

How Can We Affect Change In Our World?
Video UN Project
10th Grade Humanities
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Introduction: Many problems in our environment and society do not always receive the attention in the mass media that they really deserve. It is also well known that one of the best ways to really learn something is to have to teach it to others or present it to an audience. Student teams will conceive, plan and produce "Public Service Announcements" compelling short desktop movie stories that can show more of what students know, while providing inside looks into United Nations topics of strong emotional, as well as social interest. Making desktop movies helps students learn to create new knowledge through the effective use of technology for research, visualization, and communication of knowledge to peers, mentors, and experts.

The Task: The actual topic is developed by students, based on issues, which concern the United Nations. The videos are typically designed to be short (e.g., 30 or 45 seconds, or 1 minute, similar to PSAs or TV commercials), reflecting strong background research, creative and carefully edited video, stills, titles/graphic screens, and appropriate audio/music or narration tracks, all designed to produce an informative and emotionally impactful "story" and message. Depending on the topic, different messages are more appropriate than others. Examples of messages are:

- Awareness of an issue- this would be to give information or clarify an issue. For example, how many people really know what "genocide" is or that it is currently still happening in places like Kosovo, Chechnya, Chiapas or Rwanda? Your video could simply be a "Did you know . . .?" Your message may include where people could attain additional information.
- Appeal for donations- most agencies always need more money. Asking for funds must be accompanied by an address or phone number of a legitimate agency like Red Cross or UNEP. Of course, it is important that people know exactly what their money is going to be used for.
- Recruitment of volunteers- sometimes a call to action is vital for the survival of an agency. For example, UNICEF depends upon schoolchildren for their "Trick or Treat" fund drive.
- Warnings about dangerous materials- although usually done by the federal government, a UN agency could also produce the same kind of videos.
- Economic boycotts- sometimes dictators or corrupt governments profit by dealing in certain kinds of legal products- diamonds, ivory, animal skins and furs. Certainly it is considered appropriate to make a video that encourages people not to buy certain products in order to weaken certain governments economically.

Deadlines: Starting Monday, May 13, every Monday block will be devoted to working on this project. Here are the deadlines for this project:

May 13- Decision for message (one sentence), decision for length of video, rough draft for script. A message is like a hypothesis, essentially, what's your point?

May 20- Final script, rough storyboard. The storyboard at this point is a visual layout of the story on paper. One frame (picture) for each cut or scene. No *Flash* yet.

May 28-31- Detailed storyboard. A lengthy description about what happens in each frame of the storyboard. Further refinement/subdivision of the visual. Several pictures per picture of original storyboard. This is testing week. All free time allowed for work on storyboard. Due Friday, May 31. *Flash* begins now.

June 10-Construction in *Flash*. Recreate final storyboard elements in *Flash*. Get timing right. Add detail to each scene. Refine until 1.0 is finished. Initial screening for entire class or teacher only.

June 17- Final copy. After review, go back and make it better. Humanities POL week.

Here is the address on Plato to find a Flash tutorial:

W:\staff_html\jschiffman\all about flash.html

Assessment: The rubric for how projects will be judged will be available May 28. The standard must be what is called "Museum Quality" or "Production Quality." It must be good enough to be submitted to an international agency for consideration for actual use. Besides technological considerations, videos will be judged on accuracy, clarity of message, creativity, effectiveness of message, etc.