Visual Composition and Editing: Photo Stories and Completed Action

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **3-5 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

In this unit, students will explore the importance of cinematography in film, connecting it to plot, characterization, and theme in story structure. In this introductory unit, students will be introduced to the processes of scriptwriting and storyboarding, enlisting actors, and defining the setting via location scouting in order to establish compelling characters and narrative. Students will analyze exemplary photo stories and award-winning segments from film festivals and commercials to extract best practices before putting these skills into practice. The unit will culminate in the creation of a completed photo story consisting of fifteen to twenty images that tell a story with a clear narrative arc and character development. Accompanying written script and storyboard will be a requirement.

In building upon the previous activity, students will begin to work with motion pictures with an emphasis on editing and completed action. Students will explore everyday actions and their complexity across a variety of Oscar-nominated documentary short films in order to extract narratives from the real world. In preparation for their completed action short, students will review the story and editing transitions. The unit will culminate in the creation of a completed action short with an emphasis on shot composition and editing to tell a complete narrative.

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. Students may continue to make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interests.

Revision: June 2023

Standards

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the

economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas (e.g., 1.1.12prof.CR3a).
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills, and abilities (e.g., 1.4.12prof.CR2b, 2.2.12.LF.8).
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement, and transition (e.g., 2.1.12.PGD.1).
9.2.12.CAP.4	Evaluate different careers and develop various plans (e.g., costs of public, private, training schools) and timetables for achieving them, including educational/training requirements, costs, loans, and debt repayment.
9.2.12.CAP.5	Assess and modify a personal plan to support current interests and post-secondary plans.
9.2.12.CAP.6	Identify transferable skills in career choices and design alternative career plans based on those skills.
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice (e.g., 1.1.12acc.C1b, 2.2.12.PF.3).
9.4.12.CT.2	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving (e.g., 1.3E.12profCR3.a).
9.2.12.CAP.8	Determine job entrance criteria (e.g., education credentials, math/writing/reading comprehension tests, drug tests) used by employers in various industry sectors.
9.4.12.CT.4	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other project and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.
9.2.12.CAP.13	Analyze how the economic, social, and political conditions of a time period can affect the labor market.
LA.RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
LA.RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
LA.RI.11-12.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
LA.RI.11-12.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes and rhetorical features, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history.
LA.W.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
LA.W.11-12.2.A	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new

	element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.11-12.2.B	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.W.11-12.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
LA.W.11-12.2.D	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
LA.W.11-12.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.11-12.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.W.11-12.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.11-12.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
LA.W.11-12.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.11-12.3.C	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
LA.W.11-12.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
LA.W.11-12.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.W.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
LA.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LA.SL.11-12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the

	topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.11-12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.11-12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
LA.SL.11-12.1.D	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.
LA.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.11-12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
LA.SL.11-12.4	Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.SL.11-12.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

- How do video editing tools provide creative options for filmmaking?
- How do we analyze representative literary and film texts?
- How do we best utilize film making equipment to elevate narrative and information creations?
- How is characterization depicted through the use of color and shots in a film?
- How is color used in a film?
- How is linear and nonlinear sound used in a film?
- How is sound used to create mood and atmosphere?
- What film techniques are used to represent the theme, stated and implied, in a film?
- What is editing and why is it essential in a film?
- What is Mise-en-scene? How does it include the lighting, sets and props?
- What is the difference between a shallow and deep focus shot?
- What is the difference between diegetic and nondiegetic sound?
- Why are different shots used in a film?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- Characterization, plot and theme are all represented in the mise-en-scene, visual composition, and color used within a film.
- Demonstrate how the textual aspects of film further its theme.

- How color and cinematography influence an audience on a conscious and unconscious level.
- How editing and sound contribute to the overall mood and tone of a film.
- How the formal aspects of film relate to a film's structure and expression.
- How to differentiate between cuts and transitions within a film.
- How to engage in more intellectual discussions using the visual literacy skills gleaned through film analysis.
- How to use the techniques of visually analyzing a film to view art, history and life.
- How to utilize video and audio editing software to assemble and organize original narratives and informational pieces.
- The fundamental uses and application of Adobe Premier, Audition, and After Effects.
- The fundamental uses and application of film equipment such as cameras, lighting, etc.
- The principles of visual composition as it applies to film making.
- Using the terminology gleaned through the study of editing and sound to enrich their analytical skills.
- Utilizing film cutting, transitioning and sound.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered three times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of multimodal text sets
- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation

- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal

Summative, including Alternative Assessments:

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Problem-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics

Other Assessment Ideas:

- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism using various databases, CLCs, and Bloom's Literary Database
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation, develop notetaking skills and annotations
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation, rehearsal and modeling effective listening and speaking techniques
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal regarding Reflections, Character Development, and/or Life Choices
- Researched Presentations, Biographical, Historical, Psychological and/or Philosophical analysis of a Memoir
- Performance Assessments, including a dramatic reading of a scene, excerpt, or poem that relates to one of the subthemes
- Participate in organized literature circles where students lead discussions about character, conflict and theme and work collaboratively to determine answers to questions posed by teacher and other students
- Evaluate societal concerns reflected through plot and theme
- Cite and interpret quoted material from the text and from literary criticism
- Create a narrative memoir using narrative techniques and factual information in proper MLA format
- Participate in peer and teacher/student critiques to revise and edit their essays
- Create artistic, interactive and/or multimedia projects that suggest an understanding of the text beyond its literal meaning

Learning Plan

Instructional time for reading film will be divided into thirds; one-third of the time will be dedicated to whole class text instruction; one-third will include film circles; one-third, independent screenings. The intent is for student-readers to have clear modeling through whole-class instruction. These strategies are practiced through literature circles in a group setting of peers and through independent practice monitored through teacher conferencing with students. An emphasis will be based on the transfer of skills instruction, teaching the reader, not merely the content of the text. The text complexity and rigor of reading will be appropriate for grade 11; materials selection for whole-class and literature circles will be from the book list approved by the Board of Education. Classrooms will house rich and diverse independent reading libraries of contemporary and canonical works.

The reading of text targets not only comprehension but also analysis. Students will read both long-and short-form, excerpted, and feature-length, fiction, and nonfiction texts. The study will include the analysis of visual texts including film clips, art, infographic, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, and graphic novels. Techniques and terminology specific to a genre of reading are examined. Research tasks are embedded throughout the year and a minimum of one task is completed during each unit. Vocabulary instruction will be chosen from the reading material.

Students write in all modes of rhetoric including narration/description, argument/persuasion, and exposition. Various forms of writing including digital writing are emphasized as well. Grammar instruction is embedded in writing instruction through mini-lessons, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modeling is done through mentor texts, both published and student-crafted. Teachers focus on process in addition to the product with an emphasis on synthesizing texts with nuanced understanding; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes, timed and untimed pieces are all important.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address individual student's distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds.

Students may complete analytical analysis, persuasive writing, synthesis essays, database research, and journal writing. Students will participate in individual, partner, and group activities including Literature Circles, Socratic Discussions, Jigsaw Methods, and other Cooperative Learning activities.

Students will be taught how to speak and listen in addition to being assessed on these skills. Lessons will include identifying effective speaking and listening strategies, analyzing various techniques for enhancing voice and movement, modeling various effective speakers and listeners strategies, and creating opportunities to develop vocal effectiveness and presentation skills.

Students will compare directorial liberties in movies and plays.

This unit of study will focus on photo stories, film composition, and video production. The central quotation from Charlie Chaplin is "Nothing is more important than the moving image; except for my cup of coffee in the morning."

Sample Unit Plan:

- Core Text: Bo Burnham - Inside
  - Mini-lessons teaching students cinematography techniques surrounding visual composition, color, and editing techniques
  - Focus on analysis of themes and social commentary as established via cinematography
- Film Circles: Photo Stories
  - Focus on short-form script writing, enlisting actors, and defining the setting via location scouting in order to establish compelling characters and narrative.
- Production: Photo Story
  - Creation of a completed photo story consisting of 15 to 20 photos that tell a story with a clear narrative arc and character development. Accompanying written script and storyboard will be a requirement.
- Film Circles: Completed Action Shorts
  - Expand on previous skills with an emphasis on movement blocking and editing.
  - Focus on analysis of completed action exemplars.
- Workshop: Adobe Premier
  - Teach fundamentals of Adobe Premier editing software.
- Production: Completed Action Short
  - Students will produce a completed action short with an emphasis on shot composition and editing to demonstrate to completion of a task of their choice.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List and the Core Film List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Possible accommodations include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques
- Offer oral assessments
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Small group and one on one assessment
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Use digital technology, eBooks,, audio version of printed text
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

Possible modifications to content during writing workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan