

A STEM School

FROEBEL
BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Home of the Space Generation



SHORT FILM PROJECT

PROJECT MANUAL

This booklet contains the protocols and forms to successfully engage the English Short Film Project during the 2023-2024 school year.

FROEBEL BILINGUAL SCHOOL, INC



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INTRODUCTION

We live in a multimedia world. Some forms of literacy all people need to develop include: textual, numerical, visual, audio, and multimedia. We live in times where we are increasingly moving farther away from textual communication. Unfortunately, people get less information from reading nowadays and get more from visual sources. There is and has always been a need for efficient textual literacy and communication, however, the prevalence and impact of visual communication in contemporary society is irrefutable.

Visual Literacy is the ability to understand and produce visual messages. Not mastering visual literacy could make a 21st century individual vulnerable and irrelevant. In today's world it is vital to develop the ability to create, use, and evaluate visual resources.

Research demonstrates that a mastery of visual literacy is highly beneficial for the constructing and deconstructing written texts. In other words, visual literacy enhances textual literacy skills such as "visualization"--a key to proficiency in the enjoyment of reading.

The Short Film Project allows students, 8th through 12th grade, to engage the creative process in a way no other middle/high school literature and writing courses projects have been able to. Students have the opportunity to collaborate with a group of peers in adapting a work of literature of their choice into a short film. Some, like the Writing students, can film their own screenplays. It is important that students and parents understand that, although many of the skills and processes used in this project are taught in the elective cinematography course, this project is and has always been part of the middle / high school English curriculum.

The skills developed during this project and the experiences students undergo are useful in many other areas and stages of life. Whether a student's interest lay in the artistic arena or in more technical endeavors, this project is a great learning experience. This project is not only a creative outlet, but is also highly problem-solving oriented. A variety of filmmaking opportunities will be available to allow students full expression of their technical skills and artistic sensibilities. Although the process is collaborative, the students will also be graded for their individual contributions to the film.

The final product will be the result of choices made by the students, which is why any resources and materials to be used in its realization fall under the students' purview. All projects should be approached as low to no budget films. Students should creatively use available resources such as: equipment, props, and costumes;

ensuring they add production value to the project. If available, the school can allow our students borrow some of the tools required for the task. Any student interested in borrowing equipment must complete a request form from the Cinematography teacher and take full responsibility for replacing any equipment lost or damaged while under his/her care.

PARENTAL COLLABORATION

God saw it fit to equip our students with parents. Since all our students are minors and most require transportation and food as essential parts of the project's workflow, parents should partner up with their children to enable and assist them during the principal photography phase of the project. Because of the nature of the project, some parts of it need to be worked upon after school hours. For the process to be as smooth as possible, students and parents must engage in conversation regarding the liberation of as much time as possible during February. This month is critical because it's usually when Principal Photography takes place.

It is vital for the project's success that a realistic schedule be produced and that students and parents faithfully commit to it. As a sign of courtesy and respect towards others, everybody should be at the accorded locations on time and refrain from activities that do not help move the project towards its completion. Here, parents can help round up students that get sidetracked by "distractions" and steer them towards reaching the established goals of the day. Students are expected to be focused on their specific tasks when shooting their films. It is important that all parties remember that respect and courtesy should always be articulated while at private locations and disruptions of any kind must be avoided or minimized at the very least.

In the case of the younger students, parents must be aware that any time in which students "get together" outside school hours, should be used to shoot the project as per the Shooting Schedule. For example: having meetings at Burger King to "talk" seems like a crass waste of time. There is plenty of time at school to have team meetings to discuss the project.

STAGES

A reasonable amount of time will be provided for each stage, partially under the teacher's supervision. Each group will be divided into teams where the student themselves will determine, with the help of the team leader and the consensus of the team, the various roles they will assume during the film's production. The project is divided into five (5) stages. These are:

Development

During the first week of this school year, students should hold a discussion with the teacher regarding their approach to the school year's theme and the story they will be developing/adapting. Here is where task distribution and scripting should begin. A ½" binder will be built and maintain detailing the project's development (check the EVALUATION FORMS LIST and PROJECT DOCUMENTS section for more details). Students must at least assume two roles according to their skills/interests. Scouting of potential shooting locations, set building, and the identification of assets that will be needed must be considered during this stage. Pre-production from the last week of January to the first week of February, students should be actively preparing for Principal Photography. A detailed Shooting Schedule that has been agreed upon by all parties must be furnished to the teacher before shooting begins.

Production / Principal Photography

During January/February, students will engage Principal Photography. Teachers are to discourage students from filming at the school unless the film is **specifically** about school life. Shooting at other locations will likely improve the production value of the film. Shooting outings should be carefully planned before arriving to the locations to ensure quick and efficient filming. The safety of the cast and the crew, with a good measure of common sense must always prevail. Locations should be treated respectfully and once used should be left unsullied.

Post-production

During the last week of February, if not earlier, students must be editing and compositing their projects. Editing at a later date is the result of poor planning and organization. The usual result is a film of poor quality. Experience has taught us that it's always in the student's best interest to follow the teacher's recommendations regarding the various softwares and online resources. If You have questions about great free available resources, feel free to ask the cinematography teacher.

Distribution

During the second week of March, students will turn in their films for evaluation. The project will be delivered via Google Drive or Dropbox (or in a flash drive in case of an emergency) in the mp4 (MPEG 4) or MKV (Matroska) video format. **No other format will be allowed.**



It should be noticed that even if you give students enough time to complete a task, procrastinators will still find the amount of time given to be insufficient. Froebel Bilingual School, when compared with

other schools, has earned a reputation for being very respectful of students' time. That is why any claim of having insufficient time for this project will be considered baseless. To be successful in this project, students must learn to be responsible stewards of their time. Procrastination is the enemy!

This project is the single most important English course project of the year, that is why it has a value of 200 points. It is usually due the first week of March. Exact dates for this school year can be found in page 7. Late work will be penalized with a -20-point deduction for **each day** for each team member (student).

The short film's length will be around 10 minutes (including the credits). Projects shorter than 9 or longer than 12 minutes **will not be accepted**. Films with water marks **will not be accepted**. Beware of "free" editing apps that fool people into using their product free of charge, until they surprise you with charges to be able to export it watermark free. For those with more experience* producing cinema, at least ten (10) VFX and/or makeup FX are expected in each film.

*10th grade through 12th grade

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Students can earn points for:

- ✿ Level of organization as reflected in the shooting schedule
- ✿ Group dynamics
- ✿ Commitment to their team's effort
- ✿ Skill level as reflected in the final product
- ✿ Level of responsibility as reflected in the logs
- ✿ Faithfulness to the source material if adapting, reflecting comprehension (8th, 9th and 11th thru 12th grades)
- ✿ Level of excellence and artistry in putting the product together (reflected in the final product)
- ✿ Quality of the screenplay, reflecting creativity (previous group levels, but more specifically 10th grade)

DOs AND DON'Ts

There are things students will be allowed to do with the project, and others they won't.

They must...

- ✿ Start building a folder of assets (sound clips, music, overlays, etc...), in the computer, for later use in post to edit the coverage.
- ✿ Visit the websites recommended by the teacher to acquire free assets available for filmmakers to elevate the projects.
- ✿ Help other teammates, as long as you are not neglecting your responsibilities (even if you don't get credit for it).
- ✿ Be thrifty and imaginative by recycling used materials or items as costumes and/or props.
- ✿ Make sure shooting locations are left as clean and undisturbed as they were found.
- ✿ Use ADR and find free online sound audio assets to clean up, replace, and build up the audio in your film. Bad audio is unforgivable!

They cannot...

- ✿ Develop a project that has not been preapproved by the teacher.
- ✿ Develop a project that is not aligned with the year's chosen theme, regardless of how enthused they might feel about their story idea. Students should adapt an approved story they like. If an original story is the team's first choice it will only be greenlit pending approval of a panel of English teachers that read it.
- ✿ Begin Principal Photography without a shooting schedule that's been certified by all teammates.
- ✿ Have more than one person assuming a particular role or position. (e.g., two directors or editors)
- ✿ Cast non-members in important roles or crew positions.
- ✿ Cast in a manner that is inconsistent with the appropriate age of the character. Realism is important!
- ✿ Allow O.M.O.s* (One Man Orchestras) in the teams. Over achievers must get a grip and remember that the process is supposed to be collaborative and inclusive.
- ✿ Be absent to classes to shoot their project.
- ✿ Present content that could be rated R or above by the Motion Picture Association of America or rated M by the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board. Watch it! Sometimes less is more. Suggesting things can be more elegant than showing them.
- ✿ Turn in films with bad audio. Audio must be as clear as possible.

- Turn in films without the appropriate final credits.
- While a blooper reel is not requested, nor will it be part of the project's evaluation, if turned in by the students, it must be separate video from the film project.
- Pay to have any part of your project completed by third parties.

EVALUATION FORMS SCHEDULE

A total of three (4) different evaluation forms will be used to evaluate each student. Those will be:

1. The Shooting Schedule that has been agreed upon by all parties and that contains all preproduction material must be furnished to the teacher before shooting begins. This will be turned over by the team leaders during the pre-production stage no later than Dec. 8, 2023. (10% of grade)
2. The Individual Student Work Log sheet to monitor daily pre-production work. This will be turned over by the team leaders after the pre-production stage no later than Feb. 9, 2024. (10% of grade)
3. The Principal Photography Task Log for monitoring production work of individual team members. It will be turned in by the team leaders no later than Feb. 23, 2024. (10% of grade)
4. A ½" Project Binder, which contains the Film Development Package Checklist* of documents and evidences the evolution of the project through the first 3 stages of the filmmaking process, must be turned in on the film's due day, which is March 5, 2024. (30% of grade)
5. The Short Film Rubric to evaluate the film. This sheet will be completed by the teacher on the film's due day, which March 5, 2024. (40% of grade)

*Includes the following: ¹Copy of the latest version of the script, ²additional copy of shooting schedule, ³list of all locations used during Principal Photography, ⁴story board (2 sheets minimum), ⁵costume and set design (2 sheets minimum for each), ⁶list of cast/ crew members, ⁷production photo (1 photograph), and ⁸Movie poster as cover of the binder. The Film Development Package will be made available in your English teacher's website.



APENDIX

A. NIGHT OWL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL



Celebrated annually, the Night Owl Film Festival exhibits the best projects of the year and give awards in different categories. For all middle and high school students, attendance, and support of the activity, in order to earn points for the Film Festival Attendance & Support grade, is compulsory. This event is programmed for in April 5, 2024. Once the short film projects are graded, they are turned over to a jury, for evaluation. The panel then selects nominees for each

category through their votes. The nominees with most votes are then chosen as the winners and are kept secret until the ceremony. At the event, the five highest scored films are exhibited, since it would be impossible to show all projects in one evening.

At the live event, which is open to the community, nominees enjoy a red-carpet interview and then sit at a VIP area, where they enjoy the best view and easy access to the stage where the awards are given to the winners in each category. The exhibited films are eventually uploaded to our curated YouTube channel to showcase the school's program and our student's achievements in the cinematic arts.

B. CINEMATOGRAPHY CLUB

Exists to promote and advance the art and science of cinematography and bringing students with an interest in cinematography together to exchange ideas, discuss techniques and produce motion pictures as a vehicle of artistic self-expression. Additionally, the club will provide opportunities outside of the classroom and school hours for those interested in a variety of film projects. It is also the purpose of the club to experience the atmosphere and work of film festivals.



C. PROJECT DOCS

The following documents are provided as tool to both manage and evaluate the short film project. If students understand that they need additional, it is perfectly acceptable to print additional copies. Students should be aware of the dates they need to be turned in to their teacher.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF FILM MAKING (2008-2023)

RUBRIC	
FILM DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE CHECKLIST	
TEAM	DATE
CHECK	CRITERIA
	MOVIE POSTER AS COVER OF THE BINDER
	COPY OF THE SHOOTING SCHEDULE
	COPY OF THE SHOOTING SCRIPT
	LIST OF ALL LOCATION USED DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
	STORYBOARD (3 SHEETS MINIMUM)
	COSTUME / PROP DESIGNS
	SET DESIGNS (INCLUDING FILM'S COLOR PALETTE)
	DETAILED CAST LIST
	DETAILED CREW LIST
	PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS / BTS (NOT <3)

COMMENTS: _____

S H O O T I N G
S C H E D U L E
BOOK TO FILM PROJECT

DATE/# DAY SHOOTING: _____

PRODUCER: _____

PRODUCER: _____

WRITER: _____

DP: _____

DATE	SET/SCENES	CAST	LOCATION	SCRIPT PG.
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NOTES

P R E P R O D U C T I O N T A S K L O G

FOR MONITORING THE CAST/CREW'S INDIVIDUAL COLLABORATION

FILM TITLE	TEAM LDR				
	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
STUDENT #1:					
STUDENT #2:					
STUDENT #3:					
STUDENT #4:					
STUDENT #5:					
STUDENT #6:					
STUDENT #7:					
STUDENT #8:					
STUDENT #9:					

LEGEND

∞ - went above and beyond the call of duty

> - was not prepared / did not contribute as expected or promised

V - fulfilled responsibilities

∅ - did nothing / wasted time / interrupted the work

PRINCIPAL

PHOTOGRAPHY TASK LOG

FOR MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CAST / CREW

FILM TITLE	TEAM LDR	DATE
PROVIDE BRIEF FACTUAL OBSERVATIONS OF MEMBER'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE SHOOT. STRESS THE POSITIVES.		
STUDENT #1:		
STUDENT #2:		
STUDENT #3:		
STUDENT #4:		
STUDENT #5:		
STUDENT #6:		
STUDENT #7:		
STUDENT #8:		
STUDENT #9:		

SHOOTING DAY# _____

RUBRIC

SHORT FILM PROJECT

TITLE - _____

DATE - _____

STUDENT - _____

CATEGORY	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	SCORE
Project Commitment (During Preproduction & Production)	Students supported the team's effort by displaying a high level of professionalism. 20	Students supported the team's effort very well. 16	Students somewhat supported the team's effort. 12	Students failed to support the team's effort by not being invested enough. 8	
Screenplay (Organization - Story)	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains a clear focus throughout. 10	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains focus for most of the film. 8	There are a few lapses in focus, but the purpose is fairly clear. 6	It is difficult to figure out the purpose of the film. 4	
Cinematography (Shots / Images)	Attractive images create a distinct atmosphere or tone that matches different parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors. 10	Images create an atmosphere or tone that matches some parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors. 8	An attempt was made to use images to create an atmosphere/ tone but it needed more work. Image choice is logical. 6	Little or no attempt to use images to create an appropriate atmosphere/ tone. 4	
Sound Track / Audio Track	Microphones optimally ensure that important sounds and dialogue are captured. The team made every attempt to anticipate and filter out unwanted noise in the recording. Music stirs a rich emotional response that matches the story line well. 10	Microphones ensure that important sounds and dialogue are captured. Music stirs a rich emotional response that somewhat matches the story line. 8	At least one microphone (in addition to that on the camera) is used to ensure that dialogue is captured. Music is ok, and not distracting, but it does not add much to the story. 6	Little attention was paid to ensuring quality sound during the shoot. Music is distracting, inappropriate, OR was not used. 4	
Editing	The story is told with exactly the right amount of detail throughout. Film is long enough to say what it set out to efficiently. Good use of transitions. 10	The story composition is typically good, though it seems to drag somewhat OR need slightly more detail in one or two sections. 8	The story seems to need more editing. It is noticeably too long or too short in more than one section. 6	The story needs extensive editing. It is too long or too short to be interesting. 4	
Production Design (Props/Costumes/Sets)	Film & Production Binder display fantastic effort made to include costumes +/- props which elevate the value and realism of the project. 10	Film & Production Binder display noticeable effort made to include costumes +/- props resulting in added value and realism of the project. 8	Film & Production Binder display little effort made to include costumes +/- props which rob any sense of realism from the project. 6	Film & Production Binder display no effort made to include costumes +/- props which diminish the project. 4	
Originality	Movie shows considerable originality and inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in a unique and interesting way. 10	Movie shows some originality and inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in an interesting way. 8	Movie shows an attempt at originality and inventiveness in part of the presentation. 6	Movie is a rehash of other people's ideas and/or images and shows very little to no originality. 4	
Performances	A high level of skill was evident in the student's area of responsibility. Connected with audience due to talent. Has great aesthetics, is exciting and engaging. 10	Some skill was evident in the student's area of responsibility. Connected with audience due to talent. Has good aesthetics and is engaging. 8	Little skill was evident in the student's area of responsibility. Connected with most of the audience due to talent. Has some aesthetic value, is occasionally engaging. 6	A lack of skill was evident in the student's area of responsibility. Didn't connect with the audience. Has poor aesthetics and failed to engage. 4	
Direction	The directing style is clean, organized and presented in a creative and visual way. The character presentation and design support the overall narrative of the film and support the world for which the story is set in. Elements are presented in an interesting manner. 10	The directing style flows well with the narrative. Some tools are used to show acceptable understanding. Each character is represented and supports the narrative but does not bring anything creatively out in their performance. 8	The directing style is presented unorganized. Visual elements are confusing to the narrative. Lacks character development and elements do not support the film narrative. 6	The directing style has no direction. There is insufficient information that displays all elements support the aesthetic of the film. 4	
					Subtotal

x2=