1 MINUTE FILM COMPETITION 2018 TEACHER RESOURCE

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ABOUT THE 1-MINUTE FILM COMPETITION

The 1-Minute Film Competition is an initiative of Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM). It provides Australian and New Zealand primary and secondary school students with the opportunity to make a 60-second short film or animation, and win fantastic prizes in the process.

The theme for this year’s competition is ‘Memory’.

The categories are:

- Lower Primary (Years F–3)
- Upper Primary (Years 4–6)
- Lower Secondary (Years 7–9)
- Upper Secondary (Years 10–12)

The first-place prize in each of the four categories includes $500 in cash!

For more information, visit 1-minutefilmcompetition.org.

ABOUT ATOM

Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) is an independent, not-for-profit, professional association that has been promoting the study of media and screen literacy for fifty years. The membership of ATOM includes teachers and lecturers from across all subject disciplines at all levels of education. The membership also includes media industry personnel, a range of media and education organisations and, increasingly, the general public interested in screen literacy and the media.

For more information, visit www.metromagazine.com.au.

ABOUT THIS TEACHER RESOURCE

This resource aims to provide teachers with some guidelines for making live-action or animated short films. For teachers without prior experience teaching filmmaking, we provide links to additional resources that can offer more detail in certain areas.
USING THE 1-MINUTE FILM COMPETITION IN THE CLASSROOM

We live in a media-literate time when creating digital content has never been easier. Creating simple animations and live-action productions is fun, engaging and educational. It provides a great opportunity for students to work together and develop a range of skills.

The different stages of making a film encompass many new skills, and include:

- Developing new ideas and determining creative and effective ways of communicating those ideas;
- Writing a story and developing it into a short screenplay;
- Drawing a storyboard to help plan out the filmmaking process;
- Planning a production;
- Creating sets, choosing locations, making animation models, choosing actors;
- Learning new production skills, including camera operation, sound recording and communicating with other team members;
- Developing teamwork and planning skills;
- Applying time-management skills;
- Learning post-production skills including editing, and adding music and credits.

1-MINUTE FILM COMPETITION 2018 THEME: MEMORY

The theme for this year’s competition is ‘Memory’. This can be explored in many different ways. It’s important that teachers take the time to open up discussion with students to think about all the ways in which we can interpret memory, and how they experience that in their own lives. Every day we are making memories and may classify them as:

- Happy memories
- Sad memories
- Memories to cherish
- Memories we wish to forget

Memories also change and get lost over time.

How do we capture memories? How do they differ from one another? How are memories communicated?

WHERE DO I START?

An increasing number of schools offer practical media production as part of their curriculum. For those who do not have previous experience in teaching filmmaking, this resource provides practical advice on how to proceed.
FOR TEACHERS NEW TO FILMMAKING

This resource is designed to support you through the process of teaching students filmmaking and provides links to other resources. Read through the resources and familiarise yourself with different production techniques and the steps of making a short film.

Be realistic about the abilities of your students and your available time and resources. Is working together as a class on one film more achievable than each student making their own film? Is animation too time consuming for a one-term project?

Read the instructions in this guide and devise lesson plans around each step of the filmmaking process.

View short films made by students submitted to the 1-Minute Film Competition and the ATOM Awards last year. Viewing other works by young people can inspire students in their creativity but also expand their understanding of what they can aspire to.

Here are links to last year’s 1-Minute Film Competition finalists:

- Lower Primary (Years F–3)
- Upper Primary (Years 4–6)
- Lower Secondary (Years 7–9)
- Upper Secondary (Years 10–12)

Here is a link to the Primary and Secondary finalists in the 2017 SAE ATOM Awards. This is a broad selection of student films covering live action and animation: atomawards.org/2017-primary-secondary-finalists/

Develop realistic timelines for each stage of production. Make sure you don’t leave too little time for editing and post-production. (This project is excellent for teaching organisational and time-management skills!)

If you have any questions regarding the 1-Minute Film Competition, or aspects of filmmaking (such as copyright), please contact us.

TIMELINES

Here is an example of how a production timeline might look:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brainstorm with your students on the theme of ‘Memory’. For example: How would you define memory? What are the different ways in which we communicate memories? Can only humans have memories or do animals experience them as well?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine what filmmaking style (live action or animated) each production is going to be. Watch the films we have provided links to and be realistic about resources, student abilities and timeframes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Determine whether you will work as one large group, as small groups or as individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Every project will need a script. Spend the time to develop story ideas, determine characters, place, settings, etc. For a 60-second film, each script should only be one page long. To be sure, read the finished script aloud – if it takes longer than sixty seconds to read, the film will be too long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>How will each film look? What clothes will the actors wear? Is the story set indoors or outdoors? Is it set in the past, present or the future? All of these factors help tell the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cast your actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rehearse with the actors so everyone knows their lines and actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Drawing a storyboard is an important part of planning a film. It lets the director figure out how the film will look, what each of the shots are, and forms the skeleton of the shooting schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Learn how to use the camera. It is important that students familiarise themselves with the camera and learn how to use its functions. Let them test out different frames, use the tripod, learn how to zoom and focus and become comfortable with filming. Using different shots (wide, long, close-up, etc.) is important in giving their films visual appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sound recording: Will sound be recorded through the camera or on a separate recording device? It is important that someone is monitoring sound levels, as environmental sound will impact upon where you choose to shoot. This is also the time for students to be thinking ahead about what sound they might like to use in post-production (sound effects, music).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Assign everyone roles on each of the films and make sure they are clear about what their roles are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Shooting the movie: 'Lights, camera, action!' Each film should have a list of shots that the students need to film (based on the script and the storyboard) and a team of students to film them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Try and make time to upload the footage from the shoot while everyone is still on set. That way if the students need to re-shoot something they can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Editing: This is where it all comes together, using the script and the storyboard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Post-production sound includes adjusting the levels of dialogue, cleaning up the sound, adding sound effects and music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Watch the films back as a group. Discuss each one to ensure that the stories make sense and students have time to make any adjustments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Upload the films to the 1-Minute Film Competition website: 1-minutefilmcompetition.org.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FILMMAKING AS A SCHOOL PROJECT

This project is a great opportunity for students to try their hand at each of the different stages of filmmaking. They can undertake different roles on each other’s projects so they can learn more about the process from different perspectives.

Films can involve students beyond the one classroom and involve students from different classes with different skill sets. For example, drama students can be the actors, the creative writing students write the scripts, the art students creates the sets and costumes, the media students film and edit and the school’s administration can organise an in-house screening for the rest of the school when the films are completed.

1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/filmmaking_across_the_curriculum_-_a_beginners_guide_-_part_one.pdf
1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/filmmaking_across_the_curriculum_-_a_beginners_guide_-_part_two.pdf
1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/filmmaking_across_the_curriculum_-_a_beginners_guide_-_part_three.pdf
1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/teaching_filmmaking_whether_you_wanted_to_or_not.pdf

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

When you have worked out what memory means to you, it’s time to start thinking about how you would like to explore this idea in a 60-second film. Keep in mind that what you are making is very different from traditional film and television. When you’ve only got sixty seconds, you need to make every shot count!

As part of the brainstorming process, you could talk to people, and ask them what they think of when asked to share a memory.

**Narrative:** Even a film as short as sixty seconds will need to have a beginning, middle and end. The opening shot is very important and should help to set the tone of your film. In the first few seconds, you will need to introduce a character and present them with some kind of challenge or obstacle to overcome. The story pushes forward as they try to obtain this goal until, in the final seconds of your film, they achieve what they set out to.

**Documentary:** A documentary could be used to explore the theme of memory. If you are creating a documentary, think of something interesting to do with ‘memory’ that you could explore. Conduct interviews or vox pops with appropriate people. When you are shooting a documentary, it’s very important to capture B-roll, which is footage that helps to illustrate a story. During your interview you can cut away to this footage so that your audience isn’t stuck watching a talking head for sixty seconds.
Animation: Although animation can be challenging and time consuming, it can allow you to take your audience to places that traditional filmmaking can’t. Keep this in mind when coming up with your idea for the animation.

THE SCREENPLAY

The starting point for all filmmaking is the screenplay. What is the story? Who are the characters? What is the most efficient way to tell this story in sixty seconds?

A standard rule of thumb is that one page of script equals one minute of screen time. If in doubt, read the finished script out loud and time it.

Have students read their scripts to the class to ensure that the story makes sense to everyone else. Feedback is an important part of developing a story and helps to point things out that the writer might not have thought of.

Because this is a 60-second film, it is important that students are very clear about the message they want to communicate. Have them state the storyline – or the theme – in one clear sentence. This way, when they start to write story elements that take them beyond 60 seconds, they can come back to that one-sentence statement to help keep them on track.

Films can be comedy, drama, educational, mockumentary, a community service announcement or take any other form of genre the students best think serves their story.

EXAMPLE OF A 60-SECOND SCREENPLAY

This is the screenplay for a 60-second film called Privacy on the Line, which is about the impact of piracy on the film industry. A young couple go out on a date, but – because piracy has shut down cinemas – they have to stay at home, with awkward consequences.

SCENE 1. DAYTIME. HIGH-SCHOOL LIBRARY.

Dave, a high-school student, taps his pencil nervously on his desk. He stares at Sue who is sitting not far from him. He picks up his mobile and calls Sue.

DAVE

How about a movie?

SUE

Sounds awesome. When?

DAVE

Saturday night. 8pm.

They both react excitedly.
SCENE 2. NIGHT TIME. SUE’S HOME.
Dave knocks on a front door. Sue answers the door.

SCENE 3. NIGHT TIME. CAR INTERIOR.
Dave and Sue drive around. They drive through a street and an undercover car park. They exit the car.

SCENE 4. NIGHT TIME. MALL/CINEMA.
They walk through the mall. They enter a movie theatre. They sit down and Dave puts his arm around Sue. The room darkens and the screen lights up.

Suddenly a torch shines in their faces and a woman is standing behind them.

SCENE 5. NIGHT TIME. INTERIOR. SUE’S LOUNGROOM.

DAVE
Is that your mum?

SUE

MUM!

The woman leans down between them from behind the couch and holds out a box of chocolates. The lounge room lights are on.

MUM
Chocolate, anyone?

TITLE CARD

*Online Piracy Puts Your Privacy on the Line*

Sue’s mum sits down between them on the couch to watch a movie with them. They are not happy about it.

End Credits.

The script includes what characters say and do, identifies the location, and specifies if a scene is indoors or outdoors and if it is daytime or night-time. It is not important to go into too much detail. The important thing is that the story makes sense and holds our attention. The detail will come in determining how the film will be shot.

THE STORYBOARD

Once students have written their scripts, the next stage of the filmmaking process is developing a storyboard. A storyboard is made up of all the shots the students want to film to best tell their story. It gives them the opportunity to think about where to place the camera, which character they should be focused on, as well as little things like film-
ing a close-up of an important object, or shots of outside a building so we can see that characters have changed locations.

The quality of the drawings is not important. It really isn’t! It doesn’t matter if the students draw stick figures. The importance of this process is to visualise what the finished film will look like and then commit it to paper so they will know exactly what they need to film on the day.

Once again, less is best. The more shots a film has, the more time it takes to set up the equipment and record each one and it is important to be realistic about how much filming can be achieved in the allotted time frame.

Standard shots include establishing shots (a shot of the location where the story takes place so the viewer has context for the story), close ups of when people are saying something important, long or mid shots when you have a group of people in the scene or you want to see action.

1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/draw_before_you_shoot_-_a_practical_guide_to_storyboarding.pdf

**SHOT LIST**

A shot list is simply the list of all the shots you want to film on the day, using the script and storyboard as your guide.

The important thing to remember is to film all the shots in each location together so you are not running back and forth to the same locations all the time. For example, if the first shot in the story is of Frank sitting at his desk reading, and the very last shot is Frank sitting at his desk daydreaming, film those shots back-to-back. Then you can move to the next location.

The shot list isn’t the list of shots in the same order as the screenplay or storyboard; it’s the list of shots in the order you need to film them. (This is if you are editing in post-production. If you are editing in-camera, then all shots must of course be in order.) This will help you better arrange your time.

When you are shooting your film, a shot list is useful because it allows you to cross off each of the shots as you go, ensuring that you don’t miss anything important.

This is an example of a shot list for the 60-second film *Privacy on the Line*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE</th>
<th>SHOT</th>
<th>INT/EXT</th>
<th>DAY/NIGHT</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>SHOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dave taps pencil on desk</td>
<td>Close Up (CU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Sue sits at desk in library</td>
<td>Long Shot (LS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dave calls Sue</td>
<td>CU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dave and Sue talk</td>
<td>LS (see both in frame)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(CU) Dave knocks on Sue’s door</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(Mid shot (MS) of her feet)</td>
<td>Sue walks to door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (both in frame))</td>
<td>Sue looks through window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (from back seat))</td>
<td>Dave and Sue drive to mall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(CU)</td>
<td>Sue in rear-vision mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(CU)</td>
<td>Dave in rear-vision mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS)</td>
<td>Sue looks at Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS)</td>
<td>Dave looks at Sue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>They step out of car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>They cross pedestrian crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>They get out of elevator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>They go down escalator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>Walk past ticket counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>Walk into cinema with tickets in their hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(LS)</td>
<td>Walk up cinema stairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (in front))</td>
<td>Sit down together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (behind with screen in front))</td>
<td>Sit down together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (from in front of couch))</td>
<td>Woman shines light in their faces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>(MS (from woman’s point of view))</td>
<td>Woman shines light in their faces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Sue rolls eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Woman shines light on Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Three sets of feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COPYRIGHT**

Copyright is an extremely important matter when it comes to making short films. Put simply, if it belongs to someone else, you need permission.

This can be a confusing matter for a lot of filmmakers – they see homemade video clips set to popular music on YouTube, and they download music from ‘free music’ websites and think they can use it in their films. The winning films in the 1-Minute Film Competition will be screened in public and online so we must be very careful about respecting copyright law. This is not only true for using music, but for posters and props that may be used in the film, as well as images that might be on a television or computer screen in the film.
Any work that is submitted to the competition that does not have copyright clearance will not be accepted.

If you have used, or plan to use, pieces of music or images (posters, etc.) that are not your own (and that you have not already obtained permission to use), you will need to seek **synchronisation rights**. This licensing will be done directly by the copyright holders, rather than by a central organisation.

Two kinds of copyright can be involved:

- **The copyright on the musical composition.** This copyright is connected to the writer(s) of the music and is usually administered by a publishing company (in other words, you will usually be dealing with a publisher rather than with composers/songwriters themselves). Rights attached to musical compositions are often referred to as the **publishing rights**.

- **The copyright on the sound recording (if an existing sound recording is being used).** This copyright is connected to the recording artist(s) and is usually administered by the record company that releases the recording. Rights connected with sound recordings are often referred to as the **master rights**.

There are usually contacts in Australia, even if the music is not Australian. Any decisions about fees or any other aspect of the project will need to be negotiated between you and the copyright holder.

There is no central listing of copyright owners, as they are not required to be part of one, but there are various ways to look for the information. If you have enquiries about specific pieces of music, you may use the research facility provided by APRA AMCOS. You can find this on the [APRA AMCOS website](https://apracoms.com.au).

**OTHER SOURCES OF MUSIC**

A great way to find music for your film is to seek out public domain, royalty-free and Creative Commons music.

Public-domain music is music that has fallen out of copyright. These are songs that are typically very old. Sites like archive.org (https://archive.org/details/audio) are a good source of public-domain music. Because copyright laws vary from country to country, it is important to confirm whether the song is in the public domain in your region.

Royalty-free music can be used without having to pay ongoing fees. Sometimes it is free, but often it will require a one-off payment. There are a number of sites like Audio-Jungle and Audio Network that allow you to purchase music for a small fee.

Creative Commons is a way of distributing music and other work that exists alongside copyright. Songs that are distributed under a Creative Commons license are typically free to use, only requiring that you mention the artist in your credits. There are a number of great Creative Commons sites including the Free Music Archive, Jamendo, Bensound and Incompetech.
Know someone who is a great musician? Why not ask them to write music for your short film? Original music is always a better option because it makes your film more distinctive. Even if you don't have a great deal of skill, it's always possible to write original music using loops in software like GarageBand and FL Studio.

**COPYRIGHT FAQ**

**Can I use music from a free-download site or karaoke music site?**

Not necessarily. Just because music is free to download does not mean it is free to use in a film that will be in the public arena (at a public screening or online). It just means you can download it for free and listen to it privately.

**But the site says I can use their music in a film or video.**

Using their music for free in a privately made video (such as a wedding video) is different to using it for a film that will be screened in the public domain. It is very important to use a site that clearly specifies that its music can be used in productions that will be screened publicly. Most of these will charge a fee for use of the music and this guide features a list of recommended sites.

**My character has movie posters in his bedroom. Is this okay?**

No. Do not use movie posters, photographs or other images of copyrighted material. The same goes for recognisable logos and images on clothing, or footage from movies or TV programs that a character in your film might be watching. All of these images are copyrighted and securing permissions can be time consuming and very expensive.

If you want posters or artwork in your movie, make your own original artwork. Ask actors to wear clothing that does not have logos, etc. If your character is watching TV, you cannot show (or hear the sound of) a real-life movie or TV program – you will need to record your own material. This can be easily done by simply filming something with your friends and playing it back on the screen, using a sound effects library for fake TV sounds, or taking a photograph of yourself to put in a picture frame.

**But my friends and I make videos for YouTube using popular songs all the time.**

The internet, including YouTube, is full of copyright-breaching material. You can make these videos privately, but as soon as they go online – and you don’t have permission from the artist / recording company / movie studio – you are in breach of the law and it may just be a matter of time before the owner asks you to take those videos down.

Remember: if it’s not yours, you need permission.

Creative Content Australia’s website ([https://www.creativecontentaustralia.org.au](https://www.creativecontentaustralia.org.au)) has detailed information on the importance of copyright. Creative Content Australia is focused on supporting Australian creative communities and educating people about the value of screen content.
Another excellent resource is Creative Content Australia's *Nothing Beats the Real Thing* resources for primary and secondary school students: [https://www.nothingbeatstreathing.info](https://www.nothingbeatstreathing.info).

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All filmmaking is a team effort. Regardless of how big or small the production, students will need to rely on one another to fulfil different crew and cast roles. Have students change roles on each other's projects so everyone gets a turn at each of the roles.

On a small project like this, you will need:

- A director
- A camera operator
- A sound recordist (depending on whether you are recording audio through the camera's in-built mic or an attached microphone)
- Actors
- It will also help to have crew assisting with sets and props.

**FILMMAKING: GENERAL**

**OPERATING THE CAMERA**

In this day and age, cameras come in all shapes and sizes. Even some feature films are being made on smartphones. The script, and being creative when using the camera (using different angles and frames), is far more important than what kind of camera is used.

Regardless of what camera your students will be using, take the time to familiarise yourself with the manual and the camera's functions. Understand the settings (pulling focus; zooming in and out; setting white balance) and don't use in-camera special effects while filming – these can be added in post-production. Practice filming freehand and with a tripod, and ensure you know how to load a memory card and charge batteries.

Students will need some time to become comfortable handling the camera before they shoot their films. They can shoot some footage, screen it and learn from these practice exercises.

Ensure students understand how carefully they need to handle the camera and to be careful of keeping the lens clean.

When beginning recording, always leave a few seconds before calling 'action' and again after calling 'cut'. You don't want to lose the beginning and end of a scene because the camera was still 'taking up'.

Once the camera is rolling, the director calls 'action' and once the scene is finished the director calls 'cut'.
**TAKING GREAT SHOTS**

Whatever image you see through the viewfinder will provide you with an accurate representation of what is being filmed. If playing footage back to make sure you are happy with it, make sure you go all the way to the end of the recorded footage before filming anything else. You don’t want to accidentally erase your footage.

Use a tripod whenever possible. A tripod will make sure your shots are stable and smooth.

Sometimes hand-held filming is necessary, but make sure you practice a few times before recording. Even a small shake or bump can be seen in the finished footage.

Once students have familiarised themselves with the camera, use manual focus instead of automatic focus. It’s easy to think automatic is better because it does all the work, but it takes time for the lens to adjust to each movement. It’s actually quicker to focus the shots yourself – you just need some practice and time to rehearse the camera movements.

When using manual focus, zoom all the way in on what you want to film (whichever person or object is in the very middle of the frame), focus, and then zoom back out into the frame you want to film. This will ensure each shot is in focus.

Think carefully about how you want to frame each shot. What is happening in the story? What is important to focus on – what the lead actor is saying, an actor picking up an object, or showing the location of where the story takes place? These decisions should have been made during the storyboard stage of the project. Now all you need to do is set up the scene and practice filming it before shooting.

**SHOT SIZE**

When you are shooting your film, think carefully about the type of shot size that will best communicate your message to the audience. First-time filmmakers are often reluctant to get their camera close enough to the actors, especially when filming dialogue.

**Extreme long shot:** Often called an ‘establishing shot’, extreme long shots are used at the beginning of a scene to tell the audience where that scene will take place. They are a necessary part of storytelling; so don’t forget to include them!

**Long shot:** A long shot often includes a great deal of background in the shot but individual characters can be seen.

**Full shot:** The full shot is an important part of getting enough coverage in a scene. It shows the actors from head to toe. Keep in mind, however, that you will need to pick up medium shots and close ups of your actors performing dialogue.

**Medium shot:** The medium shot, which shows actors from the waist up, is one of the most common shots in film and television because it allows your audience to see a character’s body language as well as their facial expression.
Close-up: Whenever you’re shooting dialogue, try to capture it in close up. It shows the expression on your actor’s face and allows you to get the microphone nice and close!

**Extreme close-up:** Extreme close ups are important when you need to point out something small that is important to your story, such as a text message, that can’t be seen in a medium or full shot.

**LIGHTING**

It’s important that the viewing audience can see what is going on in the shot and that it is not too dark or too bright. Remember, just because it looks okay to you on set, doesn’t mean it looks good on screen. Look at the shot through the viewfinder and adjust your lighting accordingly.

Can you see everyone and everything clearly? If you are shooting outdoors, keep in mind the weather might change or cloud cover might affect the lighting. Make sure you never shoot directly into the sun or any other bright light source as this can cause flare and damage the lens.

You don’t need expensive lights – just open the curtains, film outside, start filming earlier in the day or choose rooms with adjustable lighting. Use all available lights, such as lamps and overhead lights, to light your scenes well. In some circumstances, a piece of white cardboard can be used to reflect ‘fill light’ onto your actors to soften any shadows that might be in the shot and to better illuminate their faces.

When you’re using natural light, ensure that your actors aren’t standing with their backs to the light because this will make their faces difficult to see.

**SOUND**

Sound is very important and is very often forgotten – everyone is so focused on the look of the film, that new filmmakers often just start recording without checking the sound.

Here are some tips that are useful to help you record decent sound on location:

**Plan:** Capturing great sound for your film means planning ahead of time. Plan to shoot your scenes in quiet environments where you can control the sound. Shooting near a busy street, for instance, is always a bad idea. Always plan to take someone with you who knows how to operate the microphone that you might be using.

**Equipment:** Select appropriate microphones, booms, tripods and other equipment to help you record decent sound. Always remember to take an extra set of batteries with you and ensure that your sound operator has a pair of headphones.

**Noise:** When you are on location, do your best to reduce noise. Turn off refrigerators, air conditions and other appliances that might interfere with your sound recording. If there are noises that you can’t control, such as the sound of traffic, try moving to a quieter location.
**Proximity:** Try and get your microphone as close to your actors as you can. Recording your dialogue in close-up is a great way to get your microphones close.

**Ambience:** When you are on location, always record a couple of minutes of ambient sound. This is useful when you have silence in your soundtrack that needs to be filled.

**Levels:** In addition to getting your microphone close to your actors, you need to make sure that the volume levels are set appropriately. If the input levels on your microphone are too soft, it will be difficult to hear your actors. Too loud and the sound will be distorted. If you have a microphone that allows you to view sound levels, try to ensure that your actors’ voices don’t go above -12dB.

**Sound test:** Whether you’re using an external microphone or not, it’s always a good idea to record a test before you start filming just to make sure that the equipment is working correctly.

**Action calls:** It’s a good idea to call action when you start to shoot a scene. On a professional film, this process involves a number of people ensuring that the cast and crew are ready to shoot. On a low-budget film, it might sound a little like this:

Director: ‘Quiet on the set!’
Sound operator: ‘Sound rolling …’
Camera operator: ‘Camera rolling …’
Director: ‘ACTION!’

…
Director: ‘CUT!’

**Marker:** Using a slate can help you identify shots easily in post-production but markers also perform another important function. The ‘snap’ of a clapperboard gives you a distinct sound that can be used to line up different sources of audio in post-production. If you don’t have a clapperboard, a simple clap will do!

**FILMMAKING: LIVE-ACTION PRODUCTIONS**

Live action refers to real people playing roles in a live location. Most of what we watch on television or at the movies is live action.

Filmmaking schedules are usually managed around locations. For example, if the beginning of your script is set in a classroom, and the last scene is in the same classroom, you film those scenes together so you aren’t running back and forth to the same locations all day.

Most films are shot and then edited in post-production. This allows the opportunity to film things from a few different angles and try out different edits as well as to learn the skills of editing.

You can film different shots and then edit them together later. Music, sound effects, special effects, and credits are all added to the film in post-production.
IN-CAMERA EDITING

This style of filmmaking is very different. Here you film every shot in sequence (as it appears in the script) one after another. Instead of downloading the footage onto a computer and editing, each shot is filmed in sequence and at the end of filming you have your completed production.

This is a great idea for a beginner’s exercise. It allows students the opportunity to get used to the equipment and the process of filmmaking, as well as to help them understand the importance of being organised before filming – if they haven’t thought through their shot list properly, they will soon realise this when they understand they can’t go back and film it.

It’s also a great way to film if you don’t have access to post-production facilities or if you think editing and post-production is a little beyond your students’ capabilities at this time.

The final product might be a little rough because you don’t have the advantage of fine tuning the edit and you can’t add music or titles in camera, but a clever story and engaging performances will make up for that.

When making a film in-camera, make sure you follow these guidelines:

- Make sure you have a well-organised shot list that covers everything in the script.
- At the beginning of the memory card, record fifteen seconds of black before you start filming shots.
- Just as every scene must be filmed in order, the titles must be filmed in order. Students can be creative about this.
- Film each scene, shot-by-shot just as the storyboard shows.
- Use the pause button between shots and not the stop and start buttons. Remember – every time you hit record, the camera needs a moment to ‘take up’ and you might lose the last couple of seconds of the previous shot. Always use the pause button.
- Try to end each shot neatly and without too many seconds to spare between each shot.
- Film closing credits.

CHECKLIST

- Make sure you have a copy of the script, the shot list and the storyboard.
- Ensure you have a memory card with enough storage space, and that the camera batteries have been fully charged up
- Check that you have all your props and costumes.
- Make sure everyone knows what their role is on the day.
THE ORDER OF THE SHOOT

- Load the memory card and battery, and set up the camera on the tripod for the first shot.
- Check for background sound and test the sound levels by asking the actors to say some lines.
- Make sure your lighting is good and you can clearly see everyone and everything in the viewfinder.
- Focus the camera on the first shot.
- Ask the actors to play out the scene and rehearse a few times.
- Record a couple of takes and make sure you are happy with the shot.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

There is a unique language on a film set that all crews use to keep a film shoot moving. When everyone is in place and ready to film, the crew says:

Director: ‘Quiet on set’
Director: ‘Standby to record’
Crew: ‘Standing by’
Director: ‘Roll tape’
Camera operator (after pressing the record button): ‘Rolling’
Director: ‘Action’!

It is important that the camera record button is pressed before calling action. This ensures that the camera has ‘taken up’ and you won’t miss the action once the director calls ‘action.’

Once the actors have finished acting the scene, the director calls ‘Cut!’.

Everyone stands by and, if the director would like to film another take, the process is repeated.

POST-PRODUCTION

Simple editing programs are available that students can easily learn. If your school has any of these programs, this will greatly enhance the quality of your final productions and add an entirely different level of skill development to your students’ educational and creative experience. Some software provides video tutorials and online resources to help you get started. If you’re a first-time filmmaker, iMovie and Shotcut are great places to start with your editing.

GUIDELINES ON EDITING

Editing is the process of selecting the shots you want to use and the order you wish to place them in. Good editing is seamless and lets the story flow in a way that makes sense to the audience.
The storyboard that students developed earlier in the production process largely determines how shots will be edited together. While it isn’t necessary to stick with this exactly, it is a good beginner’s exercise to follow the storyboard. As students become more confident, they can be a little more creative with their editing.

More than just putting the story in order, editing can impact the story in many different ways.

When selecting shots, and deciding how long to hold them for on screen, it is important to consider what is going on in the story. Who should we be paying attention to? Who is talking? Is there something going on in the background that we need to see a close-up of? While the storyboard will guide this to a large degree, the pace and emotion of a story can be changed dramatically through editing.

Editing can also be used to manipulate the order of time, moving forward in time or creating flashbacks. Fast cuts can create tension, and reducing the number of edits can slow the story right down.

**GETTING STARTED WITH EDITING**

- The first part of editing is ingesting the footage and starting a workflow.
- Import the video onto your computer.
- Arrange the shots in story order (using the script to guide you).
- Watch the clips and choose the best one of each take.
- Trim each shot, removing any excess footage at the beginning and end of each shot (such as when the director is calling action and cut).
- Apply special effects transitions between shots if necessary (dissolves, fade to black, etc.).

Less is often best when editing. Too many cuts and too many special effects are distracting. The best editing isn’t usually noticeable by the person watching the film.

Don’t underestimate the amount of time required to edit. Because each story can be edited in different ways, it’s important to allow time to try out different techniques and structures.

https://www.shotcut.org

**TITLES AND CREDITS**

The title is the name of the film that appears at the beginning of the film and also might include a logo, a school’s name, and the names of key crew.
Credits listed at the end of the film usually include the names of everyone who worked on the film, friends who might have helped, sponsors, logos, the name of your school and anyone else whose assistance contributed. Be sure to spell everyone’s name right and to include any necessary copyright information.

**Opening and/or closing credits are not required for 1-Minute Film Competition entries, but (if added) may be up to 10 seconds in total (in addition to the maximum 60-second running time of the film itself).**

**MUSIC**

Music plays an important role in movies. It influences our emotions as we watch a story unfold and can make a scene scarier, sadder, more fun or suspenseful. Ask students to apply different styles of music to their production to see how strongly it can impact the storytelling experience.

Please refer to the section on copyright before adding music to each production. The seriousness of adhering to copyright law cannot be underestimated and it can be a complicated field to navigate. More entries are disqualified each year for infringing copyright than for any other reason.

**EDITING SOUND**

If you want to create a polished short film, spend time editing the sound in your video.

When you are editing sound, it is often best to use the camera's audio as a guide for your soundtrack. This lets you know where you should place sound effects and dialogue. When you are finished, you can turn off this audio and you will be left with a pristine, polished soundtrack.

When you were on location, you probably recorded a couple of minutes of ambient sound. This background sound is the foundation of your soundtrack. It will fill the silence between your dialogue and other sound effects.

Consider replacing any sound effects in your film, such as footsteps and doors opening, with sounds from sound libraries or websites such as [www.freesound.org](http://www.freesound.org). Reproduction of these sounds is known as foley, and these versions are generally higher quality than the ones you will have recorded on location with your camera. If you can’t find the right sound effects, consider returning to your location with a microphone to record foley sound for your film.

When editing sound effects and dialogue, change the volume of these sounds so that the soundtrack feels natural and consistent.

Many editing programs also allow you to remove noise, such as the sound of a refrigerator or air conditioner that has accidentally been recorded on-location.
 FILMMAKING: ANIMATION PRODUCTIONS

Animation provides boundless opportunities for creativity. Whatever students can think of, they can create in a way that can be difficult with live-action productions.

Animation can be very time consuming so it is important to look into what styles of animation are possible, and to be realistic about what can be achieved in the available timeframe. Animation is usually recorded at 25 frames per second so that a string of static images run together and look like they are moving images.

Different physical animation styles include:

Cel Animation:

This is the traditional style of animation as used in classic television cartoons. Put simply: all the action seen on-screen is drawn on transparent cels, and one drawing is replaced by another in order to create the illusion of movement in the way a flipbook does. It requires a great deal of attention to detail and a considerable time commitment. On a series of clear plastic sheets (cels), the action is drawn over and over again, with each image showing a slight change in action, so that when they are placed on a background one by one and recorded on camera, the end result is smooth movement.

- Draw, paint or photograph a scene or a background.
- Draw your characters (and any other part of the story that will be moving in the final film) onto tracing paper.
- You will need to keep positioning each image against the background to ensure each one is scaled correctly.
- Place cels (overhead projector transparencies) over the sketch.
- Using a film-ink pen, draw the outline and use oil-based paints for colouring in.
- Place the dry cel onto the background image.
- The camera will need to be set up directly overhead of the background and cel and take two photographs (capture two frames) of this cel.

If you would like an idea of how many cels you might need to make a 60 second film, it would be approximately 750!

Stop-Motion Animation:

Also time consuming but a little easier to manage is stop-motion animation. You can create models and characters using clay, building blocks, cut-outs or any other materials. A camera is set up in one position in front of the scene and each time you make a small adjustment to the scene, you shoot a frame.
Cut-Out Animation:

Similar to both cel and stop-motion animation, cut-outs are moved around on a background, which is static.

The sky is the limit in terms of creating a world and characters with animation but it does require patience.

Here are some examples of some terrific animations created by finalists in the 2017 ATOM Awards student animation categories:

atomawards.org/2017-student-category/best-primary-school-animation/
atomawards.org/2017-student-category/best-middle-school-years-7-10-animation/
atomawards.org/2017-student-category/best-senior-secondary-animation/

FRAME RATES

While the standard animation requires 25 frames per second, animators can shoot each frame twice without making the final movements appear too bumpy. The more frames you shoot of the same scene, the slower the final on-screen activity will appear. Less frames shot means the action will appear faster.

When animating characters, move them as little as possible between recording each action so that the end result isn’t too jerky.

Try to limit movement. For example: If a character is walking, just move their feet instead of their whole body (swinging their arms, etc.), as the more movement you put in the scene, the longer it will take to film.

ANIMATION SOFTWARE

All types of animation are easier than ever before with modern software. All you need is a camera (still, video, tablet or smartphone), a tripod, a computer that connects to your camera, and some simple animation software.

There are some terrific animation programs available. Here are some:

www.clayanimator.com/english/stop_motion_animator.html
www.framethief.com
www.stopmotionpro.com
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Here are some additional education resources for working with students:

1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/get_animated_-_capturing_interest_in_the_primary_classroom.pdf
1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/toy_stories_-_stop-motion_adventures_in_the_classroom.pdf
1-minutefilmcompetition.org/resources/rotoscoping_-_a_practical_way_to_animate_in_the_classroom.pdf

Just as with live action, students will need a script and a storyboard.

As a general guide for shooting animation:

Flat images such as cel images and cut-outs are filmed on flat surfaces with the camera positioned overhead looking down on the animation. 3D models can be shot from any angle, but for beginners it can be a good exercise to leave the camera stationary so that the focus is on moving the models.

As with live action, it is important to light the scenes properly: not too dark and not too bright. Be mindful of casting shadows and make sure you are judging the quality of lighting by what you can see through the viewfinder.

With animation, it is best to always leave the camera on the tripod or stationary on a stable surface. Mark the spot where the tripod is so that the exact same location can be used when filming resumes after a break – even the slightest change in camera angle or frame size can have a big impact when all the recorded images are pieced together in the final animation.

Follow the storyboard and take your time to move your pieces around, whether using models, cut-outs or drawings. The most important part is making slow and gradual changes between each shot in order to create smooth action.

If you have characters in your animation that speak, lip-syncing can be very difficult. It is important to record the dialogue lines for yourself before you start filming so you know how long each line takes to say, and so you can move the models’ mouths accordingly. Otherwise, consider using voice-over narration. Don’t get too stressed out about moving the characters’ mouths perfectly! Viewers are used to seeing animation where the characters simply move their mouths open and shut!

As with live action, you can add music and sound effects. You can record your own sound effects or use a sound-effects library. As always, refer to the copyright section for the responsible use of music, sound and images.