**Documentary Project**

“I don't know what truth is. Truth is something unattainable. We can't think we're creating truth with a camera. But what we can do, is reveal something to viewers that allows them to discover their own truth.”

—Michel Brault

## Description

Next in Language and Literature class, you will work in a group to create a documentary film six to seven minutes in length. Your topic is your choice. However, keep in mind this is your chance to bring attention to a good cause. You can spread awareness and have a positive impact on the lives of others. Furthermore, is your topic realizable? Can you create a documentary (shoot B-roll footage, identify stills, conduct interviews) for this topic. You may want to choose topic for which you have a personal connection and you have a network of connections (parents, family friends, friends of friends).

Once you choose a topic, you will begin planning and shooting footage. This work will be done out of class, and it is your responsibility to stay on schedule and complete work by deadlines.

**Objectives**

1. Integrate multimedia footage into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
2. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
3. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation
4. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
5. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

**Documentary Vocabulary**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **B-roll** | footage shot to complement the interviews that are heard; should be relevant to interview or topic |
| **Dialogue** | conversations that take place between subjects in a film (or subjects and the filmmaker) |
| **Factual** | attempting to relay information that is accurate about something real or actual; based on facts |
| **Footage** | refers to all material used in a film, including edited and unedited sequences |
| **Narrative Arc** | a logical construction of a coherent ideas to establish meaning; “telling a story” |
| **Opinion** | an evidence-based personal belief or judgment that, unlike a fact, can be disputed by another person without either of you being wrong |
| **Persuade** | to cause to believe; convince |
| **Point of View** | sometimes abbreviated as POV, the perspective from which a story is told; in film, also refers to a shot that depicts a character’s outlook or position |
| **Re-enactment** | a depiction created at a later time than the actual event |
| **Represent** | to re-tell; all media is a representation of something (e.g., a photograph of a horse is not the actual horse; it represents the horse) |
| **Stills** | Fixed images or photography used in a documentary |
| **Stock footage (archival footage)** | footage that is included in a film that is often shot by another filmmaker or for another project and not specifically for the film – only allowed with permission and must be credited! |
| **Subjects** | the topics of the film or the people the film features |
| **Voice-over** | a production technique or creative device in which an off-screen voice is used for narration. This voice often establishes context and was recorded at another point in time. |

**Schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activities** |
| February 17 | Submit Documentary Practice Project |
| February 24 to March 18 | Complete Majority of Filming |
| March 1 | Submit Two Sets of Questions for Two Interviewees |
| March 3 | Timeline of Project Completion Due |
| March 8 | Begin Editing Footage in Computer Lab |
| March 15 | Continue Editing Footage in Computer Lab |
| April 3 | First Cut of Documentary Due (3 Minutes Minimum) |
| April 15 to April 18 | Continue Editing Footage in Computer Lab |
| April 22 to 25 | Continue Editing Footage in Computer Lab |
| April 28 | Final Cut of Documentary Due on Canvas |

**Camera Sign Out**

To sign out a camera, give your teacher twenty-four-hour notice of when you need to sign the camera out. Be able to explain exactly what footage you will be shooting.

Your group is responsible for the camera once it is signed out. You are responsible for checking the SD card, making sure you have charged batteries, and identifying other equipment you may need like a tripod.

Once you have shot your footage, and you return your camera, you must save your footage to a flash drive. Any files left on the card will probably be deleted. Do not leave the camera or equipment unattended at any time or anywhere. A sign-up sheet will be made available by your teacher. Plan ahead. Our resources are limited (there are only four cameras available).

**Interviews**

What is your group’s topic?

In the space below, think about the different types of questions you may ask your interviewee. Write down your own definitions in the space provided. Farther below, you may start brainstorming actual questions. Make sure you classify them correctly.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Questions** | **Definition** |
| **Gathering** |  |
| **Processing** |  |
| **Applying** |  |
| **Open** |  |
| **Closed** |  |

**Interview Subject \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Pre-Written Questions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Question** | **O or C?** |
| **Gather** |  |  |
| **Gather** |  |  |
| **Gather** |  |  |
| **Process** |  |  |
| **Process** |  |  |
| **Process** |  |  |
| **Apply** |  |  |
| **Apply** |  |  |
| **Apply** |  |  |

**Documentary Rough Cut**

Due April 1 at the end of the period

At this stage, you will recieve feedback on the interest level, creativity, understandability, and technical editing aspects after watching your rough cut. During this editing time, you need to work collaboratively as a group. There is no reason for you to be playing games, on your phone, etc. To begin, the first step is to put all footage both on the flash drive and on one group member’s W Drive. Next, cut out all the questions you asked, as well as eliminating unneeded footage. You can have each group member working on a different interview or do it together. I will show how to do the first option.

**Requirements**

You must have a minimum of the following completed to get the full 25 points possible.

1. Three minutes long (8 pts)

2. The video shows three different people’s interviews, including at least one expert. (8 pts)

3. Title sequence with proposed title /music (2 pts)

4. Credits sequence that lists group members “Made by…” and thanks all interview subjects (will be checked against permission forms) and others who contributed to doc’s creation. (2 pts)

5. No filmmakers’ voices (unless approved) – cut out all questions. (2 pts)

6. Title cards with all interview subjects’ names and titles (3 pts)

Your rough cut will be turned in on or before April 1 to your group flash drive as an mp4 file. That means you will need to begin saving with at least 10 minutes left in the period.

**Documentary Rubric**

**100 points**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **You may work on this project after school, during study hall, or during activity period; the final project due dates are below.** *All group members are expected to contribute equally, and if that is not the case, individual grades will be issued as needed.* | **Poor - -30%** | **Fair- -20%** | **Good - -10%** | **Outstanding** |
| **Message:** You effectively convey a viewpoint about your topic, engaging the audience in the topic.  To do so you use a variety of media elements to support the point of view and main idea. Eg., interviews, B roll - photographs, maps, diagrams, etc.  (25 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Creativity:** Your video has creative and unique qualities that make it original and entertaining. **Final cut should reflect critique received from rough cut**. (15 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Interview:** You have a minimum of 4 interview subjects, including at least two “experts” and have included interesting excerpts of their interviews.  (10 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Sound Quality:** All narration, music, and effects are clear, audible and easy to hear/understand. Captions, if needed, are accurate and logically/fairly used. Music is used to convey mood and for additional effect. (10 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Video Editing:** Order, timing and transitions are carefully planned and arranged. There are no glitches or odd, awkward moments. You have a variety of images, including B-roll, to make the film visually interesting.  (20 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Picture & Video Quality:** The pictures and video are consistently well chosen, varied, clear, and relevant to the narration. Shots are in focus, well-framed, interesting and shot from a variety of perspectives and angles.  (10 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Timing:** Your finished product should be within the 6-7 minute range. (5 pts) |  |  |  |  |
| **Title Slides and Credits:** You need a beginning title slide with a relevant and unique title. You need a final credits sequence that thanks anyone who you interviewed or who was integral to your project. You credit any outside pictures. *\*\*Must include Bexley Education Foundation* (5 pts) |  |  |  |  |

**Due dates: TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_/100**Rough cut – 25 points – due 4/1Final cut – 100 points – due 4/22 via final movie file