



FOSTER YOUTH VOICE TRAINING MODULE 2

In Module 2 participants explore ways to help youth cultivate original ideas and to generate questions that matter. Through hands-on activities, participants experience and reflect on the pre-production process as a meaningful learning opportunity.



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OVERVIEW

In Module 2, participants will explore ways to help youth cultivate original ideas and to generate questions that matter. Participants examine the elements of good storytelling and share tips for supporting the development of creative ideas. Through hands-on activities, participants experience and reflect on the pre-production process as a meaningful learning opportunity.

TRAINING GOALS

- Demonstrate the use of graphic organizers as tools for idea development
- Experience how to promote and facilitate inquiry through hands-on pre-production activities
- Explore the elements of good storytelling through media making
- Pitch a project idea to peers
- Complete a simple video project

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- Computer, projector/monitor, and external speakers, or another way to screen media
- “Foster Youth Voice” training presentation slides
- *Adobe Youth Voices Guide*
- For Target Map Activity: Flip chart paper, markers
- For Pre-Production Activity—Sense of Place: Flip chart paper, markers, digital cameras that can capture video, (optional) tripods

Training Handouts (included in the appendices of this document):

- Writing Prompts
- Shot Composition
- Story, Audience, Message, and Style (SAMS)
- Sense of Place Activity Plan

MEDIA SAMPLES

In the script, we refer to a number of carefully selected youth media works culled from around the world that correspond to the content of Module 2. These sample media can be found on the **AYV training gallery**: <https://vimeo.com/createwithpurpose>. Be sure to review the media in advance. If the selected works do not connect with or relate well to your trainees, select alternate media from the collection that might be more suitable.

Media samples:

- In This Life Nothing Is Impossible (video, 07:13), Redwood City Peapod Academy
- Recipe for Beauty (video, 04:28), West Seattle Elementary School

READING

The *Adobe Youth Voices Guide* is a key companion to the AYV training, providing additional context, resources, and support for planning and implementing a youth media program. To prepare for Module 2, we recommend assigning Chapter 3 to trainees, as it is particularly helpful when learning about how to facilitate the creative process.

TUTORIALS

A number of video tutorials were produced to reinforce key AYV concepts and principles. The tutorials show youth and educators in action and are useful in explaining key concepts and ideas in a direct and appealing way for youth and educators. The entire collection of AYV tutorials can be found on the AYV training gallery. The Project Proposal video tutorial introduces pre-production materials that can help in preparing for a project pitch.

PRE-PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION ACTIVITY: SENSE OF PLACE NOTES

Carefully review the instructions in the script for facilitating these activities. In addition to pitching their video idea to their peers, teams create a short video by shooting a sequence of video clips in order. Ideally, have a video camera for each group of five trainees, who will work together as a production team. To project and watch the videos as a group, you will need either proper cables to connect the cameras to a projector, or the ability to share the created video files on the presentation computer.

Note: Even a simple production activity like this one requires additional support. We strongly encourage enlisting the help of those with some video experience to support the teams and to co-facilitate the pitch session as additional trainers.

FOSTER YOUTH VOICE: TRAINING MODULE 2

STEP 1: WELCOME AND GOALS

Duration: 5 minutes

Slides 1–2: Title; Training Goals

WHAT TO DO

- Welcome trainees.
- Review the training goals.
- Allow time to determine participants' needs and to better understand what they wish to gain from this training.

PROMPT

Good morning, everyone, and welcome! In this training, we will explore how to support and encourage the unique creative expression of young people. Let's first review the goals for the training, and then we'll take a moment to check in on your goals and needs for this session.

STEP 2: SHIFTING THE ROLE OF “TEACHER”

Duration: 15 minutes

Slide 3: Shifting the Role of “Teacher”

WHAT TO DO

- Explain that media-making instruction often works best with a youth-centered approach. Youth-centered instruction shifts the role of the educator and fosters individual engagement by framing creativity and inquiry as essential skills.
- View and discuss the media sample, using the discussion questions.

MEDIA SAMPLE

Recipe for Beauty (video, 04:28)

PROMPT

When facilitating youth media, adults don't have to be the experts with the tools or to have all the answers. A facilitator is not the keeper of all knowledge about a subject; rather, the facilitator is there to encourage youth to explore their own ideas and seek answers to questions that matter. That is at the heart of the “Create with Purpose” philosophy: young people not only expressing themselves, but also addressing issues that have meaning for an intended audience.

DISCUSS

What was the relationship between the educator and the youth during the making of this work? How do you see a youth-centered approach working in your own setting? What may be challenging about this approach?

STEP 3: YOUTH MEDIA MAKING PROCESS

Duration: 5 minutes

Slide 4: Youth Media-Making Process

WHAT TO DO

- Share Slide 4 and review the steps and stages of youth media-making.

PROMPT

So, what is the process? Very broadly, there are five stages, with each being equally important to the end result and requiring your careful facilitation to encourage youth's voice throughout.

- **Pre-production** involves idea development, scripting dialogue, and the project pitch.
- **Production** involves capturing sounds and images based on the production plan.
- **Post-Production** involves assembling the media files as planned.
- **Critique and revision** should happen throughout but at this stage—after post-production—it involves sharing a rough-cut and getting formal feedback.
- **Exhibition** involves getting the work out to an audience. This can take many approaches, but it is particularly powerful when youth artists and audiences interact.

STEP 4: THE BIG IDEA

Duration: 5 minutes

Slides 5–6: The Big Idea: In-School Approach; The Big Idea: Out-of-School

WHAT TO DO

- Share Slides 5 and 6 and review the “Big Idea” concept as a lead-in to brainstorming. Explain why an “anything goes” approach often fails.
- Emphasize that there should ultimately be a link between the theme and a truly relevant topic of interest to the youth.

PROMPT

Having young people jump in and work on the first thing they think of as a media project doesn't usually work. Youth are often tempted to do what is popular or to imitate what is familiar to them. It helps for the facilitator to introduce some broad thematic topics that can get young people thinking in creative ways and asking great questions. To foster youth's voice, activities must engage young people to share their own views and talk about what really interests them. Remember to set realistic boundaries. You can say a lot in three minutes or less if the work is well-planned, creative, and purposeful.

DISCUSS

What issues are important to the young people you work with? What questions do they have about these issues?

STEP 5: TARGET MAP ACTIVITY

Duration: 30 minutes

Slide 7: Brainstorming Ideas: Target Map

WHAT TO DO

- Organize trainees into small groups of ideally no more than five. Provide each group with flip chart paper and markers for creating their target map.
- Instruct them how to create a target map, using Slide 7 as a guide and example.
- Have groups create a target map. Make sure that they choose a topic that young people care about.
- To help facilitate the activity:
 - Listen carefully for what stimulates the most conversation or debate in the groups, and ask questions to keep the discussion going.
 - Help groups narrow down their questions and be specific. For example, if the topic is “Poverty,” the question “Why is there poverty?” is too general, whereas, “How many people in my neighborhood are living in poverty?” is more specific and open to inquiry.
 - Encourage groups to go deeper—not only posing questions but also seeking answers and solutions, such as interviewing community members, searching online, and showing the reality of someone living in poverty.
 - If groups seem to be getting stuck, encourage them to keep brainstorming and to consider multiple ideas.

PROMPT

Let's do some brainstorming. With your group, create a target map on one topic that you think young people care about—family, money, health, respect, etc. Pick a topic that young people are familiar with and can ask real, personal questions about to investigate further. Map out what young people might know or want to know about that topic. As you discuss the topic, get to why it really matters on a personal level. If it does not move you personally, it won't connect with an audience.

STEP 6: WEBBING ACTIVITY

Duration: 30 minutes

Slide 8: Brainstorming Ideas: Webbing

WHAT TO-DO

- Have groups take the idea that received the most attention during the Target Map activity and “web it” by connecting related ideas and thoughts together.
Note: Webbing might be more familiar to trainees than target maps. If

so, trainees familiar with webbing can share their knowledge of how to use this technique with young people.

- Share Slide 8 as a guide and an example of webbing.
- Have each group share its target map and web with the whole group for feedback.
- Debrief and discuss both brainstorming activities.

PROMPT

Let's try another activity. Take one of the ideas that stirred the most enthusiasm and conversation and make a web. Webbing allows you to get into specific media approaches to exploring a topic. A young person might web-out the ways that poverty impacts their community by assembling a montage of still images combined with statistics they find online for their community and quotes from local residents. The real idea is to get ideas down on paper so a young person has a variety of options to explore when they make a more detailed production plan.

DISCUSS

What were some good questions that you came up with? What techniques did you see the training facilitator(s) use to support this activity?

STEP 7: SUPPORTING STORYTELLING

Duration: 20 minutes

Slides 9–11: Writing Prompts and Story Starters; Telling a Story; Supporting Storytelling

WHAT TO-DO

- Share the Writing Prompts handout, and explain how writing activities can be used to jump-start project ideas.
- Review the basic elements of a story, using Slide 10. Explain that these elements are essential in facilitating the “art” of storytelling.
- View the media sample, and have small groups discuss the story elements of the piece.
- Share ideas as a full group.
- Reference the AYV curriculum as a resource for story-starters.

MEDIA SAMPLE

In This Life Nothing Is Impossible (video, 07:13)

PROMPT

The Writing Prompts handout contains a list of interesting prompts to encourage creative writing and reflection with young people. Writing and journaling can help young people plan their project ideas and track their progress from start to finish.

As youth begin to tell their stories, help them stay mindful and aware of these basic story elements. A story has:

- A subject
- A place
- A situation or conflict
- A sequence (beginning, middle, end)

Let's take a look at a youth media example.

Many of the activities and exercises in the AYV curriculum use various writing prompts to get things rolling.

DISCUSS

How might the adult facilitators have fostered youth's voice and supported their storytelling in the process of making this project?

STEP 8: PRE-PRODUCTION ACTIVITY: SENSE OF PLACE

Duration: 30 minutes

Slide 12: Pre-Production Activity: Sense of Place

WHAT TO DO

- Distribute the Shot Composition and SAMS handouts.
- Introduce the Sense of Place writing prompts listed on Slide 12. Have participants write and reflect individually on the prompts.
- In small groups of up to five, have participants share their ideas and then decide together on the best approach to their story.
- Ask each group to create a simple written description or "treatment" for their story, using the SAMS concepts as a guide.

Note: Because groups will create their final projects without the use of software, participants should envision ways to tell the story with strong visuals that do not depend on transitions or special effects. The Shot Composition handout is a useful resource for reinforcing camera techniques.

PROMPT

Thorough pre-production is critical to the creation of successful media work. Scaffolding activities such as this one—Sense of Place—can help get things started. Follow the instructions on the slide to begin.

Remember to:

- *Consider the perspective of an object or element in the space, and write what it would say.*
- *Use your senses and descriptive words to capture the complexities of what you see, touch, smell, etc.*
- *Generate a list of as many sounds as you can. You may also choose to write things you might hear people say.*

Write and reflect individually, then share your writing within your group. Decide together what would be the best approach to the story.

Use the Shot Composition handout to help you visualize and organize your thinking for your storyboard. Create a simple written description or “treatment” that describes your group’s vision for the project. Use the SAMS handout as a reference, and be sure to include the concepts of Story, Audience, Message, and Style.

STEP 9: PROJECT PITCH ACTIVITY

Duration: 30 minutes

Slide 13: Pitch Your Project Idea

WHAT TO DO

- Explain that a “pitch” is an opportunity for youth to communicate their project vision to peers for feedback.
- Show the Project Proposal tutorial, which explores the project proposal and pitch process. Note that this is a good tutorial to share with youth as well.
- Provide each group with flip chart paper and markers, and explain that each group will create and share a short presentation for group feedback.
- Charge groups with creating a storyboard that represents their media project to be used during their pitch.

Note: If possible, we recommend breaking into smaller pitch session review groups; however, if you don’t have multiple trainers, this may be difficult to facilitate.

PROMPT

A “pitch” is an opportunity for youth to communicate their project vision to peers for feedback. Your role as facilitator is to provide clear instructions, guidelines on how to respect one another’s opinions and feelings, and tools to facilitate youth in the process. The outcome of this activity should be a clear and coherent project plan. If the story or outline has holes, this is the point in the process where those should be discussed and explored.

Now it’s time for your group to “pitch” your project idea. Each group will share a storyboard that represents the media piece you intend to create. The presentations should be on flip chart paper or somehow made large enough for your peers to see your plans clearly. Your presentation should be short and to the point.

STEP 10: PRODUCTION ACTIVITY

Duration: 50 minutes

Slide 14: In-Camera Edit

WHAT TO DO

- Instruct groups on how to complete an in-camera edit. Tell them that this will give them the experience of seeing their project through to completion.
- Review the steps of the process on Slide 14. Challenge trainees who have advanced experience with media to use the restriction of having to shoot sequentially as an opportunity to be more creative.
- After each group has recorded its project, showcase the videos for the whole group to review.
- Use SAMS as a guide for viewing media together. Encourage groups to wait for responses and feedback before explaining their intentions—to *show* instead of *tell* the audience.

PROMPT

In-camera editing takes advantage of a function inherent in a video camera: the record/pause button. When you press the record button on a camera, it records; however, when you press the record button again, it pauses. Pressing record once more takes the camera out of pause; the camera records the next shot and places it next to the previous one without a gap or interruption. By recording a series of shots this way in sequential order, you can tell your story without having to use editing software.

Imposing a simple restriction—such as doing an in-camera edit, creating a video without sound, or shooting everything in one shot without turning off the camera—encourages youth to focus on the basic elements of storytelling without the bells and whistles.

Let's take a look at your projects! As we view each video, remember to think about SAMS—what is the Story, Audience, Message, and Style of each project?

STEP 11: REFLECTION

Duration: 10 minutes

Slide 15: Reflection

WHAT TO DO

- Reflect on the Module 2 training as a whole, using the reflection prompt questions to guide discussion.

DISCUSS

What strategies will you use to help young people come up with great ideas and craft original stories? How might you facilitate a pitch session at your site?

STEP 12: REVISITING GOALS

Duration: 10 minutes

Slide 16: Revisiting Goals

WHAT TO DO

- Conclude the training by revisiting the goals and providing an opportunity for questions and direct feedback.
- Remind trainees that the content of this training is covered in more detail in the *AYV Guide*.
- Administer a survey or end-of-session assessment, which will give you valuable feedback.

PROMPT

Let's revisit the goals we had for this training. What questions do you still have? What will you walk away with?

TRAINING HANDOUTS

- Foster Youth Voice Presentation Slides
- Writing Prompts Handout
- Shot Composition Handout
- Story, Audience, Message, and Style (SAMS) Handout
- Sense of Place Activity Plan

Foster Youth Voice

Training Module 2



Training Goals

- Demonstrate the use of graphic organizers as tools for idea development
- Experience how to promote and facilitate inquiry through hands-on pre-production activities
- Explore the elements of good storytelling through media making
- Pitch a project idea to peers
- Complete a simple video project



Shifting the Role of “Teacher”

From:

- *Teacher* gives information to students
- *Teacher* deems what is important to learn
- *Teacher* presents in his/her preferred styles

To:

- Facilitator does not have all the ‘answers’ and is willing to learn alongside *students*
- Topics are driven by *students’* interest
- Learning is presented in style preferred by *students*



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Youth Media-Making Process

A carefully planned youth media-making experience has at least five steps in the process . . .

PRE-PRODUCTION

- » Brainstorming
- » Identifying audiences
- » Script writing
- » Storyboarding
- » Creating shot lists
- » Project Pitch

PRODUCTION

- » Collecting media
- » Shooting media
- » Creating media

POST-PRODUCTION

- » Editing media
- » Creating narration
- » Creating & adding sound and music

CRITIQUE & REVISION

- » Review rough cut
- » Revising and editing
- » Previewing final cut

EXHIBITION & DISTRIBUTION

- » Showing final media project
- » Sharing work via social media
- » Reaching out to broader audience

. . . educators and youth artists should anticipate revision and audience engagement from the onset.

The Big Idea: In-School Approach

Successful integrated curricular units are often organized around an overarching concept that serves to connect the academic content and creative learning.

Big Ideas:

- Identity—What determines character or individuality?
- Movement—How do things evolve?
- Change—What forces lead to growth and transformation?

Thematic instruction can help unify the work that youth are doing independently and align to academic or programmatic objectives.



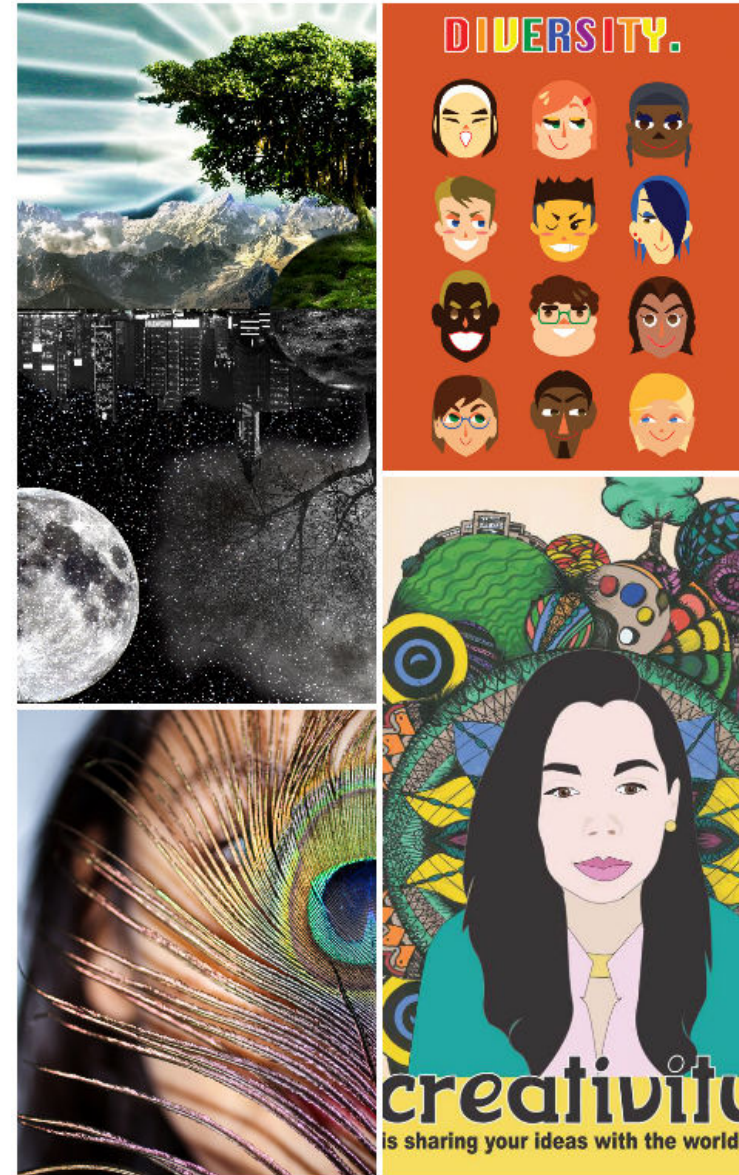
The Big Idea: Out-of-School

Youth-driven, hands-on media-making experiences have to be engaging. Youth will be invested when the topic is something they care about and have a personal connection to.

Big Ideas:

- Relationships—Who influences who we are & who we become?
- Respect—What determines how we treat others?
- Rights—Who will stand up when a wrong needs addressing?

Informal educators still need to guide the exploration of themes and ideas. Youth need to be prompted to really explore topics and take risks.

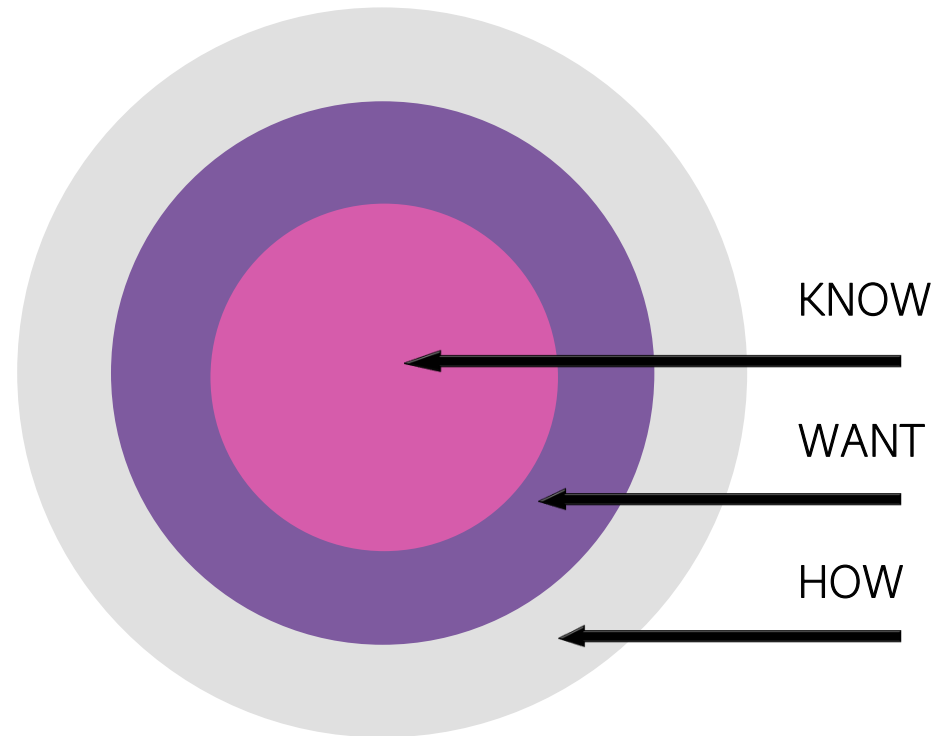


Brainstorming Ideas: Target Map

Identify possible subjects for an youth project by creating a **Target Map**:

- Place a key youth topic or issue in the center
- Brainstorm all the questions they might have about the topic
- Formulate how they might learn the answers based on these questions

The basic mapping template



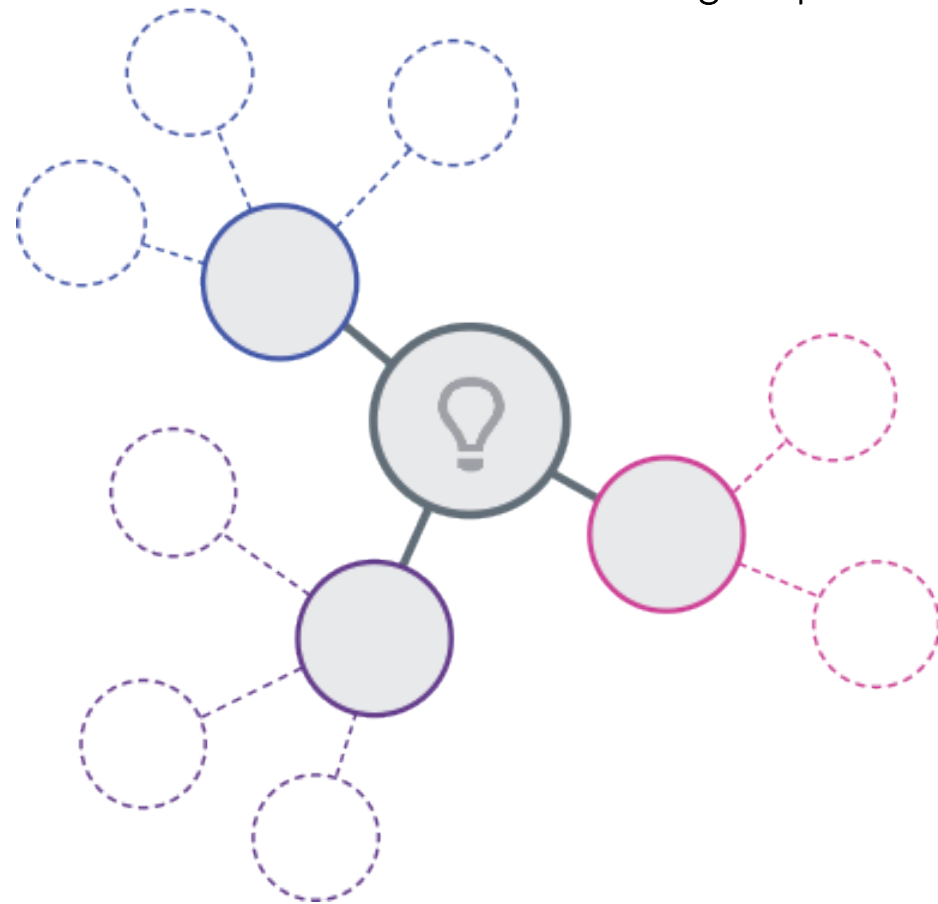
Be sure to distinguish between what youth “like” and what they really “care about.”

Brainstorming Ideas: Webbing

Dream up ways to make media on a topic by **Webbing**:

- Place your primary idea/question at the center
- Identify three or more ways to explore the central theme (montage, interviews, poem, still images, etc.)
- For each approach, brainstorm related elements (shot list, interview questions, narration, etc.)

A webbing template



Webbing doesn't take the place of pre-production – it just helps youth explore what's possible.

Writing Prompts and Story Starters

- Almost all media projects require some form of creative writing
- Activities in the AYV collection often use writing prompts to get things rolling
- Consider using journals for youth to save their writing activities, draft project ideas, doodles, storyboards, etc.
- Include storytelling (written or oral) to stir creative thinking and to discover personal connections that make the resulting media most compelling



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Telling a Story

What makes a good story? Is it something you care about? What's a story only you can tell?

- In a story, there is a **subject** (a person, a character, a group, an object)
- That subject is some **place** (safe at home, out on the town, lost, on a journey)
- There is a compelling **situation or conflict** (a tension, a need, a struggle, a threat)
- Something is going to change or come to a head (the **sequence** of the story)

When you tell a good story, people laugh, get angry, blush, and/or cry. Your task as a storyteller is to make us react and care what happens next.



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Supporting Storytelling

Use the resources in the AYV Collection to help guide good storytelling:

- Digital Storytelling Curriculum: Telling My Story
- Video Documentary Curriculum: Life Chronicles
- Stop Motion Animation Curriculum: Stories In Motion
- Narrative Curriculum: Moment of Truth
- Graphic Design Curriculum: Hopes And Dreams

Each is a sample 8-week curriculum with a variety of scaffolding techniques to get to great stories.



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Pre-Production Activity: Sense of Place

Prompts to get you started with the Sense of Place Activity:

- *Take the perspective of an object or element in the space. If the walls could talk, what would they actually say?*
- *Using your sense of sight, touch, or smell, generate a descriptive list of the colors, smells, textures, and shapes in the space.*
- *Close your eyes. Using your sense of hearing, describe the sounds you hear now or would expect to hear in the space.*

First, do some free-writing individually using one of the prompts above. Then together in your group:

- Discuss and brainstorm ideas as a group
- Select one way to approach your group project
- Create a simple “treatment” that describes your vision for this project.
- Draft a storyboard or shot list to help communicate your vision.

Pitch Your Project Idea

Educators should now plan to “pitch” their project to peers for feedback:

- *What is the purpose? What’s the goal of your project?*
- *Who is the audience?*
- *What is the message?*
- *What is the style?*

As with any media project, it is important to consider exhibition from the beginning:

- *How will your work be exhibited?*
- *What plans do you have to engage your audiences?*



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In-Camera Edit

RECORD

VIDEO: Close up of a park bench

AUDIO: "I wait"

PAUSE

(switch camera angle)

RECORD

VIDEO: High angle shot of book left behind on seat of same park bench

AUDIO: "Also..."

PAUSE

(switch camera angle)

RECORD

VIDEO: Medium shot of people walking past bench in the park"

AUDIO: " A silent witness"

PAUSE

(switch camera angle)

RECORD

VIDEO: Long shot of bench isolated in the distance

AUDIO: "To the passage of time"

PAUSE



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Reflection

Creating with Purpose means considering everything that the audience sees, hears, and understands as they experience the work.

How will you help young people generate and cultivate their ideas?

How might you facilitate a pitch session at your site?



Revisiting Goals

- Demonstrate the use of graphic organizers as tools for idea development
- Experience how to promote and facilitate inquiry through hands-on pre-production activities
- Explore the elements of good storytelling through media making
- Pitch a project idea to peers
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WRITING PROMPTS

Strong youth media tells a story and coming up with a compelling story is not a skill that comes easily to most people, rather it is a process that entails practice. A great way to get young people crafting stories is to have them write, whether that takes shape as a routine free write or journaling activity. Not only will writing give them a feel for what an engaging story looks like, but it will also provide them the space to explore issues and stories that they are interested in telling.

Below are a few writing prompts that will encourage creative writing and reflection. You can easily take any of the writing exercises further by having young people storyboard what they write, share their pieces and receive feedback, or have them use their writings as starting point for a brainstorm.

What do you do when you daydream?

Free write to the question: "What do you do when you daydream?"

"What kind of world or worlds do you create in your dreams?"

Day in the life of...?

Choose an inanimate object whose story you would like to tell and write about what a day in the life of that object may look like.

An object I really, really like...

This is a ____

I keep it in ____

I got it from ____

It ____

In the future ____

Bring in an object that you really, really like and then fill out the prompts above.

Self-portrait

First Name

____, _____, ____

Likes ____

Fears ____

Dreams of ____

Last Name

Follow the prompts above to create a self-portrait poem.

What would you say to the world?

Free write to the question: "If you had 5 minutes to say something to the world, what would it be?"

SHOT COMPOSITION

All great pictures have one thing in common — they are well composed. Composition — also called “framing” — is fun to talk about, because there is no right or wrong. The only rule is that there are no rules. But there are a few tips to help you take better pictures:

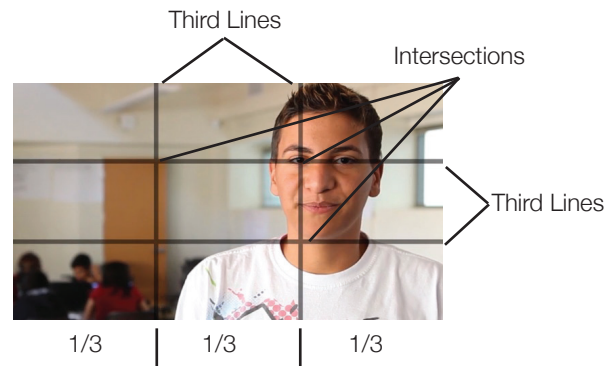
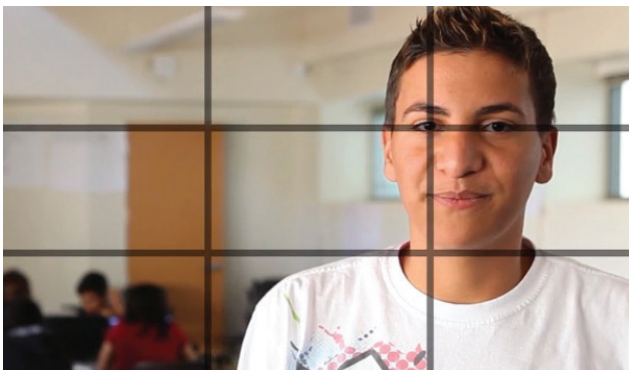
FRAMING

Pay attention to framing. Nothing ruins a photo faster than distracting elements in the background. Don't get so focused on the photo's subject that you ignore what else is going on around them. Watch out for poles, trees and power lines, and look all the way around the edges of the frame, asking “Is this what I really want?”



RULE OF THIRDS

Learn the Rule of Thirds. The human eye has its “visual center” and this is the place that it is naturally drawn to. Imagine the viewfinder is divided into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. This grid creates four points where the lines cross. For the greatest impact, place the subject where the lines intersect, instead of in the center of the frame.



FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND

Every photo has a foreground and a background. How you want people to look at your picture tells you what to do with the foreground and background. To blur the background, zoom in close and choose a large aperture setting (like F2.8). This works really well for pictures of a person.



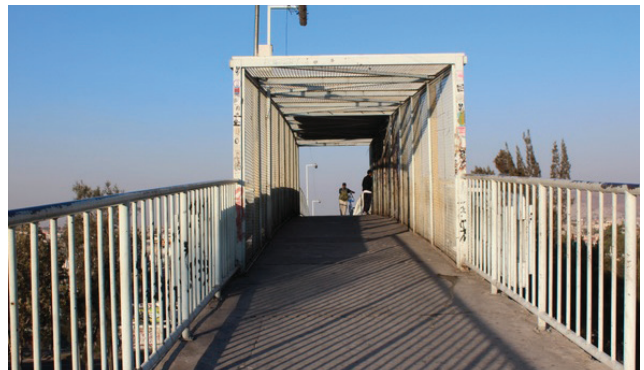
LINE OF SIGHT

Change your line of sight. Try kneeling, or even putting the camera on the ground. Or climb a flight of stairs so you're higher than the subject you're photographing. Digital cameras with twist and tilt LCD screens make it even easier. Changing angles provides a new way of seeing things, and makes for a more dramatic picture.



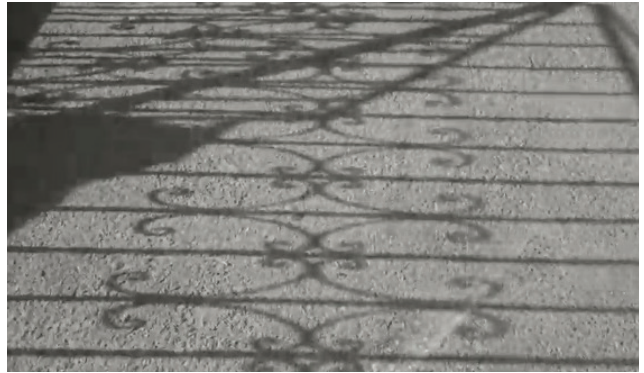
LEAD THE EYES

Look for elements that lead the eyes through the photo. A winding path, a row of telephone poles or even a line of chairs at the beach can serve as elements in a good photo.



FIND PATTERNS

Keep your eyes open for patterns. Interesting photos can be made of the waves and patterns created by drifting snow, a flock of birds flying in formation or pipes stacked at a construction site.



GET IN CLOSE

Try getting in close. Look for texture, in the wrinkles of a face or the bark of a tree. Pay attention to details.



CROPPING

Cropping brings a photo to life. If you edit photos on the computer, you are no longer limited to the standard 4 x 6, 5 x 7 or 8 x 10 print sizes. Look at each photo and think about what you really want people to see. Then crop everything else away. Try some unusual shapes, like panoramas or narrow verticals.



Original Photo



Cropped Photo

CAMERA SHOTS

ESTABLISHING SHOT OR EXTREME LONG SHOT (ES)

Used to establish a setting or sense of place. Shot is captured very far away from the subject.



LONG SHOT (LS)

Captures all of the subject, this shot generally establishes the size of the subject relative to place (for example a person from head to toe).



MEDIUM SHOT (MS)

This shot captures half of the subject, generally seen from waist to head for a person.



CLOSE-UP SHOT (CU)

This shot focuses in closely on the subject. Used most frequently with people during interviews.



EXTREME CLOSE-UP SHOT (ECU)

Goes in even closer to the subject than the Close-Up Shot and is used to focus on details or to make a more interesting shot.



CAMERA ANGLES

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Shooting the subject from way above.



HIGH ANGLE

A shot that is just above the subject looking down, but not nearly as high as Bird's Eye View. This shot can make the subject look or seem smaller and inferior.



LOW ANGLE

A shot that is just below the subject, looking up at them. This shot is used to make subjects look larger and more powerful, for example the President is usually shot from a low angle.



CANTED ANGLE

A shot that is tilted. Generally used to create the feeling of imbalance.



STORY, AUDIENCE, MESSAGE, STYLE (SAMS)

When watching media, it helps to have a shared language that you can use to understand and critique the work. This “SAMS” (Story, Audience, Message, Style) sheet can help you discuss key points about the media with each other.

STORY

What is the story?

What has changed from the beginning of the story?

AUDIENCE

Who is the audience for this piece?

What in the piece tells you that it was created for this audience?

MESSAGE

What is the message of this piece? Is there more than one message? If so, what are the additional messages?

STYLE

Comment on the style of this piece. How would you describe this piece? Is it fiction or non-fiction? Is it poetic? Is it a personal story?

What are the techniques the artists used to convey their message? Did they use interviews, text, performance, music etc.?

How is the quality of the audio and/or visuals? Are they clear? Is the sound at a good volume? Are there objects or sounds that are distracting?

How do the audio and/or visuals contribute to the message and the story?

SENSE OF PLACE

DURATION: 2 HOURS

OVERVIEW

An activity that introduces participants to shot composition and camera techniques by having them tell the story of a location, object, or moment in time using digital photography.

MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Video Editing Software (e.g. Premiere Elements)
- Digital Still Cameras + Extra Batteries
- USB Cords and Memory for Digital Stills
- Projector or some way to look at images together
- Shot Composition Handout (optional)
- Storyboard Handout (optional)

PREPARATION

Educators should have an understanding of the video editing software being used.

ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Review shot composition basics with participants. The Shot Composition Handout is a resource that can be used to cover the basics. (10 mins)
2. In small groups (up to 5) have participants brainstorm a place, object, or moment in time that they want to tell a story about using digital photos. Examples may include: bathroom, park, door, kitchen, intersection, subway station, car, bike, nature, waiting at a bus stop, park bench, playground, housing complex. (5 mins)
3. Have them brainstorm ways to tell that story visually before going out to shoot their photos. This is a great time to introduce storyboarding as well, the Storyboard Handout can be used to do this. (15 mins)
4. Groups should collect up to 15 shots that experiment with using close-ups, long shots, etc. and practice framing and composition (looking for texture, rule of thirds, etc.). (30 mins)

5. Once they have collected their 15 images, have the groups import them onto the computer. It is a good idea to have them create a folder either on the desktop or external hard drive to work from. (5 mins)
6. Participants should select the 6 images that they want to use to tell the story of their place. Edit those 6 images (if necessary: crop, rotate, etc.) using a photo editing software before importing them into the video editing software. (10 mins)
7. Using the video editing software have participants import the 6 images and edit their story by:
 - Organizing the clips
 - Edit the duration of the images if necessary
 - Export from video editing software(30 mins)
8. Share Sense of Place Media Projects as a group and reflect. (15 mins)