, to illustrate meaning and communicate it to others. Often a series of such dramatizations done in different groups serve to embody the curriculum being presented.
- Person/Character Confessional**—Student portraying a person/character from history/literature, turns to the camera and gives a truthful account of his/her own motives/feelings/ thoughts that require the student to fill in the blanks of what is known and dramatize a believable interpretation. Based on the confessionals in reality shows.

- Multi-character Monologues**—These videos pose a specific question (e.g., “Who is responsible for the King’s death in *MacBeth*? What is the relationship between the boy and the father in “My Papa’s Waltz”?) and different students enact the perspectives of a few different characters to answer the question, taking on the role of the character interpreting and dramatizing his/her attitudes and thinking (e.g., the witches, Lady MacBeth, MacBeth; the boy, the father, the mother). The film can then be used to initiate discussion of key, contested issues. Also can be done with people involved in historical events (Should the United States annex Hawaii?)
- 20/20, E True Hollywood Investigations**-- inquiry into a specific topic or problem in a specific place to uncover its hidden complexity, issues, and relevance to people and society (What’s up with the cafeteria food? What happened at Love Canal and what is happening now? Who was Christopher Columbus—hero or villain? ) Some in this genre do not just look at various points of view, but may try to persuade to a specific point of view (video editorial) on current social, political, or cultural events/issues. Either version often uses a variety of sources (interviews, primary documents, newspapers, cartoons, TV and movie clips, graphs, dramatic re-enactments, etc.),
- Video Quilt**—Usually occurs after a writing project where students have had writing workshops for pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing. During the final phases of the writing students come up with one sentence that captures the essence of their individual writing pieces. They are given a prompt to complete (e.g., “In the world today....” as they finish writing papers on social issues; “Childhood is...” as they finish writing stories about childhood; “The city....” as they finish writing poems about their vision of the city.) Students also provide or develop a visual aid to accompany their sentence. Students film their images and record their narration directly from the DV camera into the video editing program. [Sometimes the teacher does the final editing that can include establishing shots, title screens, music, transitions, credits.

#### Some Variations on these genres

- Campaign ads**—Creating an advertisement selling an historical, literary or cultural figure for election to a specific office (e.g., Nixon for President, Gatsby for Governor, Class candidate for President of a fictional third party). Can be adapted to other kinds of fictional contests (Vote Mitochondria most important part of the cell.)
- Neighborhood/place portrait**—short autobiographical or biographical piece or exploration of a place emphasizing cultural roots/influences (This is Buffalo sent by a French class to their e-pals in France; In response to *House on Mango Street* students create a digital video vignette of their neighborhood)
- Interview inquiry**—research into a controversial topic, where more than one opinion is represented (e.g., What do Buffalonians think about a signature bridge?) and analyzed. Could stand along as a news segment or be part of a News at 7:00 news show.
- Music video**—a visual interpretation of a musical piece, which focuses on a strong idea/mood/concept/scene, possibly connected to a piece of literature, a real or fictional character, an issue. Sometimes students write lyrics for the video and/or perform them.
- Video journalism behind the scenes**—A behind-the-scenes story of an important event that does not document the event, but rather goes undercover to show the making of the event with a SINGLE STRONG FOCUS. (e.g., pride of culture, commitment, personalized involvement, the creative process, the decisions-making process, etc.) Based on the genre of The Making of a Movie genre (Making the Lord of the Rings). Also could be based on DVD extras features.
- Writing into DV**—Students visually interpret their own short pieces of writing of any genre to capture the mood, tone & ideas.

# *A Sample DV Unit Plan*

Keith J. Hughes

October 28, 2005

Grade Level: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade U.S. History and Government  
Unit Plan: The Constitution Through the Lens



Timeframe: 2 weeks.

**Materials:** Class lab of Macs, LCD, Internet access, 5 digital cameras and tapes, firewire, lighting and filming equipment, [Constitutional Video Rubric](#), [electronic notes](#), various lot of magazines and props for filming.

**Objectives:** While various principles and construction of Constitutional terms will be embedded in this lesson, the pragmatic goal is to have students produce digital videos of Constitutional Commercials. A previous example of a student produced video on the Constitution is available online [here](#).

**Assessment:** The final video project will be graded using the following [Constitutional Rubric](#). There will also be a quiz and three related homework assignments. The total unit includes up to 250 points towards their 1000 point first quarter total. Grades are posted throughout the course of this unit to motivate students to complete homework and group responsibilities. You can visit the grade book [here](#).

**Background:** This lesson incorporates a multi-modal approach of methodology using feedback lectures, community presentations, [City Voices](#), [City Vision](#) integration and the power of digital video. During the course of this unit you will find students engaged in all levels of [Bloom's Taxonomy](#). Classroom learners will be engaged in listening, discussing, reading, researching, writing, drawing, filming, editing and presenting an original visual demonstration of curriculum based learning. The culminating product in the first film production will be the creation of 30 second Constitutional commercial.

While digital video is a recent phenomenon in the classroom, it is my belief that its multi-modal approach with its authentic product driven product as an assessment tool can be quite powerful. Its' potential to allow students to work with the community and share the "fruits of their labor" beyond the concrete walls of a large urban high school is well worth its sometimes tedious planning and execution. Students work with various methods and materials that allow them to become immersed in the curriculum content and concepts resulting in "[flow](#)" (Csikszentmihalyi) and [mastery learning](#). Following the completion of this unit the students work will be shared through the World Wide Web as well as some students work being shared with the greater Buffalo community though a public access on a show produced by my mass media class entitled, "[The Firewire](#)".

## **Essential Learning Questions**

- 1) What are the foundations of government found in the U.S. Constitution?
- 2) Explain the various ways the U.S. Constitution is flexible. Relate it to today.

- 3) Explain the various ways the Constitution can be interpreted.
- 4) How does the Constitution protect individual and state rights against possible abuses by the Federal Government?

#### **Key Learning Points**

- 1) Students will learn the Constitutional vocabulary necessary for the U.S. History Regents exam.
- 2) Students will learn the skills necessary to plan, film and edit a digital video using Apple's iMovie video editing software.
- 3) Students will learn how to engage themselves in their classroom and community operating in multiple modes of learning.

#### **Social Studies Standards**

- **SS1.C.1B:**  
Students describe the evolution of American democratic values and beliefs as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other important historical documents.
- **SS1.C.4A:**  
Students analyze historical narratives about key events in New York State and United States history to identify the facts and evaluate the author's perspectives.
- **SS1.C.4B:**  
Students consider different historians' analyses of the same event or development in United States history to understand how different viewpoints and/or frames of reference influence historical interpretations.
- **SS1.C.4C:**  
Students evaluate the validity and credibility of interpretations of events or issues in NYS or U.S. history, revising these interpretations as information is learned
- **SS1.C.3B:**  
Students research and analyze the major themes and developments in New York State and United States history (e.g., colonization and settlement; Revolution and New National Period; immigration; expansion and reform era; Civil War and Reconstruction; The American labor movement; Great Depression; World Wars; contemporary United States).
- **SS5.C.1C:**  
Students compare various political systems with that of the United States in terms of ideology, structure, function, institutions, decision-making processes, citizenship roles, and political culture.
- **SS5.C.1D:**  
Students identify and analyze advantages and disadvantages of various governmental systems.
- **SS5.C.2E:**  
Students understand the dynamic relationship between federalism and state's rights developed.

#### **English Language Arts Standards**

- **ELA1.C.LR1A:**  
Students interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations,

including technical manuals, newspaper and broadcast editorials, electronic networks, political speeches and debates, and primary source material in their subject area courses.

- **ELA1.C.LR1F:**

Students evaluate writing strategies and presentational features that affect interpretation of the information.

- **ELA1.C.SW2E:**

Students revise and improve early drafts by restructuring, correcting errors, and revising for clarity and effect.

- **LA2.C.LR1D:**

Students understand how multiple levels of meaning are conveyed in a text.

- **ELA2.C.SW2B:**

Students produce literary interpretations that explicate the multiple layers of meaning.

- **ELA2.C.SW2C:**

Students write original pieces in a variety of literary forms, correctly using the conventions of the genre and using structure and vocabulary to achieve an effect.

### **Communication With Parents: Film Release**

Prior to this unit plan from being executed, every student must bring home and have a letter signed by their apparent/guardian. The letter is an introduction to the Unit Plan as well as a film release. A signed film release form allows the school to broadcast the student's image in a legal manner. The letter also informs the parents of the benefits and purposes of the use of digital video. Parents are also reminded of the School's open house in November where their child's work will be shown.

### **Day One: Introduction to I-Movie: I-Movie in a Day**



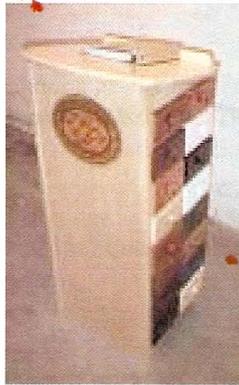
The I-Movie in a Day Lesson is viewable online. [Click here to view it.](#)

Because students are coming in to this unit with little to no experience in digital video, a basic introduction is necessary. Prior to class I have a formatted I-Movie that has a broad theme related to the curriculum. Students are modeled various filming and basic editing techniques and assigned a "filming" concept. Students then film these concepts in front of the class with the class facilitating the shots. Clips are then imported and within 45

minutes a complete film is done. You can view a sample complete I-Movie in a day by [clicking here](#).

Homework: Students are assigned a basic introductory question and answer worksheet to familiarize them with the principles of the U.S Constitution we will be learning.

### Days Two-Four: Feedback Lectures



While many students wince at the idea of a lecture, the format, if done correctly, can be a quite powerful method. I pride myself as being an excellent communicator and I believe that students can use a good explanation of the basic concepts and content of the curriculum prior to an in-depth project. In these introductory lessons, students are given analogies and mnemonic devices to help them relate to the curriculum. An example would be as following: One learning concept is that of flexibility in the Constitution, which is embodied partly in the Elastic Clause. The Elastic Clause allows Congress to pass laws, which are not delegated through the original text of the Constitution. So, I talk with the kids and ask them what it would be like if their Mom said they had to follow new rules (i.e., be home by 9pm, clean your room), and then followed it up by saying the last rule is you could do anything necessary. The kids laugh and amazingly enough, they “get it” So ends my defense of the good old history lecture.

The notes are provided to the students and also made available online. When engaged in a feedback lecture students should be active. Their will be time for writing later, wasting time on a low cognitive such as notes, seems fruitless. The three sets of notes for the lectures that are needed for this Unit are available for viewing below:

- [What are the essential principles in the U.S. Constitution?](#)
- [How is the Constitution flexible?](#)
- [How is power checked and divided in the U.S. Constitution?](#)

Project Assignment: On the first day of the lectures, students are given the [rubric](#)

and assigned their constitutional principles. Students are instructed to brainstorm over the course of the next few days with their groups and to come up with a basic genre of commercial they would like to produce. After showing a few examples of commercials, we concentrate on some basic film/shot analysis of the genre, students usually choose from one of the following commercial genres: Product driven, Movie/T.V. trailers and pharmaceutical ads.

Homework for Lecture: An in-depth question based assignment with an essay is assigned over the course of the first week. The question assignment is available [here](#) as is the [essay](#).

Written Assessment: Prior to the computer lab a “Pre-Test” is given to measure the knowledge base before the authentic assessment. This is an optional grade assignment. The quiz is made up of regent’s questions from [the linked online database](#).

### **Day Five: Canisius/Squeaky Wheel Presentations**



While students have been introduced to some of the technical aspects of filming and what genre is it is also important to introduce them to some of the more subtle aspects of being persuasive with film. Both Squeaky Wheel and a Film class from Canisius College (Barbara Irwin) have offered to do this presentation. Using examples of media, students are taken through a series of examples of devices used in marketing to influence consumers. Students are then given the opportunity to brainstorm with a storyboard for their own film. The power of this day is twofold; One they feel like they are being taken seriously because professionals are sharing with them the same methods they employ and secondly their paradigms of what “media” is begins to crumble as we set forth to build a new one.

Homework: In order to begin the video lab, students are assigned to complete their narrative for their commercial. Groups are to turn in one script for review for the next class.

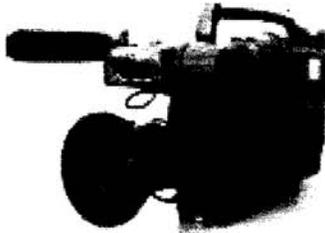
**Days Six and Seven: Voice recording, Music importing and research/planning.**



On the first day of the lab, students are first modeled the process to record sound. Student groups are given a camera and a secure location to record their voice. Using students from my mass media class and a college student taking Digital Literacy (LAI516, S.Miller) students are facilitated in this sometimes- hectic task. Students are modeled the use of a website which offers copyright music as well as my own person library. You may visit the online database of royalty free music [here](#). By the end of the two classes it is expected that all groups will have their voiceover complete. Students are also given access to primary documents related to their topic in order to narrow their focus into the critical concept. A sample website we use is American Memory which can be viewed [here](#).

Homework: Students are to complete their visual storyboard for filming using the rubric as their basis for assessment. A sample of the storyboard we use in class is available here.

### **Days Eight, Nine and Ten: Video Lab**



A total of three full class periods is allowed for the filming and editing process. Editing skills are modeled using an LCD and usually takes 10 minutes of class. Examples of techniques modeled are speed manipulation, special effects, clip editing, volume adjustments, sound effects and the use of transitions. I usually find two to three students from previous years to help me out in the classroom. Most of the learning happened when the student are working. Once a new skill is mastered, the group must send an ambassador to other groups to show them what they just learned. This process usually feeds off itself with kids becoming excited to show other student how they made their clip go in reverse or appear to be filmed in the 1960's. Other advanced skills are also used such as importing online primary sourced video, such as those found at the [Internet Archive](#) is also modeled.

On the last day films are exported into QuickTime format and DV tape format. Student groups are then given feedback forms for self-evaluation using the previously posted rubric.

### Day 11: The Screening



The screening is one of the most component parts of the digital video experience. All students are given multiple copies of the rubric with an evaluation form. Films are viewed using the LCD and we spend the time analyzing the various media components of the film and concentrating our discussion on the concepts and content as it relates to the assigned principle.

Students evaluate in the end of whether the film accurately represented the most important concepts as they related to the subject. Students finish the assignment by writing a reflective essay for homework commenting on the process, their experience in general and what they really learned. Students groups at this time must hand in their typed scripts and turn in final draft storyboards.

### Day 12: Post Assessment



Students are administered another short written assessment as a post-test activity. This quiz is to determine whether learning accorded, as they would correlate with the NYS standards, using the U.S. History Regents format.

### **Afterthoughts: Product/Authentic Curriculum Project Sharing**



Once the project is completed, student ratings are used to determine the “best” movies in three major categories; best picture, most educational and most creative. The winning films will then be integrated into our community based public access show, “The Firewire”. Other works will also be posted online and incorporated into review categories, so students may use them as they prepare for future assessments.

By far the one ingredient, which makes this unit plan work, is you, the teacher. If you put in four ounces of enthusiasm, six pounds of patience, 6 ounces of planning, 9 ounces of facilitation and fourteen tons of love and respect the results will floor you. And in 6 weeks you’ll be doing it again!

*Sample Storyboards*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Storyboard*



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\_\_\_\_\_  
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