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Overview

Wisconsin high school students will produce a mini-documentary about a peer who is actively working to make a difference in their community for the PBS Wisconsin series “Young Changemakers.” While creating their video, students will learn media production and storytelling skills.

Requirements for Participation

- You will need the ability to record and edit audio and video files.
- You will need the ability to export student videos into .mov or .mp4 format.
- You will need the ability to host student videos in your Google Drive account.
- You will need all students to fill out a PBS Wisconsin release form (found at bit.ly/PBSWIRelease).

Call to Action

From raising money for local food pantries, encouraging local businesses to stop using plastic bags, to volunteering at a humane society, high school students across the world are working everyday to make the world a better place. For the PBS Wisconsin Education series “Young Changemakers,” students will tell us about a peer who is actively working to make a difference in their community. Whether they are creating art to decorate a local nursing home or making new students feel welcome on their first days of school, these students’ stories reflect the positive impact young people are having in their communities.

Learning Goals

Student producers will be able to

- compose a narrative with a clear theme, telling one person’s story using interviews, B-roll footage, natural sound and music;
- operate editing software, as well as video and audio equipment in order to create a cohesive, inspirational narrative; and
- express different emotions through video composition, lighting and music.

Young Changemaker Video Requirements

Student videos should

- model pathways to change in Wisconsin communities,
- reflect stories about youth who are actively working toward change that affects other young people,
- represent the diversity of the state,
- use creative cinematography and storytelling techniques,
- evoke an emotional reaction,
- give viewers a glimpse into someone else's world,
- have a clear theme or big idea with which others can relate,
- have a running time of three to five minutes,
- include video footage from interviews and B-roll, and
- include at least two royalty free songs that fit the tone of the story.

Related Academic Standards

Wisconsin Standards for English Language Arts

W.11-12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.11-2.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Wisconsin Standards for Art & Design Education

A.A.Cr.12.h: Develop unique, well crafted works of art utilizing deliberate choice of media, tools and techniques.

Wisconsin Standards for Information & Technology Literacy

- EL2.a.4.h: Assess the fundamental concepts of digital tool operations, demonstrate the ability to choose, use and troubleshoot current digital tools.
- ID1.a.4.h: Collaboratively analyze the community locally and globally to make change socially. Explain the depth and breadth of a problem and analyze conditions for improvement.
- CC1.b.4.h: Create works for an authentic audience that reflect responsible remixing of digital and Fair Use content.
- CC1.c.4.h: Utilize digital tools to analyze, modify and communicate complex ideas, data, and solutions to an authentic audience.
- CC2.a.4.h: Intentionally align message with audience, purpose and task when publishing and presenting content.
- GC2.b.4.h: Explore and analyze local and global issues and leverage collaborative digital tools to work with others to investigate, develop and actualize solutions.

Resources

What is a Mini-Documentary?

The “Young Changemakers” series is a creative opportunity to explore innovative cinematography and unique storytelling techniques. A mini-documentary is **a three to five minute video** based on a **real person and real events** with a **clear theme or message**. Mini-documentaries **create emotional connections** for viewers, encouraging them to care about the changemaker in the video.

Creating an **engaging story** of the changemaker’s experiences, your video should bring viewers into the changemaker’s world, helping the viewer see the world from the changemaker’s perspective. Your story can be told creatively – infusing audio, video, and graphics – but should **describe the changemaker’s past, present and future**. Paint a picture of what led the changemaker to their work, what they are currently doing to create change and what their plan is to continue making a difference in the future.

Guiding Questions For Idea Generation

Are your students unsure of who to choose as the changemaker for your mini-documentary? Ask your students these questions to help generate ideas about who they could feature:

- What problems are in your community? Who do you know that is actively working to resolve the problem?
- What issues are important to you and your peers?
- Which after school clubs or organizations are doing positive activities in your community?
- Who do you know or have you heard about who is working toward a change in your local community or school?
- How have you noticed your peers responding to or acting upon issues they care about?

Mini-Documentary Examples

- “The Social Justice Advocate” (found at youtu.be/mcbAr3QCPs0)
- “Milwaukee DJ Gives Back to Her Community, Inspires Young Women” (found at www.wisconsinlife.org/story/milwaukee-dj-gives-back-to-her-community-inspires-young-women)

Youth-led Movements

- “Too Young to Vote, Old Enough to Act: A Brief History of Major Youth-Led Movements” (found at www.kqed.org/lowdown/30275/the-kids-are-all-right-a-timeline-of-youth-led-movements-that-changed-the-nation)
- “The Youth Activists Behind the Standing Rock Resistance (with Lesson Plan)” (found at www.kqed.org/lowdown/27023/the-youth-of-standing-rock)
- “Fearless Kids Around the World” web series (found at www.carmensandiego.com/fearlesskids)

Video Production Tutorials

- PBS Digital Studios Video Training Series (found at www.pbs.org/digital-studios/station-resources/training-videos)
- PBS Newshour’s Student Reporting Labs “Level Up” Video Tutorial Series (found at www.studentreportinglabs.org/tutorials)

Royalty Free Music Source

- Incompetech (found at www.incompetech.com/music)

Transcription Services

- Trint (free trial, found at www.trint.com)
- Otter (free for basic plan, found at www.otter.ai)

Interview Tips

Approaching interviews with a focus in storytelling will help lead to a creative and informative video. It is important to hear all of the details about how the subject became interested in making a difference, their struggles, their successes and all of the little details that make a story come to life. In order to do this, have students ask themselves why their story is an important story to tell and why now is a good time to tell this story.

When creating interview questions, encourage students to think of the questions as story prompts. This will encourage the subject to tell heartfelt stories and share personal details.

Encourage students to

1. review the Top 10 Video Interviewing Tips for Documentary Filming (found at www.desktop-documentaries.com/interviewing-tips.html),
2. ask the person to speak about their personal experiences,
3. create questions that reach at emotions, and
4. prompt the person to tell their story using phrases such as, "Tell me about _____," or, "Can you talk about _____" which will encourage people to tell stories rather than answer factual questions.

Optional: Step-by-step Guide to Production

We have broken the “Young Changemakers” assignment into three easy-to-follow segments. The steps below are only guidelines and are not required when submitting videos to PBS Wisconsin Education.

Pre-production

Before filming, we recommend the following activities and lessons:

1. Read through the student prompt as a class and view mini-documentary example videos (see page 5).
2. Use guiding questions and resources on youth-led movements to brainstorm story ideas (see page 5).
3. Compose interview questions and practice conducting interviews that lead to strong storytelling using provided interview guidelines (see top of this page).
4. View Student Reporting Lab’s “Level Up” videos on lighting, audio, B-roll, and principles of photography (POP) (found at www.studentreportinglabs.org/tutorials).

Production

During filming, we recommend students complete the following:

1. Conduct an interview with the featured changemaker for at least 30 minutes using about 15 questions.
2. Ensure all producers and individuals featured in the film fill out the PBS Wisconsin release form (found at bit.ly/PBSWIRelease).
3. Set up two or three B-roll filming shoots featuring the changemaker demonstrating something they talked about in the interview. Film a variety of close up, medium and wide B-roll shots. Film shoots may be actual or staged events (e.g., follow the changemaker at a march, schedule an interaction with someone).
4. Consider filming the changemaker for 20-30 minutes in a natural setting to reflect a “day in the life” of the subject (e.g., getting ready for school, in a classroom, at lunch).

Post-production

After filming, we recommend having students complete the following steps:

1. Transcribe the interview, and determine which sections to keep and which to discard.
2. Arrange interview clips into a story format before editing the video.
3. Create a storyboard using interview footage and B-roll.
4. Pitch storyboard ideas to peers to gather feedback prior to editing.
5. Edit interview footage with editing software.
6. Seek peer feedback and edit based on suggestions.
7. Add B-roll, voiceover, and music.
8. Share with your peers and classmates.

Submitting Student Videos

Student videos are due no later than June 5, 2020. All videos will be submitted to PBS Wisconsin Education through a submission form on the Click Youth Media website, www.pbswisconsineducation.org/click. You will need to provide the following for each video:

- link to student videos stored in your Google Drive account,
- title of video,
- list of all producers,
- signed release forms for all producers and individuals featured in the work,
- brief description of the video, and
- teacher's name, teacher's email address, name of school, school district and school address.