Guidelines for Making Movies in Libraries

Project Type: Digital Media, Creative Tactile

Group/Individual: Group

Lesson Plan Audience: Maker Mentor

Time: 4 weeks

Hard Skills: Narrative building, Video editing, Content creation

Soft Skills: Design concepts, Collaboration, Leadership, Resilience and patience, Problem Solving, Literacy, Media Literacy, Performance, Multi-tasking, Negotiation, Creative thinking

Ideal # of Participants: scalable

Age Group: 8 and up

Ideas for Taking it Further: Share your movie on YouTube, enter it into film festivals, Pursue other local filmmaking clubs or groups to make your next movie more professional

Difficulties/Tips: Some participants may have difficulty understanding the limitations or the kinds of materials we have to work with (i.e. cardboard, paint, fabric, etc), or may have trouble understanding the editing process and software. Care should be taken with camera and equipment. You will need space to store props and equipment, as well as several weeks to develop the idea, shoot, and edit.

Materials: Greenscreen
Camera
Tripod
Computer with editing software
Misc. building/costume materials

STEPS

1. Brainstorm! Talk to your students about what kind of movie you're making (**See Narrative Development Lesson Plan**). Establish a loose plot or central idea. Ask them about the characters they've created, what happens to them throughout the movie, where these characters live, and where they go. You can use a story or plotline participants are already familiar with, such as a favorite book or movie, or make something entirely new. Write out a script.

2. Start drawing! (**See Video Shot Types and Storyboarding Lesson Plan**) Talk about shot types, look at examples, and create a storyboard to plan for your movie. You can also draw out plans for the set (**See Set and Scenic Design Lesson Plan**).

3. Start building! (**See Paper Mache Head Lesson Plan**) This can include cutting out cardboard for set pieces, making masks, sewing costumes, creating props, or painting and drawing backdrops to be green screened in.

4. Rehearsal! It's important to go over the script and do test shots so everyone knows their lines and when to come in and exit. (**See Skit Workshop Lesson Plan**) Make any changes necessary. Remind participants they need to be aware of where the camera is and how they may be blocking a shot. Reviewing test footage can help them see this. Use tape to help stage shots.

5. Film it! Break your project down into scenes and film one or two per day. Give reminders about what happens in each scene before you start.

6. Edit it! Put all your scenes in order and cut out the bloopers. (**See Video Editing Lesson Plan**) Participants often need help with the editing process, and learning editing software can be frustrating and time consuming, but giving participants exposure to these tools is a great way to provide a longer-term project for a dedicated student who is capable of concentrating.

8. Premiere! Get a projector and set up a premiere so everyone can see their hard work up on the big screen!

NOTES: Making a movie in a limited space such as a library can be a complicated process. Most of the movies we have made have worked around these limitations in creative ways:

- Making lightweight, changeable set pieces out of cardboard allows you to work in a modular way to save space. You may still need a closet or other space to store set pieces and props.

- Flexibility is of utmost importance. Allowing ideas to morph and change around the participants, keeping the plot loose and the script minimal can prevent stiffness and keep the project fun. Sometimes participants don't want to write out a full script or complete a storyboard, and that's ok as long as your have a general outline to follow, especially if you have a minimal script. Ad libbing is fun and should be encouraged - Be open to experimentation and change!

- Make costumes and characters interchangeable so the project can move forward if a participant isn't there.