Speaking & Listening: Interviewing, Conferencing, and Collaborating

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **20 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Guiding Quotation: "To be a filmmaker, you have to lead. You have to be psychotic in your desire to do something. People always like the easy route. You have to push very hard to get something unusual, something different." — Danny Boyle

Throughout this course, students develop advanced filmmaking skills by planning, storyboarding, enlisting stakeholders, scouting locations, filming, editing, revising, and presenting original non-scripted short- and long-form films. Through the lens of speaking and listening, this unit emphasizes presentation, collaboration, interviewing, and professional communication as students work with peers, instructors, and community stakeholders by conducting interviews, participating in conferences and critiques, presenting project proposals, showcasing completed work at the CHS Film Festival, and collaborating with Dialogue leadership for publication. As an advanced course, students assume ownership of their learning by setting goals, tracking their progress using the Advanced Film Scorecard, and demonstrating mastery through authentic collaboration, revision, and public presentation.

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.

As part of the Cranford High School Film Academy sequence, this dual-enrollment course is offered in partnership with Montclair State University, providing students with the opportunity to earn college credit while engaging in advanced study of non-scripted filmmaking. Building upon prior coursework in cinematography and film production, students refine the technical, artistic, and professional skills necessary for continued study and careers in film, media, communications, journalism, digital storytelling, and related creative industries. Through authentic learning experiences—including film festivals, publication opportunities, internships, guest speakers, and community partnerships—students explore a variety of career pathways while making informed decisions about future coursework, postsecondary education, and professional aspirations.

Revision: July 2026

Standards

Holocaust: This unit further reflects the goals of the Holocaust Education mandate where students are able to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior; understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination; understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life; and understand the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

Amistad: This unit also reflects the goals of the Department of Education and the Amistad Commission including the infusion of the history of Africans and African-Americans into the curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete, and inclusive history regarding the importance of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in a global context.

NJ Diversity and Inclusion: In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity.

Information Literacy: 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.

L.SS.11–12.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas (e.g., 1.1.12prof.CR3a).
L.SS.11–12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested.
L.SS.11–12.1.B	Observe hyphenation conventions.
L.SS.11–12.1.C	Recognize spelling conventions.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement, and transition (e.g., 2.1.12.PGD.1).
L.KL.11–12.2	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
L.KL.11–12.2.A	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness

	level.
L.KL.11–12.2.B	Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.
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).
L.KL.11–12.2.C	Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
9.4.12.CT.2	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving (e.g., 1.3E.12profCR3.a).
L.VL.11–12.3	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
9.4.12.CT.3	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).
L.VL.11–12.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
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.
L.VL.11–12.3.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
L.VL.11–12.3.C	Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.
L.VL.11–12.3.D	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
L.VL.11–12.3.E	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
L.VI.11–12.4	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, including connotative meanings.
9.2.12.CAP.13	Analyze how the economic, social, and political conditions of a time period can affect the labor market.
L.VI.11–12.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
L.VI.11–12.4.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
L.VI.11–12.4.C	Analyze how the meaning of a key term or terms develops or is refined over the course of a text.
L.VI.11–12.4.D	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.
SL	Speaking and Listening
SL.PE.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.
SL.PE.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.

SL.PE.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.
SL.PE.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.
SL.PE.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.
SL.II.11–12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
SL.ES.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.
SL.PI.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.
SL.UM.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.
SL.AS.11–12.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Essential Questions

- How do you best present completed work?
- how do you conduct a large event that can bring attention to your work and the work of your peers?
- How do you conduct detailed and credible research on a topic?
- How do you design and present a proposal that can build engagement and buy-in on a project?
- How do you prepare for and conduct conferences that are beneficial for feedback and production?
- Why is feedback and collaboration essential to success?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

Course Goals & Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate proficiency in basic core technical skills for un-scripted field production and post-production editing
- Incorporate supplementary media elements such as archival footage, graphics, and animations into unscripted videos using available tools and resources
- Develop the skills to produce strong visual content for a clear point of view
- Understand story structure and pacing for the moving image
- Effectively critique a film using visual storytelling language. Consider central questions surrounding the representation of reality and truth, including voice, authority, evidence, and point of view
- Work and collaborate effectively in organized groups and production crews
- Provide constructive feedback to peers and engage in collaborative idea exchange and problem-solving

- Reflect on how creative choices and techniques shape the meaning and impact of nonfiction videos on audiences.

The learning outcomes focus on developing core technical proficiency, creative storytelling capabilities, critical analysis skills, and collaborative abilities within an ethical framework. Participants will gain hands-on experience while examining deeper issues surrounding unscripted media.

Technical learning outcomes:

- Pre-Production and planning
- Understanding copyright and fair use
- Components of field production and post-production
- Scheduling, writing and conducting interviews.Principles of location lighting and audio
- Determining and Shooting b-roll - images to support the story
- Treatments/outlines based on elements gathered in the field
- Beginner-level editing of non-fiction materials using Adobe Premiere Pro
- Considerations and best practices for inclusion and accessibility
- Finishing and presenting final projects.

- Conducting interviews.
- Conducting research.
- Conferencing with teachers and peers
- How to organize a film crew.
- How to organize a major event/film festival.
- How to work with publication sources.
- Presenting information in small and large scale situations.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Assessment in Advanced Film Design: Non-Scripted is standards based and emphasizes growth, revision, and demonstrated mastery.

Film production—from idea generation through exhibition—is assessed using the Advanced Film Scorecard, with each project aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Students co-author their assessments by conferring with the teacher, monitoring their progress, reflecting on their work, and identifying next steps for improvement. Students will complete a minimum of two long-form and four short-form films per marking period while demonstrating mastery of the standards identified on the Advanced Film Scorecard, which is informed by standards-based grading practices and adapted from the Marzano Method. Throughout the marking period, students are encouraged to revise, resubmit, and reassess their work until mastery is achieved. Grades reflect each student's highest demonstrated level of proficiency at the conclusion of the marking period rather than an average of performance. Both formative and summative assessments are used to monitor growth and evaluate learning, with assessment opportunities differentiated based on student readiness and

performance.

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.

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

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

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.

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

Learning Plan

Throughout the course, students engage in a workshop model that emphasizes collaboration, reflection, authentic communication, and iterative learning. Instruction is personalized to address students' distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, and cultural backgrounds while providing opportunities for student leadership, feedback, and public presentation.

Students develop speaking and listening skills through authentic filmmaking experiences, including interviewing subjects, presenting project proposals, conferencing with instructors, participating in critiques, collaborating with production teams, and presenting completed films. Students work with Dialogue leadership to publish selected work throughout the year and collaborate with the Film Club to organize and host the annual CHS Film Festival.

Instruction includes explicit modeling of effective speaking and listening strategies, presentation techniques, interviewing, collaboration, and constructive feedback. Students participate in individual, partner, and group learning experiences, including conferences, Socratic discussions, cooperative learning activities, and peer critique to strengthen both communication and production skills.

Sample Unit Plan:

- Weekly Conferencing

- 2 Project Proposals per Marking Period
- 2 Project Presentations per Marking Period
- 3 Publications per Marking Period on the Dialogue
- Prepare for and host the CHS Film Festival.

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.

It is expected that materials endorsed by Montclair State University will be used in this course as part of the concurrent enrollment agreement. In that way, both the academic rigor and topical content of these pieces will be appropriate for a freshman undergraduate student. Students can anticipate that reading material is relevant, timely, thought-provoking, mature, and rigorous. (Statements such as these will be included on the course syllabus).

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

Instructional Materials

Teachers may utilize a variety of instructional resources, including print and digital materials, multimedia, visual and audio supports, interactive technologies, authentic texts, assistive technologies, and other district-approved resources. Any teacher-selected ancillary instructional materials must receive prior approval from the Department Supervisor and should provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression to support diverse learner needs.

- Cranford Dialogue: https://cranforddialogue.com
- Film Freeway: https://filmfreeway.com/dashboard

Teacher Resources

- Refer to film list above
- Text: Film and Literature: An Introduction and Reader, Corrigan
- Text: Making Movies, Sidney Lumet

- Text: Understanding Movies, Louis Giannetti, Prentice Hall
- The Film Fund (https://www.thefilmfund.co/tips-for-short-documentary-filmmaking/?expand_article=1)

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