Golden Rule of Filmmaking

**An hour to film.
A day to edit.
A minute to watch.**

You must build in the necessary classroom time to complete the entire process.

The Three Stages of Filmmaking

- **Pre-production:** Developing the idea, script and storyboard. Making or gathering the costumes, set, props, etc. Organising equipment, locations, etc. This takes the longest amount of time, maybe three weeks.

- **Production:** Filming the footage! This can be done in less than a week.

- **Post-production:** Editing the footage to create coherent sequences and to create pace, mood, etc. Adding sound and visual effects. This is a painstaking process if done right so takes time, maybe two weeks.

- They say that you **make a film three times**, making changes at each stage as needed: encourage pupils to be flexible and to keep adapting and adjusting their planned work throughout the process.

Filmmaking: Designing Groups

- Groups of **four** are best.   More will leave members with little to do – particularly during the editing phase – and fewer can cause problems if someone is absent.

- Assign **random groupings** that allow for a variety of skills and viewpoints. Asking pupils to choose a partner then putting two random pairs together is a nice compromise.

- Build in some **icebreakers** to get the groups started off!

- Encourage the group to create a **name and logo** for their "production company" to create a sense of pride and ownership. (Maybe even a team chant!)

Pre-production

Storyboarding

Camerawork

Planning

Pre-Production: Storyboarding

ACTIVITY: Storyboard Sequence

- Show the class this short film:
  - **Birthday Boy | Screening Shorts** / **Birthday Boy | Vimeo**
- Share the storyboard of the first 90 seconds of the film. Discuss shots used and what they reveal about narrative, characterisation, setting, etc.
- Show the film from 2:02 to 2:41. Ask the class to draw the next eight shots in the blank storyboard and to identify the shots used.
- Get them to discuss **what** the shots reveal and **how they work together** to reveal it. They should write their ideas on the storyboard.

1.

2.

Black Bear, Black Bear.
Snow falls on the mountain

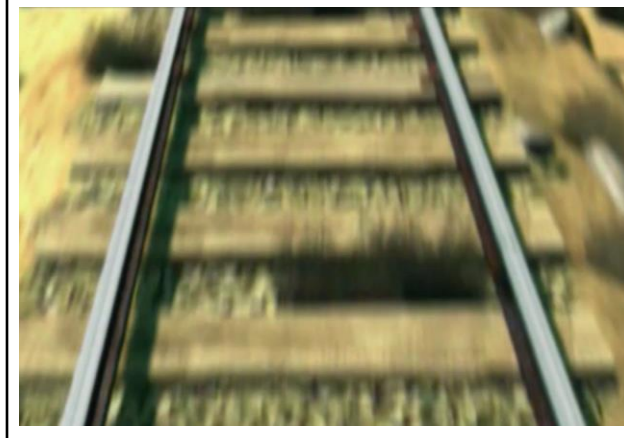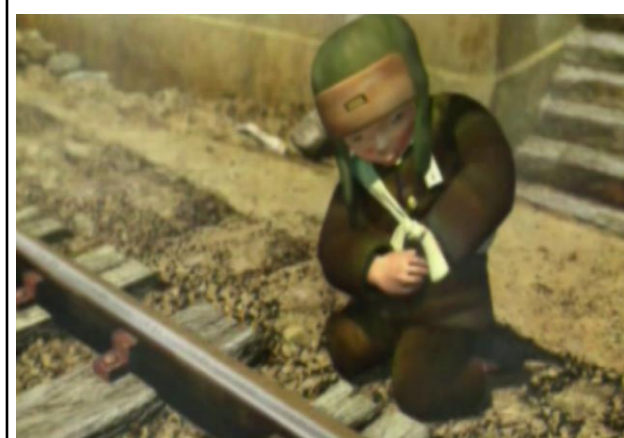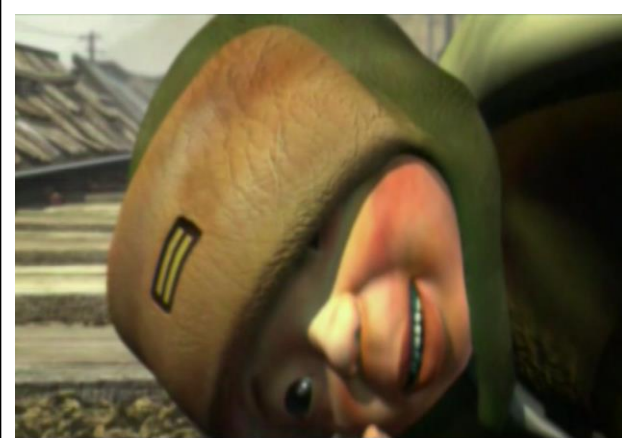3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

7. Long shot
Establishes his location to introduce this new sequence.

8. Mid shot
Creates interest – what is he doing?

9. Extreme long shot
We learn what he's looking for; builds interest – what is he looking for the train for?

10. Mid shot
Continues his viewpoint as we check the other direction.

11. Close-up
Mimics intensity of his listening; allows us to experience his joy.

12. Full shot
Allows us to clearly see what he's doing; links to what he found in the previous scene.

13. Close-up
Mimics the intensity of his concentration on what he's doing.

14. Close-up
The train approaches – builds tension in viewer.

Pre-Production: Storyboarding

ACTIVITY: Post-It Method

- Show this clip from Pixar about the storyboarding process for 'A Bug's Life'.
  - **A Bug's Life | "Storyboard Pitch" Documentary | Pixar – YouTube**
- Give pupils a large sheet of paper (A3 or bigger) and a batch of Post-Its.
- Pupils draw their shots on the Post-Its. This allows them to easily add, remove or re-order shots, encouraging reflection and revision.
- This also works perfectly for storyboarding as a group.

Production: Camerawork

ACTIVITY: Camera Operators

- Give each group one of the sets of "screenplay excerpts" from the next slide.

- Ask them to imagine that they are camera operators who have been given excerpts from a screenplay by the director. Their job is to choose the best camera shot for each excerpt.

- Using what they have learned, they are going to stage and take a **still photograph** of what they think the best camera shot would be for each excerpt.

- Project them on the screen and ask them to explain their choice.

SCREENPLAY EXCERPT ONE	**SCREENPLAY EXCERPT TWO**
1) Junior looks up at Britches McGee, the biggest bully in school, in terror. 2) She runs away as fast and far as she can. 3) We can see that all of the others have gone, and only one bag remains. 4) As Carlos tells his story, he becomes more and more excited and animated.	1) Sheila is in the middle of an argument with Bruce. 2) Bobby stares at his daughter, clearly angry, and in the middle of telling her off. 3) Louis looks around and sees that he is all alone. 4) The banging sound comes again and Franklyn stares around wildly, terrified.
SCREENPLAY EXCERPT THREE	**SCREENPLAY EXCERPT FOUR**
1) Joanie stares straight at him. It is an uncomfortable moment. 2) Donnie is smartly dressed in shirt and tie and polished shoes. 3) We can see in the distance two people having a chat. 4) Ruthie's eyes narrow evilly.	1) We suddenly realise we are seeing it through Shuggle McSnort's drunken eyes. 2) Regina and Florence laugh together. It is a moment of pure connection. 3) Dazzled, all Bruno can see right now is her smile. 4) Beanie and Boris circle each other warily as the others look on in thinly-disguised horror.

Production: Camerawork

ACTIVITY: Lumière Minutes

- A lumière minute is a one-minute long film that finds beauty or interest in the everyday and "mundane".

- Get pupils to choose a location and subject then set up their camera in the ideal position.

- They need to choose exactly the right moment to start recording from one position without moving the camera at all. 60 seconds later, they stop the shot.

- You'll find more help here: **Lumière Minutes (cinematheque.fr)**

Production: Camerawork

ACTIVITY: Six-Shot Film

- Ask pupils to create a six-shot film that ties into one of these titles:
  - **The Discovery   The Animal   The Rebel   The Box**

- Get them to complete a storyboard first.

- Make sure they use at least three interesting camera shots. You could do a lucky dip where they choose a camera shot at random.

- If a group is less confident, you could also instruct them on the exact camera shots they should use.

- *TIP: Hold on to the footage for when they need to practise editing!*

Pre-Production: Planning

- The planning stage is vital - it makes pupils slow down and consider what they **need** in order to film thereby stopping them from running around everywhere on shooting day.

- It also encourages them to build their skills in teamwork, organisation and responsibility.

- The planning stage will be quite ad hoc – relax and allow for managed chaos! Keep some extra tasks on hand for the efficient groups that organise themselves swiftly.

- Only allow **two** members of a group out at a time.

Pre-Production: Planning

- Pupils complete these four lists and have them checked before starting to film.

- **Equipment List:** Assign group members responsibility for handling/returning items of equipment. (Other members can use it during the shoot.)

- **Location List:** Note everywhere they will film and get signed permission from appropriate people (e.g. a science teacher who is letting them use the lab).

- **Costume and Prop List:** Assign costumes and props to group members for the day of the shoot. Encourage them to put reminders in their phones or diaries!

- **Shooting Script:** Assign each scene in the script/shot in the storyboard a number. List what will be needed for each one. (Handy if a pupil has a planned absence on a shooting day.)

Equipment List

Equipment	Date	Time	Responsibility of...	Permission obtained?	Signature
Camera	Friday 24 March	10·35 – 13·05	Samara Begum	Yes	GERobertson

Location List

Location	Date	Time	Shots	Permission obtained?	Signature
Staff car park beside school	Friday 24 March	10·35 – 11·15	1, 2, 3	Yes	GERobertson

Costume and Prop List

Costume/Prop	Date	Time	Shots	Character	Responsibility of...
Paper carrier bag	Friday 24 March	10·35 - 13·05	3, 5, 6, 7	Man on bench	Daisy Beeson

Shooting Script for _____

Shot No.	Shot Description	Location	Date/Time	Cast/Crew	Costume/Prop	Equipment
1	Tracking shot of Aiden running	Staff car park beside side door	10.35am Friday 24 March	Aiden Little John Okpaje Daisy Beeson	Hoodie	Camera Tripod Dolly

Production

General Tips

While They're Filming

Production: General Tips

- **Shoot to edit**. Pupils should shoot as much as they want, trying things different ways, knowing that they can remove what they don't like during the editing stage.

- **No time to edit?** Get pupils to shoot footage strictly in order and to simply pause the recording between shots so it naturally flows together.

- **Finished?** If a group returns early saying they are finished, check their footage for gaps/problems. Send them away for any remaining time to film B-roll footage (scenery, reaction shots, etc.) or reshoot shots they think could be improved.

Production: While They're Filming

- **Trust** is key. You'll have spotted those who have not worked responsibly during pre-production. If you don't trust them, don't send them away.

- **Stay** in the classroom most of the time so they know where to find you in event of any issues.

- **Check** on groups every 15/20 mins. Place a sign on the door when you do leave the room stating you will return soon.

- Use their **location list** to know where they are filming. Tell groups that they must send someone to update you on each change in location. Impress on them the health and safety implications of this.

Post-Production: Editing

- Editing is the most **exciting** part of the filmmaking process, watching raw footage work together with sound and visual effects to create a complete film.

- However, since only **one** person can operate the editing equipment at once, it is very hard to do in a classroom/group situation.

- One solution is to **assign each pupil** a scene to edit or 15 minutes of editing time with other activities for the class to do while waiting.

- **No bloopers** in the film! They spoil the professional finish - and chances are only the group members will find them funny. If they have time they can edit themselves a separate blooper reel.

Post-Production: Editing

ACTIVITY: Found Footage

- Get pupils to download film footage from an existing film or archive footage.

- They can edit it together in a new form (e.g. a trailer, or a tonally different version - like this horror version of 'Mary Poppins': **Scary 'Mary Poppins': Recut Trailer**

- You can find downloadable short films on **Screening Shorts**.

- You can find archive footage on: **Scotland on Screen**; **BFI National Archive**; **BBC Archive**; **British Pathé**.

Post-Production: Editing

Useful Resources

- Multi-jack **headphone adaptors** mean everyone in the group can clearly hear their footage at the same time.

- A list of film educator-recommended editing software can be found here: **Filmmaking Resources | Screening Shorts**

- Introduction to Basic Editing: Using iMovie. This PowerPoint Can be found in the Files of **Screen Scotland: Film Education Team | Microsoft Teams**

- Your **pupils**! Many of them will be very confident with the technology; don't be afraid of asking for their advice.

Screening: Première and Awards

- Make a **big deal** of it – they'll be so proud of their work!

- Create the most **cinema-like experience** that you can: black out the windows, ask neighbouring classes for quiet, set up rows of seating – let them have popcorn!)

- Invite **special guests** to the screening.

- Give **awards** for acting, sound, editing, directing, etc. but also for teamwork, innovation, imagination…

- Hand out **peer evaluation sheets**, especially if you want the work to be used as a piece of assessment.

Group Name:		Film Title:

Rate the film's…	Mark out of 10	Explain your reasons for your mark.
mise-en-scène/design		
camerawork and editing		
sound		
overall creativity		

What other comments do you have about the film?

Filmmaking: The Final Word

Like driving a car or tying your shoes, the best way to learn about filmmaking is simply to **try it out yourself**.

So grab a camera and get shooting!
Play with it and have fun!

Credits