AS and A LEVEL

Delivery Guide

FILM STUDIES

H010, H410
For first teaching in 2017

Making a Short Film – Non Examined Assessment (Component 3)

Version 1

Introduction

AS and A LEVEL
FILM STUDIES

This guide outlines approaches and ideas, including learner activities for the non-examined assessment component of OCR's A Level in Film Studies.

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

- **Content:** A clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;

- **Thinking Conceptually:** Expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;

- **Thinking Contextually:** A range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

If you have any feedback on this Delivery Guide or suggestions for other resources you would like OCR to develop, please email resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk

DISCLAIMER

This resource was designed using the most up to date information from the specification at the time it was published. Specifications are updated over time, which means there may be contradictions between the resource and the specification, therefore please use the information on the latest specification at all times. If you do notice a discrepancy please contact us on the following email address: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk

Curriculum content

Preliminary Activities (non-assessed)

The Preliminary Activities for the Short Film component is a required but non-assessed element of the component. It is common to learners choosing the short film or screenplay options for both the A and AS Levels. This guide focuses on research, planning, and presentation in preparation for production and submission for assessment of the learner's artefact and evaluation. In this element of the component learners must carry out research into the British short films listed in the specification (for AS level, learners need only to focus on one of the films).

Learners should aim to explore:

- the narrative conventions of the short film, including the three act structure

- how the dramatic qualities of a short film are constructed through a wide range of narrative techniques, including through the use of dialogue, character development and dramatic devices

- how narrative can convey points of view, both intended meaning and those of the spectator.

Learners should also produce some planning materials to demonstrate the original process of the artefact. These materials could include:

- a draft script

- writing a location report

- notes on casting considerations

- a storyboard

- a series of screen tests with notes.

Research and planning materials, even though non-assessed, should be presented in an appropriate format, along with the assessed elements of the unit. This guide will explore options for the production of materials and possible routes for learners to present their work.

Thinking conceptually

General approaches:

The specification states that it 'is essential for learners to carry out these activities in preparation for their chosen production task so that each individual learner's work can be authenticated'. It is also essential that these activities are completed so that learners can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the process of production. It is good practice to thoroughly research and plan any project. Only when thorough preparation has taken place are best results achieved. Learners can draw upon prior learning while teachers can offer new approaches or techniques. This element should be learner led and they should take the initiative in selecting appropriate activities in preparation for the production of their artefacts. However, teachers should monitor the process closely and offer guidance on how to undertake research and plan effectively. If a learner's construction calls for new skills the teacher can use this element to introduce and develop new learning.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have:

The Preliminary Activities element is somewhat unusual for learners as they will be completing work that they may see as having little 'value' towards their final qualification. For this reason it is important that learners see the connection between initial research, planning, construction, and evaluation. It is important that teachers stress the true value of this element and don't simply see it as a 'chore' or a hoop to jump through. 'It is intended that some of the activities will be used as the foundation for self evaluation as well as informing the final artefact. Research and planning activities should be given value by being published either in hard copy or digitally online. Learners should be given the opportunity to take pride in publishing their research findings and planning materials and submitting them to OCR for moderation as part of a final portfolio of work, even though this element is not assessed.

Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set learners up for topics later in the course:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed for these activities are those developed throughout the course of study (and throughout the GCSE course if applicable). This component allows learners to demonstrate a practical application of their learning. Learners should be encouraged to explore the relationship between their theoretical learning and the application of practical skills.

Thinking contextually

Approaches to teaching the content:

This component offers the opportunity for learners to creatively apply their learning to the production of an artefact of their choosing. As they have a level of autonomy in their choices it is important that they are offered some structure within which to work. The specification provides a context for the productions and it is important that teachers ensure that learners work creatively within this context. Even though there are two approaches to the production element (screenplay and stills or moving image) the preliminary activities should be seen as common. It is also important at this stage that teachers monitor the planning materials to ensure that proposed artefacts are appropriate to the task and for submission for a national examination. Some form of health and safety task is important at this point in the process. Learners should also be encouraged to explore the options available for publication of their materials, both digital and physical.

Curriculum content

The Short Film (screenplay and stills or moving image)

The screenplay and stills or moving image element of The Short Film component is an internally assessed, externally moderated element testing AO3. Learners can follow a choice of two routes through this element, either via the production of:

- a complete, new short film (4-5 minutes)

or

- a screenplay for a new short film (10 pages, equivalent to 10 minutes of screen time) including a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section of the screenplay, illustrating, through careful construction of mise-en-scène and shot selection, how the screenplay would be realised (20 digitally photographed key frames).

(For AS Level, learners must complete a 2.5-3 minute sequence for a new British film or a screenplay for a key sequence from a new British film including a digitally photographed storyboard [see specification for details].)

This guide focuses on developing learners' production skills across both routes and explores ways in which learners can work with the codes and conventions associated with genre and the short film format.

The emphasis of this guide will be very much based on the technical codes of film making and the practical application of concepts explored in the research element and through prior learning if applicable.

Thinking conceptually

General approaches:

The specification states that the content should be produced independently by each learner. Where appropriate, for the moving image production for example, learners may employ others to take on roles both in front and behind the camera. However, the learner must be able to demonstrate that they have directorial control over the production at all times. Learners can draw upon their learning to select the genre in which to produce their artefact. The choice of moving image or screenplay could be made by learners or teachers depending on the circumstances at the centre. Learners should work independently on their productions, but teachers should offer guidance at all stages of production. Learners are encouraged to work on productions that are creative and challenging, but teachers should ensure that learners are working safely within the constraints of a submission for examination. Teachers should ensure that the centre has the equipment and facilities appropriate for the task chosen. The presence or otherwise of appropriate equipment may be a determining factor in which route to choose through the NEA.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have:

Learners may find it difficult to work independently on this component. There is often a misconception that because the assessment is done on an individual basis, learners have to work individually. This is not strictly the case. Both routes through the component would be difficult to complete on an individual basis. The process of film making is one performed by a team, even the production of the screenplay is often completed by a small creative team. Therefore, learners may adopt this professional way of working for the production element of their NEA. However, it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that learners take on a role within the group that allows them to maintain creative control over the production. It is advised that the learner acts as director/camera operator and editor for the process. Other learners in the group may serve as actors, sound recordists, make-up artists etc. as appropriate. The group may carry out these roles for each other as long as each member has a final artefact to be assessed.

The non-assessed planning may be completed in groups but the individual learner should always have a focus on their own production in mind. Generic recce reports etc. are not appropriate but several produced at the same location may be if more than one production is to be shot there.

Research tasks may be completed in groups but individual learners should be able to show how the research relates to their proposed/final productions.

Often learners are excited to work with ideas that they have generated and want to move straight on to the production process. Sometimes research and planning become an afterthought. It is important that teachers monitor the stages of production and direct learners to complete the research and planning before they embark on the production process. A production that is informed by research and planning is, in the majority of cases, far more effective than one that simply takes shape 'naturally'.

Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set learners up for topics later in the course:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed for these activities are those developed throughout the course of study (and throughout the GCSE course if applicable). This component allows learners to demonstrate a practical application of their learning. Learners are asked to show that their knowledge and understanding directly informs their application of practical skills.

Thinking contextually

Approaches to teaching the content:

This component offers the opportunity for learners to creatively apply their learning to the production of an artefact of their choosing. As they have a level of autonomy in their choices it is important that they are offered some structure within which to work. The specification provides a context for the productions and it is important that teachers ensure that learners work creatively within this context.

For many learners this may be the first time that they have been asked to produce a complete text (the moving image option). If this option is pursued the teacher should endeavour to ensure that learners have a thorough understanding of narrative structure. It is often the climax/resolution (denouement) that is problematic when producing short films.

For the screenplay it is important that learners follow the stylistic conventions of the screenplay and that they view each accompanying still image as a creative artefact in itself. It is worth the teacher spending some time with learners focusing on composition/mise-en-scène. Learners should think carefully about how each still image illustrates the camera position/shot type and all the elements of mise-en-scène, including lighting.

Curriculum content

Individual Evaluation

The evaluation element of the Short Film component is an internally assessed, externally moderated element testing AO2. The specification requires that learners must use subject specific terminology and produce an evaluative analysis which:

- evaluates and analyses their production in relation to the professionally produced set short films

- informs analysis and evaluation by selecting a range of appropriate evidence from their own production and the professionally produced set short films

- makes use of appropriate critical approaches

- discusses how micro-elements of film form can generate a preferred and alternative reading(s) of a short film.

(For AS Level, learners must do the same but with a focus on British film.)

This guide focuses on developing the learner's evaluative and analytical skills and how they can be used to critically evaluate their own work. It will also explore synoptically how prior learning can be used to explain decisions and processes evidenced in the learner's artefact.

Thinking conceptually

General approaches:

The specification states that the evaluation should be the work of the individual. Unlike the other elements of this component the evaluation is best approached as an independent piece of work. As it is a requirement that the evaluation has a maximum word count teachers should ensure that learners are disciplined in their approach to this element. It is important that the analytical nature of this activity is emphasised. Learners should be discouraged from simply telling 'the story 'of their production. The four bullet points above should be the focus of any preparatory work for this activity and learners should address them directly in their evaluation.

The publication of this element as part of a final portfolio lends itself to the traditional essay format, which is fine; however, learners should be encouraged to illustrate their analysis with appropriate stills from the final product (this applies for both routes – moving image and screenplay). For those following the screenplay route images used in the final artefact may be used in the evaluation to illustrate analysis.

This guide offers some preparatory activities for the production of the learners' evaluations. However, the final production should be completed as an independent task with close monitoring from the teacher.

Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have:

The primary issue that many learners may face with this element is the temptation to 'tell the story' of their production. It is important that teachers monitor the work of learners to ensure that they are addressing the four bullet points and not simply describing their process.
Reference to the short film collection is important as this provides the comparative element of the evaluation, a high level skill. It is also important that learners are equipped with the appropriate analytical tools to complete this task. They should also be able to use the appropriate vocabulary to clearly express their understanding. Teachers should ensure that an appropriate academic style is employed.

Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set learners up for topics later in the course:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed for these activities are those developed throughout the course of study (and throughout the GCSE course if applicable). This component allows learners to demonstrate a practical application of their learning. Learners are asked to show that their knowledge and understanding directly informs their application of practical skills. In this element the learner should draw upon their prior experience of comparing and contrasting texts. This is a skill that if developed will serve them well across the specification and beyond.

Thinking contextually

Approaches to teaching the content:

It is important to emphasise that the evaluation offers learners the opportunity to look back critically on their practical work. It allows them to bring their prior learning to bear on an artefact that they have produced themselves rather than the work of others. Sometimes this can be a difficult concept; many learners are their own biggest negative critics. Teachers should encourage learners to look at their work in a dispassionate way, much in the way they look at professional productions. The activities in this guide offer some options to help learners distance themselves from their work and use feedback from others to inform their understanding.

Teachers could use these activities within the centre whilst learners are completing their evaluations independently.

Learner Resources – Activities

A range of suggested teaching activities has been provided using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

All of the following learner resources can be found here: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/416530-nea-making-a-short-film-delivery-guide-learner-resources.zip

Learner Activity 1

Publishing research and planning materials

www.blogger.com

This activity and associated learner resource explores the options open to the learner for publication of their work across all three elements of this component.

It is important that learners publish their work for submission to OCR. Whilst it is not essential to publish every note and utterance it is desirable to be able to see the process from research to idea to planning to production to evaluation. This can be achieved through a folder or scrapbook of paper based materials or a digital platform that allows the user to organise items chronologically, such as a blog (from experience Blogger is the best suited of the widely available applications although there are many more appropriate applications available). Learners will not be advantaged by using either form of presentation, what is important is that the teacher and moderator can see a clear 'journey' from beginning to end of the process.

In small groups learners could discuss their experience of presenting projects. What in their opinion works well, what not so well? Is there a difference between presenting orally, on paper, and digitally? Which do they prefer? Why? They could then nominate one member of the group to feedback to the rest of the group.

The teacher could present a sample of digital and physical presentations (these will be available here after the first series). Learners could then use Learner Resource 1 to explore the pros and cons of using the different formats.

Learners could then make a decision about which format they will use for their NEA and set up a blog or physical folder. Teachers may need to demonstrate how to set up and use both formats depending upon the experience of the group. It is important that this is done at the start of the process so that learners can publish work from the very start of the process.

If there are safeguarding issues with using online applications it is permissible to create passworded access to blogs such as within intranets etc. as long as a password is provided for the moderator to gain access. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide clear instructions as to how to access learners' work.

Learner Activity 2

Researching short films and audience expectations

OCR Short film collection

www.pinterest.com

This activity and associated learner resource draws upon audience expectation and serves as an introduction to the OCR collection of short films.

Throughout these activities learners should be encouraged to make links to their experiences as consumers of film and to prior learning.

Learners could be asked to look at the titles of the films from the OCR short film collection. They could be told that they all share one thing in common; they are all under 30 minutes running time. Learners could complete the first column of Learner Resource 2 which asks them to identify their expectations – these could be discussed in pairs or as a group. The films could then be viewed and the resource sheet completed. Did any of the films conform to expectations? Which films did the audience find most satisfying? Why? Consider characters and narrative. The outcome could be used later when looking at the short film format, narrative, and when planning the individual construction.

Learners could then expand upon this activity by asking 'what makes a film British?' An interesting way to explore this concept is for small groups of learners to set up boards on Pinterest or similar virtual cork-boards, using images, video clips, words, phrases, text clippings etc. (This can be repeated for different genres as appropriate). A group discussion could ensue about what learners as audience expect from short films and if the generic conventions of feature films are common to short films.

All activities with outcomes such as the one above can be published (physically or online) and submitted as a preliminary activity.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 3

Researching Mise-en-scène and its relation to genre

www.elementsofcinema.com/directing/mise-en-scene-in-films/

This activity and associated learner resource explores two concepts studied for previous components and asks how they are related in practical application.

Learners could be encouraged to think visually by asking their opinions about the appearance of various locations, characters, physical items etc. (see Learner Resource 3)

Learners could then revise their prior learning in relation to mise-en-scene. A simple question and answer activity would suffice.

Learners could then consider their 'personal mise-en-scène' – what connotations are given off by personal appearance? A scrapbook or digital pinboard (see pervious activity) may be useful here. Learners could consider their own appearance. Why do they dress in different ways at different times and in different places? Discussion could be linked to key life events and/or social functions, weddings, gigs, school, funerals etc. and the differences between what is/what is not appropriate and why that is the case.

Learners could then work in groups to analyse the use of costumes, actors' physical appearance, props, locations etc. across a range of extracts from different genres of their choice. They could ask 'how does mise-en-scene aid our understanding of genre?'

Outcomes could be published and submitted.

Learner Activity 4

Researching the short film format

http://randomacts.channel4.com

This activity and associated learner resource explores the identifying features of the short film format. It is important that learners understand the distinguishing codes and conventions irrespective of which artefact they choose to produce.

As all learners are working with the short film format it is important that they understand how it differs from the full length feature format that they are more used to.

Drawing upon prior learning learners could be asked 'what is a short film?' Can they differentiate the form from a feature film, for example?

Using the Random Acts collection and extracts from a feature film of the teacher/learner's choice learners could create a comparative table of features (Learner Resource 4).

What codes and conventions distinguish the short film format? Is it a genre in its own right?

Learners could then discuss their individual findings in small groups. The small group could then try to create a model short film synopsis based upon their findings. They could then share this with the whole group and produce what they see as the definitive model. This framework could then be used to inform the construction of artefacts for assessment.

This activity could be combined with the Researching short films and audience expectations activity.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 5

Researching narrative

http://www.screenplayology.com/content-sections/screenplay-form-content/3-1/

http://www.screenplayology.com/content-sections/screenplay-form-content/3-2/

This activity and associated learner resource draws upon previous learning to explore the practical construction of different types of narrative structures.

One of the most difficult things for learners to realise when making short films (or extracts) is the discipline of a well constructed narrative. Learners will have explored different narrative forms earlier in the course but putting this knowledge into practice can prove difficult. From experience the most difficult part for learners is producing a satisfying conclusion to their narratives; therefore this may be a particular area of focus for teachers.

The teacher could tell the group a classic story or an audio book reading could be used. Learners could then identify and draw the key elements of the narrative. This could be done as a storyboard asking learners to create 4 or 6 frames (for example) identifying key elements of the narrative.

This is will probably be similar to the classic 3 Act structure or as Robert McKee calls it the Archplot (Classical Hollywood Structure).

Learners could watch *North by Northwest* (1959) Alfred Hitchcock (or any classical Hollywood film of their choice) and complete the learner activity 5.

Learners could then read http://www.screenplayology.com/content-sections/screenplay-form-content/3-1/ and discuss films they have seen using these structures. In groups learners could then make up a narrative using McKee's structure. At this point they could also think about character and character types – perhaps returning to Vladimir Propp's work as a starting point (see http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/characters/propp_personae.htm).

As a development learners could read http://www.screenplayology.com/content-sections/screenplay-form-content/3-2/ and consider alternative forms of narrative. They could return to their viewing of the OCR short film collection and try to plot the narrative structures of a selection of the short films.

At the end of this activity learners could identify the narrative structures that they would like to work with and record their ideas. They may also wish to develop characters at this point. It would also be advisable to link to narrative theory so that learners could include references in their evaluations.

Learner Activity 6

Generating ideas – thinking about your NEA

http://www.mindmapping.com

This activity and associated learner resource encourages learners to use their knowledge and understanding to generate and develop ideas within the given framework. The outcome(s) could form the basis for the learner's artefact.

This activity focuses on the generation of creative ideas. It focuses on one technique, mindmapping, but there are numerous other techniques available. Different techniques suit different people so it may be worthwhile for teachers to explore alternatives to mindmapping with learners, either on an individual or group basis, as time allows.

Using the mindmap template and materials available at www.mindmapping.com the teacher could demonstrate using mindmapping to generate ideas.

Learners could then create a mindmap based on a genre and/or a narrative structure of their choice. This could serve as the basis of their production. Once complete learners could form small groups and explain their ideas and, perhaps more importantly, the process of developing their ideas. This activity could be repeated with a range of techniques for generating ideas such as brainstorming, focus groups, use of digital applications etc.

As a whole group learners could share their preferred ideas and gather peer feedback. This could then be published as part of the learner's preliminary activities.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 7

Planning and creating a script

www.imsdb.com

This activity and associated learner resource encourages a practical approach to exploring the components of scripting moving image texts. The activity is appropriate for learners following both routes through this component.

Irrespective of which route the learner is following the production of a script is a useful discipline. For moving image productions it serves as part of the planning process and it is an inherent part of the screenplay artefact.

Learners could be asked to research scripting conventions. There are a range of resources available on the Internet to facilitate this. This could be done individually or in pairs/threes depending on resources.

Using what they have gained from their research, learners could select an extract from a popular film, preferably one with several characters, some dialogue, and some action. They could view it with no sound and write a dialogue script based on what they think the characters are saying. Actor and camera directions could then be added. Learners could then compare their script with the actual script (see www.imsdb.com for examples or use http://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Star-Wars-The-Force-Awakens.html). Use Learner Resource 7 and ask how does it compare?

At this point learners could develop their initial ideas and create a script for their moving image artefact or a script extract for inclusion in their screenplay. This could be published as part of their preliminary activities.

Learner Activity 8

Understanding, planning, and producing recce reports

This activity explores the importance of location.

The teacher could lead a discussion focussing on 'what is a recce report? And why is it important? 'Learners could be encouraged to link their discussion to their understanding of mise-en-scène. They could then complete some internet research to find examples of effective recce reports. The teacher may need to guide this as there are a lot of ineffective student recce reports on the web. An interesting discussion could ensue about what is effective and what isn't.

Learners could make one image of a familiar location e.g. a classroom and then provide a commentary of how this could be used as part of a genre specific film. They could then present this to the group and discuss how the location adds to their understanding of generic conventions.

Learners could be encouraged to experiment with different forms of presentation for their recce report, a storyboard, slideshow with captions, photo album with captions etc. They could then choose their preferred format and produce a recce report for their preliminary activities – planning.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 9

Digital storyboarding

http://www.storyboardthat.com

This activity and associated learner resource brings together research and planning elements in a visual representation of the learner's ideas.

A detailed storyboard helps the learner collect together their ideas in one place and carefully plan their production. This activity is often seen as a chore or as unnecessarily time consuming. However, if done well this process results in the best moving image products. For learners following the screenplay route, the storyboard is an integral part of the process – still images should be used to show how the learner visualises a finished moving image production even though they are not actually producing one.

Learners could read the following article about why storyboarding is an important part of the creative process https://www.premiumbeat.com/blog/the-benefits-of-storyboarding-your-next-film/ They could then discuss the pros and cons in small groups.

Learners could experiment with creating animated storyboards using the StoryboardThat application at http://www.storyboardthat.com/ As an extension they could then use Learner Resource 8 to produce an analogue storyboard. The question 'Which do you prefer and why?' could then be asked.

Learners could now produce their own storyboards, whether digital or physical and publish them as part of their preliminary activities (this may take the form of a draft for those following the screenplay route).

Learner Activity 10

Assessing risks

http://www.hse.gov.uk

This activity and associated learner resource emphasises the importance of the learner employing safe working practices and reinforces what is appropriate or not for an examined outcome.

Film making, like other industries, has an element of risk attached to it. There are additional risks involved, linked to safeguarding, when working with young adults and for an examination. Learners should be aware of all the risks involved in producing work for their NEA. Those following the moving image route will possibly confront some risks whilst engaged in practical work, for those following the screenplay the risks may remain theoretical.

Learners could be asked to consider why it is important to carry out risk assessments.

The teacher could provide a risk assessment form such as those available for classrooms from the Health & Safety Executive website (Learner Resource 9). Working in small groups, learners could then discuss and complete the risk assessment form.

Learners could then use a template (Learner Resource 10) and complete it for an outdoor location or indoor studio that is to be used in a photo shoot. (A resource guide is also available on the HSE website, which learners could use in preparation for their production).

Learners could then use the template to produce a risk assessment for their shoots, both moving and still image. These could then be published as part of their preliminary activities – planning.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 11

Using digital cameras/film – critical debates

This activity is a practical activity drawing upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for learners following the moving image route but could be adapted for those learners following the screenplay and stills route.

Whilst it is likely that learners will use digital equipment to film their artefacts it is useful for them to engage with the digital vs. film debate. Many professional film-makers prefer to use film stock as opposed to digital tape or solid disk/card drives. Learners could read the following articles and watch the embedded videos and prepare a short presentation on the differences between film and digital. They could also research films which have been filmed in the different mediums and present examples from them.

http://www.elementsofcinema.com/general/digital_filmmaking.html

https://indiefilmhustle.com/film-vs-digital/

It is useful for learners to understand the limitations of the equipment available to them. Teachers/technicians should demonstrate advanced features of photographic equipment available for use. Learners could then use the available equipment to shoot test shots illustrating the capabilities of the photographic equipment they are using.

Footage could be published in the learner's portfolio.

Learner Activity 12

Audience response to shots and camera movement

This activity and associated learner resource is a practical activity drawing upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for learners following the moving image route but could be adapted for those learners following the screenplay and stills route.

Learners will have knowledge and understanding of shot types and camera movement from earlier components. They could revise their understanding by using Learner Resource 11.

Learners could then take screen grabs from a film of their choice, and identify the shot types / angles / movements and create a list of connotations. They could use the second part of Learner Resource 11 to prepare a short presentation on why certain types of shots are used in extracts of the learner's choice. The presentation could be recorded and discussed as a group or more widely – online etc.

In small groups fed back to the main group, learners could discuss when they should use certain types of shot and camera movement. What are the conventions of medium/long opening/establishing shot etc.? When should they be employed? Why? Can the conventions be broken? What effect would this have?

Materials produced could be published.

Learner Activity 13

Understanding lighting

LA Video Film Maker

http://www.lavideofilmmaker.com/filmmaking/film-lighting-tips.html

Nofilmschool.com
http://nofilmschool.com/2015/11/lighting-like-vermeer-create-cinematic-depth-lighting

This activity and associated learner resource is a practical activity drawing upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for, and relevant to, both learners following the moving image route and those following the screenplay and stills route.

Learners could complete the activity (Learner Resource 12) to gain a basic understanding of hard and soft light, high and low key, and natural light.

The range and quality of available lighting equipment will vary from centre to centre. The teacher or technician could demonstrate the use of the equipment available.

Learners could then read http://www.lavideofilmmaker.com/filmmaking/film-lighting-tips.html

It is important that they have an understanding of the effect on audience of various lighting techniques, especially the basic premise that high key light will make audiences feel safe and happy, low key light will cause feelings of fear, suspense, and mystery, and a film shot in available light will present a sense of normality and reality.

Learners could then read the article and watch the video 'Lighting Like Vermeer: How to Create Cinematic Depth with Lighting'.

They could then research classical paintings taking note of how depth/perspective is created using light.

In small groups learners could select their favourite painting(s) and try to recreate it focusing on depth/perspective using lighting techniques. The results could then be published with comments as preparation for the production.

Working in small groups, learners could then read the remaining resources and watch the video at www.nofilmschool.com. They could then shoot test shots to try to reproduce lighting effects outlined in the web pages with the equipment available to them. The resulting raw footage could be published with an explanation of how the lighting effects were achieved and how they might add to a reading of the sequence.

Learner Activity 14

Developing sound recording skills

This activity draws upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for learners following the moving image route.

As with the previous activity the range and quality of available sound recording equipment will vary from centre to centre. The teacher or technician could demonstrate the use of the equipment available.

Learners could be given film sequences without sound and given extracts from different soundtracks (not necessarily the ones from the films concerned). They could then choose which soundtrack best fits the sequence chosen / given to them.

Learners could then justify their choices to the group.

Learners could also choose a film sequence and do the following in order:

1. Watch the extract with sound.

2. Watch the extract without sound

3. Listen to the extract without visuals.

How important is sound to an audience's understanding of the narrative and their engagement with characters?

Learners could watch an extract from a silent film. They could then consider if there is a difference from simply watching without the sound on? This could then be discussed in small groups and/or with the group as a whole. Does this have implications for their constructions?

Discussions could be recorded and published.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 15

Auteur vs. Director – your role?

http://www.filmreference.com/encyclopedia/Academy-Awards-Crime-Films/Auteur-Theory-and-Authorship.html

This activity explores the role of the director in film making. Whilst the activity is of interest to all Film Studies learners it is most suited to those following the moving image route.

Learners could be asked to read http://www.filmreference.com/encyclopedia/Academy-Awards-Crime-Films/Auteur-Theory-and-Authorship.html They should explore the linked pages which also deal with auteur theory. Some of this material may need teacher input as it can be quite academic at times. It is important that they come out of this with the ability to identify the differences between auteurs and directors.

Learners could be asked to identify a director who they consider to be an auteur. They could then justify their view by referring to what they have read previously.

In groups learners could discuss when do directors become auteurs?

Learners could be asked to discuss 'What is your role in producing your short film (extract for AS)?'

Learner Activity 16

Approaches to editing

http://filmanalysis.coursepress.yale.edu/editing

https://collegefilmandmediastudies.com/editing/

This activity draws upon theoretical understanding and prior learning. It is intended for learners following the moving image route but could be adapted for those learners following the screenplay and stills route.

After directing and filming their short film learners will need to edit it. In many ways editing can be the most difficult part of the process. Learners must have an understanding of how to edit a film and the rationale behind their editing decisions. A useful way to ask learners to think about their decisions is to listen to a film director talk about the process.

Ask learners to watch Alfred Hitchcock talking about editing https://youtu.be/NG0V7EVFZt4

Learners could then read

http://filmanalysis.coursepress.yale.edu/editing/

and

https://collegefilmandmediastudies.com/editing/

Learners could then make some test shots and edit them together in different ways using the editing techniques illustrated in the materials they have read. They could then be asked to consider what the potential impact is upon the audience of using different types of editing techniques.

Learners could choose a sequence from a film of their choice and consider the frequency and type of cutting from shot-to-shot. They could then compare this to a sequence from a different genre – what similarities / differences emerge?

Learners could compare sequences from old and new films. In what ways is the pace / type of editing similar or different. One possible approach is to use films which have had modern remakes.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 17

Dialogue and narrative

This activity offers a practical approach to writing dialogue for film. It is aimed at those following the screenplay and stills route but could be used as a non-assessed planning activity for those producing a moving image artefact.

Before introducing activities to learners following the screenplay route, it is important to offer a distinction between a script and a screenplay. Many commentators see them as interchangeable; others suggest that a script is for the theatre whilst a screenplay is for film. For the purposes of this specification a script is defined as a document produced for actors giving the dialogue of their characters with some direction as to mood, movement, and position of the character. A screenplay can be defined as a document which contains all elements of the conceptualisation of a film, including dialogue between characters (the script), stage directions, setting/locations, key props, indicative camera shots, and lighting positions. The screenplay is a broad document that helps the director visualise the final product.

Learners could be asked to listen to the interview with Charlie Kaufman at https://soundcloud.com/bafta/charlie-kaufman-screenwriting-lecture

(As background reading learners could research the work of Kaufman – a good starting place is https://indiefilmhustle.com/charlie-kaufman-screenwriting/) and make notes.)

In small groups they could then return to their work on narrative and discuss what makes a good 'story'. Using their notes from the Kaufman lecture can they suggest ways that dialogue can be used to develop a narrative?

New York Film Academy

https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/write-dialogue-film/

Learners could read https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/write-dialogue-film/ and then write the dialogue for the opening of a film – use the In Medias Res technique outlined in the reading materials.

When complete learners could share their work and discuss what else, other than the spoken word, needs to be included in a document in order to be able to fully visualise a final product.

Any notes, comments, and/or observations can be published as preparatory work for the final artefact.

Learner Activity 18

Producing a screenplay

http://thewritepractice.com/screnplay-process/

This activity offers a practical approach to writing a screenplay for film. It is aimed at those following the screenplay and stills route but could be used as a non-assessed planning activity for those producing a moving image artefact.

Once learners have experimented with writing dialogue they can move on to producing their screenplay. Using their notes from the previous activity they could work in small groups to make a list of the things that they think might need to be included in a screenplay. They could then watch an extract from a film of their choice for which a screenplay is available and make a list of directions. They could then compare their notes to the screenplay available at www.imsdb.com

Following the advice in http://thewritepractice.com/screenplay-process/ and using their ideas from the ideas generation activity learners could work on creating a screenplay extract for their NEA.

Learners could also be asked to further research the process of creating a screenplay before producing their own. The teacher must ensure that learners are clear about the definition of screenplay for the OCR specification – there is some blurring of lines on the internet between screenplay and script.

The learner's work could be compared with screenplays at www.imsdb.com and shared with others for feedback.

At the conclusion of this activity learners should aim to have completed a full draft of their screenplay ready for the following activity.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 19

Formatting a screenplay

This activity explores using professional requirements for producing screenplays. It is intended for learners following the screenplay and stills route.

If the centre is offering learners the screenplay option it might wish to consider investing in screenplay software such Celtx (www.celtx.com), Final Draft (www.finaldraft.com), or Movie Outline (www.movieoutline.com). Learners could then be given instruction in using the chosen software.

In small groups learners could review their knowledge and understanding of scripting dialogue and directions. They could then add their understanding of what else needs to be included to complete a screenplay.

Learners could then either use their chosen software or follow the guide provided at http://www.movieoutline.com/articles/screenplay-format-a-guide-to-industry-standard-script-formatting.html to work on creating and formatting their final artefact.

Learner Activity 20

Composition – framing a shot

http://www.photographymad.com/pages/view/10-top-photography-composition-rules

This activity is a practical photography activity drawing upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for learners following the screenplay and stills route.

Learners need to be able to produce well constructed and shot photographs for the second part of their NEA. Most will have some form of photographic equipment, ranging from high end DSLRs to cameras in their phones. Irrespective of what equipment they use all learners will benefit from some advice about how to shoot effective images.

Learners could revise the rule of thirds (http://www.photographymad.com/pages/view/rule-of-thirds) and then explore what makes a good composition by visiting the web link for www.photographymad.com

Learners could then make a range of images and label them to explain their strengths and weaknesses. These images could be collated as a slideshow and published as preliminary materials.

Learners could display their favourite image on the wall. When all the learners in the group have displayed their images they could work in pairs to role play art dealers. The pairs must decide which photograph they think is best (they could choose two or three). Each pair will then be given a virtual £1000 and an auction will ensue. Whose image will be sold for the highest price? The winning bidders could be asked to explain why they bid for the image. What makes it worth investing in?

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 21

Photo editing and reading for meaning

This activity is a practical photo editing activity drawing upon theoretical understanding. It is intended for learners following the screenplay and stills route.

The teacher or technician could demonstrate the available digital photo editing software (this will vary from centre to centre). It would be useful if a demonstration of some of the editing techniques possible were conducted.

Learners could then select some images they made previously and using the software, edit the images in different ways to convey alternative readings. For example, applying a red filter to connote danger. They could then be asked to compare the original image with the edited version and explain the differences in meaning.

Learners could then choose one photograph and present the original and edited versions side by side. They could then demonstrate the process and explain the difference to the rest of the group.

Learner Activity 22

Creating photo stories

This activity explores how to show a narrative through the use of a series of still images. It is intended for learners following the screenplay and stills route.

This activity can be combined with, or follow on from, the researching narrative activity.

Learners could in pairs revise their knowledge and understanding of narrative structures.

Learners could then plan a short narrative and make a series of images to illustrate it. They could then select five images and create a photo story based on their narrative. The images should contain characters and clearly illustrate narrative development as appropriate.

Learners could be asked to reorder their images in different combinations. Do any of these combinations work as different types of narrative? Demonstrate successful re-orderings to the group.

Learner Activity 23

Writing critical film reviews

http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine

This activity encourages learners to think critically about the work they have produced.

This activity can be completed either prior to production as a research exercise or after production as the foundation for evaluation.

Film reviews are a good starting point for encouraging learners to think critically about their own work. There are different types of film reviews published in a range of mediums. For this activity, at this level, teachers could focus on the more academic reviews published in Sight and Sound Magazine (either the paper version or online at the address provided).

Learners could choose, or be given, a collection of reviews from Sight and Sound. In groups they could identify the key conventions of the film review and any linguistic features used. These could then be discussed with the full group.

Learners could then read a range of reviews of short films from UK Film Review (https://www.ukfilmreview.co.uk). They could then watch the OCR short film collection together as a group or individually. They could produce short reviews for each film which could serve as their published research notes and the foundations for their individual evaluation.

Learner Activity 24

Producing a director's commentary

http://thedirectorscommentary.tumblr.com/

This activity encourages learners to explore the process of production and to think critically about the work they have produced.

Learners could select one of the short films from the collection and after listening to a range of director's commentaries (see web link) they could role play being the director of the film and produce and record a commentary for it.

This activity could be repeated with the learner's own production. The commentary would serve as preparation for the individual evaluation.

Learner Resources – Activities

Learner Activity 25

Comparing and contrasting films and extracts – developing critical thinking

http://zone.msn.com/en/spotthedifference/

This activity draws upon the learner's prior knowledge and understanding and develops their critical thinking skills.

Learners could be asked to play the spot the difference game on the MSN web site. This will encourage them to view images closely in a fun way.

Learners could be asked to watch the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSFhBCMDPqg and discuss in small groups how they can use the advice contained within the video in their own work.

Learners could then take two filmed extracts (these could be from the short film collection of from films of their choice, or the choice of the teacher) and identify how micro and macro elements are employed differently or in similar ways.

Learners could then return to their notes and any other work they have completed on the short film collection and evaluate and analyse their production in relation to the short films.

Learners could share their work with others for comment and feedback before publishing a final draft.

Learner Activity 26

Using peer assessment as feedback

This activity and associated learner resource draws upon the learner's prior knowledge and understanding and develops their ability to be critical of their own, and other's work. The activity encourages learners to be evaluative.

Peer assessment is a useful way of getting learners to think critically about their own work and the work of others.

Learners could be asked in small groups to study the mark scheme for the specification. They could then discuss and agree the key descriptors at each level. It might be useful to give learners the simplified mark scheme – Learner Resource 13 – rather than the version from the specification.

Groups could then peer assess each other's work using key descriptors rather than marks. Feedback could be noted by individual learners and used as part of their individual evaluation.

Learner Activity 27

Evaluating work using the reverse pitch technique

This activity encourages learners to be reflective of the process of construction and to evaluate their final artefacts.

Once the productions are complete, or at least at a full draft state, learners could adopt the work of others and then create a presentation to 'sell' the artefact to the rest of the group – highlighting strengths and relationship to materials used as influence.

If this activity is completed using only screenplays the concept of the full final film could be sold as in a pitch to a client.

The highlighted strengths could be included in the individual evaluation.

Learner Activity 28

Collecting and using audience feedback

This activity encourages learners to seek and respond to critical feedback. It allows them to be reflective and ask how they could improve their work.

Once the productions are complete learners could present their work, moving image or screenplay, to an audience of their peers and invited guests. This could be informal or at a formal event.

Learners could then elicit feedback, verbal or written, to use as part of their individual analysis.

Learners could explore different ways of collecting feedback on their work. This could include comments on video or social media sites, using online applications such as Survey Monkey, or collecting quantitative and/or qualitative data via face to face interviews or focus groups.

Any data collected could be published to illustrate process and the outcomes used in the individual evaluation.

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