

Exploring Film Genres for Telling Hero Stories: Experimental Shorts

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Subject Area: Art/Music, English/Language Arts, Social Science, Technology/Media Literacy, Other subject

Grade Level: 5-8, 9-12, college

Overview/Purpose:

An experimental film combines several media to express a theme or concept about heroism that the filmmaker wants to explore.

Objectives:

Experimental film is a place to make your own rules and be VERY creative. Often experimental film is thought of as, but not limited to, visual poetry. It is a good place to experiment with shooting styles and to try new things like extreme close-ups, strange camera angles, focus blurs, and sound effects to create mood.

Resources/Materials:

Activities and Procedures:

In preparation for making your experimental short keep these simple guidelines in mind:

You are telling a STORY.

Whose story is it?

What happens? Be flexible with time and space with experimental film.

Where does the story take place? What unusual landscapes can you incorporate?

Why have you decided to tell this story? What is the importance of this hero story to you and to others?

The best place to begin your filmmaking process is with writing your SCRIPT.

Be CREATIVE.

Begin with your underlying INTENT.

Be creative with your storytelling (or unconventional).

Be poetic, expressive, or interpretative.

Be in touch with the feelings you are trying to convey.

STRUCTURE:

An experimental short still needs structure. It is important to plan your creative project using conventional storytelling techniques in unusual ways. You can combine establishing shots, scenes, montages, and subjective footage in a variety of ways to create an interesting story.

Experiment with your approach to these standard methods:

Establishing shots are usually wide exteriors of the location to establish where the story takes place.

Scenes are usually shot with actors interacting in a location. Some scenes have dialogue, some do not.

Montages are usually created by combining music and stills (or footage without dialogue) in sequences to help tell the story.

Subjective footage is "getting inside the character's head." There are many ways to be creative in expressing what a character is feeling, thinking or dreaming. Point of view (POV) shots with some sound effects and narration (voiceover) can create the effect of being in someone's head.

FLASH ANIMATION:

Even if you don't have a camera, you can make your movie using the animation software, Flash. With Flash you can create elaborate and dynamic animations that fly all over the screen using photos, drawings and simple animations. Download a fully functional 30-day trial version of Flash from Macromedia and start making your movie.

PRODUCTION RESOURCES FOR STUDENT FILMMAKERS:

[How to Make a Short Film About Your Hero](#)

[Cinematographic Techniques for the Digital Filmmaker](#)

[Working With Images](#)

[Creating and Recording Sound](#)

This is your short film so be creative and have fun!

Assessment:

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