

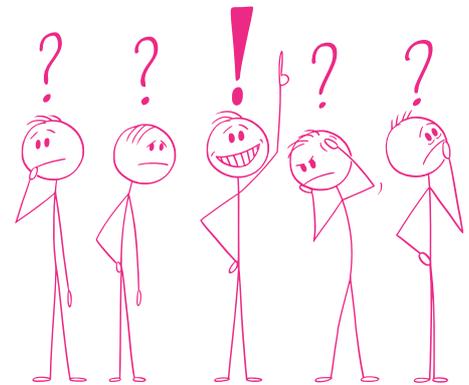
Creating Quality Content - Film

Short films are a great and engaging media for sharing messages. Taking the time to plan and storyboard your film will result in a better end product.

PLAN

Why are we even making a film? Is it to tell a story, or share a message? Once you know why you are making a film you will be able to decide on a theme, choose elements to include, and know the parameters around production. You may need to think about:

- How long should it be?
- What is our theme?
- What do we need to include?
- What budget do we have?
- Who will be involved?
- How will we make it? Will we use live-action, digital animation, Claymation, green screens, etc.



SCRIPTING

Once we have answered these questions we can start writing a script! The first step is to create a storyboard using a Storyboard Sheet. When creating your storyboard think about these questions:

- What journey is your lead character going to take through your script?
- Where is your story set and how does the setting affect your characters and story?
- How will you stage your film? Use each square in the storyboard to draw out what the scene will look like and how the characters will move.
- What will your characters say? Make sure your lines fit with the emotions and personalities of your characters, and convey your messages clearly.



EDITING

When you think you are finished, go back and read what you have written. Take out anything that doesn't relate to the story, even if it's fantastic.

Ask some friends to take on the personalities of the characters and read the script aloud with you. Listen closely for what works and what doesn't! Does it flow from one part to the next? Does it make sense? You might need to edit against to make sure your story is told smoothly.

PRE-FILMING

Now it's time to get set up! This will depend largely on how you want to create your film. You could use:

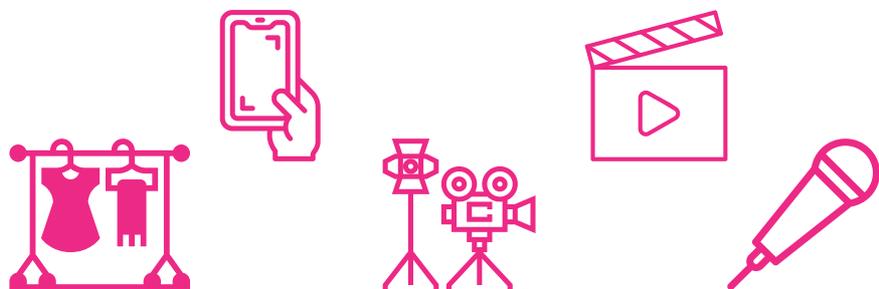
- **Live-action:** where you film real people acting out the parts either on a set or in an environment.
- **Digital animation:** there are lots of online free digital animation options such as moovly.com or renderforest.com
- **Stop-motion animation:** where you take many photographs of your scene, making minor adjustments between each photograph and combining all the images to make a film. You could use LEGO, cardboard cut-outs, or action figures.
- **Claymation:** this is another type of stop-motion animation where you use clay to make figures and scenery. Think of *Wallace and Gromit!*
- **Greenscreens:** This is a great way to put someone or something into a scene where they can't possibly be! Maybe you want someone to dangle over a volcano or scale a high-rise building.

Which of these elements you choose will largely depend on your story, timeline, and budget. Does it make sense to use this element? Can you do it in the time you have? Can you afford to do it? And remember, you don't need a whizz-bang blockbuster-quality video camera to make a great film - a mobile phone, camera, computer, or tablet will work very well too.

GEAR

Make a list of everything you will need, and we mean EVERYTHING! Think about:

- cameras
- lights
- scenery
- costumes
- props
- software
- microphones



LAWS

Consider copyright. Images and music sourced online or publicly available could potentially be subject to copyright and so cannot be accepted as part of the competition. You are encouraged to create your own props, models, sets, images, music etc. These do not need to be complex or elaborate: sometimes the simplest props, sets and music are the most effective. The important thing is to demonstrate creativity and good messaging, not expensive sets and props.

Get consent. Anyone who is acting or speaking in your film needs to sign a consent form. This is also called a 'model release'. If they are under 18 years a parent or guardian will need to sign it. Make sure you don't film anyone without their permission as this is a breach of their privacy. You also need consent to film on someone's property.

FILMING

Here are our hot tips for filming day:

- **Have a backup plan!** If you were going to film outside and it starts raining, what else could you do? If your camera battery dies, do you have a spare battery or a different device ready?
- **Practice, practice, practice!** Make sure everyone knows their lines and your videographers know how to use the equipment. There's nothing worse than nailing the perfect scene to find you didn't get it on film. If your actors struggle to remember their lines, you can use cue cards to help them.
- **Do it again!** Do another take, even if you think it was perfect on the first try. Otherwise, you might pack up, send everyone home and start putting the film together only to realise something wasn't right. It is much easier to do multiple takes on the same day and choose your favourite than having to come back and set everything up all over again.
- **Be innovative!** If something isn't working, change it up, whether it's lighting, positions, lines or props. You can choose what you liked the best in post-editing.

POST-PRODUCTION



It's time to pull all your scenes together, add music and polish the overall look and feel of your film. Use editing software to:

- Put the scenes together
- Add music, edit sound (be sure to use music not restricted by copyright)
- Add special effects
- Add credits

Before you submit your film to be assessed, share it with a friend or family member and listen to their feedback. Maybe you missed something, maybe a simple tweak would improve the plot line or flow. It can be hard to listen to criticism – even when it's constructive - but it can help to make your work stronger and more engaging.

CELEBRATE!

Don't forget to celebrate your work! You can:

- upload it and share it with the world
- show it at your school assembly
- have a private screening for friends and/or family
- set up an outdoor movie theatre

