

Getting personal: Biographies in and on the media



Strand
Media

Possible links

English
Health and Physical Education
Studies of Society and Environment

Purpose

Students explore the genre conventions of biographies through the analysis of biographical pieces in popular media and the creation of their own biographies within media contexts.

Overview

Activities are based on a learner-centred approach and are organised into the planning phases of Orientating, Enhancing and Synthesising.

Media	Possible key learning area links in each phase		
ME 4.1, ME 4.2, ME 4.3	Studies of Society and Environment: Culture and Identity strand	English	Health and Physical Education: Enhancing Personal Development strand
Phase 1 — Orientating Students explore the range of popular media texts that are biographical pieces.	Students examine media images of groups to explore the representation of that group.	Students analyse textual features, identifying where biography is used as a text type.	
Phase 2 — Enhancing Students identify the genre conventions used in biographical media texts and analyse the representation of a person's life.	Students explore biographies to examine how groups influence personal identities.		Students explore the factors affecting the growth and development of a person, as documented in a film.
Phase 3 — Synthesising Students create and present their own personal biographical piece in a media context.		Students make deliberate choices of structural elements and textual features to produce a biography.	Students consider factors that have influenced their development and evaluate the influence on self-concept and self-esteem when developing ideas for a biography.
Phase 3 — Optional synthesising activity Students produce and present a video biography.		Students construct questions for interviews and select information to represent the subject in a particular way.	Students use supportive skills and actions in production team roles.



Using this module

Focus and links

The learning focus in this module is the Media strand of the *Years 1 to 10 The Arts Syllabus*. Activities involve students in the creation of media biographies using conventions drawn from a variety of media texts.

This module also identifies possible links that would provide opportunities for students to demonstrate outcomes in the English, Health and Physical Education (HPE) and Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) key learning areas. Allow for additional time to include activities from these key learning areas to enable students to demonstrate the outcomes that have been identified.

Other links are possible through modules in Health and Physical Education: *Growing up*, and *Our relationships*; and in Studies of Society and Environment: *Youth cultures: Talkin' 'bout my generation*.

Activities also contribute to learning in literacy, numeracy and life skills and can be used for gathering evidence about students' development in these cross-curricular priorities. In literacy learning, students consider the features of biographies as they read and write them. Biographies commonly feature a title and an orientation followed by an account of the subject. This may be either a narrative structured around a chronology of events or a reflective piece, structured around issues with philosophical discussion relating to events, circumstances or people at any number of periods in a person's life. Other features of the biography include:

- the influence of purpose on the selection of subject matter
- the social purposes of biographies in media texts
- significant textual features including conjunctions often signalling temporal or causal relationships (next, finally, because, so that); vocabulary related to events of interest of subject; grammar — circumstances of time and past tense; visual language
- roles in relation to media selected (e.g. scriptwriter, director, author) and reader/viewer purposes (information seeker, entertainment seeker)
- relationships — texts are produced to elicit particular responses from particular points of view
- mode and medium — choice of mode and medium will influence how the text is organised.

Aspects of numeracy are included in graphical design when the student must consider proportion, symmetry and balance, and in editing when students estimate frame numbers and time. Life skills include personal development skills, social skills, and self-management skills.

Some students with physical, hearing or vision impairment may need assistance with some of these activities. Obtain advice from their support teachers.

Module organisation

- This module includes three phases — Orientating, Enhancing and Synthesising — that are sequenced to provide a developmental approach to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in media. The first two phases relate to the responding outcome in Media (ME4.3) while phase three relates directly to the producing and presenting outcomes in the Media strand (4.1 and 4.2). The optional synthesising activity is included for teachers who wish to plan a video production with students.
- Each phase briefly describes student activities that may be modified for a short or extended period of time, depending on guidance from the teacher, time availability and access to resources and equipment.
- At the end of the activities in each phase, you will find Teaching considerations. These provide ideas, suggestions and clarification relevant to the activities.

Organising learning and assessment

- When organising a program it is important to ensure that any linked activities build on prior learning in the related area and come at the appropriate time in the sequence of media activities.
- Assessment opportunities are provided throughout the module, while further information about gathering evidence and making judgments is provided in the Assessment section and on Teacher resource 2.
- While specific advice about students' demonstrations of related outcomes in English, HPE, and SOSE has not been provided, opportunities to make judgments will arise as students progress through this module.

Prior learning

To devise a unit of work appropriate for the class, consider students':

- prior learning in the five core concepts that form the core content in media (see core content, syllabus, pp. 52–53)
- group work skills
- skills in the technological processes involved in radio or video production and online design
- analysis skills in responding to media texts.

Unit planning

This module enables the development of discrete units of work for demonstration of the media outcomes in the following ways:

- Planning could focus on phases 1 and 2 to enable students to have recorded demonstrations in outcome 4.3 as a responding unit in media.
- Planning could focus on phase 3 and the optional activity to enable students to have recorded demonstrations in outcomes 4.1 and 4.2 as a production unit in media.
- Planning could focus on phases 1, 2 and 3 as a unit that enables students to have recorded demonstrations in all three Level 4 Media outcomes.

Evaluation of a unit of work

After completion of units of work developed from this module, collect information and make judgments about:

- teaching strategies and activities used to progress student learning towards demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- opportunities provided to gather evidence about students' demonstrations of core learning outcomes
- future learning opportunities for students who have not yet demonstrated the core learning outcomes
- the extent to which activities matched needs of particular groups of students and reflected equity considerations
- the appropriateness of time allocations for particular activities
- the appropriateness of resources used.

Information from this evaluation process can be used to plan subsequent units of work so that they build on, and support, student learning. The evaluated units of work may also be adapted prior to their reuse. For further information, refer to the 'Curriculum evaluation' section in the sourcebook guidelines.

Core learning outcomes

This module focuses on the following core learning outcomes from the Media strand of the *Years 1 to 10 The Arts Syllabus*.

Level statement: Level 4

Students make considered decisions about the selection and combination of media languages and technologies to construct meaning, utilising generic conventions and different media forms.

Students understand that the type of media form and the audience that is being targeted will influence the choices made in construction and presentation.

Students analyse media languages and technologies being used to construct representations that have become accepted by audiences as generic conventions. Students apply this understanding to construct their own representations.

ME 4.1 Students apply media languages and technologies through genre conventions to construct media texts.

ME 4.2 Students select media forms and apply technologies to construct and present media texts to target an audience.

ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.

Other key learning areas

English core learning outcomes

The core learning outcomes in this key learning area were in development at the time of publication. The identified activities could contribute to learning in the English key learning area.

Health and Physical Education core learning outcomes

Enhancing Personal Development

EPD 4.1 Students evaluate the influence on self-concept and self-esteem of their own and others' behaviours, including the recognition of achievement and changes in responsibilities.

EPD 4.3 Students explain how factors, including challenges and inherited characteristics, influence physical, social and emotional growth and development.

EPD 4.4 Students demonstrate skills and actions that support the rights and feelings of others, while adopting different roles and responsibilities in social, team or group activities.

Studies of Society and Environment core learning outcomes

Culture and Identity

CI 4.3 Students debate how media images concerning gender, age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong.

CI 4.5 Students express how material and non-material aspects of groups influence personal identities.

Cross key learning planning

Refer to elaborations of the stated outcomes in the relevant Years 1 to 10 Sourcebook Guidelines to plan learning experiences relevant to this module.

Core content

This module provides a learning context for the following core content from Level 4 of the syllabus in addition to the core content from previous levels:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| media languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre conventions — biography – published, online and video, television and film documentary, magazine feature articles • lighting — for interviews • spoken dialogue — voice-overs, narrations, dramatic re-enactments • titles/credits — role of titles in the biography genre, production credits, sources of information |
| media technologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • editing — through storyboards/crash editing or editing software • scripting — storyboards, interview questions, scripted scenes • publishing — desktop publishing • titling — using pen and card or titling software • sound mixing — voice over with music track |
| audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programming and scheduling - time slots for media biographies • circulation — of popular magazines, biographical books, biographical television and film |
| institution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre from media forms — print, broadcast and cinema • purpose — to target audiences, tell a story of someone's life, sell the media text, promote a celebrity/star/cause |
| representation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • celebrities and their private lives • ordinary people and their extraordinary experiences/triumphs/tragedies/heroic acts • the past and present times in a person's life. |

Assessment

The following table provides examples of opportunities for gathering evidence and making judgments about student demonstrations of The Arts core learning outcomes in this module. When making an on-balance judgment about demonstrations of the learning outcomes, consider all of the points in the 'Making judgments' column. The table is not exhaustive and should not be considered mandatory. Assessment opportunities should be negotiated with students to maximise their demonstrations of these outcomes in a variety of ways. Reflect with students on evidence gathered to make judgments about their demonstrations. Teacher resource 2 provides further assistance by providing descriptions of demonstrations at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Outcomes	Gathering evidence	Making judgments
<p>ME 4.1 Students apply media languages and technologies through genre conventions to construct media texts.</p>	<p>Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create personal biographies and storyboards • create a video biography • complete peer- and self-reflection sheets • keep a production diary to document the creative processes and collaborative decision making. <p>The teacher may use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focused analysis • peer- and self-assessment. <p>recorded in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checklist • production diary • reflection sheets • criteria sheet. 	<p>When constructing, do students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply their knowledge of shot type, angle, camera movement, colour, setting, symbols and lighting? • apply their knowledge of publishing, camera and sound technologies in production? • use generic conventions of narrative, biography and documentary to produce media biographies? • apply their knowledge of camera frame and angle for the selection of photographs? • make considered decisions about the presentation, format, layout, style of the biography to reach a targeted audience successfully?
<p>ME 4.2 Students select media forms and apply technologies to construct and present media texts to target an audience.</p>	<p>Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in discussion and questioning • pitch their ideas in an oral or audiovisual presentation • promote the group video biography • present or publish their biographies to audiences. <p>The teacher may use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student–teacher consultation • teacher observation • peer- and self-assessment. <p>recorded in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checklists • criteria sheets. 	<p>While constructing and presenting, do students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select the appropriate media form to appeal and reach targeted audiences? • apply known processes and skills with available technology to construct and present a biography, including production techniques, publishing layout, typeface, image placement, and web templates? • use technology to enhance the presentation of a media text and make it more appealing to the audiences through graphical design, sound track, audio visual display techniques and packages? • consider the characteristics of the audience when making decisions in the creation of a biography? • make appropriate decisions about the presentation to reach the targeted audience?

This table is continued on the next page ...

Outcomes	Gathering evidence	Making judgments
<p>ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.</p>	<p>Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in discussions with the teacher and peers • analyse images in media biographies • keep a viewing diary with responses to their own and others productions • complete reflection sheets. <p>The teacher may use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher observation • peer- and self-assessment • focused analysis. <p>recorded in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checklists • criteria sheets • viewing diaries. 	<p>When analysing, do students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify how media texts use conventions from different genres in the construction of biographies of people? • examine the use of conventions, such as: interviews; archival footage; dates and place names on the screen; voice-over; narration; diary entries read aloud or placed on the screen; nostalgic music; re-enactments; letter extracts and reality TV footage? • make judgements about the use of media languages and technologies in the representations of their own lives or another person's life? • deconstruct the representations of individuals and groups that media texts construct through biographical stories by examining titles and title sequences; headlines; camera shots and angles; music; voice over; editing decisions; layout, setting and lighting?

Background information

This module offers the opportunity to explore biographical texts beyond the written word by extending the analysis to the images that often form part of popular media texts as well as the contexts surrounding their creation and publication. The activities involve students in creating biographies of their own lives and others' lives using multimedia and video forms. The module helps to increase their understanding of the conventions of biography they read, view, listen to and access as audiences and users.

Terminology

Students have opportunities to become familiar with and use the following terminology in this module:

archival footage	cuts	media form	sensational
authentic	dialogue	media languages	headline
autobiography	dissolves	non-fiction	soundtrack
biography	documentary	online	storyboard
camera angle	exclusive	paparazzi	time line
camera shot	fades	pitch	trailer
caption	feature article	re-enactment	transcript
celebrity	genre	representation	voice-over
code	interview	scanner	wipes
convention			

School authority policies

Be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module. Education Queensland policies on Health and Safety considerations for Media may be found at www.education.qld.gov.au/corporate/doem/sindex/m-ind.htm. The relevant modules for health and safety are Media Studies HS-10-62 and Photography HS-10-42. The relevant modules for public and media relations are CM07 and CM12. Further guidance is offered on video safety in Teacher resource 1.

For policies and guidelines for the Catholic sector refer to Queensland Catholic Education Commission website at www.qcec.qld.catholic.edu.au/www/index.cfm

Equity considerations

This module provides opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of equity and diversity within a supportive environment. It includes activities that encourage students to:

- be involved within a supportive environment
- work individually or in groups
- value diversity of ability, opinion and experience
- value diversity of language and cultural beliefs
- support one another's efforts
- become empowered to take on roles
- negotiate and accept change
- become empowered to communicate freely.

It is important that these equity considerations inform decision making about teaching strategies, classroom organisation and assessment.

Support materials and references

The following resources may be helpful additions to your professional library. Review material before using it with students. Resources referred to in this module are identified with an asterisk (*).

Information relating to copyright issues can be found at the Australian Copyright Council's, *Online Information Centre* at www.copyright.org.au/index.htm. Please note the licence conditions that apply to downloading and printing information sheets from this site.

Teacher references

Allan Ellis, *The Complete School Torque Guide To Video Production* (soon to be released, telephone Allan Ellis 02 9545 4847 or email alellis@ozemail.com.au) [Information is available at www.schooltorque.aust.com/course.htm]

Ayers, R. et al. 1992, *AFTRS Guide to Video Production*, Allen and Unwin, North Ryde, NSW.

Branston, G. & Stafford, R. 1996, *The Media Student's Book*, Routledge, London.

Hart, J. 1999, *The Art of the Storyboard*, Focal Press, Oxford.

Katz, S. 1991, *Film Directing Shot by Shot*, Michael Wiese Productions, Studio City, CA.

Middlemiss, J. 1992, *Guide to Film and TV Research*, AFTRS, Sydney.

Millerson, G. 1999, *Television Production*, Focal Press, Oxford.

Mollison, M. 1996, *Producing Videos: A Complete Guide*, AFTRS, Sydney.

Queensland Department of Education 1994, *Constructing Realities: Media Curriculum Guide for Years 1–10*, Brisbane.

Quin, R. et al. 1996, *Teaching Viewing and Visual Texts (Primary)*, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Victoria.

Stewart, C. & Kowaltzke, A. 1997, *Media, New Ways and Meanings*, Jacaranda, Milton.

Websites

(All websites listed were accessed in August 2001)

Project-Based Learning Multimedia: http://pblmm.k12.ca.us/curr_main.htm

*School Torque: www.schooltorque.aust.com/

Biography

Bellingham Schools, *The Biography Maker*: www.bham.wednet.edu/bio/biomaker.htm

The Australian National University, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/>

Yale University Library, *Biography Resource Centre*: <http://resources.library.yale.edu/online/viewrecorddetpublic.asp?whatcaseedit=56>

Equity

Education Queensland, *Equity*: www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/equity

Brisbane Catholic Education, *Equity*: www.bne.catholic.edu.au/external/schools/equity.htm

Media curriculum information

Australian Teachers of Media: www.acmi.net.au/ATOM/index.html

Australian Teachers of Media Qld Inc.: www.pa.ash.org.au/atomqld

Film and Media Education Resources for Students and Teachers: www.uq.net.au/~zzrdezua

Activities

Phase 1 — Orientating

Students:

- explore a range of biographical pieces from popular media texts.

Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
<p>Media ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.</p> <p>English Under development</p> <p>Studies of Society and Environment CI 4.3 Students debate how media images concerning gender, age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore where and how they access biographical information in the media about people they admire by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – keeping a journal of when they access the media for biographical information – identifying the media forms, e.g. magazines, Internet, television, film, video etc. – compiling a folio of media texts that focus on people's lives, including photographs, interviews, documentaries, fan websites, magazine and newspaper articles – collaboratively creating a display of media texts that profile the people they admire. • explore whether the biographies are narrative or reflective and discuss the use of language in each type, such as action verbs and the use of first person. • are guided in discussion about the media texts: the variety of media forms accessed; the variety of subjects; the styles, the groups that are profiled and those omitted. • identify the purpose/s of the texts they have collected, such as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – commemorate a life – document/chronicle a life – celebrate a single, but notable achievement – investigate events surrounding a life – create controversy – provide insights into the world of a public figure. • explore ways that the media represents different groups to which they belong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – They consider gender groups, age groups, ability groups, cultural groups and interest groups. • collaboratively identify the features that are shared by 'media biographies', e.g. stories of people's lives, details of birth, childhood memories, interviews with family and friends, and photographs that record important moments. • analyse textual features in relation to likely intended audience response. • collaborate to develop sub-categories of media biographies or sub-genres with common features e.g. historical documentaries, kiss-and-tell magazine features, investigative news pieces, celebrity profiles, stories of everyday heroes etc. • visit a newsagency and peruse magazine cover stories or analyse a television guide to classify programs into the sub-genres they have developed. • select a photograph for analysis from the collected texts using Student resource 1 to examine the messages that are encoded in the image. • record their written analyses of media images in their media biographies. 	<p>ME 4.3 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>student–teacher consultation</i> • <i>focused analysis</i>

Teaching considerations

The emphasis of this phase is to establish a shared understanding of the genre of biographies and the role the media plays in bringing biographical information to audiences. The analysis should focus on the obvious features that are shared by texts categorised as a biography. The broader the selection of texts, the richer the analysis and class discussion will be. The identification of features will provide a basis for an understanding of generic conventions.

Phase 2 — Enhancing

Students:

- identify the genre conventions used in biographical media texts and analyse the representation of a person's life.

Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
<p>Media ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.</p> <p>Health and Physical Education EPD 4.3 Students explain how factors, including challenges and inherited characteristics, influence physical, social and emotional growth and development.</p> <p>Studies of Society and Environment CI 4.3 Students debate how media images concerning gender, age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong.</p> <p>CI 4.5 Students express how material and non-material aspects of groups influence personal identities.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the types of images and words used on the covers and posters of books to indicate they are non-fiction and a biography. Consider: shot type and angle, font, title, text about subject and writer, signature or official status, reviews. • identify the genre conventions in the media texts they have collected by exploring the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How do stories about everyday people differ from those about celebrities? – How are stories about people who are alive different from those who have died? Why? – Why are photographs an important element for audiences of biographical stories? – What is the role of sound in the telling of people's stories on radio, film and television? Consider when the subject is a historical figure or music celebrity? – Why are quotes and interviews used as devices in biographies? – Which languages of media make the story appear more authentic or more truthful? – What type of information is selected about the person being profiled? Why? – From whose point of view is the person's life story being told? How do you know this? – Does the style of the biography change to suit the form, genre, purpose and audience? How? Why? • read and analyse biographical extracts, diary entries and films of individuals being studied in SOSE. • express how material and non-material aspects of groups influence personal identities. • discuss the influence that aspects of groups have had on the subjects of the films they view. • explore how factors, including challenges and inherited characteristics, influence the social and emotional development of the subject of a film they have viewed and discussed in class. • explain terms and describe the way they are used as conventions in a biography. (See Student resource 2.) • identify the codes and conventions used in trailers for documentaries about people's lives on television. • compare the opening sequence from a fictional film with a non-fictional film, and list the differences in the conventions used, or compare the presentation of a short fictional story in a magazine with a newspaper feature article about a celebrity. • compare conventions that are used in excerpts from historical media biographies with excerpts from contemporary biographies. 	<p>ME 4.3 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>teacher observation</i> • <i>focused analysis</i>

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Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• view extracts from biographical films and analyse the codes and conventions used in them. (See Student resource 3.) They compile a viewing diary that includes responses including student's own thoughts and ideas; personal responses of home viewing; reflections on class or group discussions; and written responses to teacher questions.	

Teaching considerations

It is not important to get the conventions 'absolutely correct', but it is important to develop a shared set that the class decides on through discussion and negotiation when analysing media texts. Students should be exposed to as much variety of media as possible: those texts they enjoy in their leisure time and those they may not experience beyond the classroom.

Phase 3 — Synthesising

Students:

- create and present their own personal biographical piece in a media context.

Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
<p>Media</p> <p>ME 4.1 Students apply media languages and technologies through genre conventions to construct media texts.</p> <p>ME 4.2 Students select media forms and apply technologies to construct and present media texts to target an audience.</p> <p>ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.</p> <p>Health and Physical Development</p> <p>EPD 4.1 Students evaluate the influence on self-concept and self-esteem of their own and others' behaviours, including the recognition of achievement and changes in responsibilities.</p> <p>EPD 4.3 Students explain how factors, including challenges and inherited characteristics, influence physical, social and emotional growth and development.</p> <p>Studies of Society and Environment</p> <p>CI 4.5 Students express how material and non-material aspects of groups influence personal identities.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are guided in discussion about the differences between biography and autobiography. • research information about their lives and construct a time line of significant events or experiences. • document their life stories (see Teaching considerations) in three sections: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the details of where and when they were born, who their family members are, where they went to school etc. (2) aspects of their lives: what they want to do in their work and leisure time when they leave school; key experiences in their lives, achievements and fears (3) a description of the one thing they want people to know about them that makes them unique, e.g. an unusual characteristic, a special talent or interest. • collect documents, photographs, written records, greeting cards, diary entries, videos, clothing, gifts and any special objects that have sentimental value, memories or information about their lives. • construct timelines and information reports in a non-fictional form. They examine the purpose of diaries, letters and personal records as documentation of events and life histories. • explore factors in their own lives that have influenced their growth and development and explain these as part of their personal biographies. Influences could involve love and affection, emotional turmoil such as loss and grief, cultural characteristics and beliefs, achievements and challenges. • explore the influence of self-concept and self-esteem on their behaviours; how recognition and celebration of achievement, and acknowledgment of effort can influence how they feel about themselves and how they treat others. • select and organise the material to be recorded as images that represent their life stories (see Teaching considerations). • photograph each other and/or record sounds for the opening to establish identification with the viewer. They consider: eye contact, background, clothing, objects and pose in photographs and the student's own voice or that of a family member, a baby's cry, a song from childhood, and sound effects for soundtrack. • reorganise the information and combine the text with images and/or sound to create a personal biography. Teacher explanation is required for basic layout principles and other design requirements for the forms chosen. 	<p>ME 4.1 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>focused analysis</i> • <i>peer- and self-assessment</i> <p>ME 4.2 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>teacher observation</i> • <i>student–teacher consultation</i> • <i>focused analysis</i> • <i>peer- and self-assessment</i> <p>ME 4.3 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>teacher observation</i> • <i>self-assessment</i>

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Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present their personal biographies to an audience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – as an oral or audiovisual presentation published in the school newsletter or magazine – emailed to a friend, relative or pen pal – published on a protected online community, such as the school network or a CD. • design video covers, book jackets, posters, and/or web banners for their personal biographies. • reflect on their choices during the production process. • are guided in discussion about the representations constructed by the students and draws connections to the analysis work covered in Phases 1 and 2. 	

Teaching considerations

Some students may not wish to disclose or document their own lives for a variety of reasons. Respect their desire for privacy and encourage them to document those aspects they feel comfortable about revealing. Offer the alternative of documenting somebody else's life. The personal artefacts may be recorded as photographs or scanned digital images. Some students may not have the suggested artefacts at their current residence, so allow these students to create such documents for the purpose of the biography. The media text that is created will depend on the resources available to the students. Ensure that appropriate permission has been granted from the student's parents or guardians before publishing personal details of a student. When publishing online, do not reveal a student's family name to ensure privacy.

For more information about storyboards and video production, see Phase 3 optional activities and Student resources 5 and 6. The following suggestions identify the range of media forms that could be created:

- photostory, i.e. a sequence of images with captions or descriptions included
- an online biography for a personal home page, protected online community or compact disc
- a storyboard
- a radio documentary
- a short video piece for a television program.

Phase 3 — Optional synthesising activity

Students:

- produce and present a video biography.

Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
<p>Media</p> <p>ME 4.1 Students apply media languages and technologies through genre conventions to construct media texts.</p> <p>ME 4.2 Students select media forms and apply technologies to construct and present media texts to target an audience.</p> <p>ME 4.3 Students analyse the media languages and technologies used by them and others to construct representations using generic conventions.</p> <p>English Under development</p> <p>Health and Physical Education</p> <p>EPD 4.4 Students demonstrate skills and actions that support the rights and feelings of others, while adopting different roles and responsibilities in social, team or group activities.</p>	<p>Research Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research the lives of local people from available sources, such as local newspapers, school magazines, picture books, museum collections, tourist brochures, biographies, letters, diaries and oral histories, to choose a biography subject. • invite the subjects to be interviewed about their lives. (See Teaching considerations.) • develop questions designed to elicit particular information about the subject in relation to the purpose of the biography. They use information obtained from the interview to represent the subject in a particular way. They write narrative or reflective biographies. • video the interviews and discuss possible images, sound and text to match the stories told orally. Conventions to be used may also be suggested. <p>Mapping out the story Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sketch a concept map, outlining an opening sequence to capture the viewer's attention; characters or people, interesting locations and an intriguing story-line. (See Student resource 4.) • refer to four large sheets of paper displayed around the classroom with a heading from the concept map on each one. After students have formulated their ideas, they record them. <p>Planning Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work collaboratively to develop their ideas into a treatment. • pitch their ideas to the class in an oral or audiovisual presentation. • divide the story into separate parts to create individual scenes. Each scene is drawn as a sequence of frames in a storyboard. (See Student resources 5 and 6.) • plan and script the three elements of a soundtrack: 1) dialogue of the characters, narrators or interviewees, 2) sound effects; and 3) music. Consider the story being told, the atmosphere to be created and the intended meaning. A narrator may speak directly to the camera, conduct interviews, or act as a voice-over. A narrator may appear on camera, or exist as a voice heard off camera. <p>Record on video Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a shooting schedule for the filming. • record each shot from the storyboard using Student resource 6 and using production lesson plans in sound and lighting from the School Torque website: www.schooltorque.aust.com/. • adhere to rules and codes as a team members and show courtesy, cooperation, respect and loyalty as group members. 	<p>ME 4.1 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>focused analysis</i> • <i>peer- and self-assessment</i> <p>ME 4.2 <i>Assessment technique:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>focused analysis</i> <p>ME 4.3 <i>Assessment techniques:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>teacher observation</i> • <i>focused analysis</i> • <i>peer- and self-assessment</i>

This table is continued on the next page...

Outcomes	Media activities	Gathering evidence
	<p>Present video Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present their biography to particular audiences by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – designing and producing a video cover/poster/publicity campaign – organising a display/viewing of their biographies in a community space or school display space – organising and promoting a launch for their biographies in a community space, such as the local library, shopping centre, meeting places or Council chambers. <p>Reflection Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect on their choices during the production process to consider the media languages of shots, sound and editing points. • reflect on their use of genre conventions. • are guided in discussion about the representations constructed by the students and draws connections to the analysis work covered in Phases 1 and 2. 	

Teaching considerations

This activity provides an opportunity to involve local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in students' learning. It is important to follow protocols including asking the appropriate contact person from the community, the kind of invitation, payment procedures, and appropriateness of questions to be asked. Ensure the guest is aware of the purpose of the video and its use in the long term. Then seek written permission to record the guest on video. For more information about protocols, see the Queensland School Curriculum Council website: www.qscc.qld.edu.au/equity/

Media classroom management

Teacher resource 1

Classroom management

The viewing of media texts in the classroom should involve careful planning as with any other educational activity. Apply the following principles to facilitate classroom management:

- Establish a purpose for the viewing or discussion of media texts so that students have a clear understanding of what they are being asked to do and why.
- Focus on a limited aspect of the text to be analysed in a session to avoid overloading the students with the amount of information to be analysed. A useful way of achieving this is to use the pause and/or still-frame button to investigate the text or restrict the viewing of moving image texts to short excerpts, rather than full movie-length viewing.
- Value the students' existing knowledge and tastes. Students will often have much implicit knowledge about media that needs to be consciously understood and made explicit.

Physical environment

Learning in media involves practical media exercises so the learning environment should enable students to work collaboratively with access to benches or large tables. They should also have access to a range of art and display materials, such as scissors, tape, glue, paper, pencils, paint, old magazines and photographs.

Equipment

The most valuable learning in practical exercises can be achieved through activities using simple scissors, images, papers and pencils. The reason is that the emphasis is on understanding the concepts of media education, the intentions behind the product and the processes of producing it. This eliminates the need for great technical skill on the part of students.

The following lists provide information about equipment and the level of access students may need for media activities in this module. Much of this equipment already exists in schools but is not always allocated for students learning about the media. Students should have continual access to:

- a TV monitor and VCR with pause button and search facilities
- a viewing room that can be darkened
- at least one good SLR or digital camera, or disposable cameras
- a tripod
- blank audio tapes and videotapes of various lengths
- audio-cassette recorders
- plenty of display space and noticeboards for regular display of students' work
- storage space for tapes, film, lights, and cameras.

Students should have regular access to:

- a photocopier that reproduces images in good quality
- a word-processing package with a variety of fonts
- at least one portable digital video camera or camcorder with rechargeable batteries
- an extension microphone.

Students should have occasional access to:

- a second video recorder and appropriate connecting leads for crash editing taped material or making copies and compilations
- a microphone and leads for dubbing soundtracks onto existing video material
- a portable light or lighting kit for video work
- desktop publishing, design or editing hardware and software
- a scanner.

Media classroom management (continued)**Teacher resource 1****Health and safety considerations**

Incorporate into lessons rules about the care of video equipment and safety considerations, such as the following list for students adapted from www.schooltorque.aust.com/index3.html:

- Whenever possible, students should be supervised by a teacher or responsible adult.
- Approve the students' planning before you allow them to operate any equipment so you know where and when the equipment is going to be used and for which type of shooting.
- Familiarise yourself and your students with all the functions of the equipment before you begin using it for a production.
- Make sure the camera is securely attached to a tripod whenever possible.
- Do not leave or place the camera where it may be knocked over or bumped.
- If the camera is attached to a power supply, ensure the cables are out of the way. If the cables need to stretch across the floor, use wide masking tape to secure them.
- Do not leave the camera in the sun or in a place where it will be subject to excessive heat, e.g. the back of a car.
- Remove the tape from the camera when it is not in use for an extended period of time to prevent damage to tape heads.
- Do not place any equipment or electrical cables near water.
- Do not point the camera at the sun because the camera can be damaged. This most often happens when someone is carrying the camera between shots face up, without a lens cap.
- Remind students to keep an eye on the camera all the time it is in their possession, particularly in public places. Cameras are small and can be easily taken and concealed.
- Instruct students to report any damage that occurs to the camera while they are using it or any faults that occur when operating the camera.
- When the filming is finished, ensure that the camera is packed away properly.

Tips

- It is a good idea to take students through a safety test with the equipment and only allow those students who pass the test to operate the equipment. Distribution of video licences to those students who pass the test is an effective motivating strategy for students.
- Assign one of the students to be safety officer during the production to ensure care about safety issues.

Typical demonstrations – Media Level 3, 4 and 5

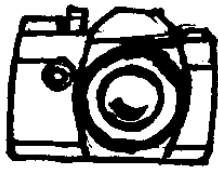
Teacher resource 2

The following table lists sample typical demonstrations at three levels. These samples are not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive and may be adapted to suit the school context. They describe what students *do with what they know* during activities in this module and offer advice to assist teachers in discriminating between one level and the next.

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
ME #.1	<p>Construct meaning in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> combine and manipulate media languages to construct one perspective of their own lives or another person's life through such processes as addition, deletion, sequencing, cropping, overlaying, and fading use available technologies to construct a particular point of view of their own lives or another person's life through combinations of text, sound and images. 	<p>Construct meaning in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make considered decisions about the selections and combination of media languages and technologies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> applying their knowledge of shot type, angle, camera movement, colour, setting, symbols and lighting applying their knowledge of publishing, camera and sound technologies during production use generic conventions of narrative, biography and documentary to construct media biographies 	<p>Construct meaning in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in a planning process before producing their biographies apply their knowledge and skills of media languages and technologies to shape the biographies in a certain way, such as print and video editing techniques refine and re-edit their work to produce the desired effects and points of view.
ME #.2	<p>Produce meaning for audiences and purposes in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> present their biographies to a specified audience of peers, school community, family, pen pal use the appropriate presentation techniques for a media form, e.g. magazine feature story layout. 	<p>Produce meaning for audiences and purposes in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> select the appropriate media form for the presentation of a biography to particular audiences apply known processes and skills with available technology to construct and present biographies make decisions about the construction and presentation of the biography to reach a targeted audience successfully. 	<p>Produce meaning for audiences and purposes in media biographies Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emulate industry practices to promote, deliver and exhibit their biographies, such as launches, retail display, celebrity appearances and advertising present their biographies in a range of contexts, such as a community display or school website make appropriate decisions about which are the most effective forms and technologies for delivering the texts to the audience.
ME #.3	<p>Respond to meanings in biographical media texts Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and examine the use of media languages that construct representations of people and their lives compare the way different media forms construct a person's life or events in their life — for example, a television teaser identify and examine the use of literary and media genre conventions in biographies examine and compare the languages used by various media forms and genres to construct biographical pieces. 	<p>Respond to meanings in biographical media texts Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the media languages and technologies used in their own construction of representations of a person's life discuss how the media uses conventions from different genres when they construct biographical pieces analyse the representations the media constructs through biographical stories. 	<p>Respond to meanings in biographical media texts Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse media representations of people's lives within a historical or cultural context analyse the purpose of biographical pieces to media institutions e.g. celebrity photo shoots to magazines research and compare the representation of people's lives in the media through history.

Analysing media photographs

Student resource 1



Cracking the Code – Analysing Media Photographs of People

1. Make three columns on a page. In the first column list the media languages (codes) used in each photograph, such as: colour, symbol, camera angle, camera shot, framing, gesture, clothing, stance, setting, objects, make-up, proximity to others and lighting. In the remaining two columns, describe the positive feelings or negative ones you associate with that use of the media languages as a viewer of the text.

Media languages	Positive feelings or associations	Negative feelings or associations
eyes directly at camera	forthright	intimidating
business suit	figure of authority	conservative/stuffy

2. Discuss your answers with other students. Suggest the attributes that readers/viewers may admire in other people (e.g. bravery, beauty, caring nature, skills, success).
3. Suggest ways that the photographs could be changed with media technologies to make the subject reflect a different attribute or image from the original. Consider cropping, lighting, computer manipulation, camera lenses, camera angle, objects, placement, layout and clothing.
4. Write captions for the photographs to portray the image of the subject you want the reader/viewer to gain. Discuss the contribution of headlines and captions to the meaning of the image.
5. Discuss whether all readers would interpret the photographs in the same way as you. Describe how readers of a different gender or from a different culture would respond to the photographs and the attributes you have identified as admirable.
6. Divide the photographs into the following categories:
Photographs:
 - that have been ‘snapped’ at an official occasion
 - that have been taken with a hidden camera or without the knowledge of the subject
 - that have been ‘snapped’ to reveal to readers the private life of a celebrity
 - that have been arranged and carefully constructed.
7. Explain how you made decisions about the photographs. Discuss the role of technologies in manipulating photographs of people in newspapers, posters, magazines and on billboards and websites.

Understanding conventions

Student resource 2

Name:

Write a meaning for each word. Then explain the use of these words as conventions in media biographies.

Words	Meaning	Use as a convention
Caption		
Celebrity		
Endorsed		
Exclusive		
File footage		
Paparazzi		
Photo collage		
Transcript		
Chequebook journalism		

Finding media languages in film

Student resource 3

Viewing Sheet – To be used with a short extract that you have seen at least twice.

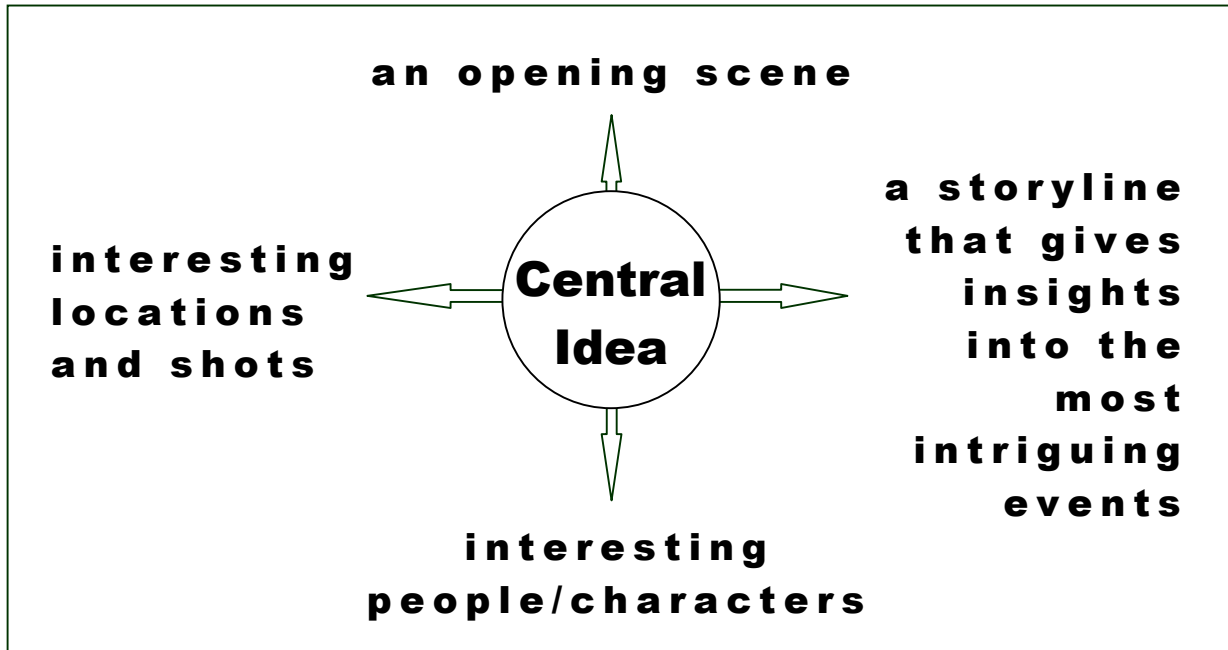
TYPES OF CLUES USED IN FILMS AND ON TELEVISION, WHICH WE CALL CODES	THE CODES YOU FIND WHEN YOU ARE WATCHING AND LISTENING	WHAT DO THE CODES TELL YOU ABOUT THE PERSON AND HOW HE/SHE LIVED HIS/HER LIFE?
Camera shot		
Camera angle (high, level or low)		
Camera movement Length of shot		
Choice of image		
Voice-over/dialogue		
Body movement Facial expressions		
Costuming/clothing		
Objects		
Colour		
Settings/scenery		
Music		
Sound effects		
Use of cuts, fades, dissolves and wipes between shots		

Please note: The teacher should model this process with a few example entries before asking the students to complete the form. Students should be able to make notes during the viewing and then be given time to complete the form after the viewing.

Planning your video

Student resource 4

Start with a concept map



What is a storyboard?

Writing well means choosing the right words and using them in the right order. Creating a visual story-line is very similar. Here you are being asked to make decisions about which shots (images) to use and the right order for them to tell your story. In film or video production this is called a storyboard.

A simple way to create a storyboard from a written story is to divide the ideas in the story into parts and sketch an image for each idea to create a shot. Keep the drawings simple; even stick figures will do. The important thing is to give a clear idea of the types of shots to be used. If it is a close-up, the drawing in the frame should show exactly what the viewer is to see. It may be a finger or an eye or a close-up of a person's whole face. The person who records the shots needs to know what to include in the frame when looking through a viewfinder of a camera and where to position the camera.

Hint: Colouring images always makes the presentation more interesting and enables the person reading the images to have a clearer idea of what is wanted.

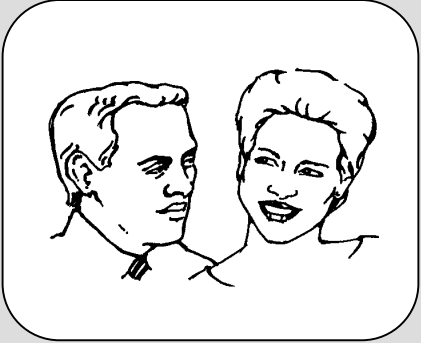
Creating a storyboard

Student resource 5

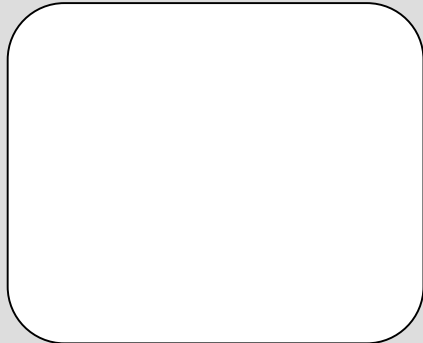
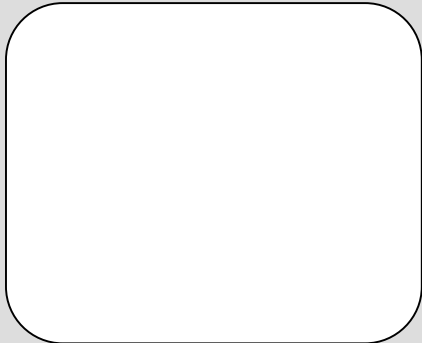
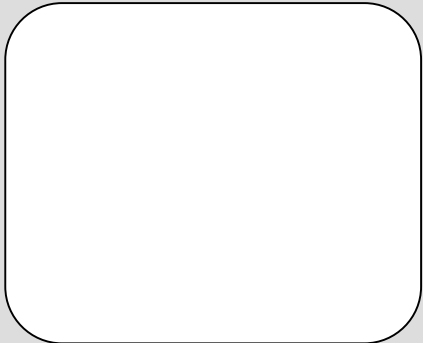
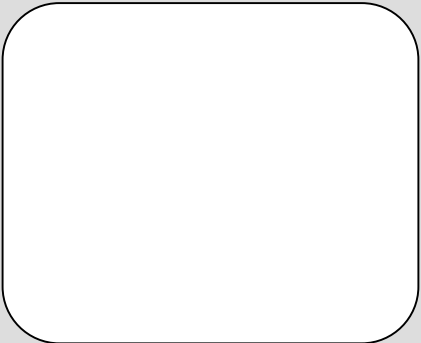
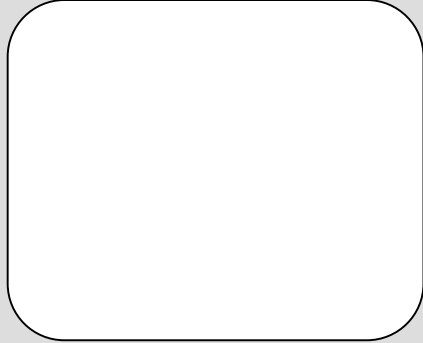
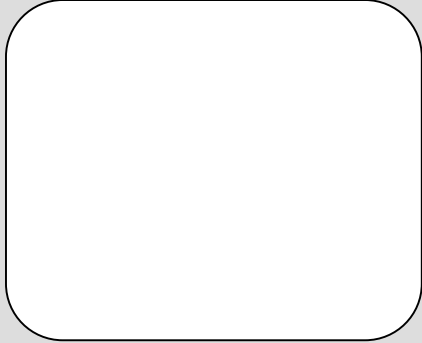
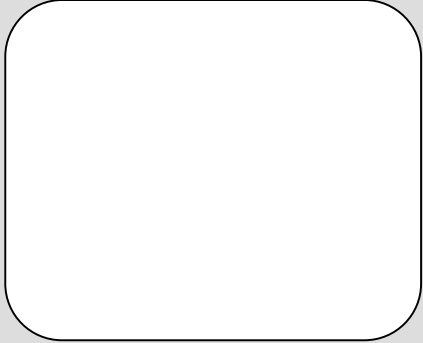
Students' name: _____

Film title: _____

EXAMPLE:



Type of shot: CU (Close-up)
Shot description: Talking heads
Sound: Dialogue



Ten steps to a video production

Student resource 6

Pre-production stage

1. **Decide** — Decide on the genre that will best communicate your story by considering the aims of the project; purpose; audience; budget and length. Will you use dramatic scenes, animation, voice-over, interviews or school file footage?
2. **Ideas** — Decide on a central idea that will enable you to present your message/story on video. Write a synopsis and a treatment that outline the idea and approach you will take to tell your story and how the video will look and sound to the audience.
3. **Plan** — Put the story together and break up the story into parts. Put the parts into an order that makes sense. Each of these parts will become scenes that you will further break down into individual shots on a storyboard or in a script. Dialogue should be written, rehearsed and timed.
4. **Prepare** — Determine resources, crew, equipment and transport. Allocate production roles so that every task is the responsibility of someone in the team.
5. **Locate** — Find locations and talent, and obtain permission for filming. Organise and arrange sets and props.

Production stage

6. **Record** — Record images and sound. Organise the filming by planning a shooting list that includes all the shots to be filmed in one location at one time. All shots should be logged for easy reference at a later stage. When filming, fix the camera on a tripod to ensure steady shots. When recording sound, ensure the microphone is as close to the source as possible to avoid picking up unwanted sounds.
7. **Keep records** — Keep records at every stage, write out plans and schedules and make sure every one on the production team has a copy. Develop copyright release forms.

Post-production stage

8. **Edit** — Prepare an edit decision list after screening all the rough footage collected during filming. Edit and record extra soundtrack or narration, titles and credits. Dub music, sound effects or voice-over onto the images that have been filmed.
9. **Exhibit and promote** — Screen your video to audiences such as other classes, parents and community groups. Promote your video through posters, postcards, stickers and library displays. Promote your video through parent meetings, launches, office displays, school and local newsletters, as well as local library and shopping centre displays.
10. **Respond** — Reflect on the video that you have produced and audiences' reactions to it. How effectively were your message/ideas and feelings communicated? Was your video informing and entertaining? Could you have improved it? What changes could you make to it to improve it?

Acknowledgments

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Years 1 to 10 The Arts Syllabus

Years 1 to 10 The Arts Sourcebook Guidelines

The Arts Initial In-service Materials

ISBN 0 7345 2222 3

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