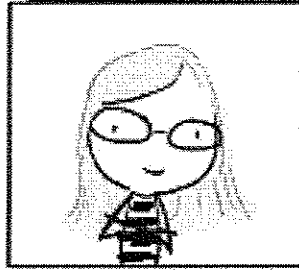# Teen Filmmaking

By Alieda Blandford and Tess Grynoch

Description & Objective

This program will give teens the opportunity to script and film a commercial advertising the teen space at their local library. The program's main objective is to give teens the opportunity to learn about film creation, including conceptualization, storyboarding, scripting, filming scenes, and editing. It will allow for a discussion about the strategies used in advertising, and will potentially get teens interested in film creation and video blogging. The program will also draw attention to online public domain resources that can be repurposed for creative works. Finally, it will result in free peer-to-peer publicity for the Central Library's teen space (Crist & Johnston, 2014).

Similar filmmaking programs in other libraries have highlighted their ability to "include youth ideas, promote emotional safety, offer supportive relationships and opportunities to belong, model positive social norms, provide appropriate structure, and encourage feelings of efficacy and mattering" (Landon, 2010). Further developmental needs this program will fulfill include: creative activities, youth as resources, service to others, community values, positive peer influences, responsibility, planning and decision making, interpersonal competence (teamwork), peaceful conflict resolution, personal power, self-esteem, and sense of purpose (Brautigam, 2008).

If iPads are available from the library for teen use, they should come loaded with the iMovie (IOS) video editing app. Free Android alternatives are available, such as Magistro, Qik Video, and Cute Cut. If no tablets are on hand, teens can use their smartphones to film and edit material. The "Teen Filmmaking" program should run for about two hours during two consecutive weeks.

Schedule

Week 1: Brainstorming & Storyboarding

Space needed: Breakout room
Supplies needed: Paper, whiteboard, pens, projector, laptop, iPads/tablets/smartphones, snacks/juice, consent forms
Display: Books about film

During Week 1, screen some recent award-winning commercials selected from the Ads of the World April 2014 Winners, and discuss the strategies used. Having teens notice background music, scene changes/cuts, angles, etc., will give them a critical look at the creation process (Vieau, 2011). Some examples might include:

- Ads of the World (2014). *Caterpillar: Largest JENGA Game Played with Cat Excavators.* April 2014 Best Film (Bronze). Retrieved from http://adsoftheworld.com/media/tv /caterpillar_largest_jenga_game_pla yed_with_cat_excavators
- Ads of the World (2014). *VH1: I Will Survive.* April 2014 Best Film (Gold). Retrieved from http://adsoftheworld.com/media/tv /vh1_i_will_survive
- Ads of the World (2014). *McDonald's: April Fool's Day at McDrive.* April 2014 Best Ambient (Gold). Retrieved from http://adsoftheworld.com/media/a mbient/mcdonalds_april_fools_day_ at_mcdrive

Next, have the teens look at some teen and staff created ads from other libraries:

- Toronto Public Library (2010). *Word Out! So You Think You Can Dance: Teen Summer Reading.* Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= eaHppq_vhWc
- Lake Oswego Public Library (2014). *Lake Oswego Teen Summer Reading PSA.* Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =hDGS9ulVKDw&spfreload=10
- Wellington Public Library (2013). *Wellington Library Book Domino.* Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =mfxmy3da_GQ

After viewing the videos, ask the teens to brainstorm ideas, concepts, and themes for their own commercials. Library staff will lead the discussion, writing ideas on the whiteboard. When the group has generated five to ten ideas, ask the teens to split into groups based on which idea most appeals to them. Once the teens have broken into groups for their concepts, show them some online resources where they can find royalty-free or creative commons licensed media in their own videos, if they choose. For the next fifteen minutes, teens will flesh out their ideas, discussing possible scenarios, background music, costumes, etc., for their individual commercials.

Next, explain the concept of the storyboard and ask the teens to draft their own (conceptualizing scenes). The teens' storyboards should be between four and eight panels, and should focus on the action and sequence of events (Vieau, 2011). For this exercise, details are not important – stick figures are fine! Staff should rove among the groups to offer support.

The next step is to create "shot lists," which will describe all the shots the teens will need to put their videos together. Shot lists might include, for example, "close-up of Tom's hand pulling the book off the shelf," and "Tom reading the book." The teens should also develop a draft script for their commercial, giving a brief outline of dialogue. Finally, the teens should assign duties for shooting the video (i.e., who is acting, filming, editing), and also create a list of props and sounds they will need. During the planning portion, library staff will continue to rove among groups for assistance.

At the end of this session, teens should present their storyboards and make a "pitch" of what their commercial will be. This will ensure that library staff will be able to support the commercial concepts and help to think of anything the teens have overlooked. Consent forms should be handed out to solicit parental consent in posting the finished videos on the library website.

Week 2: Filming

Space needed: breakout room
Supplies needed: paper, pens, projector, laptops, iPads, snacks/juice, costumes/props

Filming in the second week allows the teens to gather any costume pieces or props they may want to use on filming day. Library staff will need to collect consent forms that were handed out the previous week (these may also be posted on the teen website). The advertising for this week's program should highlight the need for the consent form to be signed. Teens without signed consent forms can still participate, but they would need to do so in a filming/editing capacity only.

Begin with a short demonstration of the iMovie app, if library iPads will be used. You can view the short tutorial available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APQh VuQXiuM.

Using the iPads and perhaps other materials gathered (costumes etc.), teens will begin filming their commercials. A teen volunteer or library staff member should be assigned to each filming group in order to assist them and help them through any obstacles or difficulties (Vieau, 2011).

At the end of this session, teens should have filmed all the footage they will need and begin editing their 2-minute commercials. The editing process will consist of shaping the raw video by "manipulating the beginning and end of each clip, and placing them in order" (Vieau, 2011, p. 29). The iMovie app also has some great options for special effects.

Once the commercials are ready, screen the films with some snacks!

Afterward, upload the videos to the library website for everyone to see.

Staffing Requirements

Two library staff, as well as two or three teen volunteers, will be needed during programming.

Community Partnerships

It may be possible to reach out to local high school drama clubs, acting and film classes, or fine arts teachers to recruit interested teens.

Proposed Budget

- Supplies including snacks, paper/pens - $50
- iMovie apps x10 (one app for each iPad in the teen area)* - $50
  Total: $100

Resources

Wikimedia Commons: a database of 25 million freely usable media files, including sounds, images, and video clips. Available at http://commons.wikimedia.org

Corbis Images: high-quality, royalty-free images available at http://www.corbisimages.com/content/royalty-free/

Public Domain 4 U: The best public domain music recordings, free to download, play, and share. Includes the mp3 Music Archive with hundreds of full-length songs browsable by genre. Available at http://publicdomain4u.com/

Internet Archive: Free songs, sound effects, images, and video clips. Available at https://archive.org

**Freesound**: a collaborative database of creative commons licensed sounds. Easy to browse and search sound effects. Available at https://www.freesound.org/browse/

YouTube Editor: a very basic, free online video editing tool to combine or trim videos, and add music or sound effects. Available at https://www.youtube.com/editor
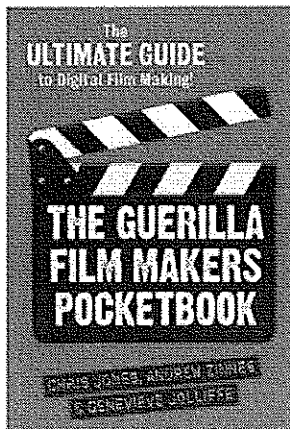
Books to Consider
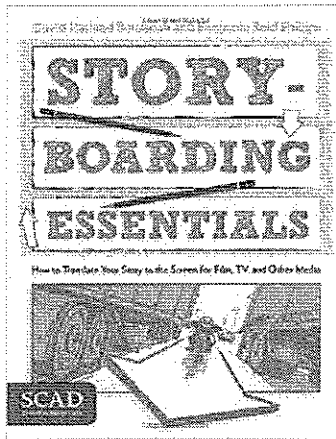
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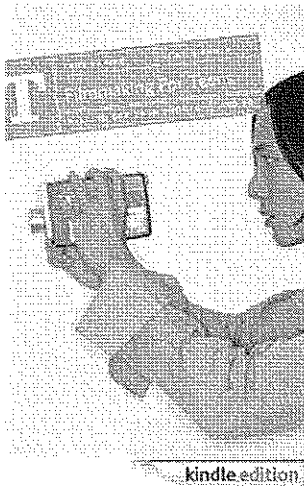
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