

Unit 3 Educational Video Essay

This unit is designed to develop your oral presentation skills. Composing for a listening and viewing audience is very different from composing a standard paper; you will need to be impactful, concise, and present yourself with confidence in this final project.

RHETORICAL SITUATION CHART

Genre	Purpose	Audience	Role	Rhetorical Situation
Educational Video Essay	Teach middle-school students about a natural sciences subject of choice using an informative video essay.	Middle-school students (10 to 14 years of age) from North Carolina	Science educator and multi-media expert.	You are science educator who has been asked to create a video essay encouraging middle-school students to pursue research in the natural sciences.

YOUR ROLE

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has recently hired you, as a science educator with expertise in the natural sciences, to direct a video essay for middle-school students that will encourage them to pursue research in the natural sciences. Policy experts in the Department of Public Instruction have decided they would like you to make a video essay about a scientific researcher at UNC Chapel Hill. The policy experts want you to either show students how a scientific researcher from North Carolina came to pursue their path to becoming a researcher OR highlight important research that this researcher is currently pursuing. They ask to hear your voice in the video essay, to make the videos relatively short (4-5 minutes), and to focus on keeping these video essays informative about real research being conducted in North Carolina by North Carolinian researchers. They leave the creative details up to you.

Remember that the purpose of these video essays is to encourage young scholars to pursue scientific research by giving them role models to look up to. You should be utilizing the research you have already done in Units 1 or 2, given that you have some expertise in the subject you have been researching up to this point. (Note that this is an especially good way to get back in touch with the mentor you found in Unit 1.) For this project, you will be asked to use Camtasia software (*note: I will give you download links for the software later—you must **wait** to download the software **until after** November 9th, 2017*).

FEEDER 1: VIDEO ESSAY SCRIPT

We will be discussing script-layouts in class to give you a sense of what the genre requires for formatting. Generally, however, scripts have a snappy title; state the work's premise; situate the setting, characters, and other story elements; and offers a clear idea about what will be said. You should be aiming to clearly convey scientific ideas to your middle-school student audience and to show that you have a vision of what the video essay should look and sound like.

However, you should also think very carefully about how you present that information. Do you want to shoot footage of someone speaking (yourself, or your subject)? If you want to record someone else speaking, would they agree to it? Would you want to use a standard interview style? (And if so, would you like to experiment with the form like the director Michel Gondry does in his 2013 interview with the linguist Noam Chomsky, [Is the Man who is Tall Happy?](#)) Do you want to mash up still images and video together? Do you want to use different sound effects or music? Do you want to incorporate a lot of text or a little text in the video? As you can see, you need to think carefully about the many questions surrounding your project. You will need to think about the logistics of what you want to say alongside how the arc of your video essay's "story" will be presented.

A successful 6-8 page script:

- Will include an original title, a section outlining the premise, the full monologue/dialogue to be used in the video, and pertinent story elements necessary for the script.
- Provide clear and informative definitions of scientific subjects
- Follow a compelling story arc (Opening – Conflict – Action - Result)
- Speak to a middle-school audience, avoiding too much jargon and clearly defining terms
- Show that the director has considered pragmatic questions of composing the video (the project should appear accomplishable to its reviewer)
- Meets page length requirements of 5-6 pages
- Include full and correct citation information.

FEEDER 2: PROGRESS REPORT PRESENTATION

In any working team where you work on a long-term project, you will need to give a presentation about how your work has progressed. For the progress report presentation, you will be asked to give a 3-minute PowerPoint presentation to your instructor and classmates about your work on your video. You want this progress report to leave several impressions: first, that you're progressing adequately on the project; second, that you have a clear vision of what you need to do; and, third, that you have a realistic understanding of what you need to work on. You also want to use this as an opportunity to show off your ideas, to excite the policy makers who have hired you to work on this project. Besides trying to leave these impressions, you should also take this as an opportunity to get feedback in the form of suggestions for resolving a problem and constructive criticism.

Successful progress report presentations:

1. Provide important background about the project itself (such as the subject of your project, the objectives you are seeking to meet)
2. Highlight the achievements and progress you have accomplished thus far (in collecting audio/image, structuring your work, etc.; note: you may want to even showcase some of your best content to get your audience excited to see your work)
3. Discuss problems that have arisen or areas in which you are seeking advice/feedback
4. Outline the work that lies ahead with a time schedule
5. Assesses whether presenter has met the proposed objectives of your project
6. Showcase speaker's oral presentation skills (professionalism, enthusiasm, and confidence)

UNIT PROJECT: EDUCATIONAL VIDEO ESSAY

The purpose of this educational video essay is to excite as much as it is to instruct. It should grab the viewer's attention, keep them interested, and tell a compelling story. Your central goal is making an argument for the viewer to pursue research in the natural sciences; to do so, you are trying to entertain as much as inform. Since you are asked to include your own voice in this video essay, you should aim to speak clearly and confidently.

A successful 4-5 minute video essay should:

- Be narrated by you, the director of the video essay, for a minimum of 20% of the video.
- Articulate a clear storyline about scientific subject (with Opening, Conflict, Action, and Result clearly defined)
- Present subject of video essay professionally and respectfully
- Provide essential contexts and definitions for your audience
- Direct itself toward a listening and viewing audience in its pacing, use of images/video/text/audio, and style of presentation
- Showcase director's creativity and originality in visuals and audio
- Showcase director's technical and editorial skills in choices of presenting visual/audio content
- Showcase director's oral presentation skills through practiced, confident delivery