



Using Technology to Highlight Scouting Adventures

It was not too long ago that short films or even commercials were major productions that required a lot of equipment, film developing, and a tedious editing process that involved literally splicing together the film stock. Distribution was handled by physically transporting film cans from place to place.

Now, in the digital age, anyone can plan, shoot, edit, and distribute a short film. What once required professional production facilities can be accomplished with a simple camera and a laptop. In fact, technology is so advanced today that this can be done directly from most smartphones, and thanks to the advent of YouTube and social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter, showing the films to others is easier than ever.

This program feature will explore how to script, shoot, edit, and distribute a short film. Learning these skills will allow your troop or crew to share its adventures. And who knows—maybe you will discover the next J.J. Abrams, James Cameron, or Steven Spielberg in your midst.

Objectives

This month's activities should:

- Give youth a way to share their adventures through multimedia.
- Show how to script and plan a video.
- Demonstrate how to record and upload videos and pictures.
- Guide youth as they make and present their own productions.
- Teach youth the proper methods of internet video sharing.
- Emphasize the basics of internet safety.

RELATED ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

- Animation, Communication, Digital Technology, Moviemaking, Photography, and Theater merit badges
- Ranger: Communications core requirement
- Cyber Chip



Leadership Planning

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items during your planning meetings when choosing multimedia as your program feature.

1. What cameras and other equipment are available?
2. Do we have computers with the required software and internet access?
3. Do we know any filmmakers who could share their expertise?
4. What do we want to do for our main event?
5. Where are our filming locations?
6. What costumes and props will we need?
7. How many days will we be filming?
8. To meet our needs, what should we change in the sample meeting plans?

PARENTS CAN HELP WITH THE MULTIMEDIA PROGRAM FEATURE BY:

1. Loaning cameras and computers
2. Providing expertise in filming and editing
3. Providing transportation to and from filming locations
4. Assisting with production costs
5. Maintaining current Youth Protection certification, which is required of all adults providing transportation for or participating in outings

MULTIMEDIA INFORMATION

Web Safety

Many studies note that about 95 percent of young adults are active online. While the internet can be a very useful tool, it can also be dangerous to give out personal information because it can be stolen and used by anyone around the world.

Be aware that pictures or opinions you post on the internet may not always remain private between you and your friends. Often, everyone on the World Wide Web can read and see them, too, and chat room “friends” are not always who they say they are.

Ways to protect yourself online include

- Guarding your identifying information (name, sex, age, address, school, teams)
- Making your username and online profile generic and anonymous
- Knowing how to exit an inappropriate website

Film Basics

Here are some essential principles of camerawork, lighting, and sound that can help you create a quality production.

Selecting a Camera

Use a digital camera. Recording using a digital camera makes the editing process much easier.

Check for a mic port. If your camera has a mic (microphone) port, you can use an external mic to record the audio.





Filming Tips

Film multiple takes. Once the shots are planned and the actors know what they are doing, filming multiple takes will make postproduction easier by providing more options in the editing. Film every shot at least three times.

Keep it simple. Zooming, panning, and dollying (moving the camera sideways with the lens pointed forward) could make shots look complicated and may confuse the audience. Whenever possible, do not move the camera during a shot. However, if you decide to try it, shoot the same scene again without moving the camera so you can see what looks best during the editing process.

Use a tripod. This will make an amazing difference in the end product. Even if the camera operator thinks he or she is steady, the shots will be noticeably shaky without a tripod. However, if you want to establish a sense of uneasiness in a scene (e.g., turbulence on an airplane or spaceship, movement while a character is running), you can create this by carrying the camera or tilting it a little to one side.

Check for continuity. You should have someone assigned to make sure that nothing in a scene changes from shot to shot. For example, during a conversation, a lock of hair should not go from being in front of a person's face to behind the ear in two seconds, unless one shot shows them moving it.

Film close-ups. TV and computer monitors are much smaller than movie screens, so you should frame most of the shots as close as possible to the people or items that are important in a scene. Remember that viewers do not always need to see a whole object to know what it is. For example, if someone is sitting on a car, it isn't necessary to show the entire car; you can film the actor from the chest up with the windshield in the background.



Creating the Shot

Follow the rule of thirds. When framing a video shot or a still photograph, imagine what you see being divided into thirds both horizontally and vertically. Everything of interest in the shot should be near the invisible dividing lines. If you want a head-on shot of an actor's entire body, the actor should be within the right and left vertical lines with their head at the intersection with the upper horizontal line. If you want a close-up of the actor's face, the eyes should be on the upper horizontal line.

Be aware of height. For a normal angle shot, place the camera at eye level with the actor, allowing just a little headroom (the distance between the top of the subject's head and the top of the frame). A high angle—the lens pointing down from above the eye line—can make the actor seem weak or powerless, while a low angle pointing up at someone from below the eye line can make an individual seem dominant. No matter what angle you use, be careful not to have too much headroom.



Sound

Decide what to use. Built-in microphones on cameras don't always provide quality sound. Using an external microphone can lead to better results. Consider which style of mic is best suited for the project. The most common options include:

- **Shotgun mic.** This type is the one most often used in film and television. The microphone is usually mounted on a boom so that it can be lifted above the heads of the actors, out of shot. Shotgun mics are good for catching dialogue both inside and outdoors, so they are ideal for recording actors and presenters. The downside to this mic is that it may pick up background noise when filming in small spaces.
- **Lavalier mic.** This microphone clips on the performer's clothes and is great for eliminating background noise. Some styles of lavalier mics have a long cord that connects to the camera; others are wireless with battery packs. However, it can be difficult to hide a lavalier mic, so you may risk losing the illusion in a dramatic scene.
- **Hypercardioid mic.** Singers often use this microphone on stage because of its ability to pick up sound from a limited direction. The mic is shaped like a figure 8 with one side larger than the other. If you have trouble with background noise, hypercardioid mics are great at blocking sounds that come from behind the actors. They are bulky, however, and often not appropriate for film and video productions.

Keep audio levels high. When recording, keep the audio level as high as possible without going into the red. If your camera has an audio level indicator, watch it while you are filming; if not, then watch the levels while you are editing and adjust them as needed.

Scripting

A script is a document that provides the actors' actions and behaviors and outlines the sound and visual effects—all the things that go into telling a story on screen. The most common script formats include the following elements.

- Headings that list camera location (“INT.” for interior or inside; “EXT.” for exterior or outside), scene location (local lake, living room, etc.), and time (night or day). Special headings may indicate montages, dream sequences, flashbacks, flash forwards, and so on.
- Narrative descriptions that include action, characters, settings, and sounds (door slams, dog growls, etc.).
- Dialogue that provides the name of each character speaking and what they are saying.

Having a script is essential to telling a story on film or video. There are many ways to craft a script but in the most basic form it should specify the locations and dialogue and include a beginning, middle, and end. The script may offer a complex set of instructions or a simple outline of what needs to happen. Most importantly, it must be written down. To allow for proper shooting and editing, you should never try to “wing it.”





MULTIMEDIA GAMES

Photo Scavenger Hunt

Equipment: Digital camera for each team (smartphone cameras may be substituted); computer with internet access

How to play: Divide the youth into teams. Give each team a list of items, actions, or ideas to be captured in a photo (e.g., a tree, high five, the color blue). Each team will take their photos and upload them to a specified multimedia website (e.g., Flickr, Instagram, Facebook).

Scoring: The first team to upload their photos to the designated website wins.

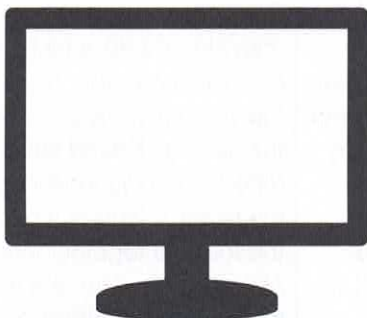


Video Screening Contest

Equipment: TV or projector with a screen; camera; paper and pencils for voting; ballot box; movie awards

How to play: Watch each group's video, and then vote on several categories: best acting, best camera work, best storyline, best overall production, etc.

Scoring: Ballots are collected and awards are presented accordingly.



Script Reading

Equipment: Scripts; area to perform

How to play: Each group performs a reading of its script while the other groups watch. At the end of each performance, the other groups offer constructive critiques, suggesting ideas that might make the script better.



Human Editing Machine

Equipment: Pen and paper

How to play: Divide the youth into teams. One member of each team is designated as the editor; each of the other members receives a slip of paper with an action written on it (e.g., purchase flowers, kayak on a lake, fight ninjas). The editor then arranges the team members in an order that would form a cohesive story, and the teams are given 5 minutes to complete the story.

Scoring: When time is up, each group presents its story to the "producers" (adult leaders), who choose the best storyline.





E.D.G.E. Ideas

Explain how it is done—Tell them.

Demonstrate the steps—Show them.

Guide learners as they practice—Watch them do it.

Enable them to succeed on their own—Have them practice/teach it.

EXPLAIN

- Discuss the importance of web safety and ways to keep safe on the internet.
- Explain how to upload pictures to Facebook and other websites.
- Explain how to upload videos to YouTube.
- Introduce the basics of script writing.
- Explain the important elements and rules of editing.

GUIDE

- Guide youth in recording short YouTube videos.
- Guide youth in using a digital camera to take photos and record videos.
- Guide them in creating skits for videos.
- Advise youth as they develop plot outlines for a script.
- Teach them how to edit clips using different systems.

DEMONSTRATE

- Demonstrate how to take a digital photo.
- Show how to post videos and photos online.
- Demonstrate uploading videos to YouTube.
- Present examples of scripts for movies, videos, and plays.
- Demonstrate how to use different editing systems.

ENABLE

- Empower youth to film and edit their own videos and short films.
- Allow them to create a special Facebook page for their projects.
- Give each youth an opportunity to record a skit and post it online with permission from their parent or guardian.
- Encourage them as they write a script for a short film.
- Have all youth earn the Cyber Chip appropriate for their grade if they have not already done so.

MAIN EVENT SUMMARIES

● ESSENTIAL

Day Activity

Short film—level 1—Make a five-minute video highlighting the unit. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend a day at a filming location recording the scenes, then edit the video together. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page.

■ CHALLENGING

Day Activity

Short film—level 2—Script and then shoot a 10- to 15-minute video. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend a day or two at the filming location recording the scenes, then edit the video together. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page.

◆ ADVANCED

Day Activity

Short film—level 3—Script and then shoot a 30-minute video. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend several days at different filming locations shooting the scenes. Spend a day editing the footage together into a completed video. Create a webpage to promote the video. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page.






MULTIMEDIA

Meeting Plan: Web Safety and Basics



Week 1 Date _____

| ACTIVITY | DESCRIPTION | RUN BY | TIME* |
|--|--|--------|-----------|
| Preopening 15 minutes before meeting | As members arrive, show age-appropriate safety videos from the Cyber Chip website (www.netsmartz.org/scouting). Note: Internet connection is needed. | | 6:45 p.m. |
| Opening Ceremony 10 minutes | Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection | | 7 p.m. |
| Group Instruction 15 minutes | Discuss the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Chip • Facebook, Twitter, and websites • What is and is not appropriate to post on websites | | 7:10 p.m. |
| Skills Instruction 35 minutes |  Learn how to take digital photos and upload them to Facebook. Make sure leader approval is given before posting. | | 7:25 p.m. |
| |  Take digital photos, then edit and post them on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Make sure leader approval is given before posting. | | |
| |  Use photo-editing software to combine two photos and upload them to the unit webpage (Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook). Make sure leader approval is given before posting. | | |
| Breakout Groups 10 minutes | Work on advancement requirements as needed. | | 8 p.m. |
| Game 15 minutes | Play Photo Scavenger Hunt (described earlier). | | 8:10 p.m. |
| Closing 5 minutes | Announcements Leader's minute Closing | | 8:25 p.m. |
| Total 90 minutes of meeting | | | |
| After the Meeting 15 minutes | Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event. | | |

*All times are suggested.



MULTIMEDIA

Meeting Plan: Video and the Web



Week 2 Date _____

| ACTIVITY | DESCRIPTION | RUN BY | TIME* |
|--|--|--------|-----------|
| Preopening 15 minutes before meeting | Set up laptops or tables so members who arrive early can watch videos on the <i>Boys' Life</i> YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/BoysLifeMagazine . | | 6:45 p.m. |
| Opening Ceremony 10 minutes | Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection | | 7 p.m. |
| Group Instruction 10 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do a presentation on the differences between <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — YouTube and Vimeo — Flickr, Instagram, and posting photos to a webpage Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each. | | 7:10 p.m. |
| Skills Instruction 40 minutes | Plan and record a 6-second YouTube video(s). | | 7:20 p.m. |
| | Plan and record a 30-second video that tells some kind of story (skit, joke, narrative, or song). | | |
| | Plan and record a 60-second video that tells some kind of story (skit, joke, narrative, or song). Then post it to YouTube or another website. Make sure leader approval is given before posting. Have all participate. | | |
| Breakout Groups 10 minutes | Begin discussing participation in the main event. | | 8 p.m. |
| Game 15 minutes | Hold the Video Screening Contest (described earlier). | | 8:10 p.m. |
| Closing 5 minutes | Announcements Leader's minute Closing | | 8:25 p.m. |
| Total 90 minutes of meeting | | | |
| After the Meeting 15 minutes | Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event. | | |

*All times are suggested.



MULTIMEDIA

Meeting Plan: Scripting and Preproduction



Week 3 Date _____

| ACTIVITY | DESCRIPTION | RUN BY | TIME* |
|--|---|--------|-----------|
| Preopening 15 minutes before meeting | Have scripts from familiar TV shows or movies on hand for Scouts to examine as they arrive. (A quick internet search will turn up hundreds of examples.) | | 6:45 p.m. |
| Opening Ceremony 10 minutes | Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection | | 7 p.m. |
| Group Instruction 10 minutes | Discuss the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basics of script writing—visual storytelling, characters, dialogue, rhythm, and camera angles • Preproduction—Finding locations, costumes/props, casting, and rehearsal | | 7:10 p.m. |
| Skills Instruction 40 minutes | Write a script for a 60-second video. | | 7:20 p.m. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a script for a two-minute video. • Plan props and costumes for videos. • Cast and rehearse the script. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a script for a five-minute video. • Plan props, costumes, and locations for videos. • Cast and rehearse the script. | | |
| Breakout Groups 15 minutes | Continue preparing for participation in the main event. | | 8 p.m. |
| Activity 10 minutes | Play Script Reading (described earlier). | | 8:15 p.m. |
| Closing 5 minutes | Announcements Leader's minute Closing | | 8:25 p.m. |
| Total 90 minutes of meeting | | | |
| After the Meeting 15 minutes | Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event. | | |

*All times are suggested.






MULTIMEDIA

Meeting Plan: Production and Editing



Week 4 Date _____

| ACTIVITY | DESCRIPTION | RUN BY | TIME* |
|--|---|--------|-----------|
| Preopening 15 minutes before meeting | Show an age-appropriate film from the iPhone Film Festival website (https://iphoneff.com/) or a similar website that features short smartphone videos. | | 6:45 p.m. |
| Opening Ceremony 10 minutes | Flag presentation Oath and Law | | 7 p.m. |
| Group Instruction 15 minutes | Discuss the filming process and how it relates to the editing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and why scenes are not shot in order • Importance of the 180-degree rule, camera movement, and framing and composition of camera shots • Why editing requires the best takes | | 7:10 p.m. |
| Skills Instruction 35 minutes |  Edit a short video using YouTube. | | 7:25 p.m. |
| |  Edit a short video using iMovie. | | |
| |  Edit a short video using Final Cut or Premiere Pro. | | |
| Breakout Groups 15 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete advancement work as needed. • Finalize plans for participation in the main event. | | 8 p.m. |
| Game 10 minutes | Play Human Editing Machine (described earlier). | | 8:15 p.m. |
| Closing 5 minutes | Announcements Leader's minute Closing | | 8:25 p.m. |
| Total 90 minutes of meeting | | | |
| After the Meeting 15 minutes | Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event. | | |

*All times are suggested.



MULTIMEDIA

Main Event: Short Film – Level 1



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Day

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

Essential (Tier I)

Make a five-minute video highlighting the unit. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend a day at a filming location recording the scenes, then edit the video together. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page. Make sure leader approval is given before posting.

Equipment List

- Camera
- Tripod (optional)
- Lighting (reflector or lights)
- Script
- Props (optional)
- Costumes (optional)

Activity

- Set up equipment at the shooting location (house, park, lake, etc.).
- Prep actors and rehearse scenes.
- Film each scene of the video, shooting multiple takes.
- Edit footage (can be done after the filming at a different place).
- Set a date to premiere the video for friends and family.
- Hold the premiere.
- Upload the video to the unit's Facebook page (or other website). Make sure leader approval is given before posting.

Safety

- Be careful with cameras and other filming equipment.
- Be sure appropriate safety guidelines are followed for the filming area.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes

Try this low-cost way to achieve the same effect as a reflector: Shine two flashlights onto a large white poster board. The white board will reflect the light and you can shine it on the actors.



MULTIMEDIA

Main Event: Short Film—Level 2



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Day, possibly multiple days

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

Challenging (Tier II)

Script and then shoot a 10- to 15-minute video. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend a day or two at the filming location recording the scenes, then edit the video together. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page. Make sure leader approval is given before posting.

Equipment List

- Camera
- Tripod
- Lighting (reflector or lights)
- Script
- Props (optional)
- Costumes (optional)

Activity

- Set up the equipment at shooting location (house, park, lake, etc.).
- Prep actors and rehearse scenes.
- Film each scene of your video, shooting multiple takes.
- Edit footage (can be done after the filming at a different place).
- Set a date to premiere your video for friends and family.
- Hold the premiere.
- Upload the video to the unit's Facebook page (or other website). Make sure leader approval is given before posting.

Safety

- Be careful with cameras and other filming equipment.
- Be sure appropriate safety guidelines are followed for the filming area.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes

What separates a “challenging” project from an “essential” one is the complexity of the script and number of additional scenes.

Try this low-cost way to achieve the same effect as a reflector: Shine two flashlights onto a large white poster board. The white board will reflect the light and you can shine it on the actors.



MULTIMEDIA

Main Event: Short Film—Level 3



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Day or multiple days

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____



Advanced (Tier III)

Script and then shoot a 30-minute video. Be sure each member has a role in the video and also works behind the scenes. Spend several days at different filming locations shooting the scenes. Spend a day editing the footage together into a completed video. Create a webpage to promote the video. Hold a premiere of the video, and post it to the unit's Facebook page. Make sure leader approval is given before posting.

Equipment List

- Camera
- Tripod
- Lighting (reflector or lights)
- Script
- Props (optional)
- Costumes (optional)

Activity

- Set up the equipment at shooting location (house, park, lake, etc.).
- Prep actors and rehearse scenes.
- Film each scene of the video, shooting multiple takes.
- Edit footage (can be done after the filming at a different place).
- Set a date to premiere the video for friends and family.
- Hold the premiere.
- Upload the video to the unit's Facebook page (or other website).

Safety

- Be careful with for cameras and other filming equipment.
- Be sure appropriate safety guidelines are followed for the filming area.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes

Try this low-cost way to achieve the same effect as a reflector: Shine two flashlights onto a large white poster board. The white board will reflect the light and you can shine it on the actors.



RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Books

Animation, Communication, Digital Technology, Moviemaking, Photography, and Theater merit badge pamphlets

Andersson, Barry, and Janie L. Geyen. *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques*. Sybex, 2012.

Box, Harry. *Set Lighting Technician's Handbook: Film Lighting Equipment, Practice, and Electrical Distribution*, 4th ed. Focal Press, 2010.

Brown, Blain. *Motion Picture and Video Lighting*, 2nd ed. Focal Press, 2007.

Kenworthy, Christopher. *Master Shots: 100 Advanced Camera Techniques to Get an Expensive Look on Your Low-Budget Movie*, 2nd rev. ed. Michael Wiese Productions, 2012.

Zettl, Herbert. *Video Basics*. Cengage Learning, 2012.

Websites

BSA Social Media Guidelines

Website: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/social-media/social-media-guidelines/>

Educational TV Productions

Website: <http://home.utah.edu/~u0288525/videosite/index.html>

Screenwriting.info

Website: www.screenwriting.info

Welcome to Film Script Writing

Website: www.filmscriptwriting.com

Related Program Features

Communication, Music

Photo and Illustration Credits

Pages 40-1 (*tripod*, BSA file; *Scout with tablet*, BSA/Randy Piland; Shutterstock.com: *smartphone*, ©NaMaKuKi; *phone scenery*, ©Rudy Umans; *microphone*, ©kak2s; *light*, ©GalapagosPhoto), 40-2 (Shutterstock.com/©Tatiana Popova), 40-3 (©Nate Luke Photography), 40-4 (Shutterstock.com/©Dean Drobot), and 40-5 (Shutterstock.com: *camera*, ©SmileStudio; *screen*, ©SmileStudio; *movie script*, ©Constantine Pankin; *clapper board*, ©phoelix)

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Kendra Virgin, Vancouver, Washington, for creating the Multimedia program feature.