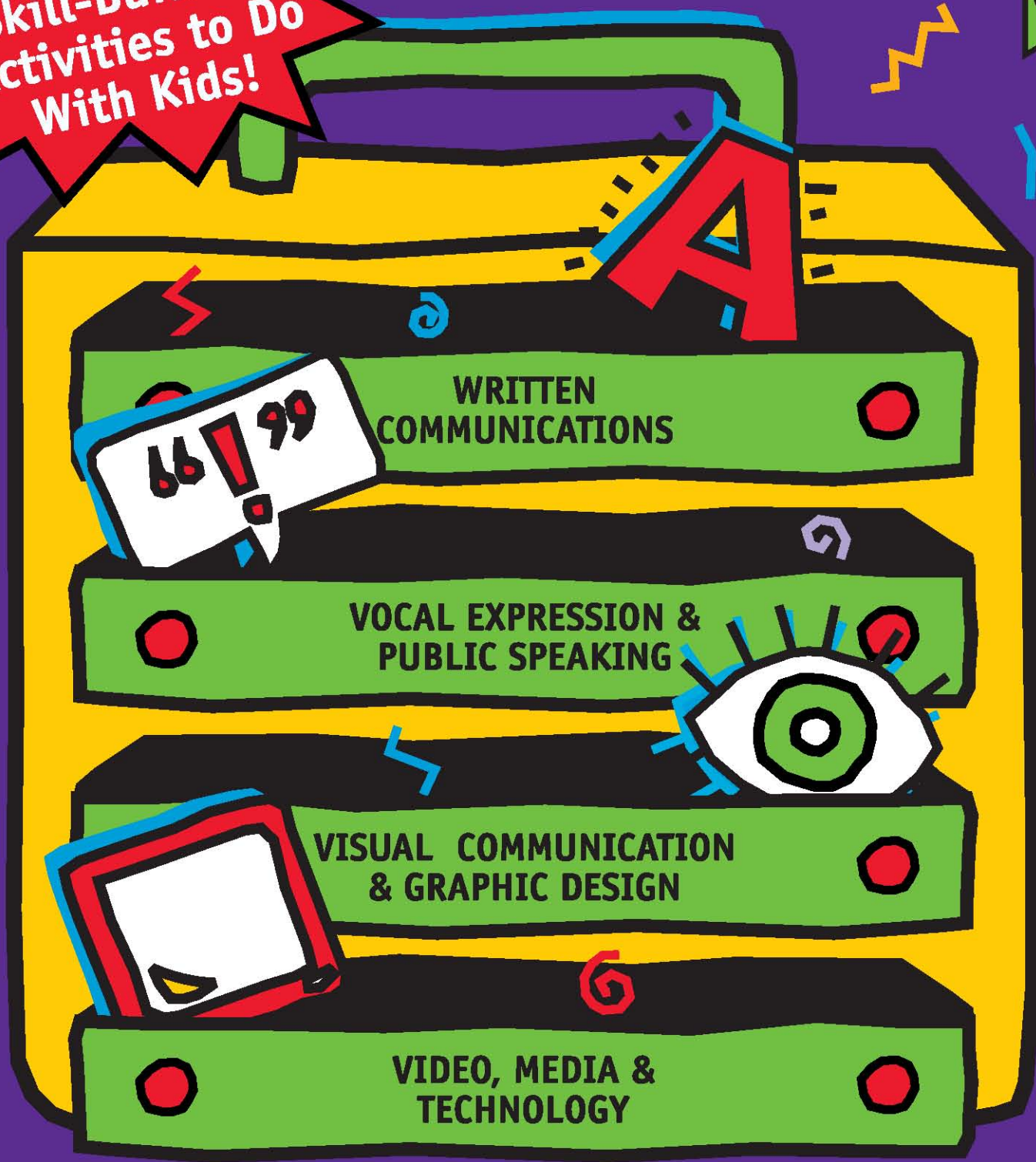




Communications Toolkit

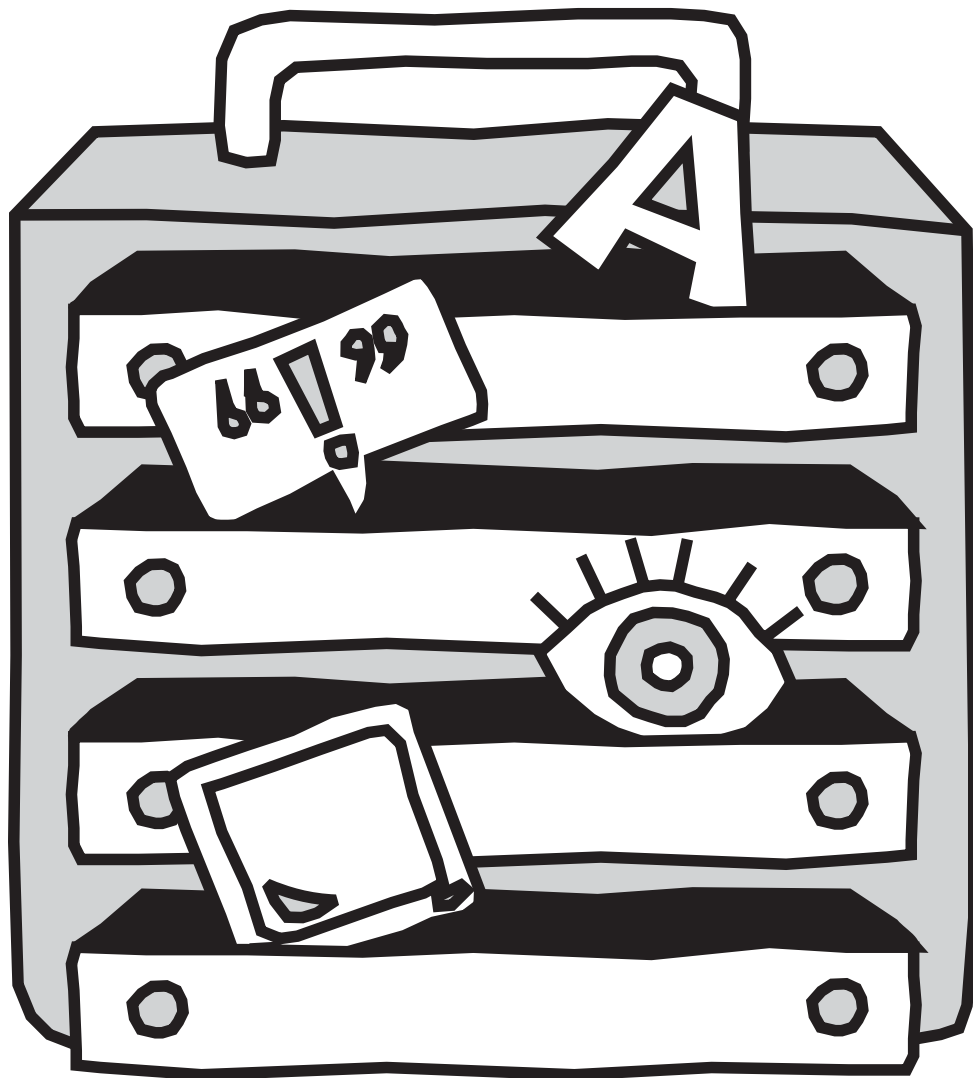
**Fun,
Skill-Building
Activities to Do
With Kids!**



**4-H Youth Development
Children, Youth & Family Programs**

Communications Toolkit

Fun Skill-Building Activities to Do With Kids



A 4-H Youth Development Book
Children, Youth & Family Programs
Michigan State University Extension
East Lansing, Michigan, USA



**Special thanks to the
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Development staff
members, volunteers,
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people who helped
guide the development
of this resource.**



A 4-H Youth Development Book

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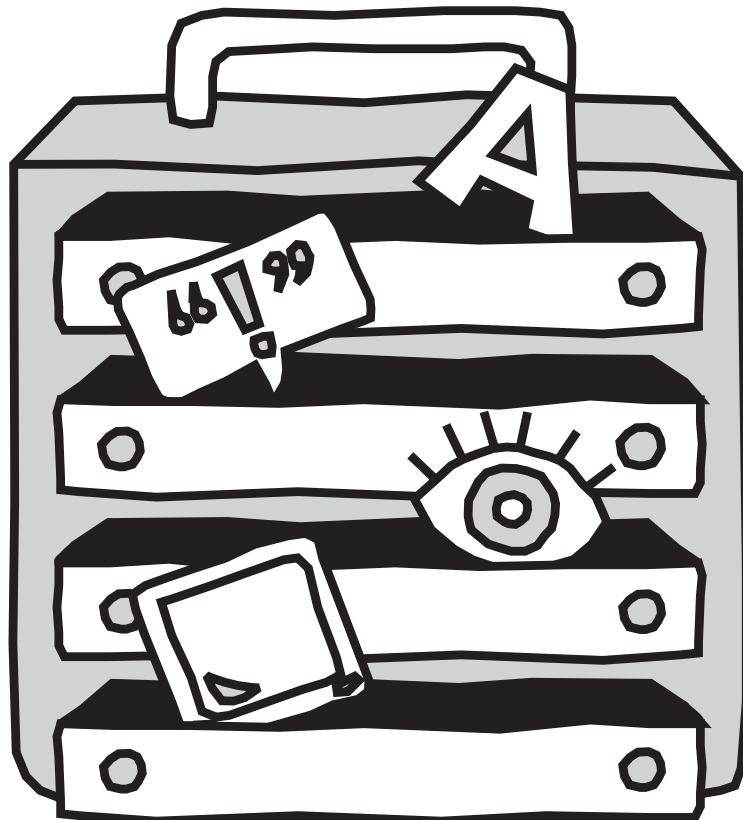
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About This Toolkit

Introduction & General Information

Welcome to the **Communications Toolkit: Fun Skill-Building Activities to Do With Kids!** This resource was developed for people who work with young people aged 12 and up, although many of the activities can be adapted easily for use with younger children. In the toolkit you'll find information, activities and resources that will help kids build on their skills in vocal expression and public speaking, video, media relations, graphic design and writing.



Why Communications?

Helping kids build communication skills is often mentioned as one of the most important areas of youth development. The ways we communicate – as young people and as adults – cut across all that we do in life. Our interpersonal skills and how we express ourselves in written and spoken form have significant effects on our professional and personal endeavors throughout our lives. As we enter the 21st century, the need is greater than ever for young people to sharpen their skills in reading, writing, speaking and presenting information.

What's in This Toolkit & How You Can Use It

The *Communications Toolkit* is designed to be flexible and easy to use. It has five sections:

1. About This Toolkit
2. Written Communications
3. Vocal Expression and Public Speaking
4. Visual Communication and Graphic Design
5. Video, Media and Technology

Within each communication area you will find subsections:

- **What Leaders Need to Know**—Including an introduction, life skills that can be learned, a glossary of terms and other general information.

- **Skill Sheets** – Information on important skills that are needed for that communication area. Skill sheets are for you, the facilitator, and may be copied for young people, when appropriate.

- **Icebreakers, Activities and Projects** – Purposeful activities that help kids work in teams or on their own to build communication skills. Each activity lists information about the focus, purpose, materials, time, setting, procedure and tips for “talking it over” with participants.

- **Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas and Resources** – Project ideas, books, resources and ideas on how to use the community as a classroom.

Most of the materials in this toolkit are written for *you*, the adult or teen facilitator who is working with kids aged 12 to 19. Some sections include copy-ready handouts for participants.

What Leaders Need to Know Self-Assessment & Evaluation

Many of the activities in the *Communications Toolkit* provide young people the opportunity for self-expression and creativity, which, for some kids, can be a bit scary. Consequently, the philosophy of this resource book is one of positive learning and growth. Your goal should be to create a safe, caring, positive learning environment in which young people can build on their communication skills.

Experienced communicators know that the best way to improve one's skills is through lots of practice. The best thing you can do as a leader is to provide varied opportunities for young people to practice and reflect on their skills in writing, speaking, graphics and video. The worst thing you can do is to allow negative, unhelpful criticism by other young people or adults, which can squelch interest in learning more about a topic. The experiences in this toolkit emphasize self-reflection and discussion to help young people think about how they feel about their own learning process and the areas they would like to learn more about. Some sections include information for you to use or adapt that can help you and others provide positive, helpful, constructive feedback for the young people with whom you work.

Later in this "About the Toolkit" section, you'll find a worksheet called "What I Learned." This form is for you to copy and distribute to the young people involved in activities or projects found in this toolkit. The self-assessment tool gives kids the chance to think about:

- What they've learned.
- How they feel about themselves related to the skill they've learned.
- Communication areas they'd like to learn more about.

Let kids reflect to themselves as they write their answers on this sheet, which is "for their eyes only." After they've filled it out, you can encourage small group discussion about what they learned or let those who are comfortable doing so share their responses with the whole group.

Communication Project Evaluation Guide

If you're working with young people in situations where you want to provide evaluative feedback on their communication projects, please consider using the following kinds of questions. For each of the questions, remember to provide the young people with information about what works well and constructive feedback about what they may want to try differently next time.

- Does it appear that the project is well thought-out?
- Is the purpose of the message clear and understandable?
- Does the message appeal to the intended audience?
- Does the method and format work with the message and intended audience?

Make the Toolkit Work for You!

Communications skill development can be woven into just about everything we do with young people.

Explore what your group is interested in and choose activities from the appropriate sections of this toolkit. Some people may choose to blend communications into what they're already doing with kids – using a variety of activities from the toolkit to meet their needs. Others may want to make communications more of a focus and use activities and other items from several sections of the toolkit over a period of time. Don't feel that you need to read all that's here or do *everything* provided in the order in which it appears in the toolkit. Pull what you need when you need it, and adapt it to fit your group.

Think about combining activities from all the sections to create a

larger project. Your group may want to create a local media campaign, for example, that helps people understand what it's like to be a teen, think about youth violence prevention, or discover the benefits of 4-H or another youth group.

The contents of this toolkit will help your group understand the importance of planning and working together as a team as they write news articles, create posters and produce television spots. Be creative! Explore the toolkit and create a plan for using what's here in ways that meet your needs and those of the young people with whom you work.

Using the Communications Toolkit to Meet Your Needs

When you're deciding how to use the *Communications Toolkit* with your group, first think about:

- What do you or other leaders need to know to help young people learn about communications?
- What do youth participants want and need to know about communications?
- What time and resources are available?
- What's the end goal – what would you like your communication training to accomplish?

Then pick and combine the materials that best meet your group's needs.

You can tailor the information and activities provided in the *Communication Toolkit* in many ways. For example, if you want to:

- **Jumpstart your own understanding of the different areas of communications and learn ways to introduce young people to the**

Communications Toolkit activities – Review the “skill sheets” in each area, which provide basic subject matter information. Reading the “About This Toolkit” section as well as the “What Leaders Need to Know” introductory sections to each communication area will give you background for working with young people.

•**Get your youth group’s feet wet and expand their “comfort zones” in the different areas of communications** – Set up a fun, fast-paced and interactive communications “skill-a-thon” (a room set up with several learning stations that participants can rotate through) using short activities from different sections of the *Communications Toolkit*. You can structure the skill-a-thon so that participants rotate to a new activity after a set period of time. Look for icebreakers or activities that can be done in 30 minutes or less or that could be modified to fit a shorter format.

•**Use the *Communications Toolkit* “a la carte,” on an “as needed” basis** – Use the activities or skill sheets when the need arises. For instance, if your group needs to write for a newsletter or put together awards documentation, check the “Written Communications” section; prepare for public speaking at an upcoming event, check the “Vocal Expression and Public Speaking” sec-



tion; videotape a group performance or activity, check the “Video, Media and Technology” section; design graphics for a poster or display, check the “Visual Communications and Graphic Design” section.

•**Take your group on an in-depth exploration of a communications area they’re interested in** – Pick one of the communications areas and go through all of the activities. Investigate the “Try This, Too” ideas that accompany many activities. Consider the resource materials listed in the “Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas and Resources” section for that particular communication area.

•**Start with a project idea and explore the communication areas needed to carry out the project** – Develop a communications campaign around a community service topic or a public awareness message. Use relevant activities from the *Communications Toolkit*, applying the projects to fit the theme you have in mind.

The Communication Process

Whether you’re developing a speech, writing a news article, creating a poster or producing a videotape, it’s important to understand the basic communication process. Communication can be defined as “*a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or information.*” You can apply this definition to the development of oral, written, graphic and video presentations.

“*A process by which information is exchanged between individuals...*” This phrase emphasizes that you must have a message or something to share (information) for commu-

nication to take place. This is also called a goal or “**objective.**” For example, an objective for a speech could be to help young people learn the health risks of smoking cigarettes.

The definition also emphasizes that communication is a process between individuals or groups. This is called your “**audience**” – the types of people who will see or hear your message. In the example above, the audience for the antismoking message is young people. It’s very important to know as much as possible about your audience. You must narrow in on who they are, what their beliefs and attitudes are, what they may and may not know about your topic, and more.

For example, you could specifically target kids aged 11 and 12 who attend your local middle school. Knowing your audience usually requires some detective work. This could include research such as asking questions of people in your target audience and of others who are experts on that particular group but who may not be members of the group themselves.

“*...through a common system of symbols, signs or information.*”

This part of the definition of communication stresses the importance of the **method**, or format, you choose to share your message. Keep in mind that communication is a two-way process between people and groups.

When you carefully consider the audience you’re trying to reach, you can craft your message in a way that will be meaningful to that group. Would a flier or a video work best? Can you reach your group by making a powerful speech at a school assembly or service club meeting?

Keeping your intended audience in mind, you must carefully consider

and choose the following elements when crafting your message:

- Language and words (style, slang, educational level)
- Type and number of graphic symbols
- Style
- Rhythm of your message

For example, if you want to reach preteens with an anti-smoking message, a short presentation by a peer about how “uncool” it is to stink like stale smoke and how smoking slows you down on the basketball court may make sense. Perhaps a rap song with this message would capture the attention of your 11- and 12-year-olds. Would a rap work best as a live performance or as a video? Could you do both? If you’re preparing an antismoking message for adults, would a rap song – whether performed live or on video – work? Probably not.

With any communication project, it’s important to:

1. Clearly define your message. (Try to keep it to one key idea.)
2. Carefully identify your target audience. (Be very specific.)
3. Select the methods, approaches and formats that will work best for that group. (What mix of oral, written, video, graphic, computer or other methods will best reach your audience?)
4. Find out how you did. (Ask members of your target audience, through interviews or surveys, whether they think your communication efforts worked!)

How to Brainstorm

Many activities in the *Communications Toolkit* recommend that you help kids brainstorm ideas before

they begin an activity or project. Brainstorming encourages everyone in a group to share ideas and explore as many approaches to a problem or project as possible. It’s kind of a creative thinking free-for-all!

Many ideas that seem impractical at first may evolve into very useful and wonderful solutions. Business people, scientists, educators and others in the work world use brainstorming all the time to create innovative, problem-solving approaches.

Here’s a quick lesson on how to brainstorm.

1. Have large sheets of paper (such as newsprint) and markers available to write down everyone’s ideas.
2. Explain to the young people that everyone’s thoughts and ideas are valid (even if they sound far-fetched or seem a little weird.) Brainstorming is not a time for evaluating or judging ideas. The goal is to get lots of ideas on the table. Put-downs are not acceptable.
3. Give everyone who wants to share the opportunity to do so. Don’t let one or two kids dominate the group.
4. After the group members have shared all the ideas they can think of, begin a fair and democratic process of discussing which idea (or combination of ideas) the group thinks will work best for the particular situation.

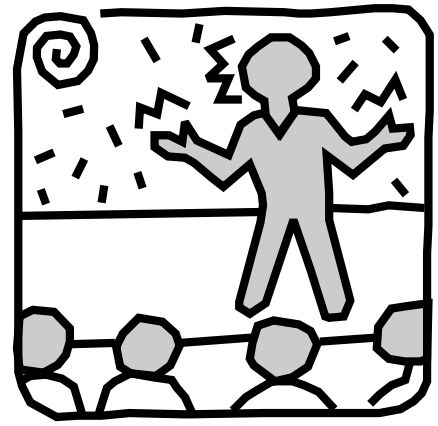
Encourage the kids to follow these rules while brainstorming:

Rule 1: Do not judge ideas!

Rule 2: It’s okay to be far-out.

Rule 3: Think of as many ideas as you can.

Rule 4: Piggyback on someone else’s ideas.



You may want to write these rules on a sheet of newsprint and display the sheet where all the kids can see it.

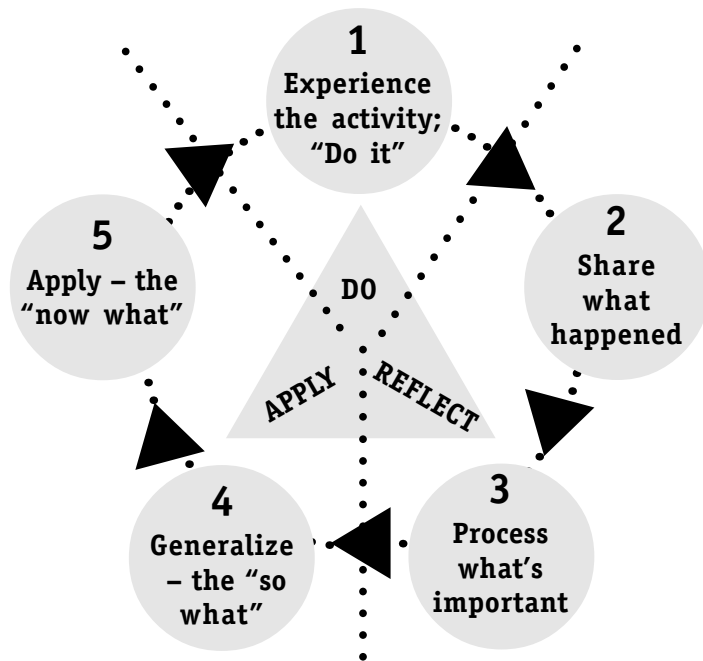
Help Kids “Learn By Doing”: The Experiential Learning Model

Decades of research have provided evidence that the experiential learning model is a very effective method for helping children learn. And it’s really not complicated at all! The experiential learning model is based on the work of John Dewey and emphasizes the importance of building in opportunities for kids to Do – Reflect – Apply.

•“Do” refers to hands-on learning, including activities and projects that get young people actively involved with the subject matter. In this toolkit you will find activities that actively engage teens in the process of learning and skill-building through creating posters, speeches, videos and other projects.

•“Reflect” refers to taking time after the activity or project is completed to think about and share what happened, the importance of what was learned, and the feelings young people have about what they learned. Each activity in this toolkit includes a “Talking It Over” section that helps the leader guide this thinking and sharing process.

Help Kids “Learn By Doing”: The Experiential Learning Model



• “Apply” refers to taking the activity to another level by thinking and talking about how the information learned through the activity can be applied to “real life” situations and other learning opportunities. Throughout this toolkit you will find references to real career opportunities in the area of communications. The “Beyond the Toolkit” sections will help you guide young people in applying what they’ve learned to new and future learning opportunities. Activities also include sections called “Try This, Too” and “Where to Go From Here” to guide you in helping kids apply what they’re learning to new situations.

The Importance of Bias-Free Communication

As you help young people develop or strengthen their communication skills, one very important area to consider is the use of language and images. Words and pictures have power – more power than we may realize. They can include or exclude,

stereotype or provide accurate information about people. Words and images can encourage or discourage, diminish and degrade. When messages around us every day in books, radio, television or newspapers contain information that reflects sexism, racism, adultism and other biases, the impact on readers, viewers and learners is profound. There are critically important connections between our thoughts, words and actions, and the language we use reflects and helps shape society. Here are a few things to consider about helping young people develop bias-free communication habits:

• Biased words and phrases make unfair assumptions about some groups, label people in ways that they do not choose for themselves, use maleness as the norm, and treat femaleness as the exception. An example of the latter is the use of “he, him, mankind” and other so-called universal terms that are clearly gender-biased. Another example is the use of suffixes such as *-ess*, *-ette* and *trix* in words like “poetess,” which means a female poet, while

the word “poet” means a person who writes poetry. “Poet” is considered the norm, and “poetess” a deviant from the norm. See the problem? A poet is defined as “one who writes poetry” while a poetess is defined as “a female poet.” Such wording implies that men are “the real thing” and women are “*not quite* the real thing.” Some other phrases, such as “man and wife,” imply inequities. In this phrase, women are referred to unfairly because the woman is identified only in terms of her relationship to the man. The fair and appropriate phrase to use is either “husband and wife” or “man and woman.”

• Remember that when referring to a person who has a physical difference or health challenge, always “put the person first.” For example, don’t label someone “handicapped” or “disabled,” refer to him or her as “a person with a disability” or “a person who is physically challenged.” A person is not an “AIDS victim” but rather “a person who has AIDS.”

• Keep in mind that the only thing constant about language is that it is constantly changing. Just when you thought you knew the preferred way to refer to a particular group of people, for example, more options emerge that some would prefer. It’s important to monitor the changes and nuances of words and language in order to be as respectful as possible. When you’re confused about how to refer to someone, the best approach is to *ask* the person (for example, “Do you prefer Ms. or Mrs.?” or “Do you prefer Black or African American?”).

• Just as thoughtful writers give careful attention to spelling, grammar and sentence structure, so must we give careful consideration and effort to searching for unbiased words. This applies to choosing words for oral communication as

well. A book called *The Bias-Free Word Finder: A Dictionary of Nondiscriminatory Language*, by Rosalie Maggio (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press Books, 1991), is an excellent resource for understanding the reasons why creating bias-free communication is so important. It also provides an extensive dictionary of nondiscriminatory language.

- When creating or choosing images and pictures, be careful to be inclusive. Images that are inclusive convey the message that “all are welcome here” and this information is open and available to all. For example, if teens are developing a videotape that documents “life in our community,” the people videotaped ought to reflect different kinds of people who do, in fact, live in the community. Think about including a variety of people who reflect diversity of ages, race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class, disability and so on. And be careful not to stereotype people. Don’t portray certain groups in ways that tend to be inaccurate stereotypes and over-generalizations of that group.

About Kids in This Age Range

The *Communications Toolkit* will help you create learning opportunities for young people 12 and up. (Some activities may be adapted for younger children.) When working with teens, it’s important to keep in mind the stage of development they are in. Here are some important factors to consider:

Younger Teens (Aged 12 to 15)

- Young people in this age range are moving from concrete thinking to-

ward the ability to think abstractly. They enjoy playing with ideas, and you can provide opportunities for them to explore new areas of interest. Issues of values, justice and equality may become very important to them. Caring adults can provide positive opportunities for discussion, self-reflection and growth.

- Social acceptance and peer groups become increasingly important to kids this age. Clubs, classrooms and youth groups should be supportive, caring environments in which young people feel connected and accepted by adults and peers. Adults can set the tone for a group by expecting respectful behavior and modeling it themselves in their interactions with young people and other adults. Young people this age can and should be actively involved in selecting the direction of their learning activities. Adults show respectful behavior toward teens when they ask for and value their ideas and opinions.

- The early teen years can be an emotional roller coaster for many young people. Fast-changing bodies and hormones can cause mood swings and behaviors that look adult-like one minute and child-like the next. For some teens, this can be a time of challenge to their self-concept. You can help teens through this potential time of turmoil by being accepting and caring. Help younger teens reflect on what they’re good at and identify their personal strengths.

Older Teens (Aged 16 to 18)

- Teens in this age range are beginning to master abstract thinking and are likely to be focused on and concerned about their futures. Career

exploration and preparation become increasingly important. Adults can help teens “try on” different skills and careers, and the *Communications Toolkit* provides many activities and project ideas to get them started.

- Older teens often have an intense need to “belong” to groups outside the family. They see themselves as quite capable of choosing their own activities and projects and much prefer to do so. The role of an adult shifts away from “leader/teacher” to “advisor/confidant.” Adults can “open the door” to new experiences and explorations that older teens crave.

- Older teens have the capacity to understand the needs and feelings of others even though they may not consistently portray this empathy. Opportunities for community service give them the chance to deepen their understanding and strengthen their relationships to others in the community. One way to explore community service is to have older teens help teach middle school-aged young people communication skills using the activities in the *Communications Toolkit*.





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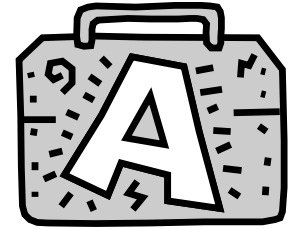
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What Leaders Need to Know



Introduction

Whether your group writes song lyrics, “how-to” instructions, term papers or newsletter articles, the ability to write allows them to entertain, teach, inform or enlighten others.

Writing is a nearly universal way of communicating feelings, knowledge, ideas and intuition across generations and even across cultures.

This section of the *Communications Toolkit* is designed to help young people practice writing in many ways. Through the resources in this section, you can:

- Explore ways to help kids become more comfortable with written communications.
- Use written communications skill sheets to find out how to use written communication in your youth group.
- Explore creative and practical uses of written communications.
- Explore careers that require written communication.
- Discover activities that help kids explore the writing process.
- Find out ways to learn more.

Definition of Writing & the Writing Process

In this section of the *Communications Toolkit*, we have defined “writing” as “using language to compose

a set of ideas or concepts for purposes of communication.” Language, in this instance, can be words, musical notes or any understandable and appropriate character used to communicate a concept.

Although “The Writing Process” skill sheet on page 17 has numbered steps, writing as a process doesn’t always flow into any particular pattern or line. Each step can lead to any other step that’s part of the process. For instance, once you draft your work, you may discover that a different format would work better, or that you need more information. Although all the steps are integral to the process, each writer is responsible for deciding the order in which he or she will use the steps to create a written work.

Again, whether it’s a poem, a song, a term paper, a news story, a short story or even directions for completing a task, writers must incorporate each of these steps to effectively express themselves in writing.

Helping Kids Become More Comfortable Writers

Reading to Write

How do you motivate kids to comfortably take pen in hand? One easy way is to encourage them to read – or to read to them – written works of all sorts. These could include comic books, short stories, newspapers, novels, magazines, CD liner notes, poetry and sheet music. When kids can appreciate the sound, the motion, the

rhythm of words that are spoken, it gives them an excellent idea of what their own written words can do for an audience. Consider these ideas for helping kids learn to appreciate good writing:

- Read out loud to the group from a variety of works. For instance, read a short story out loud and have the members critique it for interest, entertainment value and writing style. Ask them whether the information would have worked better in a different format. Were there passages that were boring or hard to understand? Ask them to improve the text, change the ending or reformat the information into a better presentation.
- Have the kids turn a front-page newspaper article into a two-minute television news story or a newspaper display ad into a 30-second radio spot.
- Ask the young people to put the words of a poem to music. Read the poem out loud, then have the kids adapt the words to familiar musical tunes. Tell them it’s okay to change the words to fit the music better.
- Ask for a volunteer to read a short story out loud to the group. Then have the volunteer read it again, changing the story’s ending. (Short, fictional stories that can be read in 15 minutes or less work best. Your local librarian can help you identify books that would work well.)
- As kids show an interest in different forms of writing, encourage them to learn more about that form by reading other people’s work.

Have them study how a piece is organized, how long it is (and whether that length was appropriate) and what the author emphasized in it. Have the group experiment with writing the piece from their own point of view or experiences. If the piece is about a subject they know something about, ask them if the piece contained new or unfamiliar words. If there were, have the kids think of simpler or easier ways to express the same thought or information.

- Have your group members expand on the typical book report by reading a newspaper story, a written piece on a subject they're interested in, a poem, short story, novel or children's book. Then have them write the answers to several questions about what they read:

- How did the story make you feel?
- What did the story explain or talk about?
- Was the work a fair treatment of the subject matter?
- What information was important for you to know that was left out of the story?

Understanding the Meaning of Words

When kids look at words as fun puzzles to explore and solve, instead of as stumbling blocks to understanding, their comfort with reading and writing increases.

Strategies for increasing kids' comfort with words include:

- Have kids read a newspaper, short story, speech or any written communication. Ask them to jot down words that are new to them, that they don't understand or that they like and would like to learn more about. Then have the kids look up the words in a dictionary to discover their meaning or in a thesaurus to

discover a simpler word the author could have used to increase the reader's understanding.

- Have the group work together to choose a word of the month. Write the word on a sheet of newsprint and post it somewhere in your meeting room that is visible to everyone. Challenge kids to use the word as often and as creatively as they possibly can in their written work for the group that month. Make a chart to track the members' use of the word. Place a star by each person's name each time he or she successfully uses the word. At the end of the month, reward the person who was able to incorporate the "word of the month" into the most writing exercises or group writing experiences.

- Develop a list of words that may be unfamiliar to the group. Ask them to guess the complicated words' definitions by breaking them apart. For example, by breaking "malodorous" into its smaller root words, ("mal" or "bad" and "odorous" or "having an odor") they can learn that the word means bad odor or bad smelling. This exercise can help kids learn not to be intimidated by large words.

Life Skills

The ability to write well is itself an important and marketable life skill. The writing activities and skill sheets in this section will help develop young people's ability to:

- Communicate and express themselves effectively.
- Judge the value of information for a given purpose (for example, evaluating information for news writing).
- Ask questions to gain more information.

- Organize and plan for a final product.

- Work as a team member (for example, creating a newsletter with others).

- Build personal awareness and self-esteem by understanding their abilities and having an opportunity to experience success.

- Manage feelings (for example, using writing as an expression of feelings).

So, you may be asking, how do you get kids to write? Well, there's only one way – encourage them to write, write and write some more! The best way to develop writing skills is just to do it. Use any and all opportunities to encourage kids to practice writing.

Also, allow kids to write simply to express themselves. Kids (and adults) can be intimidated and avoid writing altogether if they're afraid it won't be "perfect." Tell kids to forget about spelling and grammatical details at first. Those things can certainly be addressed some other time if the work is intended for publication.

This section of the *Communications Toolkit* offers a variety of activities and suggestions to help you help kids write! It also offers resources to help you and your kids better understand the concepts and tools of written expression and communication. Included are definitions of different forms of written expression, a list of writing resources and ways to extend learning experiences "beyond the toolkit."

Self-Assessment & Evaluation

After each activity or project you lead with young people, please help them think about what they learned. Make copies of the "What

I Learned” self-evaluation form on page 8 and distribute them to your group. Ask them to think quietly about the questions and make notes about what they learned, how they

feel about their skills in that area and what they’d like to learn more about. Then lead a discussion with the whole group and ask if anyone wants to share what they came up

with. Young people may want to keep their “What I Learned” self-evaluation forms to refer to later and as a way to document their learning process.

Glossary

Personal Expression

Book – A set of written, printed or blank sheets bound together into a volume

Creative writing – Stories, poems, songs, plays or lyrics (see the “Creative Writing” skill sheet on pg. 19)

Journal – A record of experiences, ideas or reflections kept regularly for private use

Mission statement – A statement that defines or outlines a calling, vocation or specific task with which a person or group is charged

Public Information

Fact sheet – A printed sheet that presents information that is true or has objective reality

News release – A compilation of material that is newsworthy and appropriate for distribution in a newspaper, news periodical or newscast

Newsletter – A printed sheet, pamphlet or small newspaper containing news or information of interest chiefly to a special group

Public service announcement – A promotional message broadcast in the public interest on television and radio stations at no cost to the provider

Speech – Communication or expression of thoughts in spoken words; a public discourse or address

Video scripts – Written text used in production or performance of a videotape

Promotion

Advertisement (Ad) – An act or process (that is, broadcast) or notice used to make something known, announce publicly or call public attention to

Brochure – A pamphlet or booklet containing descriptive or advertising material

Flier – A form of advertisement distributed by hand to, or picked up by, a particular audience

Jingle – A short verse or song marked by catchy repetition

Poster – A bill or placard for posting in a public place

Other

Case statement – A written statement describing a situation requiring action; usually used for campaigns to raise financial or emotional support for a project

Communication outline – A plan or preliminary account of how you plan to communicate; can help writers organize their thoughts to write for any media

Copy – Manuscript or text material

Essay – An analytic or interpretative literary composition usually dealing with a subject from a limited or personal point of view

Grant proposal – A written request for financial support that outlines an action plan, budget, and rationale and support for why the money is needed

Project proposals – A written synopsis of a proposed activity that includes goals, intended outcomes and a plan of action

School reports – Written reports designed to explain, educate about or describe a subject or topic, usually for academic credit or a grade





Careers

Most jobs require some writing skills, but a few jobs require (or allow, depending on your point of view) higher-level, full-time writing skills. As the group considers the following list of career options, ask the participants what form of written communication a person in each field would use. (You can use the glossary on pg. 11 as a resource.)

- Advertising, marketing or public relations professional
- Author
- Clergy member
- Curriculum developer or specialist
- Editor
- Fund-raiser
- Journalist
- Label/package writer
- Legislative aide
- Novelist
- Playwright
- Poet
- Professor
- Script writer for film, television, radio
- Songwriter
- Speech writer
- Technical writer

Notable Writers

Having excellent writing skills has enabled many historical and notable personalities to make important contributions to our lives and to society.

Louisa May Alcott – Her classic works have become standard classroom literature for many young students. In 1994, her most famous work, *Little Women*, again was made into a major motion picture, a mere 126 years after the book was first published!

Maya Angelou – The actress, poet and novelist earned national attention in 1993 when she read her poem, “The Pulse of the Morning,” at President Clinton’s inauguration.

Judy Blume – Adolescents around the world have enjoyed and learned from the entertaining books about growing up written by this author.

Hillary Rodham Clinton – The First Lady of the Clinton Administration, who is also a lawyer, has written landmark briefs during her legal career. And her book, *It Takes a Village to Raise a Child*, written during her husband’s first term in the White House, has been a rallying cry for people working on behalf of children, youth and families.

Charles Dickens – The words of this classical writer have made him immortal.

Martin Luther King Jr. – Dr. King was a wonderful writer who used language to create memorable and history-making speeches. His words helped convince people of the merits of racial equality and world peace.

Charles Schultz – The creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip happens to be an excellent illustrator, too! He’s a great example of a writer who uses another medium to communicate his ideas.

Dr. Seuss – This genius of rhyme and imagination taught kids and adults alike how much fun words and writing can be!

Will Smith – “The Fresh Prince” is expert at using verse to communicate contemporary ideas in a language and style that kids can understand.

Ways to Involve Parents in the Writing Process & Practice

The very best way for young people to become better writers is for them to write as often as they can. Enlist the help of parents in your efforts to encourage writing in the following ways:

- Encourage parents to write letters to their kids and have the kids write them back. If parents have electronic mail (email) addresses, have them share the address with their kids and encourage them to exchange messages or short letters. Even without email, parents can use a similar technique by stamping and addressing 12 envelopes to their work addresses. Once a month, parents can encourage their children to send a letter that captures their thoughts and what’s going on that month. Parents can write back through the mail.
- Poll parents to see if there are writers in the group. If there are, invite them to be a part of a session that focuses on the kind of writing they do professionally or personally.
- Ask parents to encourage journal writing at home. Have them help their kids keep holiday or vacation journals.
- Plan a parent’s night where kids can formally present and showcase their written works for their parents.
- Have parents become partners with their children in creating stories about the family history.

Other ideas for parent involvement might become apparent in the process of helping kids develop their writing skills. You also could ask the kids to talk about ways they would like to work with their parents on their writing skills and help encourage that involvement in your interactions with parents.

Using Written Communication in Your Youth Group Creative Writing as a Group Project

One great way for young people to explore creative writing is to do so with friends or other young people who share the same interests. Kids can learn about themselves and each other through the opportunities for personal expression that creative writing provides. Activities include writing poetry, short stories and novels, songs and plays.

Consider having your creative writing group try one or more of the activity ideas that follow.

Explore writing forms – Each month choose a form of creative writing your group would like to explore. Spend the first part of your time together reading or reviewing an acknowledged quality work in that form. For example, for a close look at poetry, the group could read works by one of our nation’s poet laureates such as Robert Frost or Maya Angelou. To study song lyrics, check out works by artists on the top ten lists published by outlets such as *Billboard* magazine. (Song lyrics are often printed on album jackets or CD liner notes.) Your local library or bookstore can help you find examples of popular kids books or books that kids have been assigned to read in school.

Then offer kids a way to express themselves and their thoughts or ideas through that same medium. Some forms (books) may take longer to explore than just one meeting. By the end of the project year (or by county fair time), they could have several works completed for exhibit or recognition.

Publish a creative writing newsletter or magazine – Have each member submit at least one piece for each issue to share with other group members, parents, all county 4-H families or whatever audience your group has identified. If they choose to do a magazine, they could help pay for it by seeking local sponsorship from a publishing company or printer, or by selling ads.

Organize peer review sessions – Encourage the members to practice some form of creative writing between meetings. Require each writer to bring at least one completed work or work-in-progress to each meeting for review. Establish guidelines to ensure that criticism is productive and valuable to the writer, so that his or her creative energy isn’t crushed. As the peer reviewers read or listen to a work, have them think about and be ready to answer the following questions:

- What did the work make you think about while you read or listened to it?
- How did it make you feel? Did you feel anything after listening to or reading the work?
- What did you learn that you didn’t know before, either about the writer or the subject?
- What did you want to know that the writer failed to share or illuminate in the writing?
- What would have made the work more powerful for you?

Have each writer go through the same review process. Think about sharing some of your own writing, too. Ask the group to discuss the responses. This activity should be set up and run as a safe environment, one that nurtures the creative growth of the writer. Writers should be willing to listen to and learn from the peer reviewers, and to understand how their writing affects others.

Using a Group Newsletter to Explore Writing Skills

Newsletters are designed to deliver specific information to an identified audience on a regular basis. Youth groups could use newsletters to communicate important information to their members, recognize the activities or accomplishments of their members and showcase their members’ knowledge or skills (such as in creative writing).

How can your group decide whether they need to produce a newsletter? A newsletter can be a good communication tool when the information you want to communicate is:

- Intended for people with an obvious common interest.
- Confined to limited interests or deals with one subject matter (such as the operations of the local 4-H club or group).
- Relevant and useful to the readers.
- Reliable, accurate and considered trustworthy by the audience.
- Familiar and personal. That is, the publishers are people the readers know and can contact easily.
- Short and to the point. The information can be read quickly.
- Timely, referring to the recent past, present or near future.

See the “Steps to Creating a Newsletter” on pg. 22 for more information.

Writing as a Club Project

If you have a group of kids whose primary interest is in writing and communications, consider starting a writing club. Your group could serve as a resource to other clubs or groups in your community that are interested in making writing a part of their program.

Your group could be responsible for:

- **The county 4-H newsletter.** Group members could be responsible for gathering news from throughout the county, writing stories, editing submissions, and producing and distributing the newsletter. This could be a year-long responsibility or a one-time issue to note a major event or occasion.
- **Writing and illustrating greeting cards** that are unique to your group or program.
- **All promotion and publicity activities for a county 4-H program or youth organization.** The group could serve as the program’s public relations firm. They could work with the local staff to prepare and distribute news releases, brochures, advertisements, public service announcements, special histories or written pieces for special events. These writing, production and me-



dia relations opportunities can give kids portfolio pieces that could strengthen later college or job applications.

- **Creating county 4-H program exhibits or ads for your organization.** If your group members are interested in strengthening their written and visual communications skills, this could be an excellent project that benefits the county program and provides a wealth of practical experience.

Writing to Strengthen 4-H Project Knowledge

4-H offers kids many opportunities to practice their writing skills. Making writing an integral part of the 4-H project can ensure that young people:

- Develop a broad knowledge of their project area.
- Become confident of their skill in a project through their ability to write about it.
- Are able to communicate with others about the skills and talents they have learned in a project area.

You can help your kids use writing to strengthen their project knowledge or knowledge on any subject by encouraging them to write:

- Instructions on how to perform a project task.
- Descriptions of pieces they have created, whether those pieces are photographs, works of art, pieces of clothing or new or easier methods for doing a project.
- Journals in which they regularly record progress on their project or work they are doing as part of the group.
- Promotional pieces (news releases, public service announcements, ads, fliers, brochures) about fund-

raisers, about their group to recruit volunteers or members, or about an upcoming special event.

- Histories of the project or their club in their county.
- Speeches to deliver during a meeting about the project.
- Résumés featuring project or group experiences that can translate into employment options.
- Project manuals for younger kids interested in taking up a project.

Any of these activities can become a part of any project work in which 4-H’ers or other young people engage. And it gives them what they need to become good writers – practice, practice and more practice.

Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas & Resources

The Community as a Resource

Libraries

What better place to explore all kinds of writing – from journals, periodicals and legal writings to novels and nonfiction literature – than your local library?

On a visit to a local library you can have group members check out books, then read and write reviews of them.

Libraries are excellent places for writers to research possible topics, or to learn about other writers and people whose success or fame is based on their use of the written word. Libraries are also good sources of information on how other people feel about an author’s work.

Newspapers

Your local newspaper can be a place for your group to see professional reporters and writers in action or for you to find writers to speak to your group. It can also be a place for your members to test their writing skills through letters to the editor, opinion columns, or placement of news releases or other work.

Many newspapers solicit work by outside writers in an effort to include a variety of viewpoints and opinions on events and issues that affect their coverage areas. Some newspapers even dedicate a page or section each week to teen issues, featuring articles submitted by young adult writers. Look on the editorial page for guidelines on submitting letters to the editor and other types of articles, or call the newspaper's editorial offices.

Broadcast Media Outlets

Writing for radio and television differs from writing for a print medium. Air time is – literally – money, and the writing reflects that. News and opinion pieces are generally shorter and written with more of an ear for how they sound than similar pieces intended for print. Arrange a tour of a radio or television station and a talk by a staff writer to help your group learn about the unique skills required when writing for broadcast. Audio- or videotape a radio or television news broadcast and play the tape at a later meeting. Have the group time the stories and listen for differences in the writing style for news stories, advertising copy and public service announcements.

Bookstores

Schedule a group visit to a bookstore. While you're there, survey the bestseller lists to take a "snapshot"

of what the public wants to read. Ask the manager to talk to your group about what people come to the store to buy, what themes or titles are popular in literature today and what kind of how-to information is selling well in the store. Visiting a bookstore can be especially informative for someone considering becoming a professional writer.

City Magazines

Many major cities have magazines that focus primarily on local stories. If your city has a dedicated magazine, arrange for your group to interview the editors and find out what kinds of stories they're looking for. Do they accept creative works from freelance authors or writers? Do they accept contributions from young people? Do they hire paid or volunteer interns or correspondents to cover issues that affect young people in the community?

Books & Electronic Resources

Books on Developing Language Arts Skills

- A dictionary and a thesaurus. All writers need these reference tools to help them improve their writing skills
- *Language Arts Activities for Children* (3rd edition), by Donna E. Norton and Sandra Norton. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University, Merrill Press, 1994.
- *Picture This: Teaching Reading Through Visualization*, by Laura Rose. Tucson, Arizona: Zephyr Press, 1989.
- *Spuntz I: Language Arts Activities for Self-Awareness*, by Merrill Harmin, Ph.D. Tucson, Arizona: Zephyr Press, 1992.
- *Whole Language in Action! Teaching With Children's Literature*, by

Nancy Polette. O'Fallen, Missouri: Book Lures Inc., 1990.

Books on Developing Writing Skills

- *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*, edited by Norm Goldstein. New York: The Associated Press. 1996. The most widely used and taught reference book for news-style writing; useful for newsletter development, news releases and broadcast writing. It is updated periodically.

- *Plan It: Your Personal Guide to Making a Plan and Carrying It Out* (4-H 1501), Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, 1991. This worksheet helps kids construct plans by anticipating their needs and obstacles, with the ultimate goal of sharing what they learn. (Available from the Michigan State University Bulletin Office, 10B Agriculture Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039.)

- *Recipes for Writing: Motivation, Skills and Activities*, by Murray Suid and Wanda Lincoln. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1989. A comprehensive resource for exploring the writing process and a variety of writing forms. The book includes copy-ready forms and activities for helping young people write. "Recipes for Writing" can serve as a great companion to this toolkit.

- *So You've Been Elected Reporter of Your Club* (4-H 1472), Michigan 4-H Youth Programs (reprinted with permission from the Iowa State University and Illinois State University Cooperative Extension Services), 1989. This bulletin offers guidelines for promotional and news writing, with an example of a news story's development and tips for writing effective news articles. It also includes a practice worksheet. (Available from the Michigan State University Bulletin Office, 10B Agriculture Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039.)

- *Ways to Learn More Packet* (4-H 1499), Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, 1991. Expanding kids' knowledge is the goal of this folder! Kids are given information on writing in 18 areas – from business letters to pen pals, field journals to questionnaires and surveys, résumés to telephone resources – in a fun and exciting way. (Available from the Michigan State University Bulletin Office, 10B Agriculture Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039.)

- *Writing: How and Why*, by Matthew Lipman with Ann M. Sharp. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, 1980.

Electronic Resources

The following Internet or World Wide Web (WWW) resources feature opportunities for language arts and writing skill development. Keep in mind that Internet and WWW addresses tend to change fairly often. Use the general categories listed here as search terms with any of the Internet search engines: "writing," "creative writing," "news writing," "poetry," "literature," "children's literature," "authors," "novelists" or "publishers." You could also have the participants come up with their own set of search terms. (See pg. 134 for information on Internet safety.)

The Big Busy House (<http://www.harperchildrens.com/index.htm>) – This commercial site, a section of the HarperCollins Pub-

lishers site, offers information on children's literature and activities that encourage reading and language arts skill development.

The Children's Literature Web Guide (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/>) – Provides a comprehensive listing of children's literature and access to sites where kids can publish their works online.

Cyberkids (<http://www.cyberkids.com>) and **Cyberteens** (<http://www.cyberteens.com>) – Two online commercial magazines that publish original electronic stories and art created by kids and teens.

Elements of Style (<http://www.bartleby.com/141/index.html>) – Columbia University offers an online version of this invaluable writer's tool that is also published by MacMillan Publishing Company Inc., New York.

Kids Web (<http://www.kidsvista.com>) – A digital library of World Wide Web resources appropriate for kids. Each subject section, including literature, music and drama, contains a list of links to information that is understandable and interesting to school kids. It also features links to more advanced material on each subject.

MidLink Magazine (<http://longwood.cs.ucf.edu/~MidLink/>) – An electronic magazine for kids in the middle grades (generally aged 10 to 15) that provides an interactive space to enjoy art and writing.

It links middle school students all over the world.

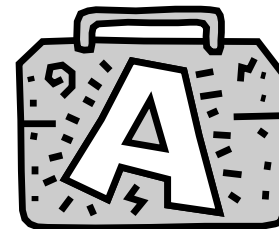
- **Schoolhouse Rock** (<http://genxtvland.simplenet.com/SchoolHouseRock/index-lo.shtml>) – An online compilation of the educational series that airs on the ABC television network between Saturday morning cartoons. The site provides a great way to help kids explore how words and music can be combined to teach complicated concepts.

- **Word Play** (<http://www.wolinskyweb.com/word.htm>) – A guide to sites that feature fun with words. The listing is an extensive, reviewed list of Web sites that explore words in their many forms. Also features word games that you can adapt and use with your group to get them feeling more comfortable with words. As with all Web sites, an adult should review the suggested sites for age and content appropriateness before sharing with kids.

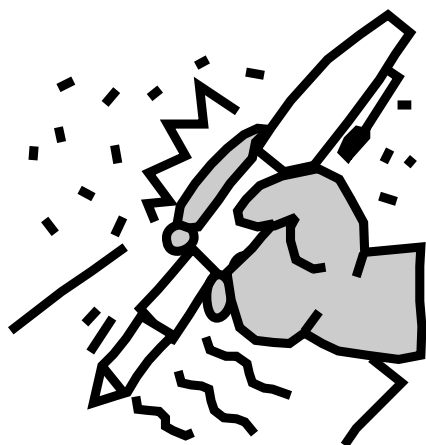


SKILL SHEET:

The Writing Process



There are seven basic steps to writing. Use this skill sheet to help you through the steps. And remember, writing as a process doesn't flow into any particular pattern or line. It doesn't matter so much how you incorporate the steps, but that your writing should include some attention to each of the steps.



Step 1: Find Ideas

Ask yourself what and who are people talking about? What's been on your mind a lot lately? What would you like to do something about? What do you find most interesting? These are the start of ideas you can write about. Now write them down and save them. When you're ready to begin your writing project, pull them out and pick out the idea that most appeals to you.

Step 2: Plan

Once you've picked out the idea that most appeals to you, decide who most needs to read or hear your idea. Who is your audience? What is the goal of your work? Do you want to entertain, inform or teach your audience? Do you want to express your opinion or describe your idea? Or do you want to change people's minds or the way they act? In planning you should:

- Define your audience.
- Decide on the purpose of your writing.
- Decide if you will give an overview or discuss a small part of your idea.
- Write your title.
- Decide on your format – will it be a song, a poem, an essay, a news article, a feature story, a poster, a videotape, a bumper sticker?
- Decide the length of your piece.

- Decide whose point of view you will write from – yours (first person – I), your audience (second person – you) or some other person's (third person – he, she or they).
- Determine your tone. Will your writings show strength, humor, fear, celebration? Will you be quiet, easy, restful or loud, boisterous, wacky? Deciding this point will help you choose the words you need to make your point.

Step 3: Research

There are many places you can go and methods you can use to research a story. First determine what you most need to know about your story idea. Then decide how you will find out what you need to know. Will you go to the library or surf the Internet? Will you interview people? Will you watch, look and listen? Once you determine what you need to know and how you can get the information, go to the source and record what's necessary to help you write your piece. Be sure to check your sources to ensure that the information is up-to-date and accurate. This might require checking more than one source for all the information you need to gather.

Step 4: Organize

Decide how you'll approach the information. You can present information in chronological order (measured by time), spatial order (from top to bottom, from end to beginning, from left to right or vice versa), rank order (best to worst,



The Writer's Toolkit

- Research notes
- Dictionary
- Thesaurus
- Grammar book
- Style manual
- Editing pencil or marker (preferably in a different color than what you're using to write with)
- Stick-on note pads

most important to least important, first to last, biggest to smallest) or even emotional order (from happy to sad, from anger to resolution, from uninformed to informed).

Step 5: Draft

Take your idea, and your plan for the best way to approach that idea, and all of the information you've gathered in your research about that idea and your outline for organizing your idea – and write! Develop a practice version of the piece you want to create.

Step 6: Revise

Now, take a break from the piece. Sometimes even a 30-minute break helps you see it much clearer, but the best break would be between group meetings, if you have the time. When you pick up your work again, read it first to decide if it meets your goals. Does it entertain, inform, educate, encourage or excite you? Is everything you need to be there in your manuscript? The best way to determine this would be to have a friend or partner read and react to your work. Have the person tell you if there are parts he or she doesn't understand or feels you left out. Ask the person to share how the piece made him or her feel. Did it achieve what you wanted to achieve with your audience? Also have the person point out any ob-

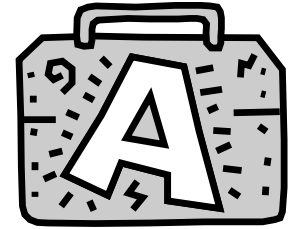
vious inconsistencies, misspellings or incorrect uses of grammar. Use the tools of writing (see "The Writer's Toolkit" on this page) to help you correct or check things like spelling, grammar, dates and usage. Note all of these issues or changes on your draft so that you can correct them, and make the changes on another draft. Then have someone else, a teacher or your volunteer group leader, read and review the piece again before you publish it.

Step 7: Publish

You can print it in long hand, type it on a word processor, videotape it or design the words into a poster or flier. However you choose to do it, it's time now to put your work in its best, final form for sharing and communicating with your audience. Once it's done, share it! Publish your essays, poems, feature or news articles, and song lyrics in a newsletter, your local newspaper, your school newspaper or a book. Publish your script on video or audio and play it for your group, or share it as part of an exhibit at an event. Talk to your local cable television company about airing your tape on a local access channel. Incorporate your slogans, phrases and thoughts into a poster design, a bumper sticker or flier. Be creative in thinking of ways to share your work with others!

SKILL SHEET:

Creative Writing



Use the Seven Steps

Whether you decide to write a cartoon or comic strip, a play, a poem, a song or a story, it's very important that you follow the seven steps of the writing process:

1. Finding ideas.
2. Planning how you will create the piece.
3. Gathering the information you need to complete the piece.
4. Outlining how you will present the information.
5. Creating a first draft.
6. Editing or revising that draft.
7. Publishing the work.

Use the "Writing Process" skill sheet (see pg. 17) as a companion to this one when you begin creative writing. The special features of some creative writing forms can help you work through the process of writing.

The Cartoon or Comic Strip

A cartoon or comic strip is a drawing or series of drawings designed to entertain or make a point. The words in cartoons or comic strips are there to:

- Provide the characters' thoughts or dialogue (usually appear in balloons over the character's image or at the bottom of the cartoon panel).
- Identify or label graphic images. This is particularly important when the drawing itself doesn't clearly and completely convey the point the cartoonist is trying to make.

Cartoonists typically use very few words in this creative format, so they must choose the words they use with great care.

The Play

One of the key elements that distinguishes plays or dramas is the importance of dialogue and physical action. Dialogue and action are used to illustrate or tell the story to an audience. Plays or dramas usually include all of the elements found in a written story, but

they have the added advantage of helping people hear and visualize the feelings, emotions and conflicts of the characters through live performance.

The Poem

A poem is a work composed of lines of verse that may or may not rhyme. Poems – whether they rhyme or not – often have a rhythm to them, especially when read aloud. Although rhyming lines of verse can be easy, it is more important that the rhymes have meaning or make sense to the reader. The mix of verse should clearly lead to the reader understanding a message, idea or concept. In writing a poem, the writer also must decide where the lines will rhyme. Will every other line rhyme or will the rhyme come at other times? What will be the rhythm or beat of your poem? This question is important whether your verse rhymes or not. Short poems (one or two lines) can be used to create greeting cards. Unlike the freedom of poems and other prose, greeting card poems are often guided by the occasion the card is designed to recognize.

The Song

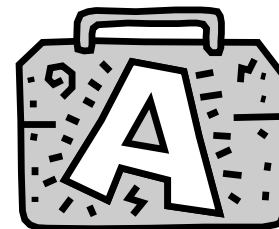
A song is a work of words (the lyrics) and music (the tune). Songs are distinguished by the ability to flow words and their meaning to a tune you've identified. Often songwriters adapt the music of nursery songs or adapt their verses to popular music. Works of poetry often can be put to music to create songs. Make sure the mood of the music matches or complements the mood and tone of your words.

The Story

A story is an account of events, incidents or situations. The format for most stories includes an introduction of the key characters or locations, the development of some kind of conflict or problem one or all of the characters face, descriptions of all the interesting things readers need to know about the character(s) and the conflict, a dramatic resolution to the conflict or problem (the climax) and then a conclusion.

SKILL SHEET:

News Writing



Whether you're writing news releases to send to the media or writing a story for your group's newsletter, following these news writing tips will help you successfully communicate what people really need to know.

What Is News?

The best way to decide what is "news" in your community is to read, listen and watch. What are reporters writing about in your local newspaper? What are broadcasters talking about on the local nightly newscast? What are people talking about in your community? In most cases, news consists of the events, people and ideas that are:

- **Local** – Happening in your community, to your community, with your community.
- **Timely** – Happening now or near to now.
- **New** – Unique, different or never been done before.
- **Important** – Affects lots of people in your community.
- **Progressive** – Improves the way we live, learn and do things.
- **In conflict** – Involves tension or struggle.
- **Of human interest** – Makes people feel or react.

The Five W's and the H

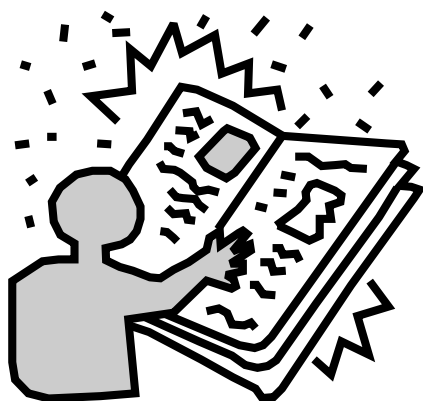
The very first thing a person should read in your story are the Five W's, and maybe the H!

- **Who** is your story about?
- **What** is your story about?
- **When** did or will the story occur?
- **Where** did it or will it take place?
- **Why** did or will it take place?
- **Why** does or should anyone care?
- **How** did or will it happen?

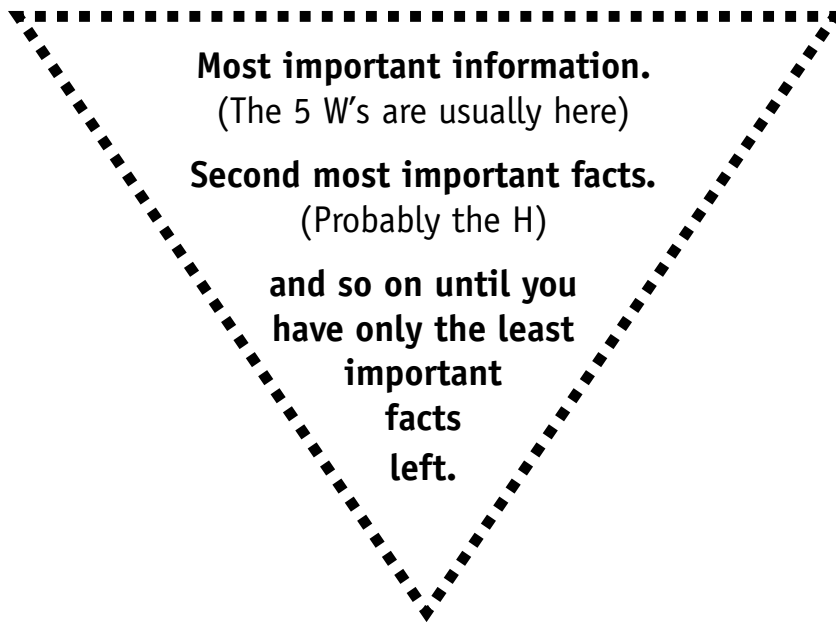
By identifying the who, what, when, where, why and how of your story idea, you help the media and your intended audience decide whether the story is worth their time to read. The five W's are typically the elements that make up the first sentence or paragraph of the story – the lead. The H is more often found in the balance or the detail of the story, but it still needs to be one of the first things the reader gets from your story.

Inverted Pyramid

Make your point and make it fast (your five W's and H lead) and then give the facts and details from most important to least important as your story progresses. In news writing this is called the inverted pyramid. Your writing should allow an editor to cut from the bottom and not lose the essence of the story you're trying to tell.



The Inverted Pyramid



Just the Facts, Please!

It is very important that in news writing, you include only the facts. Opinion does not belong in a news story; it is more appropriate in an editorial. Always check for accuracy. Be sure to double-check all information, especially names, dates, times, titles and phone numbers. Never guess!

Write Well!

News writing is a great way to practice writing well. Your sentences should be short (no more than 20 words). Your paragraphs should be short (no more than four sentences, preferably less). Your words should show action and grab readers' attention. Your words should be simple and easy to understand.

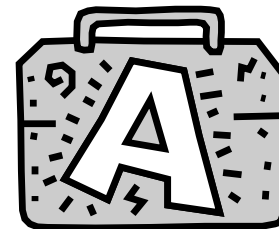
News Release Format Toolkit

Use these tips in formatting your news releases for distribution:

- Use no more than 500 words or two double-spaced, typed pages.
- Always double space to leave space for editor's notes and to ease reading.
- Include an attention-getting headline that summarizes your lead.
- Always type news releases. Never submit a handwritten release.
- Use photos or illustrations (such as graphs or graphic timelines) to increase the impact of your story.
- Include a contact person's name and a phone number where he or she can be reached days and evenings.
- Include a date on the release.
- If your release has two or more pages, put "-more-" at the bottom of the first and subsequent pages and "-30-" at the end of the final page.
- Include your headline and the page number (such as "page 2") at the top of the page.
- When possible, use a letter-head for news releases that identifies your group and gives a contact address.

SKILL SHEET:

Steps to Creating a Newsletter



If you decide a newsletter is a good communication tool for your group, the steps and questions on this sheet will help you get started.

Step 1:

Establish goals and objectives for the newsletter to guide the content, design and budget.

Step 2:

Identify the newsletter's audience. Who do you most need to communicate with to reach your goals for publishing? Do you have a way to distribute the newsletter to this audience? What information and format will interest the audience?

Step 3:

Decide on the newsletter's format. Will it be text only? Will it include photographs or artwork? What paper and ink colors will you use? What size will each page be? How many pages will each issue have?

Step 4:

Decide how often you will publish. Monthly? Quarterly?

Step 5:

Decide on the quality level you want and can afford for your newsletter. Will the newsletter be photocopied, offset printed or delivered to your readers electronically, via computers?

Step 6:

Name your newsletter.

Step 7:

Develop a production time line. Decide when you want the newsletter to reach your readers, and work backwards from that date to set up the production schedule.

Decide on the deadlines for:

- Copy to be submitted.
- Editing and proofreading to be completed.
- Pages to be designed and laid out (keylined).
- The date the pages will go to the printer or photocopier (or, in the case of an electronic newsletter, posted to the mailing list or put up on the World Wide Web).
- The newsletter to be delivered to readers.

Step 8:

Assign production responsibilities to group members. Assignments could include reporters or writers, editors (you may need separate editors for news, arts and features), graphic artists and designers, photographers and distribution personnel.

Step 9:

Publish your newsletter. Starting up and publishing a newsletter helps kids to learn to write concisely, meet deadlines and work as a team. This wonderful group project can incorporate a variety of skills group members may have. See the "News Writing" skill sheet (on pg. 20) for tips on how to write the news stories and other pieces your group might decide to include in the newsletter.



ACTIVITY:

Group Story Writing



FOCUS:

Building creative communications skills

PURPOSE:

To encourage kids to work as a group and use their creative thought processes to create a credible, meaningful story

MATERIALS:

- 5.5-inch by 8.5-inch pieces of paper or 5-inch by 8-inch index cards
- Thin point markers
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

A large indoor space with an open wall, floor or bulletin board

TIME:

5 minutes per contributor

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Write a number in the upper left corner of each sheet of paper or index card, beginning with 1 and continuing through the number of participants you expect at the meeting.
2. On the first card, write a story starter such as those that follow, or one that is related to your groups' interests or experiences.
 - Thirteen-year-old Joshua was skateboarding down the sidewalk when...
 - Cindy has run out of options...
 - Michael had been observing Billy since the beginning of class...
 - The 4-H Teen Club had three days to go before the county 4-H fair...
 - When Chantal was seven, she...
 - Running through the park, he caught...

During the meeting:

1. Tell the group they are going to work as a team to write a story. Their challenge will be to formulate a beginning, an action middle and an end. Each writer will have no more than five minutes to continue the story, building on the work of the previous writer.
2. Give each participant a numbered paper or index card and a marker.
3. Read the story beginning written on the first card, then ask the person with card 2 to continue the story. Have the participants add a phrase or sentence to the story in the order of the numbers on their cards.
4. When the last person has completed the story, ask for a volunteer to read the entire story out loud, or have the participants read their pieces of the story in order.

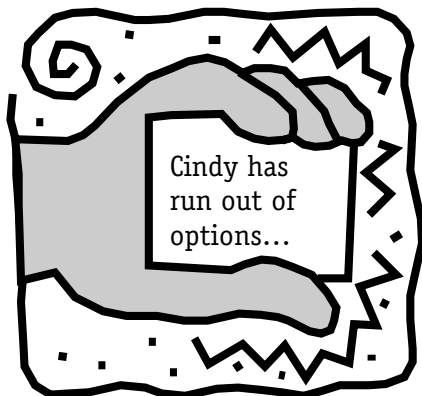
TRY THIS TOO:

Before you start the "Group Story Writing" activity, try this icebreaker. Have the group stand in a semicircle. Have the first person introduce himself or herself with these words:

"My name is _____ and I most like _____."

Have the second person in the circle pick up the story by saying, "(Name of first participant) may like (what that person liked)" and either "but I'm partial to _____" or "and I do too!"

Each person in the group picks up the story and gives his or her opinion on the previous person's likes or dislikes, then offers his or her own opinion, until everyone has been introduced.



ACTIVITY:

The ABC's of Me



FOCUS:

Building creative communication skills

PURPOSE:

To have the participants create their own alphabetical autobiographies

MATERIALS:

- Newsprint
- Marker
- Masking tape
- Paper
- Pencils or pens
- Dictionaries or thesauruses
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

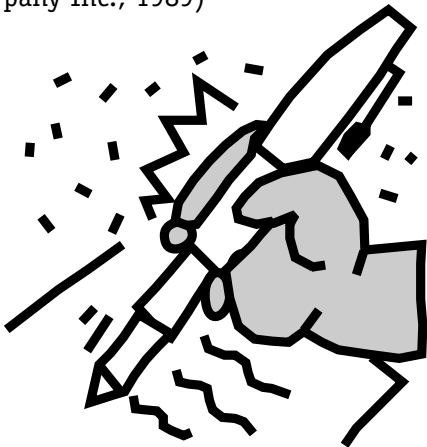
SETTING:

A large space with writing surfaces

TIME:

30–40 minutes

Adapted from *Recipes for Writing: Motivation, Skills and Activities*, by Murray Suid and Wanda Lincoln (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1989)



PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

Write a sample ABC autobiography on a sheet of newsprint and display it so that everyone can see it.

As my mother lay in labor at the hospital, she thought that she would surely love an ice cream cone. **B**rother Bobby was wondering, he told me once, whether he would finally get a male playmate or whether I would be born a girl he would have to keep all his buddies away from. **C**assie I was dubbed and protector he became...

During the meeting:

1. Tell the group they're going to write "The ABC's of Me," an autobiography composed in 26 sentences. The first sentence starts with a word beginning with the letter "A," the second sentence with a word beginning with the letter "B" and so on through the end of the alphabet. Read the sample ABC autobiography that you wrote on the newsprint to the group.
2. Tell the participants that proper names and titles are acceptable and that they can use a dictionary or thesaurus if they are stuck.
3. Pass out paper and pens or pencils.
4. Give the group about 20 minutes to work on their autobiographies. When they're done, have the participants take turns reading their autobiographies to the group.

TRY THIS, TOO:

Have the group write:

- ABC stories about their project areas.
- ABC biographies about a friend or family member.
- ABC adaptations of published stories or fairy tales.
- Autobiographies using the letters of their first name to start sentences. For example:

Justice

Just a little bit into August, I was born.

Under the astrological sign of Leo, that vivacious lion.

Soon my parents named me "Justice," because they saw great potential for me as a police officer or lawyer.

Thus I spent my life developing the tools of peacekeeper and negotiator.

In fact, as a youngster I often found amicable resolution to the squabbles of my playmates.

College helped me hone my choices, much to my parents dismay.

Ever since I left the place, it's a most artistic life I've led.

ACTIVITY:

Who's in the News?



FOCUS:

To build news writing and analysis skills

PURPOSE:

- To help participants understand the purpose of news writing and how the audience determines the style of the news article
- To help participants write a clear, informative and accurate news story

MATERIALS:

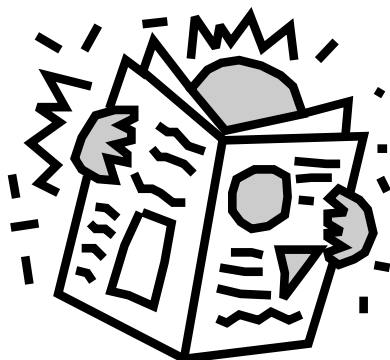
- Newsprint or chalkboard
- Markers or chalk
- Easel or masking tape
- Local daily and weekly newspapers
- Pens or pencils
- Equal numbers of name tags that say "Reporter" and "Source"
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

TIME:

90 minutes or more (depending on size of group)

SETTING:

A room with desks or tables and chairs



PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Collect several editions of local daily and weekly newspapers.
2. Prepare equal numbers of name tags that say "Source" and "Reporter."

During the meeting:

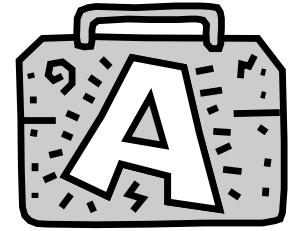
1. Tell the group they'll have about 15 minutes to look through the front (news), business, sports and feature sections of the newspapers. They should look for stories that feature the activities or actions of one person.
2. Take about 15 minutes and ask for volunteers to read aloud the articles they selected. Tell the group to listen for the purpose of the article, the kind of information it included, and its intended audience. Have a volunteer chart this information on the newsprint or chalkboard.
3. Have the group divide into pairs. Have each team pick up one "Source" and one "Reporter" name tag and decide who will play each role.
4. Now tell the reporters they will have 15 minutes to interview the sources. The reporters should look for story angles (something newsworthy, interesting, unique) that would appeal to the entire group. Encourage them to look for the kinds of angles they identified in the newspaper articles.
5. After the 15-minute interviews are completed, give the reporters about 20 minutes to "write up" their interview notes into articles.
6. If time allows, have the original "reporters" and "sources" trade roles and repeat the interview and article-writing process.
7. Ask for volunteers to read their articles to the group. Again have the group listen for the purpose of the article, the kind of information it included, and its intended audience. Have a volunteer chart the information on newsprint or the chalkboard.

TRY THIS TOO:

Publish a group newsletter featuring the members' articles. (See the "Steps to Creating a Newsletter" skill sheet on pg. 22.)

ACTIVITY:

Find Those W's & That H!



FOCUS:

To build news analysis and writing skills

PURPOSE:

- To help participants understand the elements of news writing
- To help participants identify the most important elements of a news story

MATERIALS:

- Daily and weekly newspapers
- "Find Those W's and That H" handout (on pg. 28; two per participant)
- Pens or pencils
- Newsprint or other large paper
- Markers
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

TIME:

30 minutes or more, depending on size of group

SETTING:

Room that allows kids to work in pairs, either seated in chairs or on the floor

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Collect several editions of local daily and weekly newspapers, or copy several different front-page stories from different sections of one newspaper to distribute to kids.
2. Make two copies for each participant of the "Find Those W's and That H" handout.

During the meeting:

1. Group the kids into pairs to locate the "W's" of the news stories you've selected.
2. Explain the "5 W's and the H" of news writing to the group – **Who** is the story about? **What** is the story about? **Where** does the story take place? **When** did the story take place? **Why** is the news important or why did the story take place? **How** did the story take place? Distribute a news story to each participant. Tell them they have about 5 minutes to locate all of the W's and to note how far they had to look to get them all. They can use the "Find Those W's and That H" handout to note them all. (All five W's and the H should show up in the first two paragraphs of a news story. If they appear lower in the story, have the kids discuss and decide whether the story is a news or feature story.)
3. After 5 minutes, have the kids switch news articles with their partners and repeat the process.
4. When they're done, have each pair compare their sheets to see if they identified the same "5 W's and the H." Have the partners note those stories where they had trouble finding all of the elements or disagreed on which was the right W and H.
5. Now have the partners work together to decide what is the most important of the elements they found in the story. Then have them write a new and different lead paragraph for the news story.
6. Bring the group back together and ask for volunteers to share their work. Have them read the first two paragraphs of their news story and identify each of the "W's and the H" of the story. If the partners disagreed on how they identified the elements of the story, have them share where they differed and why. (You also could just have them read the story and see if the full group can identify the same elements that they did.) After both partners have shared their discoveries, have the team share their new lead paragraphs. Have them share why they chose the elements they did to create the new lead.



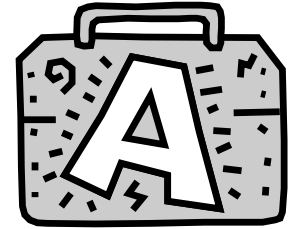
7. If time permits, have the group do a creative critique comparing the new lead to the original story lead.

TRY THIS TOO:

As an icebreaker, have pairs find out the most important “W’s and H” about their partners and write lead paragraphs using that information to introduce the partner.

HANDOUT:

Find Those W's & That H!



Look through a news article and see if you can locate the following elements:

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

How: _____

Which of the six was the most important or “newsy” of the elements? Why?

Write a new lead paragraph for the news story using the most important element you found in it.

TRY THIS TOO:

Instead of using this handout with a news article, use it to find out about a friend or a person in your group. Write a lead paragraph to introduce the person to the rest of the group.



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What Leaders Need to Know



If you asked kids to identify the assignment they dread the most, chances are that most of them would say “public speaking.” Speaking in front of their peers is probably even more nerve-wracking to them than speaking to a group of total strangers. Therefore, the goal of these public presentation materials is to help young people overcome their fear of public speaking and increase their public speaking skills in a nonthreatening environment.

Why Learn About Vocal Expression?

Public speaking can seem daunting, but if a young person develops these skills early on, the skills will be an asset throughout his or her life. People develop poise and self-confidence as they grow accustomed to standing before a crowd and sharing their thoughts and ideas.

As communication skills become more critical to the career world, so does the need for kids to learn these skills. It’s also important for them to experience early success with expressing themselves. This means that even though you may be afraid of public speaking because of bad experiences in the past or lack of experience, it’s time to put your fears aside and really encourage your members to stand up and speak up! Many kids don’t take the chance to practice public speaking because the people around them make it sound scarier than it is.

The activities in this section of the *Communications Toolkit* should make

public speaking seem fun, not impossible. This requires you to create an environment where all levels of participation are applauded, regardless of the speaker’s age or skill level.

A Comfortable Setting

Many of the activities mention doing them “in a comfortable setting.” Creating a comfortable setting will take some thought and planning. Keep in mind that young people, like adults, have a variety of personality types. That means that some kids will naturally be more outgoing than others. Try not to push them too hard or too fast. Encourage them to share ideas using a variety of methods. As they become more comfortable with sharing their ideas and with the reactions their actions receive, they’ll be more adventurous in the projects they undertake.

Life Skills

Participating in the public speaking warm-ups and activities in this section will help young people develop their ability to:

- Organize their thoughts and ideas.
- Communicate information to someone else in a confident and convincing manner.
- Problem-solve and be flexible (for example, overcoming stage nerves or adapting information to different audiences and situations).
- Use resources wisely (specifically, to honor the time allotted for a presentation or speech)!

- Develop useful, marketable skills (for example, speech writing and delivery techniques).
- Manage stress and feelings.
- Evaluate their work and set goals for improvement

Self-Assessment & Evaluation

After each activity or project you lead with young people, please help them think about what they learned. Make copies of the “What I Learned” self-evaluation form on page 8 and distribute them to your group. Ask them to think quietly about the questions and make notes about what they learned, how they feel about their skills in that area and what they’d like to learn more about. Then lead a discussion with the whole group and ask if anyone wants to share what they came up with. Young people may want to keep their “What I Learned” forms to refer to later and as a way to document their learning process.

Public Speaking in Other Projects

The skills young people learn while practicing public presentations translate well to other project areas and should be integrated into project activities whenever possible. Part of the experiential learning model is giving kids a chance to share with others what they’ve learned about a particular subject. By demonstrating a skill or illustrating an idea before a group, kids are

practicing their public speaking skills and gaining confidence. Soon it will seem natural to them to express their ideas without a thought about how scary public speaking "should be."

You May Want to Know

You may want to know the following points before getting started with helping young people learn more about public speaking.

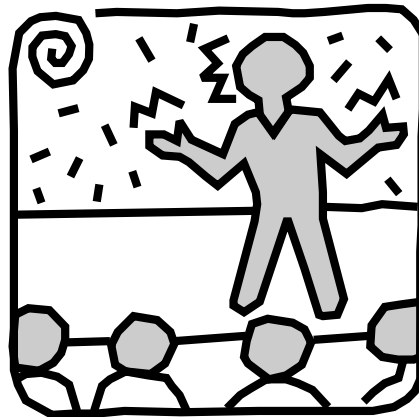
1. The basic processes for writing and delivering a speech or demonstration (see the "Writing for Public Speaking," "Delivering a Vocal Presentation" and "Overcoming Stage Nerves" skill sheets located on pp. 35, 31 and 34, respectively).
2. How to help kids evaluate and feel good about their experiences in communication (see the "What I Learned" sheet on pg. 8).
3. Where to go for field trips, where to find speakers to visit or how to find out who's talking around town.
4. The developmental needs of the kids in your group (see the *Ages and Stages of Child and Youth Development* publication which is available from Purdue University on the World

Wide Web at [<http://www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/Pubs/NCR/NCR-292.html>]).

Who's Talking Around Town?

To connect the idea of vocal expression to careers and make public speaking come alive for your group, you may want to arrange a group visit with someone who uses public speaking as a major part of his or her job, such as:

- Actors
- Lawyers
- Lobbyists
- Managers
- Ministers
- Politicians
- Presidents of professional associations and civic organizations



- Professional speakers
- Radio broadcasters
- Teachers
- Telephone operators
- Television personalities
- Tour guides

Many organizations, such as Toastmasters and Optimists Clubs, focus on communication skills and may be good sources of guest speakers.

Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas & Resources

To encourage your group to learn more about public speaking and vocal expression, refer to the "Video, Media and Technology" and "Visual Communication and Graphic Design" sections of the *Communications Toolkit*.

The World Wide Web and other sections of the Internet offer information on developing vocal expression skills. Use the general categories listed here as search terms with any of the Internet search engines: "public speaking," "vocal expression," "speeches," "speech writing," "speakers." You could also have the participants come up with their own set of search terms. (See pg. 134 for information on Internet safety.)

SKILL SHEET:

Delivering a Vocal Presentation

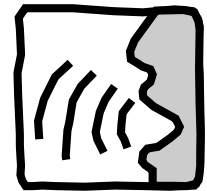


In any speech, demonstration, play or choral reading you must be aware of *how* you're delivering your message as well as the content of the message. This skill sheet describes the basics to remember for delivering vocal presentations. For information on writing a piece to be delivered before an audience, refer to the "Writing for Public Speaking" skill sheet on page 35.

Delivering a Speech

Voice

As many famous people have discovered, your voice can be a powerful tool. But like any tool you must practice with it to use it well. When giving a speech, you want the entire audience to hear you. The following points may help:

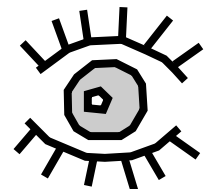


- Project your voice and speak up. Voice projection is not shouting, and you can do it without straining. Speaking from the back of the throat makes your voice sound weak and tires it faster; use your diaphragm muscles to make your voice carry. The diaphragm muscles are between your chest and stomach. Using them will help you relax and make your voice sound stronger.
- Try to sound like yourself. Use a conversational tone with familiar words.
- Speak at a comfortable pace so everyone can hear and understand your entire speech.
- Enunciate (pronounce clearly) all vowels and consonants.
- Don't slur your words – practice pronouncing the d's, t's and ing's on the end of words.
- When you're rehearsing a speech, have someone stand near the back of the room to give you feedback on your projection and delivery, as well as content.

Remember: A strong confident voice will make your message more believable.

Eye Contact

Eye contact, or lack of it, can make a difference in how receptive the audience is to your message. These points may help:



- Maintain eye contact with your audience. Try to memorize your opening and closing statements so that you can maintain steady eye contact when you need to hold the audience's attention.

Your audience will be more receptive and attentive if you look at them.

- Try not to stare at a fixed object. Let your eyes travel casually and naturally from person to person throughout your speech.
- Look for friendly faces with whom to make eye contact, but don't neglect the rest of the audience. Once you get into the body of your presentation, watch the faces of the audience members to see whether they understand and follow you.

Gestures and Expressions

Gestures can be a powerful addition to any speech. They can also be a terrible distraction. The following points may help you turn gestures into a public speaking asset:



- Use gestures only if they are natural to you. Effective hand gestures come from being relaxed and spontaneous, not from fidgeting.
- Smile! If you look like you enjoy what you're doing, so will your audience. Be dramatic, but match your facial expressions to your words. Look serious and sincere if your message is serious, smile if your message is positive.

Posture

Posture is very important to maintaining an interested and confident appearance. The following points may help.

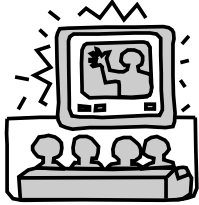
- If a podium is available, place your notes on it, but don't lean on it. Leaning gives the impression that you're tired, sick or bored.
- If you choose to walk while you talk, maintain your upright posture and hold your notes above your waist. Avoid pacing because it is distracting and may make you look nervous.

Other Tips

- Warm up your vocal chords and facial muscles before beginning your presentation.
- Be yourself, don't try to imitate others.
- Practice speaking techniques, not just individual speeches.

SKILL SHEET:

Using Visual Aids



Some speeches just stand alone. Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," President John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech are examples of memorable speeches given without the help of visual aids. However, audiences may need the help of visuals to fully comprehend some messages.

Visual aids come in many forms, such as slides, overhead transparencies, posters, flipcharts, videos, puppets or other actors, and objects.

For information on creating presentation graphics see the "Designing Presentation Graphics That Work" skill sheet on page 67.

When To Use Visual Aids

In many situations, using a visual aid would enhance your presentation, such as:

- **When you're presenting complicated information.** If the information you're presenting is detailed and has many parts to it, you might want to use posters or overheads to organize your thoughts. You can point to individual items or place a check mark by items as you talk to keep the audience moving with you.
- **When pictures speak volumes.** Some pictures really do speak a thousand words and can be very appealing to an audience. Showing slides, videos or posters may be more effective than trying to describe a scene. Imagine how much more persuasive a photograph of a destroyed rain forest is than describing the way it looks.
- **When your audience may fall asleep.** In some speeches it may be necessary to give many statistics or to talk about percentages. Overheads showing pie graphs or charts may break up the monotony of numbers. Better yet would be to show a short video clip illustrating the content of your message between bouts of delivering statistical data.

Audiovisual Tips

A few tips to remember when using equipment to present visual aids follow.

- Choose your audio and visual aids thoughtfully, keeping in mind the size and shape of your room, the expected size of your audience and available equipment. For example: If you're expecting an audience of 50 you wouldn't want to show a video if you only have a single or small monitor. The same is true for writing on a chalkboard or flip chart for a large room where your audience might be spread out over a distance.
- Practice with all equipment before you deliver your speech so you're comfortable with how it works. Allow time to make adjustments if necessary. You could practice with the equipment at the same time you check the microphone (if you're using one).
- You may need to speak louder than you normally do in order to be heard over some equipment. Test this before your presentation.
- Structure your presentation so that you aren't constantly turning on and off the lights. Audience adjustment to light and dark may be slow, creating lag time in your presentation.
- Rehearse your speech, including all of your visuals. You should be able to use them smoothly to enhance your presentation and not distract the audience from your primary message.
- Always have a backup plan in case you aren't able to use your audio or visual aids (for whatever reason). A presentation that relies completely on a video or slides may be a disaster if the equipment doesn't work or isn't available.

SKILL SHEET:

Overcoming Stage Nerves



The largest barrier to learning to speak effectively in front of a group is the fear that something terrible will happen. Some people who dread public speaking are afraid because they've had poor first experiences and were unprepared to handle the situation. But for most people it's the lack of practice or opportunities to speak that keeps them from feeling like capable public speakers.

It is important to recognize the difference between a real phobia and just a bad case of stage nerves (also called "stage fright"). The symptoms of stage nerves could be quite severe, but should lessen as you become a more experienced presenter. You don't have to lose your fear before you can do a good job. You can learn the mechanics of overcoming fear, and through repetition you'll gain confidence.

If you get nervous before crowds, remember that a little nervous energy is absolutely necessary to give you that excited spark that the audience can share. Even very experienced speakers and actors feel "butterflies" before going on stage because they all want to give their best performances. Only speakers who don't care don't feel anything.

If you get nervous before crowds, remember that a little nervous energy is absolutely necessary to give you that excited spark that the audience can share. Even very experienced speakers and actors feel "butterflies" before going on stage because they all want to give their best performances. Only speakers who don't care don't feel anything.

Tips for Reducing Stage Nerves

To reduce your stage nerves and work toward becoming a confident speaker, follow these tips:

- Be prepared. A well-planned and well-rehearsed talk will sound clear and organized and seem natural to deliver.
- Only speak about things you know well or that interest you, so you feel confident you have something to offer the audience.
- Complete the "Let's Talk About Nerves" activity found on page 48 to help you identify your anxiety symptoms. Then learn to prepare for and eventually overcome them.
- If you get nervous speaking in front of strangers, try to chat with a few members of the audience before you have to give your speech. This helps establish contact and make you feel as though you're on friendly ground.
- Eat light before a presentation.
- Avoid carbonated beverages, which may cause stomach upset or uncomfortable gas. Dairy products may coat the mouth and throat, and also may cause stomach upset for some people.
- Practice giving your presentation several ways so you're comfortable making last-minute adjustments.
- Learn a quick stress-reducing routine for relaxing your neck, shoulder and facial muscles just before giving your talk.
- Visualize yourself succeeding and enjoy the applause!



SKILL SHEET:

Writing for Public Speaking

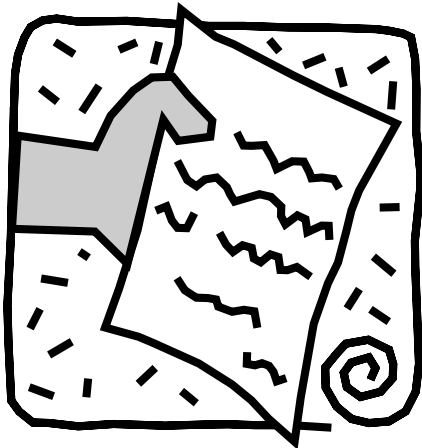


Several points that will help you write good presentations follow.

- **Choose a topic.** When preparing any good speech, the first important step is to pick a topic you're comfortable with. If you're familiar with and excited about the topic, your speech will be more interesting for the audience to listen to and easier for you to present.

- **Consider your audience.** The next step is to consider your audience, how you'll present your material and how much depth or detail will be necessary. Targeting your message to your audience increases the likelihood that your speech will be a success. If you know something about your audience, you'll be better able to plan a talk that speaks directly to them. For example, consider how a presentation for a group of 8-year-olds would differ from the same topic presented to a group of adult volunteers.

- **Develop an outline.** Keep in mind the three basic outline parts: introduction, discussion and conclusion.



Developing an outline first will save you work and frustration later on.

- **Remember the high points.** Write down certain phrases or points that you don't want to forget.

- **Use the introduction to grab attention.** The introduction should grab your audience's attention and set the stage for your presentation. Choose a quote, a joke, a challenging question or something surprising to get the audience interested. The introduction should also outline important parts of your speech and tell your listeners what you'll be talking about. You may want to include some information about yourself, too.

- **Be logical and thorough.** Present your material in a logical order and be sure to cover the areas you outlined in your introduction. Again, tailor your talk to fit the age and interests of your audience.

- **Get personal.** Use personal examples, illustrations and stories in your talk.

- **Summarize your speech.** The conclusion summarizes the speech. It should stress the most important parts of the speech and tie everything together.

Follow these tips to present your written ideas in the most effective way.

- **"Tell 'em what you're gonna say."** Remember, in the introduction you tell the audience what you're going to say, in the body you say it and in the conclusion you tell the audience what you said.

- **Follow your notes or an outline.** Don't be afraid to use your notes or outline during your talk. However, be sure the print is large enough to refer to at a glance. This will help you stay on track and make your presentation flow. Losing your place in your notes distracts you and the audience.

- **Avoid memorizing.** When you're truly familiar with your topic, memorizing your speech is unnecessary. Thoroughly prepared speakers learn their outlines, then relate the major points and supporting information when delivering the speech. Working from a written outline without memorizing the entire speech will give you more flexibility if something unexpected happens.

SKILL SHEET:

Tips for Effective Demonstrations



Demonstrations are talks that show, one step at a time, how to perform an activity.

Planning Tips

Your demonstration may take only 10 minutes, but the time you spend planning those 10 minutes will determine your success or failure. Here are some questions to ask yourself and points to consider:

Will my topic work as a demonstration?

- Pick a well-defined skill or activity that can be demonstrated in a short time period. For example, showing how to toss a salad is easier than explaining how to cook.
- Select a topic that can be easily broken down into illustrated steps that the audience can be successful at doing themselves. For example, you may be able to wiggle your ears, but others may not find it as easy to do!



- Consider how much background your audience will need on your topic before you begin demonstrating. For example, if you are showing how to saddle a horse, you may need to first explain how to approach the horse and make it hold still.

What is my audience going to be like?

- Plan your demonstration around the size of the group. Will you have a small group that can cluster around you, or will you need large visual aids and a microphone to be seen and heard?
- Try to anticipate how much your audience may already know about your topic. Pick a skill level that you think will be high enough to hold your audience's attention but not so high that they can't keep up with you.

What do I want my demonstration to accomplish?

- Decide if the purpose of your demonstration will be to **educate** the audience on how to do something, **inform** them on how something works or **persuade** them that one method works better than another. You can do all of these in one demonstration if you plan well.
- Think about what response you want from your audience. For example, do you want them to try a new skill, or change an old way of doing something?

- Consider how much time you have, the skill level of your audience and your own expertise.

Organizing

Once your initial planning is done, make a detailed outline or script for what you plan to cover in your talk and what visuals or props you will need for each step. A well-organized speech contains the following basic parts:

- 1. Introduction** – Where you capture the audience's attention with a relevant story, quote, challenge or other interesting remarks and then explain what the demonstration will be about.
- 2. Body** – Where you present a step-by-step procedure, explaining key points as you go along. You can outline the steps by doing the activity and writing the steps down as you go.
- 3. Conclusion** – Where you restate the purpose of your demonstration and give a brief summary of the steps.

Tips for Choosing & Using Visual Aids

Use visuals such as posters, slides and overheads to help the audience understand your topic. Visuals can help keep the audience's attention, but don't overdo it – too many visuals can be distracting. It's very important to practice your demonstra-

tion using your visuals. Keep them within reach and in the order you will present them. When you're done using each one, set it aside so it doesn't distract from your next point. Make sure your visuals:

- Are attractive.
- Are readable from the farthest distance they will be viewed.
- Highlight important points.
- Are simple and neat.
- Are easy to use.

Props may be helpful when realism is needed. Make sure that your props are practical for the setting you will be in. For instance, including your dog as part of a demonstration on pet grooming might make it more realistic, but you'll also need to think about any problems that might arise from bringing an animal into a unfamiliar situation.



If you're planning to use electronic equipment, make sure you'll have outlets available nearby and anticipate any replacement bulbs or batteries you might need. Have a backup plan in case your equipment fails.

Tips for Good Delivery

- Be enthusiastic!
- Dress for the part.
- Briefly introduce yourself, explaining your interest or special skills in your topic.
- Start with your opening, then get right into the action. Keep things moving but don't rush.
- Know your subject and explain what you're doing as you do it.
- Practice in advance, but if something doesn't go the way you planned it in the final demonstration, explain briefly what happened and continue.
- Be sure your audience can see what you're doing at all times. Store items away from the center of interest when you're not using them.
- Speak clearly. If you must use noisy equipment like a blender, explain what you're doing before and after you use it. Don't try to shout over the noise.

• Stay within your allotted time. To show all the steps of a process, you may need to have materials ready to show in various stages (baking bread, for example).

• End your demonstration by showing the audience your finished product and letting them ask questions. If you don't know an answer, say so – don't guess.

Practice Makes Perfect

Assemble everything you need for your presentation (and friendly volunteers to be your test audience) and **practice**. Videotaping your practice demonstration is another good way to help you fine-tune it. Afterwards ask yourself (or your test audience):

- Are my actions in logical order?
- Did I explain what I was doing while I was doing it?
- Did I give complete information?
- Are my visual aids effective?
- Did I keep to my time limit?
- Do I know enough about my topic to answer questions from the audience?

ICEBREAKER:

Speech Warm-Ups



PURPOSE:

- To help kids feel relaxed with each other
- To help kids learn that it's okay to make mistakes when speaking or reading aloud

MATERIALS:

"Tongue Twisters" handout on pg. 39; one per person)

SETTING:

Comfortable room where kids can meet in small groups

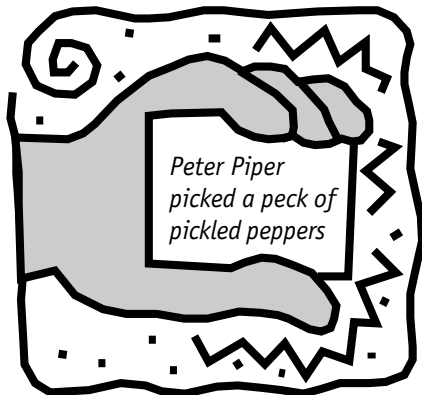
TIME:

5–10 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide the group into four- or five-person teams.
2. Have each person choose a tongue twister to work on. Give them a minute or two to practice saying their tongue twisters.
3. Have the participants take turns reading their tongue twisters aloud and teaching the tongue twisters to the rest of their small group.
4. After they've "sampled" each tongue twister, tell the teams to choose one tongue twister to read for the whole group.

Leader's Note: If everyone picks one of the simpler tongue twisters (4, 5 and 6) to work on the first time, repeat steps 1 through 4 and drop those tongue twisters from the list. Work with the kids to help them pronounce the more difficult words clearly. Explain that this will help them learn to speak clearly.



SPEECH WARM-UPS HANDOUT:

Tongue Twisters



Say these slowly at first; then say them as fast as you can without making any mistakes! If you make a mistake, start over, a little more slowly. Speak all final consonant sounds (such as t, d and p) distinctly. Also, take care to make the vowel sounds (a, e, i, o and u) distinctly.

1. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers;
A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

4. Through thin cloths, the thief thrust thorns.

2. When a twister twisting would twist him a twist,
For twisting a twist, three twists he would twist.
But if one of the twists untwists from the twist,
Then the twist, untwisting, untwists the twists.

5. Cease sighing, since sighs seldom secure success.

3. If Theofilus Thistle, the thistle-sifter, sifted a sieve of unsifted thistles,
where is the sieve of unsifted thistles that Theofilus Thistle the thistle sifter sifted?

6. Rubber baby buggy bumpers.

ICEBREAKER:

This Is My Friend



FOCUS:

Beginning to speak in front of a group

PURPOSE:

- To give participants opportunities to speak in front of a group
- To help participants understand the purpose of a good introduction

MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Pens or pencils

SETTING:

Room with chairs, an open area in front and a podium, if available

TIME:

10 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.

- Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
- Provide feedback in a positive way.
- Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
- Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
- Be considerate of other people's feelings.
- Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.

During the meeting:

1. Have the participants pair off with someone they don't know well. Tell them they'll have 2 or 3 minutes to interview and jot a few notes about each other. Suggest that they ask at least the following questions:
 - What's your name?
 - How old are you?
 - What school do you attend?
 - What grade are you in?
 - What's your favorite project or projects?
 - How many people are in your family?
 - What's your favorite dessert?
2. Explain that they'll be building imaginary frames around their partners, and that the more information they have for their frames, the nicer those frames will be.
3. Give them another 2 or 3 minutes to write a brief introduction of their partners. Suggest that they follow the format, "Hi, my name is, _____, and this is my friend, _____." Tell them to read their introductions to their partners to make sure their information is correct.
4. Have the teams take turns introducing their partners to the whole group. After they've finished the introductions, ask the group what they liked or didn't like about talking in front of the large group.

Leader's Note: This icebreaker could be used with other speaking activities in this section or to warm up the group before working on any project area.



ICEBREAKER:

Imagine It!



FOCUS:

To develop creativity and increase participants' comfort with acting in front of a group

PURPOSE:

- To help participants relax before working on their public presentation skills
- To create an atmosphere of creativity and fun

MATERIALS:

None

SETTING:

Open area (inside or outside) with little or no furniture or obstacles

TIME:

5–10 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Set the stage by being enthusiastic yourself!
2. Have group members sit or stand in a circle.
3. Start by passing around an imaginary object such as a baseball, a flower or a basketball. Items that require action to use are the best.
4. As the "object" is tossed, rolled or handed around, each person should change the object to something else.
5. Encourage the participants to act out the motions completely, even exaggerating motions; the more dramatic they are the better. This can help participants loosen up and relax their muscles before they try to do something more difficult like give a demonstration or speech.
6. If the kids are enjoying the game, try acting out imaginary scenes like picking and eating an apple or learning to ride a bike.
7. When you're ready to quit, have the group talk about how they felt being "actors." Connect this to public speaking by explaining the importance of using natural hand gestures and expressions during a presentation. For more advanced groups, try acting out emotions, expressions or action words – things that are not tangible.



ACTIVITY:

Tell Me a Story (Illustrated Talks)



FOCUS:

Using a visual aid in a presentation

PURPOSE:

- To encourage creativity
- To give participants a chance to talk in front of a group
- To illustrate a connection between speaking and using visual aids

MATERIALS:

- Scissors
- Magazines
- Poster board
- Glue sticks
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Room with space for the group to spread out

TIME:

15–30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Give the group 5 to 8 minutes to select pictures from magazines. Suggest that they pick pictures that interest them or that seem to fit together.
2. Have the kids glue their pictures to a poster board. Suggest that they arrange the pictures in the order of a story or just arrange them so they look nice.
3. Depending on their ages or skill levels, you could have older participants make up stories about their pictures and younger ones tell why they liked each picture they cut out. Participants could use one of the story starters that follow (you may need to help younger participants decide on an opening).
 - I chose these pictures because...
 - This is a story about...
 - Once upon a time...
4. Have the group members tell their stories to the rest of the group. Encourage participants to point to the appropriate pictures at each point in their stories. Remind them to re-establish good eye contact with the audience after they have pointed out each picture.



ACTIVITY:

Show & Tell:

A Demonstration Workshop



PURPOSE:

To understand the basics of a demonstration and increase opportunities for public speaking

MATERIALS:

- "Tips for Effective Demonstrations" skill sheet (on pg. 36; one per person – optional)
- "Delivering a Vocal Presentation" skill sheet (on pg. 31; one per person – optional)
- "Practice Demonstrations" handout (on pg. 45; one per person)
- Demonstration materials
- Poster board
- Markers
- "Tip Sheet for Evaluating Demonstrations" handout (on pg. 46; one per person)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Enough space for kids to break up into small groups to work on their demonstrations; area should include a table for spreading out materials during demonstrations

TIME:

30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people's feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
2. Read the "Tips for Effective Demonstrations" skill sheet so you can describe the basic parts of a demonstration to the kids. You also may want to copy the skill sheet for each person. See the "Delivering a Vocal Presentation" skill sheet for more helpful hints.
3. If you have an older group member who has presented a demonstration before, ask him or her to prepare and give a short demonstration.

During the meeting:

1. Have the older member give his or her demonstration.
2. Divide the group into teams or have the participants work alone, depending on their age and experience.
3. Hand each team a practice demonstration topic and the materials necessary for presenting that demonstration.
4. Give teams 5 to 8 minutes to create and practice their demonstrations. Encourage the teams to use posters to list ingredients or materials needed for their presentations.
5. After each team gives their demonstration, pass out the "Tip Sheet for Evaluating Demonstrations" handout. Help the team members identify the points they did well at and the ones they need to work on. Keep in mind that this may be hard for some kids and that just standing up in front of a group will be a challenge – always look for the positive first.



TALKING IT OVER:

After all the teams have presented their demonstrations, encourage the whole group to talk about their experiences. Ask the following questions.

- How did it feel to be speaking in front of a group?
- What did you find fun about doing demonstrations?
- Was it as hard as you thought it would be?
- When do you think you might do other demonstrations?

SHOW & TELL HANDOUT:

Practice Demonstrations



Leader's Note: These demonstrations can be done alone or as a team. For first-time demonstrators, it might be helpful to do team presentations.

Pencil Judging:

Explain how you would use judging techniques to rank a group of four pencils.

Making a Paper Airplane:

Demonstrate how to properly fold a paper airplane for best flight. (Talk about the structures on the plane that have to do with aerodynamics.)

Folding Tissue Flowers:

Demonstrate how to fold a paper rosette and demonstrate some of its uses.

Napkin Folding:

Demonstrate three different ways to fold napkins for a dinner table.

Sanding Techniques:

Demonstrate proper sanding techniques to achieve a smooth finish (include different weights of sandpaper and what each would be used for).

Peanut Butter Sandwich Making:

Demonstrate different methods for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich to suit your taste.

SHOW & TELL HANDOUT:

Tip Sheet for Evaluating Demonstrations



The main purpose of any demonstration is to share information, ideas and skills with others. This could be accomplished in many ways. The important thing is for you to have the chance to practice speaking skills. Don't intimidate yourself by trying to achieve a certain set of standards. However, there are some basic areas in which you can evaluate your own progress and set goals for improvement. Think about and answer the following questions.

Topic

Was the topic appropriate for the audience age and interests? Why or why not?

Content

Did the demonstration give enough information to spark the audience's interest? Why or why not?

Was the information presented in such a way that the audience could replicate the techniques or ideas demonstrated?

Poise

Did you feel comfortable in front of the group? Why or why not?

Do you feel that you presented yourself well? Why or why not?

Delivery

Was your demonstration clear and organized?

Was the audience interested enough to ask for more information?

Did people respond as if they could hear everything?

Introduction and Conclusion

Did you tell the audience what you were planning to say and then sum up what you said at the end?

Other

What else did you learn about giving speeches?

ACTIVITY:

Let's Talk About Nerves



FOCUS:

Increase public speaking skills

PURPOSE:

- To help kids identify what makes them scared of public speaking
- To help kids learn to plan for and around stage nerves
- To help kids feel less afraid of the nervous symptoms they feel

MATERIALS:

- "What Are *You* Afraid Of?" handout (on pg. 50; one per person)
- Pens or pencils
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Comfortable area where the group can sit in a circle

TIME:

20–30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the topic by telling a personal story about a public speaking experience. The story should contain something you learned about yourself as a result.
2. Ask the kids if they also have some fear of speaking in front of groups. Explain that some fears and symptoms of nervousness will go away with practice. However, they need to learn what they might be afraid of and how they can work around it and still be able to share their ideas.
3. Hand out pencils or pens and the "What Are *You* Afraid Of?" handout to each person. Give them 5 to 7 minutes to write down some of the fears they may have and to check off some of the symptoms this stress causes.
4. Bring the group back together to discuss their answers.

TALKING IT OVER:

1. Allow at least 10 minutes for discussion, depending on the size of the group. Share the following information with the group. (For tips on reducing stage nerves or stage fright, refer to the "Overcoming Stage Nerves" skill sheet on page 34.)

Here are some fears that people have noted about public speaking:

- Boring the audience to sleep
 - Burping uncontrollably
 - False teeth coming loose
 - Tripping on the way up to the stage
2. Ask the group the following questions:
 - What other fears can you think of? (Encourage the group to brainstorm as many as they can.)
 - Are you surprised at all the things people fear about public speaking? (Explain that when they can identify a fear very specifically they can work on overcoming it.)
 - What might you do to prevent some of these fears from coming true? (For example, to help keep from boring an audience to sleep, you could read your speech to a friend to see how it sounds.)
 3. Ask the group to come up with at least one solution or problem-solving technique for each fear they listed. Encourage them to be creative and not to worry about whether the solution will work for every public speaking situation.
 4. Ask for volunteers to talk about the nervous symptoms they've had before or while speaking in public. (You could open with





something like, “I always seem to get... sweaty hands... cold feet... an upset stomach... when I know I have to get up and talk in front of others.) After they’ve compiled a list of symptoms, encourage them to come up with some ways they can reduce the symptoms (for example, to remedy or minimize an upset stomach, eat only a light meal before speaking).

5. Give the group a final opportunity to talk about experiences they’ve had with speaking or reading aloud and how they felt.
6. Remind your group that being scared or nervous is not a good reason to avoid public speaking. Being able to express their ideas and share information is *very important*. Even though public speaking may be hard now, the more they do it the easier it will become.

TRY THIS, TOO:

Ask a local radio, television or sports celebrity to speak to your group about his or her experiences with performance nerves.

LET'S TALK ABOUT NERVES HANDOUT:

What Are *You* Afraid Of?



Write a sentence or two about the things that scare you about public speaking.

This is how I feel if I have to talk in front of others: (Check each symptom that you feel.)

- My hands shake.
- I get a headache.
- My shoulders ache.
- I get dizzy.
- My mouth goes dry.
- My neck hurts.
- My heart beats faster than normal.
- I get sweaty palms.
- My stomach is upset and I'm nauseated.
- My legs are shaky.
- I can't stop my feet from tapping.
- Other: _____

ACTIVITY:

What's Wrong With This Picture?



FOCUS:

To enhance understanding of basic public speaking skills

PURPOSE:

- To show kids how much they already know about good speaking skills
- To show how public speaking can be fun
- To give kids a chance to speak in front of a group

MATERIALS:

- "Topics" and "Speaking Rules" cards (from handout on pg. 53)
- "Delivering a Vocal Presentation" skill sheet (on pg. 31; one per person – optional)
- Pencils or pens
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Room with an open area like a stage or speaker's area on one side

TIME:

10–15 minutes



PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people's feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
2. Cut out the "Topics" and "Speaking Rules" cards. If you have a large group, you might need more than one copy of each card. You may want to add a few topics that are specific to your group's interests.

During the meeting:

1. You might want to hand out copies of the "Delivering a Vocal Presentation" skill sheet so the kids can refer to it during the rest of the activity.
2. Tell the group that they'll be demonstrating the basic "how-to's" of public speaking, but in an upside-down way. Tell them that this will give them a chance to show what they know about good public speaking skills.
3. Have each person pick one card from the Topics pile and one card from the Speaking Rules pile.
4. Tell the participants to prepare a 30-second presentation on the topic from their card. Their presentations should break the rules they know about the speaking skill they picked. For example, someone who chose the Speaking Rules card "Eye Contact" and the Topic card "Talk about your favorite dessert" might talk enthusiastically about chocolate brownies while looking at the floor or ceiling the entire time. This activity works best when the participants *really* exaggerate the rule they're breaking.
5. Tell them not to reveal what speaking rule they're trying to break so that the audience can guess which one it is.

6. When the audience guesses what the speaker is trying to do, ask them to identify how good speakers would handle the speaking rule.
7. Continue in this manner until everyone has had a chance to talk.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask the group the following questions:

- Did this activity help you learn anything new about public speaking skills?
- Have you tried or heard about other good tips for speaking to a group?
- Did this activity make it seem easier to try making a longer speech in the future?
- How could you share this information about public speaking with other kids or adults?

Topics & Speaking Rules Cards



Topic Card:

Describe your dream vacation.

Speaking Rules Card:

Audience Consideration

Topic Card:

Talk about your favorite dessert.

Speaking Rules Card:

Facial Expressions

Topic Card:

Talk about your favorite music.

Speaking Rules Card:

Hand Gestures

Topic Card:

Create a new commercial for one of your favorite products.

Speaking Rules Card:

Voice

Topic Card:

Talk about someone who has influenced your life.

Speaking Rules Card:

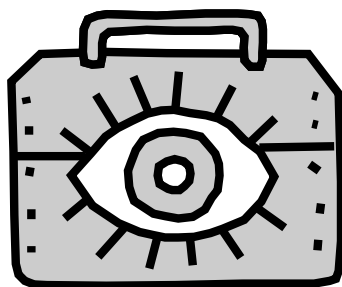
Eye Contact

Topic Card:

Talk about a book you've read.

Speaking Rules Card:

Proper Attire



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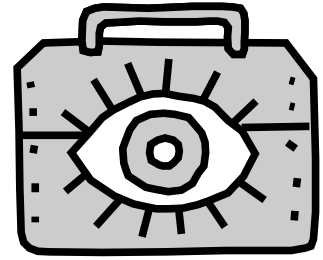
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What Leaders Need to Know



Introduction

Whether you take a drive down a well-travelled highway, stroll through a local shopping mall or surf the Internet, you see and interpret many visual messages every day. These messages may be in forms such as logos, signs and posters, or television, computer and magazine graphics.

You and your group may need to design some visual messages of your own. You might need a poster to advertise a meeting, a brochure or newsletter for your organization, or a logo for a club business. Computer technology now gives more people access to many of the same or similar design tools as those used by media professionals. To use these tools to effectively communicate a message, however, requires more than just knowledge of the computer software. It requires an understanding of how to structure visual information using the **elements and principles of design**. The area of design that deals with structuring visual information for communicating messages is called graphic design.

Information is becoming more visual in nature. (Consider CD-ROM multimedia encyclopedias and games, or the images available across the Internet – the electronic “information superhighway.”) As we exchange more information with people whose language and culture differ from ours, visual communication through well-designed symbols and images may help make our messages easier to understand. Today’s young people will face many

situations in the future – both on and off their jobs – in which they will need to understand and use good visual communication design skills to ensure that their messages are seen **and** understood.

You can use the activities and information in this section to help the young people you work with:

- Think about how and why visual messages in our environment are created.
- Become familiar with the language of visual communications.
- Become comfortable with the creative process as it applies to visual communication.
- Learn to use the basic elements and principles of visual communication design.
- Learn to evaluate visual communication.
- Find additional visual communication resources.

The Goal of Visual Communication Design

Visual communication is a special blend of art and language used to deliver information to a particular group of people. If the information is presented in a way that attracts the intended audience and persuades them to take action (such as to come to a car wash or to recycle their trash), the designer has done his or her job well.

One way to state the goal of the visual communication designer is:

To create visual formats for messages, taking into consideration the intended audience by using mutually understandable alphabets, symbols, colors, images and selecting appropriate media so the messages can be received, understood and responded to.

As you begin working with your group on visual communication activities, ask the participants to think about this. **Have them put into their own words** what they think the goal of a visual communication designer might be.

Kids & the Creative Process

Creative problem-solving and creative presentation of visual information are essential elements of the design process. You can help stimulate creative thinking by providing kids with:

- Opportunities, time and materials to explore.
- Encouragement to express their own ideas.
- Acceptance and respect for their creations.

Often it is difficult for kids (and adults!) to talk about their creative work in front of others for fear they will be criticized. It’s helpful to ask kids to talk about the **process** they went through to create their work. Ask your group to identify and talk about aspects of each others’ work

they like. This gives kids a chance to use their new design vocabulary to describe what they see.

Only when kids are comfortable with this positive presentation and feedback process should you begin to add questions like, “How could one part of this project be improved, and why?” or “If you could do this again, what might you do differently?” Allow one group member to present a suggestion to the designer, then give the designer a chance to agree or disagree with the observation. The “How Did I Do? A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project” skill sheet found on page 72 also can provide a way for individuals to privately evaluate their own work.

How to Use the Materials

In addition to “What Leaders Need to Know,” the visual communication section includes:

- **Skill Sheets** – Single concept sheets that provide basic information and tips. Specific sheets are referred to in many of the activities and may be copied and reviewed by leaders and members before beginning an activity. These sheets also can be used independent of the activities for quick reference.



- **Design Warm-Up Activities** – Short activities that introduce specific visual communication concepts. These can be used as warm-ups for projects.

- **Projects** – Longer activities designed to take a group through the design process using a format such as a poster or logo. Depending on the needs of the group, each of these activities can be completed in a single meeting or expanded into multiple meetings or workshops.

Before using the activities, think about the suggested procedures and materials. Then adapt them to fit the needs and resources of your group.

The activities are designed so that they can be carried out with the least amount of specialized tools, technical training on those tools, materials and room setup. If your group has access to and familiarity with computer page layout and drawing software or other communication technology, you can adapt the activities to take advantage of your available resources.

The activities provide “generic” situations for participants to apply their design skills to. However, you can substitute a real situation such as designing posters for an upcoming event. If your group is interested in making communications their project, you can use the activities as a jumping-off point for exploring the area of visual communication design.

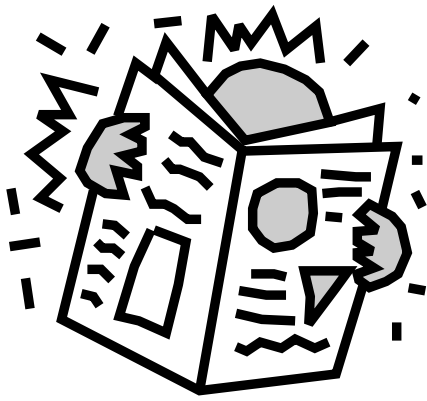
Life Skills

Using the visual communication and graphic design activities in this section can provide young people with practice in valuable life skills such as:

- Planning and researching a project, and then organizing the information.
- Making decisions and solving problems creatively.
- Using resources wisely.
- Working as a team member.
- Learning useful and marketable technical skills (the elements and principles of design, for example) and applying these skills to a project.
- Developing record-keeping skills (for example, creating a graphics portfolio).
- Communicating a concept or message to others through visual means.
- Strengthening self-esteem by understanding one’s abilities and having an opportunity to experience success.
- Evaluating a project and setting goals for improvement.

Self-Assessment & Evaluation

After each activity or project you lead with young people, please help them think about what they learned. Make copies of the “What I Learned” self-evaluation form on page 8 and distribute them to your group. Ask them to think quietly about the questions and make notes about what they learned, how they feel about their skills in that area and what they’d like to learn more about. Then lead a discussion with the whole group and ask if anyone wants to share what they came up with. Young people may want to keep their “What I Learned” self-evaluation forms to refer to later and as a way to document their learning process.



Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas & Resources Community as a Resource

There are probably individuals working in the area of visual communication design in your community or neighboring areas. Their job titles are often “graphic designer” or “graphic artist.” Keep in mind that the area of visual design is constantly changing and so are the job titles of designers! You may hear about people who are working as multimedia designers or desktop publishers, or who have other titles. The designer’s job title often reflects the technology he or she is using.

You may find people with visual communication design skills working in:

- Video or television studios designing word, symbol and data graphics, and studio sets.
- Advertising companies designing advertisements for newspapers, magazines, billboards, catalogs and the Internet.
- Book publishing art departments designing books, book catalogs and book sales brochures.

- Sign painting and outdoor advertising companies designing signs, billboards and banners.
- Exhibit and display companies designing exhibits and displays.
- In-house art departments for businesses and government agencies designing newsletters, reports, catalogs, presentations and forms.
- Printing companies designing materials to be offset or screen printed.
- Software companies designing graphics for business, education or entertainment software.
- At home, “freelancing” illustration, design, cartooning and more for any of the groups mentioned above.
- Internet service provider businesses designing World Wide Web pages.

Your group may wish to invite local designers to talk about their work at one of your meetings or arrange to visit a designer at his or her workplace.

Additional Resources

The following materials will be useful for adults and older teens who would like to learn more about visual communications.

The World Wide Web is a growing source of information on visual communication. Use the general categories listed here as search terms with any of the Internet search engines (see pg. 134 for information on Internet safety).

Business Practices & Copyright Information for Graphic Designers

- *Graphic Artists Guild Handbook of Pricing and Ethical Guidelines (9th Edition)*, edited by Rachel Burd. New York, New York: Graphic Artists Guild, 1997. This frequently

updated reference book provides information for designers on pricing a variety of design work, writing contracts and current copyright laws. World Wide Web address: (<http://www.gag.org/>)

Color

- *Principles of Color Design*, by Wucius Wong. New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997. This book provides an introduction to color for graphic designers and artists.
- *Understanding Color: An Introduction for Designers*, by Linda Holtzschue. New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997. This book provides basic color theory information and exercises for artists and designers.

Creative Problem-Solving

- *Design Yourself!* by Kurt Hanks, Larry Belliston and Dave Edwards. Los Altos, California: Crisp Publications, 1990. This book provides design exercises, thought-provoking quotes and illustrations that will stimulate the creative planning and problem-solving process.

Graphic Design & Layout

- *The New Graphic Design School*, by Alan Swann. New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997. This book provides classroom or self-study exercises and projects in different areas of graphic design. It includes exercises in using the elements and principles of design as well as the techniques necessary to put good design into practice.
- *Making a Good Layout*, by Lori Siebert and Lisa Ballard. Cincinnati, Ohio: North Light Books, 1992. This book is an easy to use, step-by-step guide to understanding the elements and principles of layout design. It provides many design exercises and illustrations.

- *SchoolArts Magazine*. Worcester, Massachusetts: Davis Publications Inc. This magazine is written by and for art teachers. The articles explain classroom art activities that teachers have used successfully and often focus on understanding design elements and principles. This magazine is also a good source for finding suppliers of art materials.

- *Dynamic Graphics Magazine*. Peoria, Illinois: Dynamic Graphics, Inc. This magazine shows the production of graphic design projects with easy-to-follow instructions.

Presentation Graphics

- *Designer's Guide to Creating Charts and Diagrams*, by Nigel Holmes. New York, New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1991. This book provides examples and exercises in how to make data look visually exciting.

- *The Presentation Design Book: Tips, Techniques & Advice for Creating Effective, Attractive Slides, Overheads, Multimedia Presentations, Screen Shows*, edited by Margaret Y. Rabb. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Ventana Press, 1990. This book provides tips

and techniques for designing effective presentation graphics.

Print Design and Production

- *Pocket Pal: A Graphic Arts Production Handbook*, by International Paper Company. New York, New York: International Paper Company. This frequently updated reference book has been providing basic information on offset printing technology and practices since 1934.

- *How a Book Is Made*, by Aliko Brandenburg. New York, New York: Harper Trophy, 1988. This children's book explains in easy-to-understand language and illustrations the process of writing, editing, producing, printing and marketing a book.

Type

- *Designing With Type: A Basic Course in Typography*, by James Craig. New York, New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1992. This book provides basic information on understanding and using type.

- *Upper & Lower Case (U&lc)* magazine. New York, New York: International Typeface Corporation. This

publication is targeted for graphic design students, teachers and professionals. The articles showcase historical and current typefaces and type designers. Additional articles are available on the World Wide Web at (<http://www.uandlc.com>).

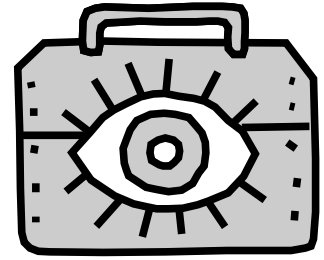
Exhibit Ideas

- See the "Designing Exhibits That Work" skill sheet on page 70, which is adapted from *Communications Made Easy: A 4-H Guide to Presenting Information*, published by Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, 1978 (out of print).



SKILL SHEET:

The Creative Process



The creative process is similar for all areas of communications — it usually involves gathering information, brainstorming, planning, getting feedback, production and evaluation. Here are some things to consider at each stage of your graphic design project.

STAGE 1:

Gathering Information

Before you start developing your design, you'll need to find out:

- Who is the audience and what do you want them to do?
- What is the message?
- What formats (such as advertisements, fliers, brochures and presentation graphics) are available and which format will best suit your purpose?
- What setting will your design piece be seen in? What will be competing with it for attention?
- What production or reproduction processes are available to you and which one will best suit your purpose?
- What is the life span of your design piece? Will it be read once and recycled, or saved and used by more than one person?



- What is your timeline and budget?

STAGE 2:

Brainstorming Ideas

Your brain can work on a creative problem even when you're not concentrating on it! Be prepared — great creative insights can occur at times when you're doing something totally unrelated to your project.

Brainstorming is a technique for generating lots of ideas in a short time (see "Brainstorming" on pg. 5). Remember that all ideas are good ideas at this stage!

- Look in magazines, books or other sources to see how others solved similar problems.
- Make lots of small, quick "thumbnail sketches" to try out many visual ideas.
- Write lots of short, action-oriented headlines or slogans.
- Look for images (photographs, clip-art) that might go with your message.
- Think about the feeling or mood you wish to convey, then look for type styles and colors that could help express it.

STAGE 3:

Fine-Tuning Ideas, Getting Feedback & Planning Production

Make a more complete version of your best idea or ideas. This could be an actual size or scale model of a drawing that looks as much as possible like the final piece. You can use it to:

- Present to others for feedback.

- Serve as a "road map" for producing your final artwork.
- Get cost and time estimates for offset printing or other methods of reproduction.

STAGE 4:

Producing the Final Piece

Once your design is approved and you've checked to make sure it will be able to be produced within your budget, you can move on to production. Production methods will be different depending on whether your final design will be:

- Handmade.
- Printed by a photocopier, offset printing press or silkscreen printer.
- Viewed on a television, video or computer screen.
- Painted on a wall, signboard, vehicle or other object.
- Produced as a display or exhibit.

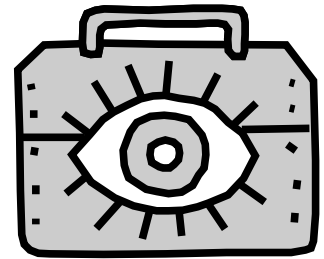
If your final product is going to be handled by others (such as a printer) talk with the people who will be working with your artwork. Be sure you know how they would like it to be prepared. Include clear, written instructions and always give them a phone number where they can reach you with questions!

STAGE 5:

Evaluating Results

Did your intended audience get your message and respond the way you hoped they would? (See the "How Did I Do?" skill sheet on pg. 72 for help in evaluating your work.)

SKILL SHEET: Design Building Blocks – The Elements & Principles

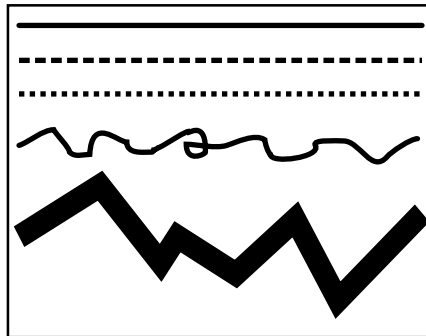


The **elements** of visual design (line, shape, texture, space, size, value and color) are like the wood, nails and concrete used to construct a house. An expert builder is very familiar with the materials of the trade. Good designers also need to become familiar with the elements of design – how to create them and when and how to use them.

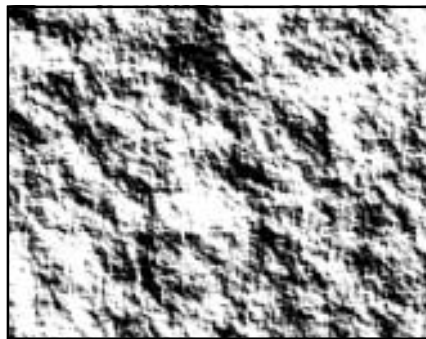
If a builder constructed a house without understanding the basic principles of how the building materials should be assembled, the house would probably collapse! Similarly, in a project such as a poster, the elements of design need to be assembled using the knowledge of a group of design **principles**. That way, the design will be able to do its job of communicating a message.

(**Note:** Design reference materials may use different names for the elements and principles than those used here, but the ideas are generally the same.)

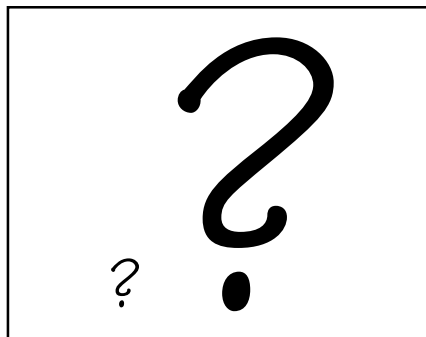
Visual design elements:



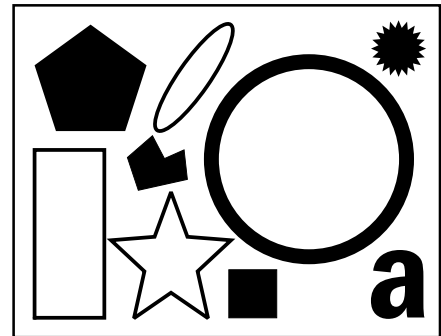
Line – Any mark, whether straight, dashed, dotted, curved or jagged, connecting two points



Texture – The smoothness or roughness of the paper used in printing or the illusion of a three-dimensional surface created by a photo or design



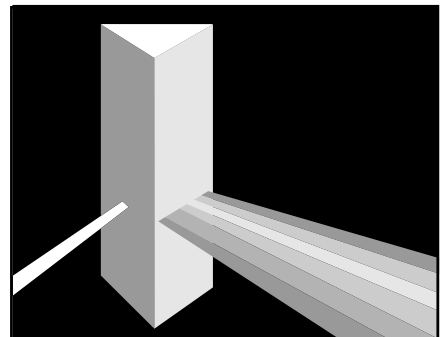
Size – How big or small something is



Shape – Anything with height or width



Space – The distance or area between or around things



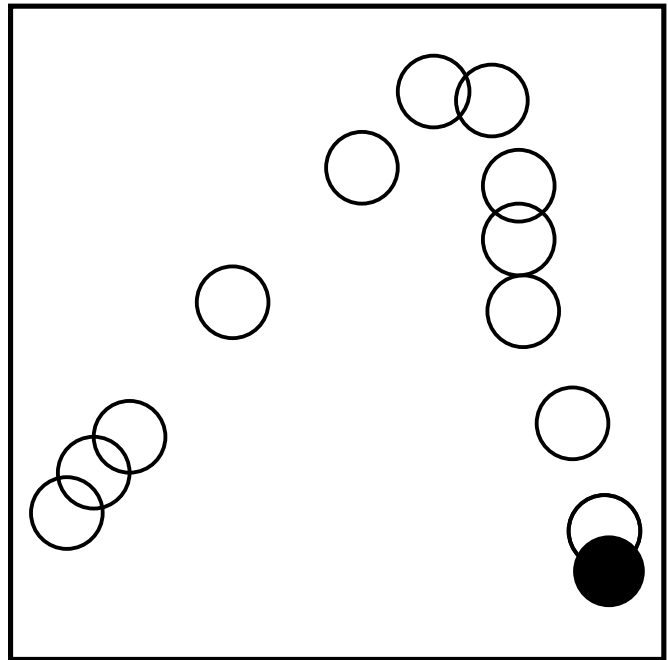
Color – Wavelengths of light that are reflected back to the viewer's eye from objects

Value – The lightness or darkness of colors

Visual design principles:



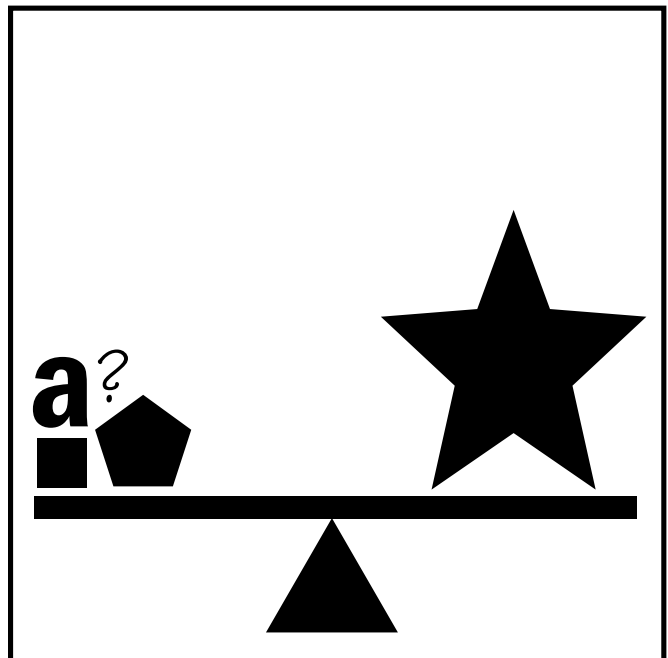
Emphasis – Using the size, shape, color or texture of elements to show levels of importance



Rhythm – Using elements to create a direction for the eye to follow or to suggest a pattern of movement



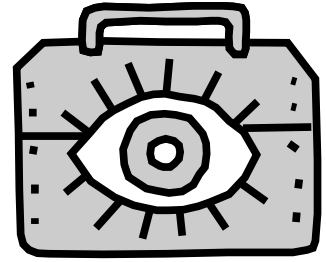
Unity – Using elements that look like they belong with each other



Balance – Arranging elements so that they create a feeling of evenly distributed weight

SKILL SHEET:

Type Terms & Tips



Type has a long and fascinating history, going back probably to 1045 A.D. with the beginning of printing using movable type (one individual piece of type for each character) in China. In 1440, the German printer Johannes Gutenberg used movable type to print his first edition of the Christian Bible. Since then, thousands of **typefaces** have been designed and a great deal has been written about how to work with type.

There are people who have focused their careers on designing typefaces for the communications industry. These designers work to create typefaces that are easy to read and reproduce, have characters that have unity (look like they belong together) and express a particular mood or image.



Type Terms

Following are some definitions of useful type terms. Visual examples of many of these terms are provided on page 63. Some of the words may seem peculiar – like “**font**” or “**leading**.” Keep in mind that many of these terms are carryovers from old printing technologies! For fun, you can research where they originated!

Baseline – The imaginary line on which all letters in a line of type stand

Boldface – A heavier version of a regular typeface, usually used for emphasis

Bullet – Characters used to begin lines of type arranged in a list; each bullet indicates a new item in the list

Flush left – Type that lines up vertically on the left

Flush right – Type that lines up vertically on the right

Font – A set of all of the letters and punctuation marks within a particular size and style of type

Italics – Letters that slant to the right

Justified – Lines of type that align vertically on both right and left sides

Kerning – Adjusting the space between letters

Leading – The space measured from baseline to baseline in lines of type

Pica – A measurement of type length and depth commonly used by graphic designers and printers; there are 6 picas in 1 inch

Point – A measurement of type size; there are 12 points in a pica and 72 points in 1 inch

Rule – Lines of various thicknesses; the thickness of rules is usually measured in points and length in picas or inches

Sans serif – Typefaces without serifs (short cross-strokes)

Serif – Short cross-strokes that are used in some typefaces

Typeface – All letters of a particular type style

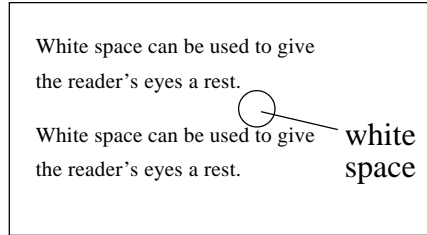
Type style – Variations within a typeface such as italics or boldface

Typography – The art and science of arranging type using the principles of visual design with current communications technology

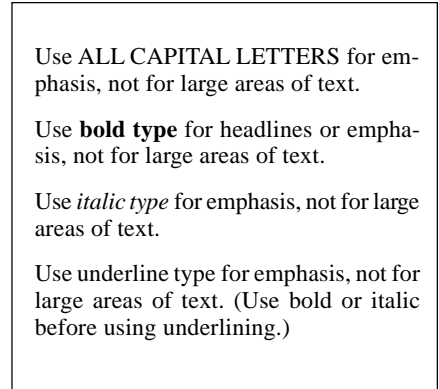
Type Tips



1. *Serif typefaces* – Times Roman, for example – are the most readable for large areas of small type in printed materials such as newsletters or books.



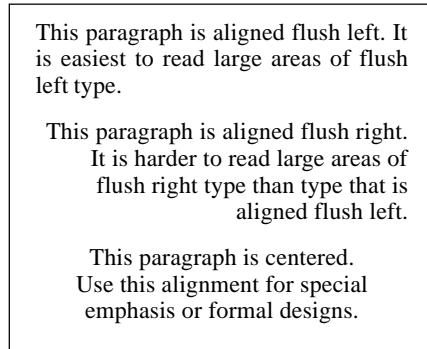
4. Use “white space” (areas of blank space between letters, lines, words and paragraphs of type) to give the reader’s eye a chance to rest between sections of information.



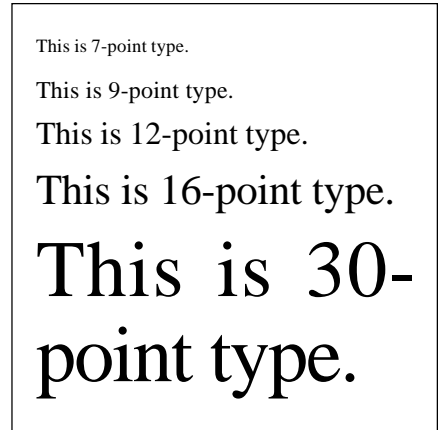
7. Using all capital letters or large areas of bold, *italics* or underlined type reduces readability.



2. *Sans serif typefaces* – Helvetica, for example – are usually good choices for headlines or for video graphics.



5. Large areas of *flush right* or *centered* type are harder to read than *flush left*. Use these alignments occasionally for special emphasis or, in the case of centered type, for a formal design.



8. Good type sizes for the main reading areas of printed materials like newsletters or books are 10-, 11- or 12-point. Type sizes for presentation graphics, posters and displays should be larger. Make type samples and see if you can read them at the intended viewing distance. Always consider the needs of the reader when picking a type size!



3. Using too many different typefaces and sizes in one design project can cause confusion and make the layout look too cluttered for easy reading.

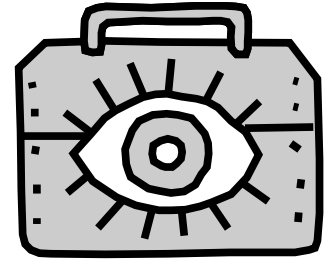


6. Match the headline *typefaces* you use to your message. Type can be used to express many different moods – from formal and serious to playful or comical. Remember that readability is the most important thing. Avoid using stylized typefaces for your “body copy” or main reading area.

9. In general, smaller type works best in shorter line lengths and larger type in longer line lengths. A “rule of thumb” to use for good readability is to keep the length of lines of type in columns between 39 and 52 characters. (This will vary depending on the type size and face.)

SKILL SHEET:

Color Terms & Tips



Color can be described in at least three different ways – scientifically, emotionally and artistically. As a designer, you'll find it useful to understand the basics of each of these viewpoints.

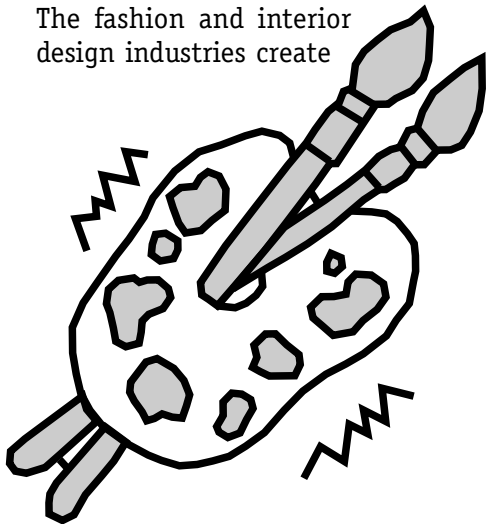
Scientific

Scientists describe color as wavelengths of light (red is longest and violet is shortest). White light is made up of all the colors of the *spectrum*. When light hits a surface, some wavelengths of light are absorbed and some are reflected. The reflected wavelengths are the colors we see. For example, green grass absorbs all the light wavelengths except green, which is reflected back to our eyes.

Emotional

We often use colors to symbolize particular emotions. These color associations can vary greatly from one culture to another. For example, the color red in one culture might signify happiness, but in another culture, aggression or anger.

The fashion and interior design industries create



color names for products (such as “passion pink” lipstick, “Bavarian torte” paint and “almond” floor tile) that they hope will have emotional appeal for consumers.

Artistic

Artists express themselves in their work using various colored media – papers, paints, pencils or computer drawing and painting programs, for example. Color wheels and color triangles are tools artists can use to aid in mixing pigments as well as to create harmonious combinations of subtractive colors.

Graphic artists who create artwork to be reproduced by offset or silk-screen printing use ink color swatch books to help them specify precise colors. Designers who use computers can choose from several different color selection systems within their software. Which one they choose depends on whether their final product will be slides, laser prints, offset printing or computer graphics to be viewed only on a monitor.

Color Terms

Additive color – The colors of light (red, blue and green) that, when combined, create white; the colors seen on computer monitors are additive

Analogous colors – Colors that are next to each other on the color wheel

Chroma – The name of a color; synonym for hue or color

Complementary colors – Colors directly opposite each other on the color wheel

Hue – The name of the color, such as red, blue or yellow; synonym for chroma or color

Intensity – The strength of a color or hue; also called saturation

Monochromatic – Containing one hue only

Pastel – A fashion industry term for colors that have white mixed with them

Primary colors – In subtractive color, the simplest colors of the color wheel that cannot be created by any other colors in combination (red, blue and yellow); in additive color, the wavelengths of light necessary to create all colors (red, blue and green)

Process colors – Ink colors used in offset printing to reproduce full-color images (cyan blue, magenta, yellow and black)

Saturation – The degree of color purity; fully saturated colors can only contain two primary colors and never black or white; also called intensity

Secondary color – Colors made up of two primary colors; subtractive secondaries are orange, green and violet, additive secondaries are cyan, yellow and magenta

Shade – A pure color mixed with black

Spectrum – All the visible hues or colors

Subtractive color – The colors of things resulting from the absorption of light; paint colors are subtractive

Tertiary colors – Colors created by mixing the three primaries

Tint – A pure color mixed with white

Tone – A pure color mixed with grey

Triad – Three colors that are equidistant on the color wheel

Value – The lightness or darkness of a hue created by adding black or white

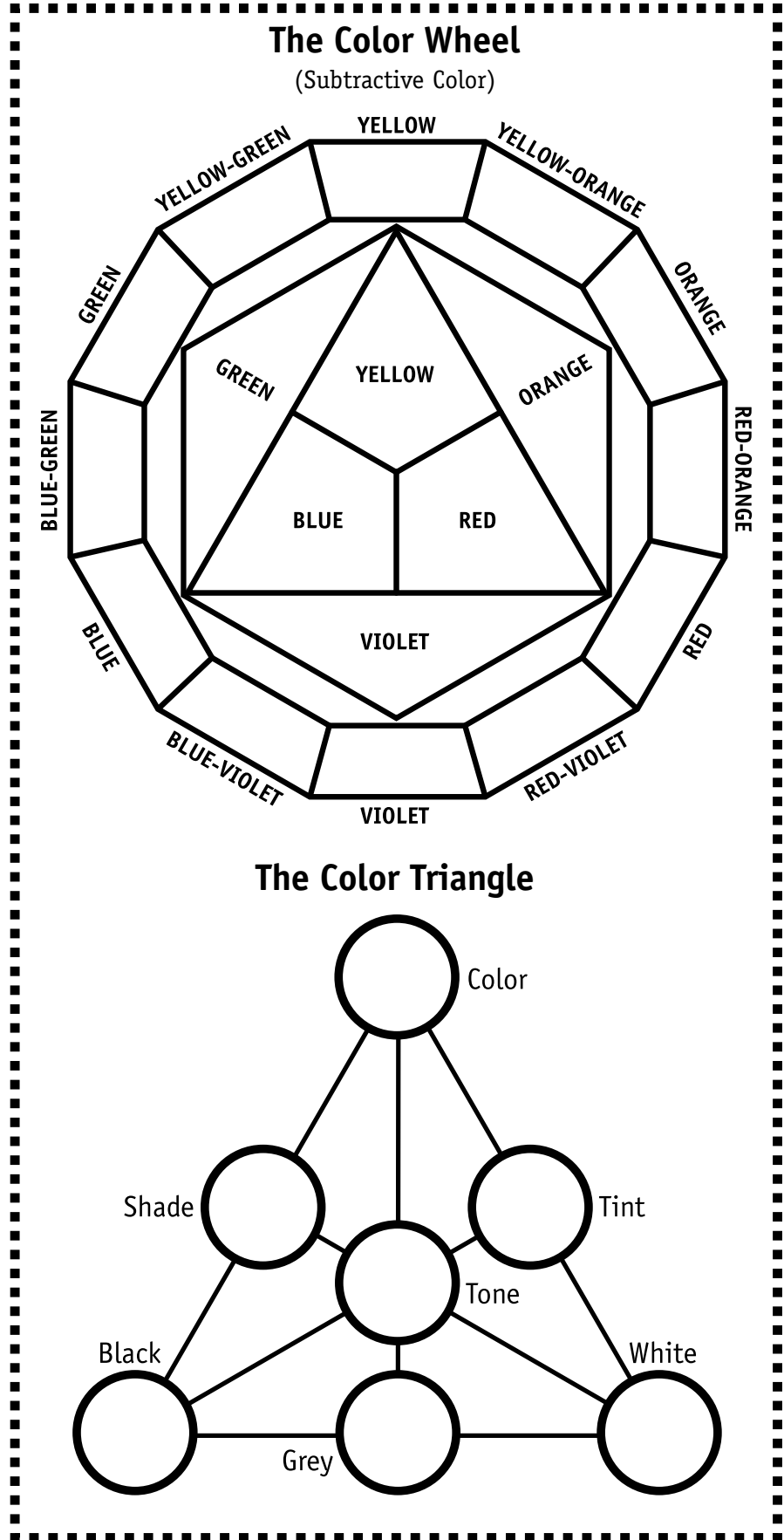
Color Tips

Use color to:

- Highlight important information.
- Show levels of information and organize material.
- Attract attention.
- Tie a layout together.
- Create a mood or an emotional response.

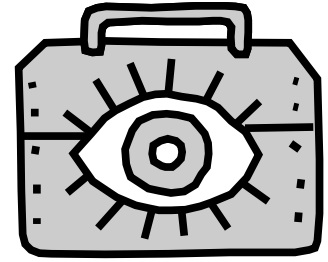
In a layout:

- Warm *hues* (yellows, oranges, reds) will appear larger and closer.
- Cool *hues* (greens, blues) will appear smaller and farther away.
- Use one dominant color for emphasis.
- A small amount of an *intense* color will balance larger amounts of less *intense* color.
- A small amount of warm color will balance larger amounts of cool colors.
- *Complementary colors* will work better together if one has lower *value* and *intensity*.
- All colors can be pleasing, depending on how they're used. Experiment!



SKILL SHEET:

Designing Symbols & Logos That Work



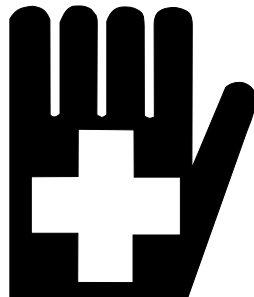
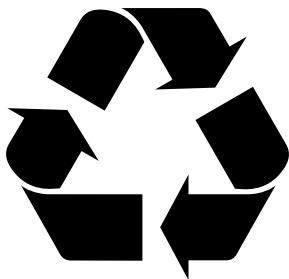
Symbols

Symbols are designs that are used to represent ideas, processes, directions or things.

Well-designed symbols:

- Are easy to recognize, understand and remember.
- Are simple and bold with no unnecessary details.
- Are easy to reproduce in small or large sizes.
- Can be reproduced in one color, especially black.
- Use “white space” (negative space) as effectively as positive space.

Symbol Examples:



Logos

Logos are designs that often combine a name with a symbol to represent a company, organization or individual. Well-designed logos have the same qualities as well-designed symbols. In addition, you need to consider the use of typeface and style and how well the word or words work with the symbols. Logos should:

- Positively express the personality or image of the organization, product or individuals they represent.
- Work well when used in intended applications such as letterhead, business cards and signs.

Logo Examples:



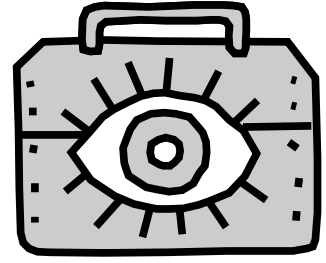
Symbol & Logo Design Tips

The design process for symbols and logos is similar to the design process for other visual communication projects (see “The Creative Process” skill sheet on pg. 59). Here are some additional things to consider:

- You have probably been exposed to thousands of symbols in your lifetime, many you consciously recognize and many your brain has unconsciously stored away. When designing symbols or logos, it’s important to make sure that your designs don’t accidentally resemble too closely the registered trademarks of other businesses or organizations. One way you can avoid this is by having others review and comment on your designs. Another way is to look in the library or bookstore for books that showcase logo or symbol designs.
- Another important reason to have several people review your designs is to find out whether they can understand what you are trying to communicate. What makes sense to you may confuse (or possibly even offend!) someone else.

SKILL SHEET:

Designing Presentation Graphics That Work



Presentation graphics are visual aids used to clarify and highlight public speaking. Posters, charts and overheads are some examples.

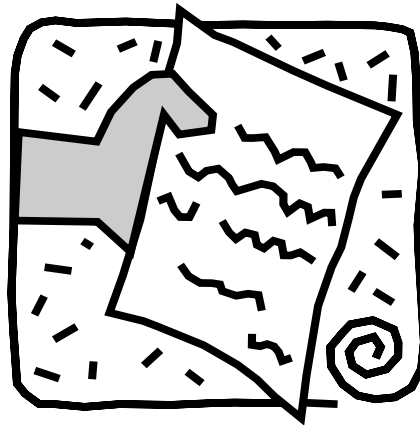


Consider Your Audience

- Make type large enough for your audience to read. Check out your visuals from the farthest distance they will be viewed to see if the audience can read them.
- Don't stack type vertically or place it at odd angles unless you really need to for a special effect. Your audience will get stiff necks trying to read too much type that isn't horizontal!
- Use points or areas of color to help lead the viewer's eye through your visuals.
- Keep your visuals simple and the information on each one brief. Go easy on the boxes, lines and other potential visual clutter. Break your

information up into several visuals and edit it so only the essential information is shown.

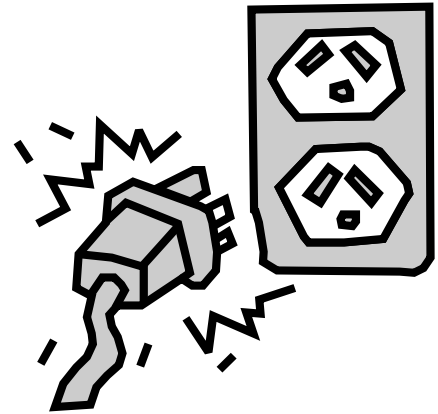
- Don't spend too much time on one visual. You'll lose the interest of your audience.
- Avoid using red and green together to compare data on charts and graphs. It is difficult for people who are color blind to see the difference.



Consider Your Information

- Take time to proofread and check the accuracy of your information. Never use visuals that you haven't carefully checked. (Failing to check your visuals ahead of time could be embarrassing to you and your audience!)
- Vary the size, weight and color of the elements in your visuals when you need to emphasize something.

Too many elements used for emphasis on one visual have the opposite effect – nothing will stand out!

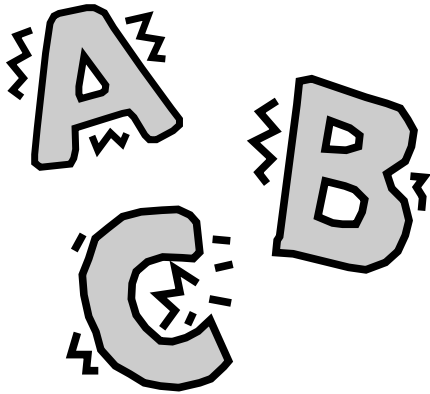
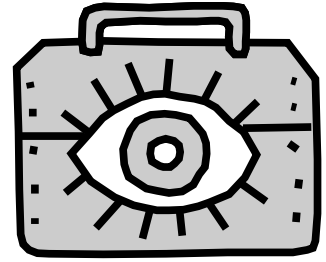


Consider Your Presentation Environment

Plan time to check the availability of electrical plugs and extension cords, curtains to darken windows or the best arrangement of your audiovisual equipment. If possible, double-check equipment before your presentation to make sure it is working properly. Always have a backup plan just in case your equipment breaks down.

SKILL SHEET:

Designing Layouts That Work



Type

- Keep headlines and wording brief – include only the most essential information.
- Take time to proofread.
- Choose an easy-to-read typeface. Avoid using all capital letters, stacking headlines vertically or arranging type at an angle unless a special effect is needed.
- Vary the size of the type (within the readable range) to show the levels of importance of different parts of the message. Make important information big and less important information smaller.
- Make samples of text using different typefaces and sizes to see how easy they are to read from the desired viewing distance.

Artwork

- Create art from enlargements of your original photos, drawings, paintings or cut-paper collages. You can also use copyright-free black-and-white “camera-ready” artwork (look in bookstores and libraries for “clip-art” books that specifically say the art can be legally reproduced.)
- Use graphic elements such as rules, bullets and art to help guide your viewer through your message.
- When possible, limit artwork to one large (at least one-third of the layout area), eye-catching illustration of the message. This will have more visual impact than several small (and hard to see from a distance) images.

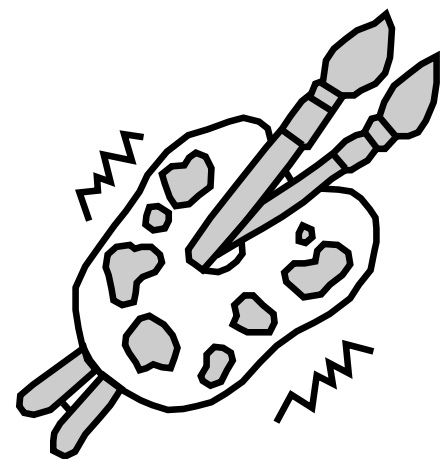
Color

- Use color to catch people’s attention and also as a tool for directing the viewer’s gaze through the message.
- Pick colors for type and art that contrast well with the background color – for example, black type on a yellow background.
- A simple color scheme of two or three colors (including the background), with only one of the col-

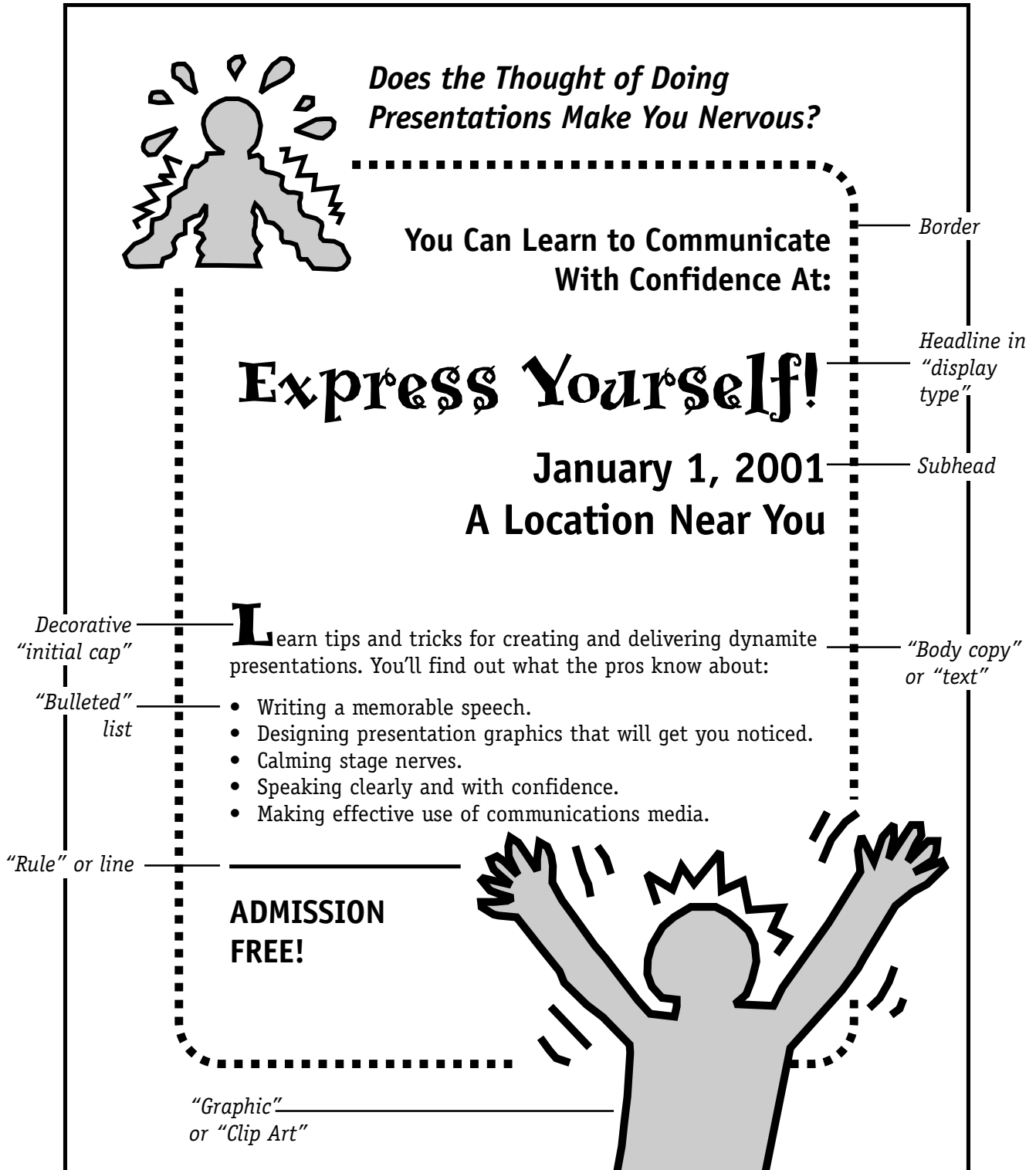
ors being a highlight color, can often communicate more effectively than a design that uses a rainbow of colors!

Space

- Use formal (symmetrical) balance primarily for formal, serious communication.
- Use informal (asymmetrical) balance for topics that call for a more dynamic and interesting treatment.
- Plan for “open space” in your design. Use open space to visually balance areas of text or artwork. If used properly, it can keep your design from appearing too cluttered or busy.
- Make lots of “thumbnail sketches” (small, quick drawings) to see how a variety of headline and art arrangements might look.

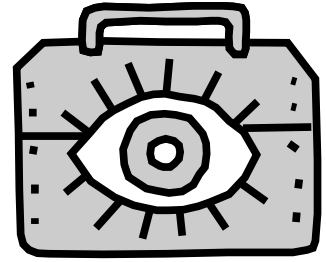


Anatomy of a Flier or Poster



SKILL SHEET:

Designing Exhibits That Work



Exhibits are visual displays designed to attract the attention of people passing by. After an exhibit has caught someone's attention, it should interest them enough that they stay and learn more about a topic, view items, sample products or purchase something.

Exhibits can be as simple as a poster series in a store window, or as elaborate as a multimedia show in a booth at the fair.

Effective exhibits:

- Attract attention.
- Summarize a single idea.
- Tell the visitor where to get more detailed information.
- Present a good image of your organization.

Exhibits may also:

- Take a considerable amount of time to plan, build and maintain.
- Require extra set-up time, specialized help or special transportation to move them.
- Require an attendant as well as maintenance or replacement parts if you use live animals, models, photographs or anything else that could be detached, handled or removed.

Planning Tips

Before you start construction, ask yourself the following questions:

- **What do I want to say?** Exhibits usually hold an audience for only a few seconds, so you must start with a very clear idea of what you want to say. Pick a message that can be easily demonstrated or illustrated and outline the most important points.
- **Who is my desired audience?** Is your message intended for people

who are old or young? Where do they live? What are their backgrounds? What do they have in common? What is important to them? If you can choose a location for your exhibit, pick a place likely to attract your intended audience.

- **Why am I doing this?** Do I want to teach a new idea? Persuade or encourage someone to do something? Reinforce an old idea? Show how something works? Sell something?

- **Who can help me?** Do you need to find people with special skills to help you? Will you need special tools or materials?

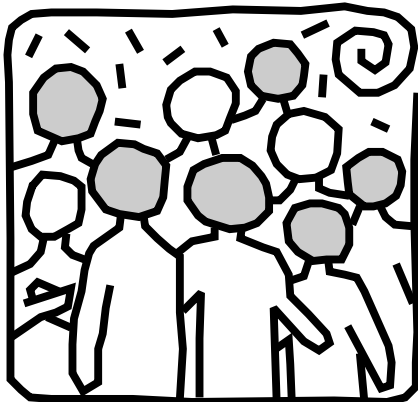
- **How much space is available?** Will you have a whole room or part of a room? An exhibit case? A table-top?

- **Will there be electrical outlets?** Will you need lighting, slide projectors, computers, tape players or other electrical devices to effectively get your message across?

Location, Location, Location

Put your exhibit where the most people you want to reach will pass by with time to stop and look at what you have to say. Always get advance permission to set up your exhibit from whoever is in charge of the area you choose! Some places where you might arrange to set up an exhibit include:

- **Schools.** Most schools have display cases and bulletin boards.



- **Public buildings.** Check libraries, airports, post offices, county courthouses and other public buildings for areas you might get permission to use.

- **Doctors' or dentists' offices.** Medical offices are often willing to provide space for exhibits on health care or nutrition, and patients appreciate having something to look at while they wait.

- **Shopping centers or malls.** These areas are good for attracting large, diverse audiences.

- **County fairs.** Many people attend fairs especially to see the exhibits.

Exhibit Design Tips

- Set up your exhibit to read from top to bottom, left to right like the pages of a book.

- Make sure background material isn't distracting, illustrations are big and bold, and lettering is easy to read. Follow this guide for lettering sizes:

Lettering	Viewing Distance
¼ inch	8 feet
½ inch	16 feet
1 inch	32 feet
2 inches	64 feet

- Use horizontal lettering, not vertical.

- Use real objects, demonstrations or models to add life to your exhibit (but be prepared for potential breakage or theft).

- Keep your message brief and to the point so viewers can digest it in just a few seconds. To convey more detailed information, pass out brochures.

- Sketch your exhibit ideas before you start to build. This will give you a rough idea of size, materials and layout.

- Try to anticipate problems. Will the lettering run if it rains? Will wind blow the panels down? Will children break the models?

- Play it safe. Have a professional check electrical wiring. Make sure there are no cords, wires or other objects anywhere people might trip on them. Anchor objects in your exhibit well to prevent accidents.

Make Your Exhibit Work for You

If your exhibit has a person tending it, he or she should:

- Be neat, polite and helpful.
- Wear a name tag.

- Make sure the exhibit is functioning correctly.

- Stay to the side, out of the way.

- Stay with the exhibit.

- Be prepared to answer questions, or tell people where they can get more information.

- Keep the area clean.

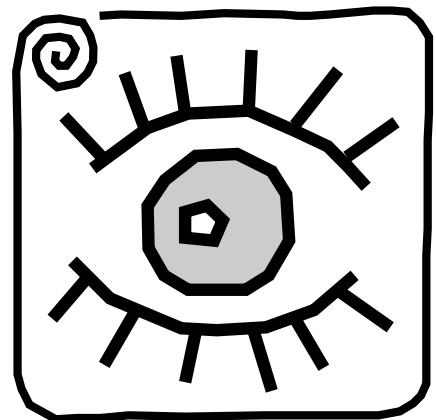
If your exhibit is unattended:

- Check occasionally to make sure everything is working correctly.

- Repair any tears, missing letters or other pieces, or other problems immediately.

- Change the display regularly, or remove the exhibit when you are through.

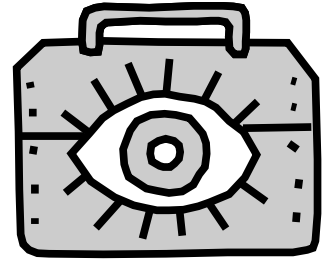
- Keep glass display cases clean.



SKILL SHEET:

How Did I Do?

A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project



Use this checklist to evaluate and fine-tune your design work. Keep notes on what you think you did well and on areas in which you'd like to improve.

Audience

- Does the design appeal to your intended audience? Is the type legible? Are the graphics appropriate for the age level? Is the design bias-free? What works well and what might you do differently?

Message

- Do all elements of your design communicate your message? Is it clear what you want the viewer to know or do? What works well and what might you do differently?

Format

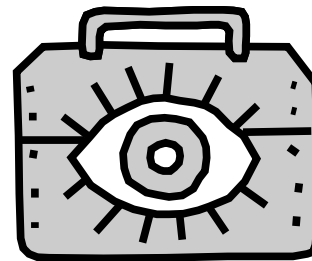
- Are the format (such as brochure, flier, poster, ad, display, overhead transparency) and layout appropriate for presenting the information? What works well and what might you do differently?

Environment

- Does the design stand out in the environment in which it was intended to be used? What works well and what might you do differently?

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Elements: Line



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of line in design

PURPOSE:

- To experiment with creating different line qualities
- To create lines that give the impression of different feelings or moods

MATERIALS:

- Various widths of black pens, pencils, crayons, markers, brushes with ink and any other writing instruments you can find
- White paper
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the participants they are going to experiment with one of the basic elements of design: lines. Designers use lines to help organize or connect things, to show direction, to suggest feelings, to show rhythm, to suggest shapes and more!

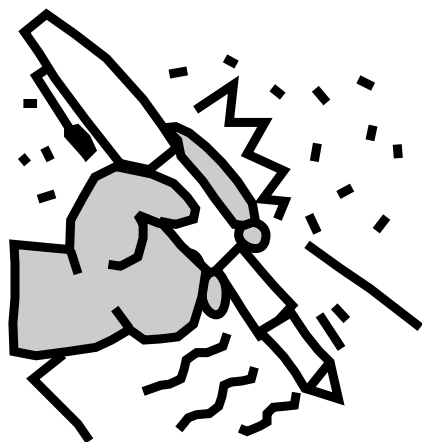
Ask the group to make as many different kinds of lines as they can with all the available drawing tools.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask the group to look at their collection of lines and describe the characteristics of the lines (such as soft, hard, neat, fuzzy, active, quiet, wiggly). Have the participants write a word they’ve used to describe the line using the same type of line – for example, they could write the word “wiggly” in a wiggly line style. Have them think about how a designer might want to use some of these qualities in a communication piece such as a poster.

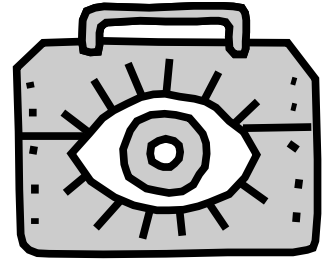
TRY THIS TOO:

Have the group find examples of advertisements, posters, magazine layouts or other communication pieces that use lines. Talk about how the designer used lines in the piece.



DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Elements: Shape



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of shape in design

PURPOSE:

To create combinations of shapes that communicate an idea or thing

MATERIALS:

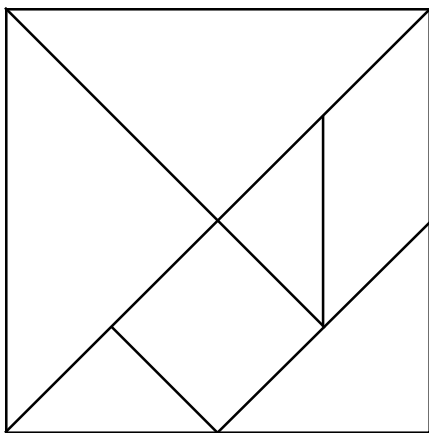
- Scissors
- Glue sticks or tape
- Paper in colors that contrast with the copies of the “Take the Tangram Challenge” hand-out
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)
- “Take the Tangram Challenge” handout (on pg. 76; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes



PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the group they’re going to use an ancient Chinese shape puzzle known as a tangram to experiment with one of the basic elements of design: shapes.
3. Share the following information with the group:

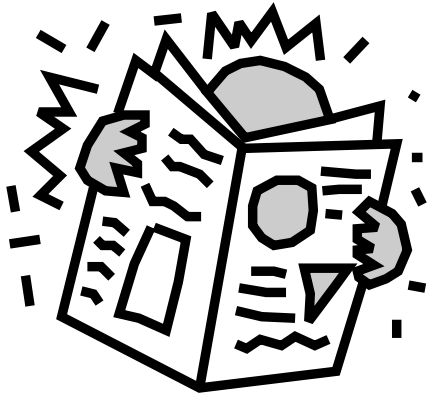
Designers use shapes to represent ideas (for example, hearts often represent the concept of love and open books represent education). Designers use shapes in logos to represent what businesses or organizations do. They often use interesting shapes to attract readers to a page of information. For example, a photograph might be cropped like a starburst or type might be arranged into a triangle.

4. Ask the group to think of some other shapes that represent ideas. Have them list some of the different shapes they could use in a design layout. For example:
 - Geometric shapes like triangles, squares, rectangles, circles
 - Natural shapes such as plants and animals
 - Abstract shapes (often similar to natural shapes, but simpler)
5. Divide the group into pairs, then distribute copies of the “Take the Tangram Challenge” handout, the glue sticks or tape, and the colored paper to use as backing.
6. Explain to the group that they will have 5 to 10 minutes to use the tangram pieces to create a shape. The shape should represent an object from the list on the handout or an object they come up with on their own. Tell them they don’t have to use all of the tangram pieces provided. They can also trade pieces with other pairs. When they’re done with the shape, have the teams fasten their completed images to contrasting paper.
7. Bring the total group together and ask them to figure out what each of the tangrams represents. Then have them repeat the activity, creating shapes that represent an emotion or action from the list on the handout or one they come up with on their own.
8. Go through the questions in the “Talking It Over” section.

TALKING IT OVER:

Bring the total group together and talk about the following questions.

1. What was easier to communicate – a thing, an emotion or an action? Why?



2. How might that ease or difficulty in communication relate to the experience of designing a logo or symbol? (Point out that in general, the more complex an idea is, the more abstract the symbol designed to express it usually is. As a result, it may be more difficult to communicate the same meaning to a variety of people. Corporate logos are good examples of this. If a company represents many products and services, their logo is usually quite abstract.)

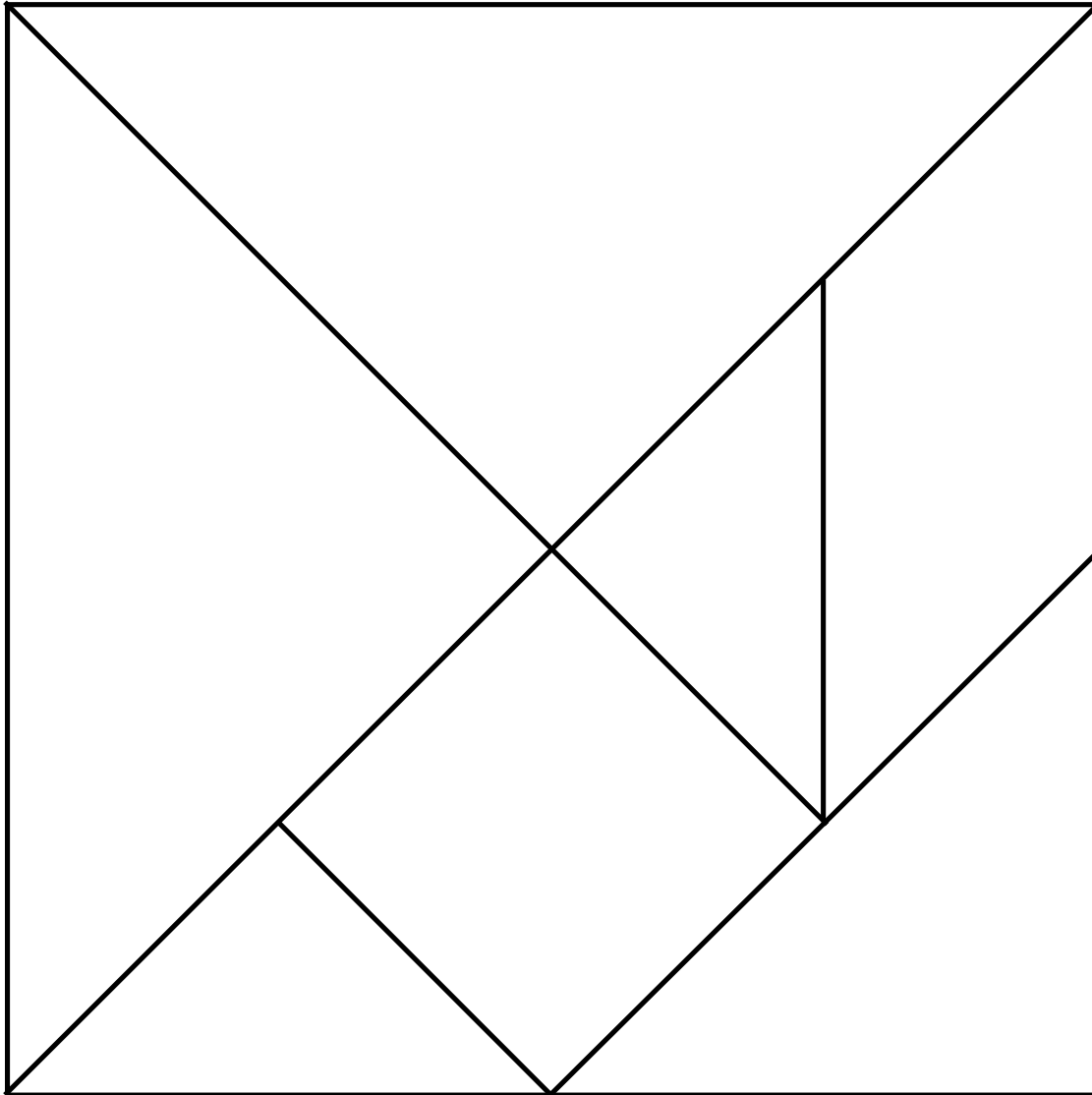
TRY THIS TOO:

Have the group look through magazines and collect examples of symbols and layouts that make creative use of shapes.

DESIGN ELEMENTS: SHAPE HANDOUT

Take the Tangram Challenge

Tangrams are ancient Chinese puzzles in which players use seven pieces cut from a square to create designs and figures. The traditional game requires that all seven pieces be used in each design and that no pieces overlap. For this activity, you may use as many of the pieces as you wish, but do not overlap them.



Trace or copy the pattern and cut the pieces apart. You can glue the pieces to a piece of paper or cardboard of a contrasting color once you've created a design you like.

CHALLENGE 1:

Arrange the tangram pieces to make one of the objects from the following list (or make up your own).

- Airplane
- Bird
- Boat
- Cat
- Flower
- House
- Mouse
- Rabbit
- Snake
- Tree

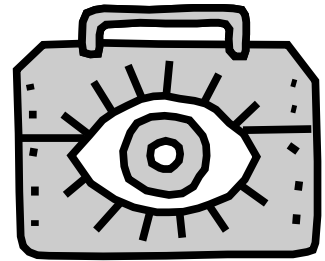
CHALLENGE 2:

Use the tangram pieces to express one of the emotions or actions from the following list (or make up your own).

- Angry
- Dancing
- Happy
- Running
- Sad
- Sleeping
- Talking
- Walking

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Elements: Texture



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of texture in design

PURPOSE:

- To experiment with finding or creating different visual textures
- To try using texture to communicate a feeling

MATERIALS:

- A variety of objects with different surface textures such as window screen, lace, wood, feathers, leaves, grass
- Samples of printed materials that use different textures of paper
- Printed materials with visual texture (patterns) such as wrapping paper, wallpaper, sections of photos cut from magazines
- Sheets of colored paper without much texture
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- "Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles" skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the "Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles" skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the group they're going to experiment with one of the basic elements of design – texture. Share the following information:
Texture actually can be felt (like the surface of linen finish paper or embossed lettering) or texture can be an illusion (like paper that is printed to look like fabric or wood.) Printed patterns also can give the illusion of texture when used as a background or border.
3. Ask the group to list some moods or feelings they think could be communicated through texture.
4. Divide the group into pairs. Tell them they're going to create texture swatch sheets (similar to the swatch sheets interior designers use to show clients different color and fabric selections.) Have the participants create visual textures by placing textured objects underneath sheets of paper and rubbing the flat side of crayons over the paper.
5. Next have the teams clip examples of visual textures from photos in magazines. Have the groups cut their texture swatches into similar shapes and sizes, then fasten the swatches that look as though they have a similar "feel" onto sheets of paper with descriptive titles such as "woody," "rough," "shiny" or "delicate."
6. Have the teams take turns presenting their swatches and ideas to the total group.

TALKING IT OVER:

Bring the group together as a whole and talk about one or more of the following questions.

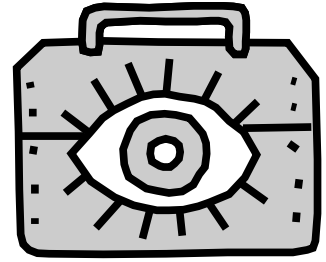
1. How could you use texture in a design project?
2. Can you think of other ways to "capture" textures to use in design? (Tell them that designers often have access to collections of photo textures on CD-ROM disks that they can apply to shapes or lettering. Also, textures can be electronically scanned into computer files or photocopied directly from objects. Point out that another important use for texture in design is in signage, where raised lettering and the use of the Braille alphabet are necessary.)

TRY THIS TOO:

- Have the participants create a scrapbook of texture swatch pages.
- Have the group research some of the computer design programs that use fractal mathematics to create fascinating visual patterns.

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Elements: Space & Size



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of space and size in design

PURPOSE:

To help participants become aware of the role of space and size in visual communications

MATERIALS:

- Solid color paper cut into different sizes and shapes
- Sheets of a contrasting solid color paper
- Scrap paper
- Glue sticks, rubber cement or clear tape
- Pencils
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the participants they’re going to experiment with two of the basic elements of design: space and size. Share the following information on space with the group:

In design, “space” is the area that type, shapes and lines occupy in a communication piece. Space is also the areas surrounding what’s in print (designers call this “open” or “white space”). The space between objects, as well as the size of the space they take up in a design, can give the impression of different relationships such as near or far, crowded or lonely, important or not important. Space can be used to give the impression that a group of things belong together. Sometimes empty space is provided just to give the reader’s eye a place to rest. Spacing between letters, words, lines and paragraphs is also very important to the readability of type. The shape of the “white space” around objects can be used to communicate meaning as well.

3. Ask the group if they can think of any symbols or logos that make use of both positive and negative space. (The 4-H logo is one example – the H’s are negative spaces in the cloverleaves.)
4. Share the following information on size with the group:

Using different sizes of objects in a design can attract more attention than using objects that are all the same size. Making something that is usually very small – such as an insect – very large in a design (maybe even so big that it is partially cut off the edge of the page) is unexpected and will make the viewer want to know more. The size of type or symbols is critically important when a driver needs to read a road sign from a distance in a moving car.
5. Ask the group to think of some other examples in which size might be critical.
6. Divide the group into pairs. Write the following ideas (or create your own) on individual slips of scrap paper.
 - Lonely or outcast
 - Joyful
 - Leadership
 - Contrast unified or harmonious with divided or confused
 - Contrast tidy with messy
 - Contrast huge with tiny
 - Contrast wide with narrow



7. Fold the slips and place them in a hat or other container. Have the teams take turns drawing slips. Explain that their task is to come up with a way to represent the idea on their slip by arranging and pasting geometric shapes on a contrasting color of paper. Tell them that they may need to try several arrangements before mounting their shapes.
8. Have the teams take turns presenting their designs to the group and see if people can guess what ideas the layouts represent.

TALKING IT OVER:

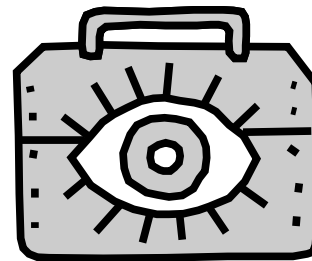
Ask the participants how easy or hard they thought this activity was. How many arrangements did they have to try before they got one that really worked? Explain that planning the size and space arrangements in a design project is similar to doing a room arrangement. It's much easier to rearrange small pieces of paper furniture on graph paper than it is to move life-sized furniture! Similarly, drawing rough thumbnail sketches makes it quick and easy to try out different arrangements of text, headlines, photos and illustrations on a page.

TRY THIS TOO:

Have the group collect examples of advertising designs in magazines that make interesting use of space and size.

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Elements: Color



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of color in design

PURPOSE:

To help participants become aware of the properties of color

MATERIALS:

- Tempera or gouache paints (yellow, blue, red, black and white)
- Paint brushes
- Water containers
- Newspapers
- Color palettes or cups for mixing colors
- Pencils
- White index paper
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)
- “Color Terms and Tips” skill sheet (on pp. 64–65; one per person)
- “The Color Wheel and Triangle” handout (on pg. 82; one per person, photocopied on card or index stock)
- “Explore Color” handout (on pg. 83; six per person, photocopied on card or index stock)

SETTING:

A room with work tables, sink and chairs

TIME:

1 to 2 hours

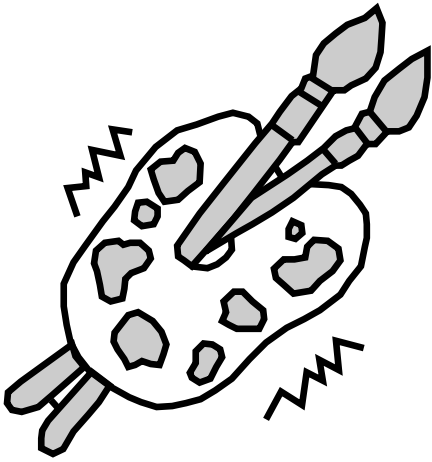
PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Photocopy the handouts.
2. Cover tables with newspapers and set out painting supplies.

During the meeting:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell participants they are going to explore one of the basic elements of design: color.
3. Give each participant a copy of the “Color Terms and Tips” and “The Color Wheel and Triangle” handouts. Review the handouts with the group and explain that they are each going to create a tool that they can use when selecting colors for their design work.
4. Have them paint their color wheels, starting with the “subtractive” primary colors (yellow, red and blue), then mixing the secondary (the color in the middle between two primary colors). Finally, have them paint the intermediary colors between the primary and secondary colors.
5. When the color wheels are completed, ask participants to point out the following:
 - Hue
 - Analogous colors
 - Complementary pairs of colors
 - Warm colors
 - Cool colors
 - Color triad
6. Tell the group to paint their color triangles by choosing one primary or secondary color, then mixing it with white, grey and black.
7. When the color triangles are finished, ask participants to point out the following:
 - Hue
 - Tint
 - Shade
 - Tone
8. Distribute six copies of the “Explore Color” handout to each participant. Ask them to label the designs and color them using the following color schemes:
 - Warm colors
 - Cool colors



- Analogous colors
- Monochromatic
- Triad
- Complementary

9. When the designs are dry, display them around the room, grouped by color scheme.

TALKING IT OVER:

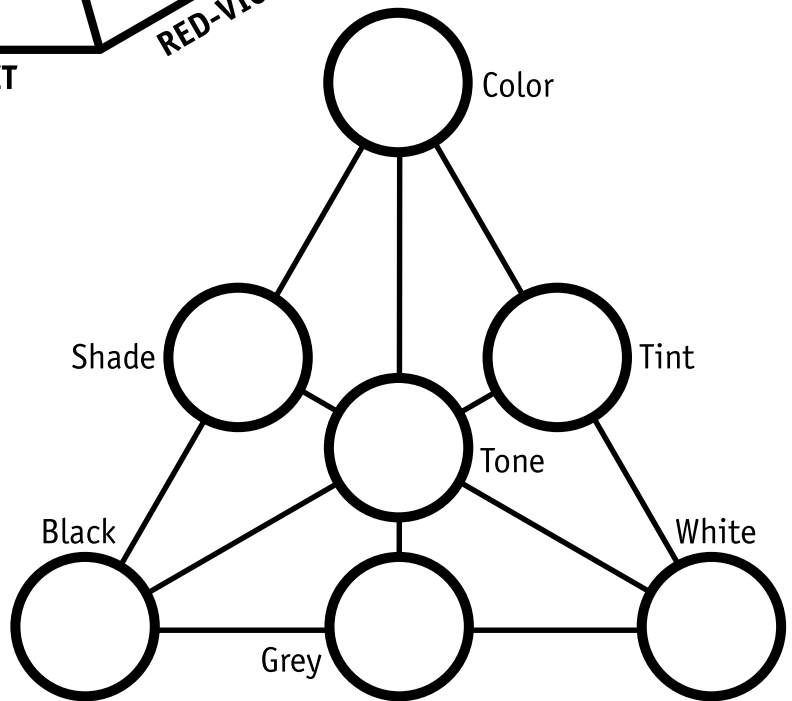
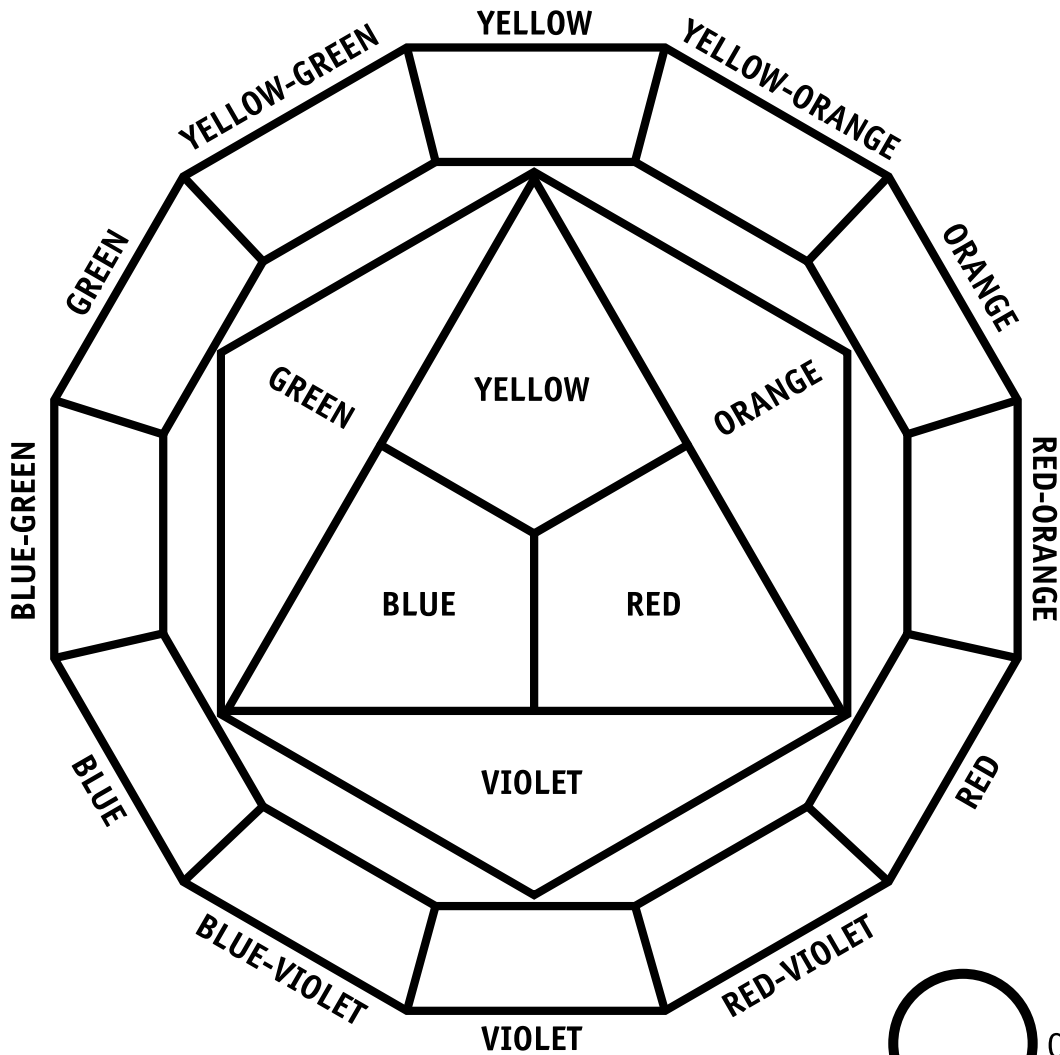
Bring the group together and ask the following questions about the emotional associations of color.

1. What feelings might the different color schemes represent? Why?
2. Does everyone associate the same colors with the same emotions? How might this information be used in visual communication design?
3. What would you do differently if you were designing information for an audience from a different culture than your own?

TRY THIS TOO:

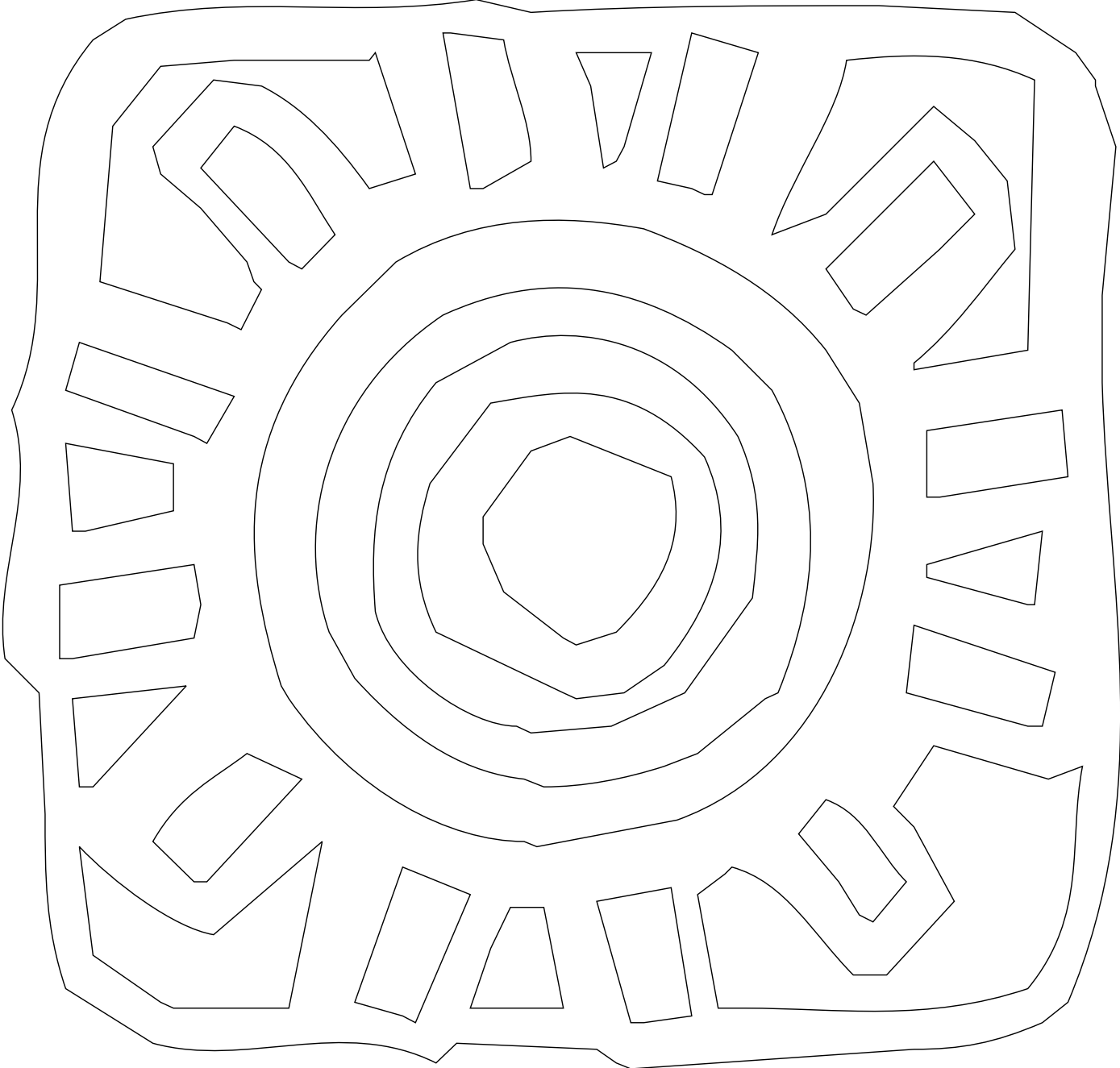
A tremendous amount of information is available about color. The group may be interested in exploring an area of color research such as fashion color. Color forecasting companies anticipate color trends for entire industries. Have your participants think about the range of manufactured products that might depend on color research. The group could have fun collecting and discussing the color names used for consumer goods in stores and catalogs.

The Color Wheel & Triangle



DESIGN ELEMENTS: COLOR HANDOUT:

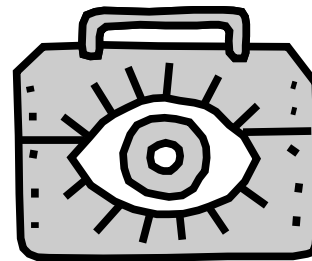
Explore Color



COLOR SCHEME: _____

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Principles: Balance



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of balance in design

PURPOSE:

To help the participants practice applying balance to a simple design problem

MATERIALS:

- Magazines
- 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Bright red markers or crayons
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)
- “Balancing Shapes” handout (on pg. 86; two per group)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

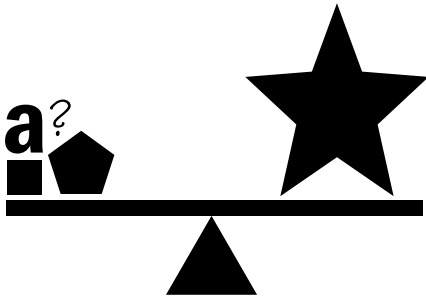
1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the participants they’re going to experiment with one of the principles of design: balance. Share the following information with the group.

Unbalanced design may give the reader a feeling of uneasiness.

Balanced design feels more secure and allows the viewer to concentrate on the message you’re trying to communicate.

Two kinds of balance are generally used in design – symmetrical (formal) and asymmetrical (informal). Symmetrical balance is an arrangement of objects at equal distance to the left and right of the center of the overall design. Asymmetrical balance is an arrangement of objects with equal “visual weight” on either side of the design. The design elements of color, size and shape all provide visual weight. For example, bright colors and large shapes would look “heavy” on the right side of an asymmetrical design and could be balanced by a large area of white space on the left side.

3. Have the group look at advertisements in magazines and identify examples of both kinds of balance.
4. Divide the group into two-person teams. Tell them they’re going to create and compare designs with the two kinds of balance. Distribute two sheets of 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper and two copies of the “Balancing Shapes” handout, scissors, a bright red marker or crayon and a glue stick to each team.
5. Tell the participants that to create a symmetrical design, they should cut out all the shapes on one of the “Balancing Shapes” handout. Then have them color the small white circle with the red marker or crayon.
6. Next have them fold one sheet of white paper in half (in either direction) and set the paper down so that the folded line is running away from them. Explain that this fold is the “line of symmetry.” Tell them to arrange the shapes they’ve cut on the white paper so that the right side of the paper is a mirror image of the left side.
7. Now tell the group that to create an asymmetrical design, they should cut out all the shapes on the other “Balancing Shapes” handout. Then have them color the small white circle with the red marker again.



8. Have the participants look at the shapes and think about which ones have the most and the least “visual weight.” Tell them to arrange the shapes on the page so that the shapes look balanced but are not symmetrically placed.
9. If you have enough time, have the groups create several symmetrical and asymmetrical designs to see how many different combinations they can come up with using the same shapes. Have the teams display their designs around the room.

TALKING IT OVER:

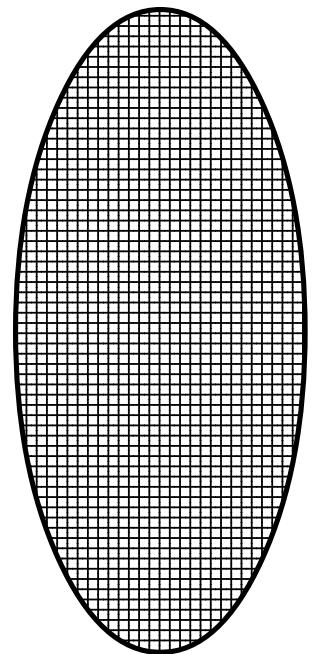
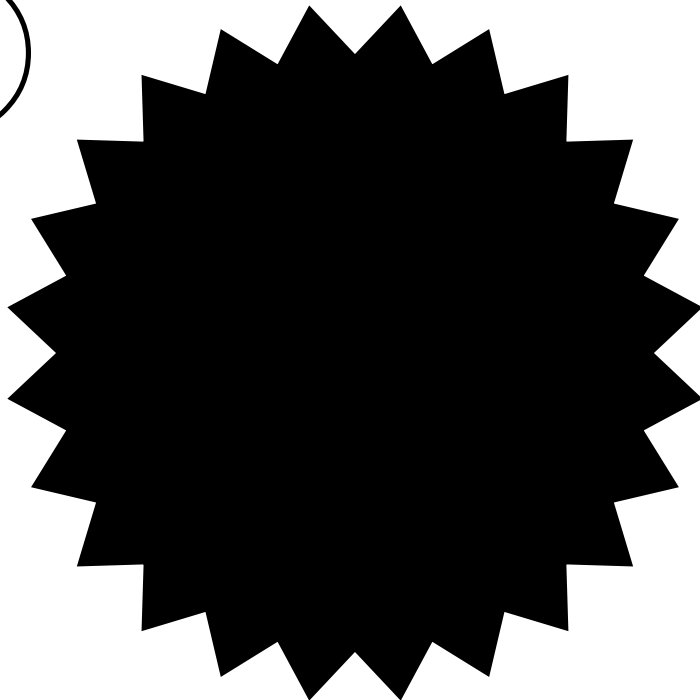
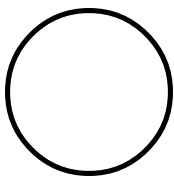
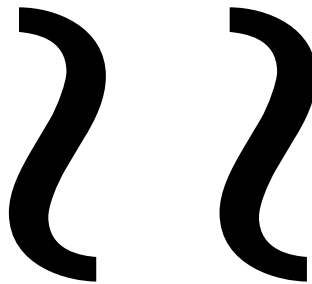
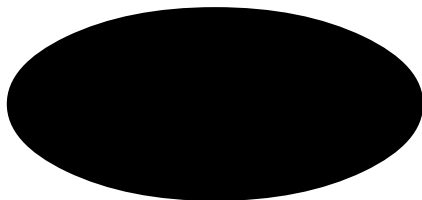
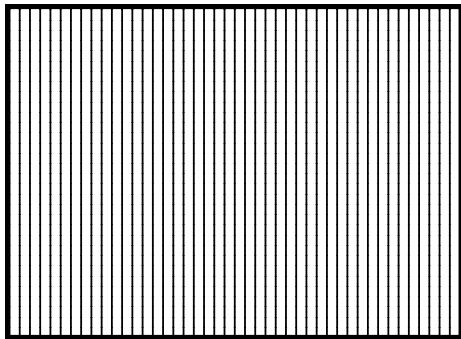
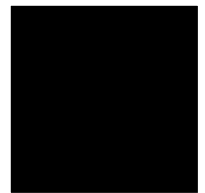
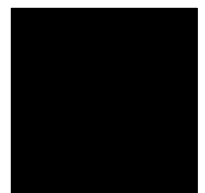
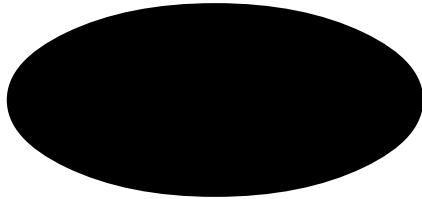
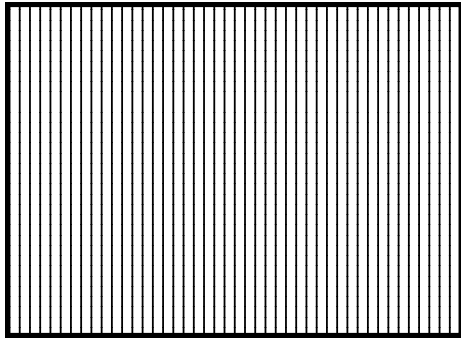
Bring the whole group back together, and while they look at the designs, ask the following questions:

1. What kind of feeling do you get from the symmetrical designs? In what kinds of design projects might you use this kind of balance?
2. What was easier to balance – the symmetrical or asymmetrical designs? (Point out that asymmetrical balance becomes easier with practice.)
3. How did adding the colored circle affect the overall balance of the designs?

TRY THIS TOO:

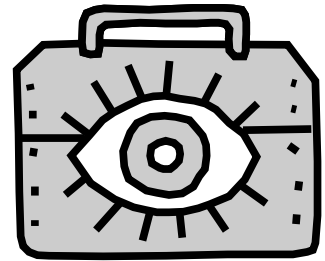
Have the group investigate how the principle of balance is used in advertising layout design. The participants could clip magazine ads, sort them by the type of balance used in the design and create a design reference notebook.

Balancing Shapes



DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Principles: Rhythm



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of rhythm in design

PURPOSE:

To practice applying rhythm to a simple design problem

MATERIALS:

- Tape recorder
- Taped musical selections with different rhythms (such as fast, slow, smooth, erratic)
- 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper
- Black and colored markers or crayons
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the participants they’re going to experiment with one of the principles of design: rhythm. Share the following information with the group.

Rhythm in design is like rhythm in music – it is created by repeating elements in a pattern, which unifies the composition. Like music, if the same pattern is repeated too long, it will become boring or annoying, so variations in the pattern are needed to maintain the viewer’s or reader’s interest. Even patterns with equal spacing between elements are more relaxing, while uneven patterns are more exciting.

3. Tell the group they’re going to create designs with rhythm with the help of music. Distribute several sheets of 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper and one black and one colored marker or crayon to each person.
4. Tell the group to close their eyes and listen for the rhythmic patterns and variations while you play a short musical selection (about 5 minutes). After they’ve listened to the music once, tell them you’re going to play the selection again. As they listen to the selection the second time, have them make marks on their paper to represent the rhythms they hear in the music. These marks can be any kind of line, shape or color they think is appropriate. Remind the group that there is no “right way” to do this! Repeat this process with the other musical selections.
5. Display the rhythm drawings in groups by musical selection.

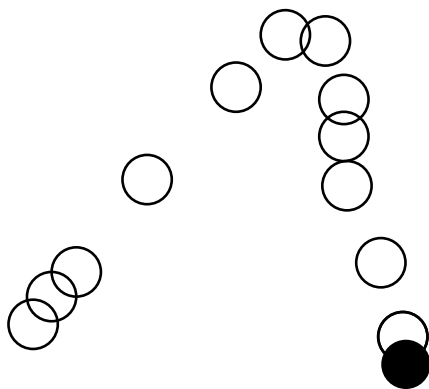
TALKING IT OVER:

Bring the group back together and ask the following questions:

1. What similarities can you find within the drawings made during each musical selection? Is the mood of the musical selection reflected in the drawings? How?
2. If you wanted to create the same mood in a poster design, how might you incorporate rhythm in your design? (Discuss background art, repeating shapes and colors, and alternating sizes and weights of type.)

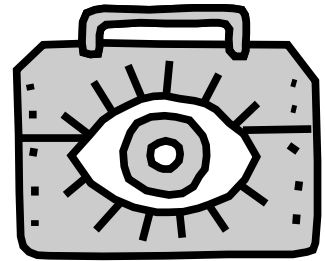
TRY THIS TOO:

Explore the work of artists Henri Matisse, Larry Poons, Vasily Kandinsky or others who have created artwork inspired by music. Collect examples of the use of visual rhythm in a design reference notebook for future reference.



DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Principles: Emphasis



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of emphasis in design

PURPOSE:

To practice applying emphasis to a simple design problem

MATERIALS:

- 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper
- 2-inch square cardboard templates
- Black and bright colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Pencils
- Black markers or crayons
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

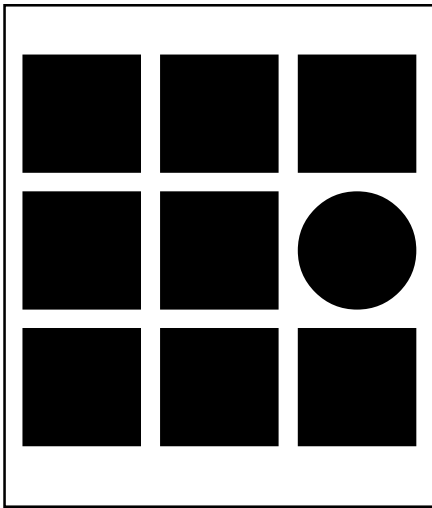
About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

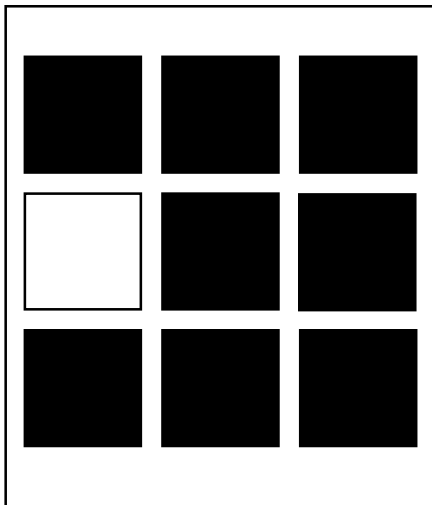
1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Decide whether you’re going to have the participants work individually or in pairs. If they’ll be working in pairs, have them form two-person teams now.
3. Tell the participants they’re going to experiment with one of the principles of design: emphasis. Share the following information with the group.

Emphasis is used in design to make important things get noticed first. You can vary the shape, color, angle, size, texture, value or line thickness of an object in a layout to give it emphasis. If a design has too many areas of emphasis, however, nothing will stand out and the viewer will become confused.

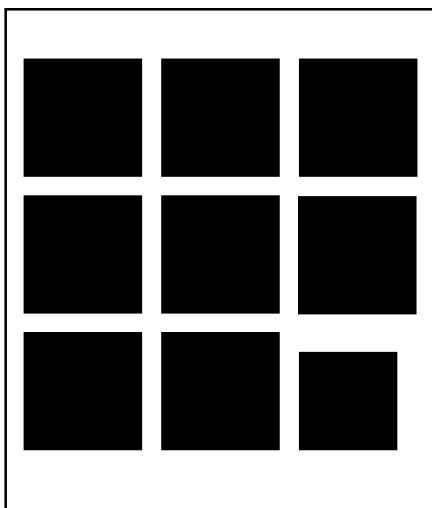
4. Distribute the 2-inch square cardboard templates, pencils, scissors, 8.5-inch by 11-inch white paper and colored construction paper.
5. Explain that each person or group will create five designs that show different ways to create emphasis. Tell them to start each design by using the 2-inch cardboard template to trace and cut out nine 2-inch squares from black paper. Then arrange the squares in three rows of three with about ½-inch of white space between each row.
 - **Design 1 (Shape):** Cut a 2-inch diameter shape that is not a square out of black paper and replace one of the squares with this piece. Paste all the pieces onto a white sheet.
 - **Design 2 (Color):** Cut a 2-inch square out of red or another bright color of paper and replace one of the squares with this piece. Paste all the pieces onto a white sheet.
 - **Design 3 (Size):** Cut a black square that is a little smaller or larger than 2 inches and replace one of the squares with this piece. Paste all the pieces onto a white sheet.
 - **Design 4 (Angle):** Position one of the squares at a slightly different angle than the others. Paste all the pieces onto a white sheet.
 - **Design 5 (Texture and Value):** Replace one of the squares with a 2-inch black square with a different texture and value (lightness/darkness of black). Create the texture by either rubbing a black crayon on a piece of white paper placed over a textured object or by making an even pattern of lines over the paper. Paste all the pieces onto a white sheet.



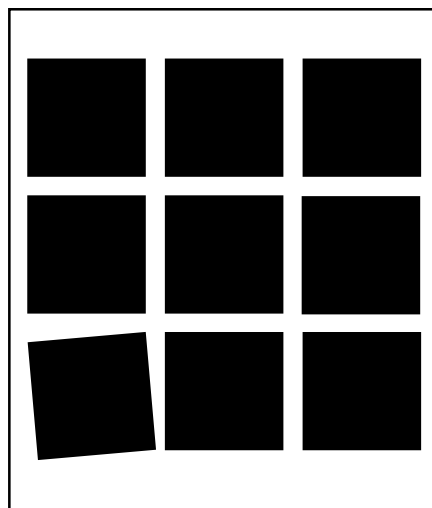
Design 1 (Shape) Example



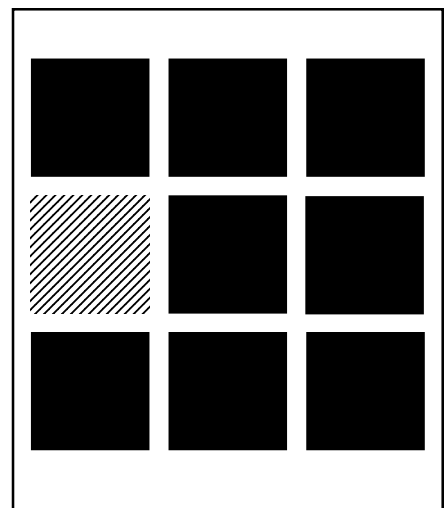
Design 2 (Color) Example



Design 3 (Size) Example



Design 4 (Angle) Example



Design 5 (Texture and Value) Example

- **Design 6 (Multicolor):** Create a similar design with nine different bright-colored 2-inch squares cut from construction paper and pasted onto a white sheet of paper with about 1/2-inch of white space between each square.

6. Tell the participants to view each of their designs by first closing their eyes, then opening them and seeing what part of the sheet catches their attention first.

TALKING IT OVER:

Have the participants get back into the larger group and ask the following questions:

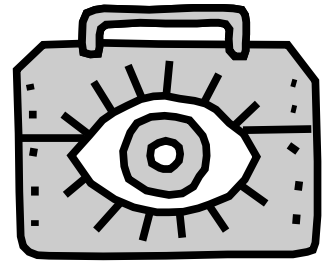
1. Did some types of emphasis stand out more than others? Which ones?
2. What had emphasis in the multicolored design? Which is more effective for showing emphasis – the design with black and one accent color or the multicolor design?

TRY THIS TOO:

- Have the group cut several ads from magazines and look at each one to see where their eyes go first when they look at the ad. Discuss why. See whether the group can find examples of ads with confused emphasis.
- The group may wish to keep a notebook for their designs and observations.

DESIGN WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Design Principles: Unity



FOCUS:

Understanding the use of unity in design

PURPOSE:

To learn how unity is created in visual communications design

MATERIALS:

- One complete and different issue of the same newspaper (such as the July 11, 12 and 13 issues of the *Anytown Herald Press*) per work group
- Paper
- Pencils or pens
- “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet (on pp. 60–61; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

About 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out and review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.
2. Tell the participants they’re going to explore one of the principles of design: unity.

Explain that a unified layout looks like all the design elements belong together. As in an attractive outfit of clothes, a unified design uses type, artwork, colors, patterns, shapes and lines that harmonize.

3. Divide the participants into small groups. Distribute newspapers, paper, and pencils or pens. Tell them that they’ll have about 15 minutes to look for and take notes on the ways the newspaper designer created unity in the layout. Tell them to look for:
 - Repeating type styles, colors, shapes or textures
 - Grouped elements
 - Evidence of a grid (an invisible framework for arranging type, art and space) being used throughout the publication
4. After they’ve looked through their newspapers, have the participants return to the larger group. Ask for volunteers to report their small groups’ findings to the larger group.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask the following questions:

- As you listened to the small group reports, did you note a sense of design unity from one issue of the newspaper to the next?
- Why do you think unity might be important to the readers of a daily newspaper?

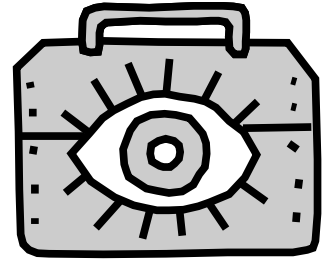
TRY THIS TOO:

- Try having the group do a similar exploration of unity as it applies to television shows or audiovisual materials.
- The group may wish to keep a notebook for their observations.



ACTIVITY:

You're My Type



FOCUS:

Communicating using typefaces

PURPOSE:

- To help participants become aware of the many styles of type
- To help participants understand how different type designs can be used to communicate different messages

MATERIALS:

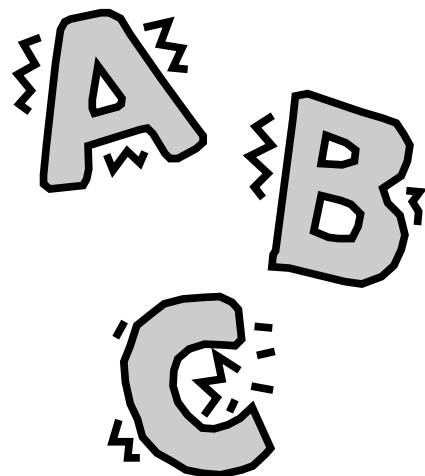
- Glue sticks
- Paper
- Rulers
- Pencils
- Scissors
- "Typeface Sample Sheet" handout (on pg. 92; one per person)
- "Type Terms and Tips" skill sheet (on pp. 62–63; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

20–30 minutes



PROCEDURE:

1. Give each person a copy of the "Typeface Sample Sheet" handout. Explain that the sheet includes just a few of the thousands of typefaces that have been designed since the invention of printing with movable type (see the "Type Terms and Tips" skill sheet for more information).
2. Have the participants divide into two-person teams. Give them 3 minutes to introduce themselves to their partners by describing the types of activities they enjoy or by sharing other information about themselves.
3. After the partners have introduced themselves, tell them they'll be designing a monogram for their partners using a typeface that visually represents their partner's interests.
4. Pass out glue sticks, paper, rulers, pencils and scissors.
5. Share the following information with the participants:

Choose a typeface from the "Typeface Sample Sheet" that is the best match for what you learned about your partner from his or her introduction. Cut out the first letters of your partner's first, middle and last names in that typeface. Use a ruler and pencil to draw a light "baseline" on a sheet of paper that you can follow to align the initials. Paste the initials onto the paper. You could also hand-draw the lettering or enlarge some letters on a photocopier and trace them onto a paper.

6. When the teams are done, ask each person to introduce his or her partner using the nameplate he or she has designed.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask the group the following questions:

1. Why did you select the typeface that you did?
2. Do you think you were able to "capture" some aspect of your partner's interests using the typeface you chose?

TRY THIS TOO:

People who design typefaces are called typographers. The study of type design is called typography. Information is available on these areas in the library under the broader topic of graphic design. Computer software has been developed that gives designers the ability to create new typefaces. If the group has access to a computer with drawing software, they may be interested in trying to create their own alphabet.

YOU'RE MY TYPE HANDOUT:

Typeface Sample Sheet

Beesknees ITC*

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

Bradley Hand ITC*

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

Cheltenham ITC Bold BT*

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

Eras Ultra ITC*

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

ITC Officina Sans Book*

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z

Snap ITC*

**A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z**

Juice ITC*

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

Matisse ITC*

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

Tempus Sans ITC*

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

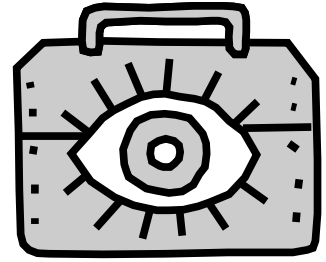
Viner Hand ITC*

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

* ©Copyright International Typeface Corporation

ACTIVITY:

Scanning the Visual Environment



FOCUS:

Thinking about visual communications in our environment

PURPOSE:

- To help participants become aware of the variety of visual communications that surround them
- To help participants learn to identify some different forms of visual communications

MATERIALS:

- Pads of paper (one pad per team)
- Pens or pencils

SETTING:

Public building or center such as a school, community center, mall or downtown area

TIME:

30–45 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide the group into two- or three-person teams. Give each team a pad of paper and pen or pencil.
2. Tell the teams they're going on a "visual treasure hunt." They should find and record as many examples of visual communication as they can in 15 minutes (you can give them more time if you think it's necessary). Ask them to name some examples of the kinds of things they might look for (such as signs, logos, T-shirt messages, bumper stickers, billboards).
3. Ask each group to choose a person to record the group's findings in words or sketches.

Leader's Note: Before your group disperses to gather examples of visual communication, review with them some appropriate safety rules. For example, staying together, staying alert to their surroundings and events happening around them, and meeting at the designated time at the designated meeting place.

TALKING IT OVER:

After the group has gotten back together, have each team present their findings. Have the group discuss the following questions:

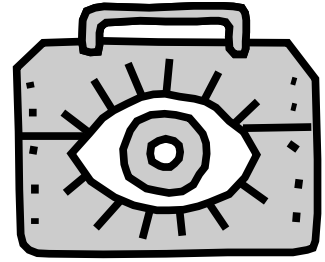
1. How many messages were you able to find? Were you surprised at the number? Do you think there were even more that you didn't notice?
2. Did some messages stand out more than others? Why? (Ask for a description of color, type size, types of illustrations and other design features.) Did some messages take longer to find? Why?
3. Do the visuals you found have different "jobs?" (Examples might include directional signs, advertising, graffiti.) Did you see any messages in Braille, raised lettering or other methods specifically designed for people with low vision or special needs?
4. How do you normally look at your visual environment – how much do you actually see? Discuss how people selectively view the visual environment depending on what they're doing or thinking about at the time.

TRY THIS TOO:

Many of the visuals your participants found were created by graphic designers. Group members could look for more information in the library under the topics of graphic design and advertising. People in the professions of architecture, urban planning and industrial design are also involved in designing the visual environment of cities and towns.

PROJECT:

Design a Logo



PURPOSE:

To design a personal logo

MATERIALS:

- Pencils
- Graph paper
- Ruler or straight edge
- Tracing paper
- Glue sticks
- White paper
- Black fine-tip and wide-tip markers
- Photocopier (optional)
- "The Creative Process" skill sheet (on pg. 59; one per person)
- "Designing Symbols and Logos That Work" skill sheet (on pg. 66; one per person)
- "Typeface Sample Sheet" handout (on pg. 92; one per person)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

A room with work tables and movable chairs

TIME:

At least 60 minutes (more if you wish to have participants create a more polished product)

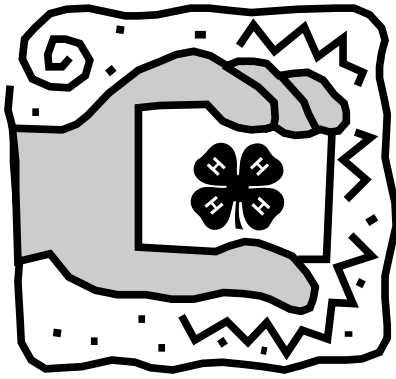
PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

It will be helpful if the group has experienced at least a couple of the design warm-up activities before doing this project. While all of the elements and principles are important to the design of logos, warm-ups that focus on shape, space, rhythm or unity are good ones to start off with. If you can do only two design warm-ups, choose one from the design elements and one from the design principles. The "You're My Type" activity is also good to use before designing logos if the participants are unfamiliar with typeface designs.

During the meeting:

1. Tell the group that they're going to design personal logos that will contain a visual symbol and their initials. Pass out and briefly review "The Creative Process" and "Designing Symbols and Logos That Work" skill sheets. It is helpful to view and discuss examples of professionally designed logos from magazines and product packaging.
2. Have the participants write some words to describe themselves and think about a symbol (such as an animal or object) to represent themselves. Pass out copies of the "Typeface Sample Sheet" and ask the participants to look for a typeface that fits their personality.
3. Explain to the group that making thumbnail sketches is a great way to brainstorm visual ideas. Using the information about themselves they've brainstormed, have them begin to explore some logo designs by drawing thumbnail sketches. Encourage them to fill several pages with sketches and to not throw any away. Explain that sometimes a sketch you initially don't like may end up sparking another creative idea that does work well.
4. Ask the participants to pick one of the thumbnails they like best and draw it larger in pencil on a sheet of white paper. Have them refine the design in pencil, then trace over and fill it in carefully in black ink. This can be used as their "camera-ready art" to include in other identity products such as personal letterhead and calling cards.
5. If you have time, suggest that each person develop ideas for calling card and letterhead layouts using their logo designs. These could be presented as sketches or laid out using reduced photocopies of the logos along with type from a typewriter or computer. To help with this, you may want to provide examples of professional calling cards and letterhead designs.



TALKING IT OVER:

Ask for volunteers to present their logos to the group and talk about the evolution of their ideas from brainstorming to final design. Ask the group how they might go about creating a logo for a company or product they weren't familiar with.

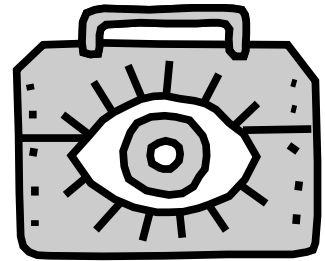
TRY THIS TOO:

The group might be interested in creating a final product incorporating their logos. If they want to have calling cards or letterhead offset printed, they could visit a commercial printing company and discuss with a printer how they would need to prepare their final art. Other uses for their logo designs are to:

- Have a rubber stamp made.
- Embroider or appliqué the design into a sewing project.
- Paint, silk-screen or stencil the design onto a personal item such as a T-shirt.
- Have small groups search for good logo examples in magazines and tell the larger group why they think the designs are successful.

PROJECT:

Design a Poster or Flier



PURPOSE:

To use the design process and elements and principles of design in a poster or flier format to communicate a message

MATERIALS:

- Magazines, catalogs or photocopies of black-and-white clip art
- Scissors
- Glue sticks, rubber cement or clear tape
- Colored pencils
- Wide-tip and narrow-tip black and colored markers
- Rulers
- Colored or white paper or posterboard
- Scrap paper
- "The Creative Process" skill sheet (on pg. 59; one per person)
- "Design Building Blocks - The Elements and Principles" skill sheet (on pp. 60-61; one per person; optional)
- "Designing Layouts That Work" skill sheet (on pp. 68-69; one per person)
- "Thumbnail Sketch Page" handout (on pg. 100; one per person)
- "How Did I Do? A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project" skill sheet (on pg. 72; one per person)
- "Sample Projects" handout (on pg. 99; one per person)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Room with work tables and chairs

TIME:

2 hours or more

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. It will be helpful if the group has experienced at least a couple of the design warm-up activities before doing this project. While all of the elements and principles are important to poster design, the warm-ups that focus on space, size, color, type or balance are good ones to start with. If you can do only two design warm-ups, choose one from the design elements and one from the design principles.
2. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people's feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
3. You may wish to decorate the walls of the room with posters you've collected.
4. If you plan to have the teams' posters or fliers reproduced by offset or other printing processes, talk to a printer in advance to find out how to best prepare the camera-ready art.

During the meeting:

1. Tell the group they're going to design either posters or fliers (fliers are small posters that are usually 8.5 inches by 11 inches). Divide the group into two- or three-person teams and have them work on real publicity situations, situations they make up or one of the projects from the "Sample Projects" handout. Point out that most posters or fliers are viewed for only 8 to 10 seconds, so they'll have to make a strong impression fast!
2. Ask the teams what kinds of information they might need before they begin their design project. Pass out copies of "The Creative Process" skill sheet. Briefly review the design stages and then give participants a chance to answer the questions in "Stage 1: Gathering Information."
3. Next, tell the group that it's time to start brainstorming ideas and layouts for their "design elements." (You may wish to distribute and

review the “Design Building Blocks – The Elements and Principles” skill sheet with the group.)

4. Distribute the “Designing Layouts That Work” skill sheet and go over it with the group. Emphasize that all ideas are good ideas at the brainstorming stage! Then pass out the “Thumbnail Sketch Page” and have the teams make several thumbnail sketches of potential layouts. If teams are having a hard time coming up with ideas, suggest they look at magazine ads for sample layouts that they could adapt to their project.
5. After the teams have created a variety of thumbnail sketches, ask each team to choose the sketch they think has the most potential from the ones they have drawn. Have them produce a more detailed layout (graphic designers call detailed layouts “comprehensives” or “comps”) of that sketch, or if time is short, have them go directly to laying out the final art on paper or posterboard. Team members can take responsibility for different elements of the design depending on their comfort level with drawing and lettering.
6. Production: Discuss with the group how production techniques vary depending on the materials available and whether the final posters or fliers will be one-of-a-kind or reproduced by photocopying, silkscreening or offset printing. Tell them that no matter how their poster or flier is to be reproduced, all art and lettering must be produced in black and white. It must be neat, with any guidelines erased and all written material carefully proofread! If your group has access to computers with page layout software, they can produce their projects electronically.

TALKING IT OVER:

Have the teams present their final products to the group and explain the design decisions they made. Ask the group to identify the strong points of each design. You can also have the participants use the “How Did I Do? A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project” skill sheet to reflect on their work.

TRY THIS TOO:

- One “low-tech” (but still effective for beginners) way to do this activity is to have the teams produce their posters or fliers with hand-drawn lettering and art using wide-tipped markers or to cut and paste colored paper or clip-art mounted on paper or posterboard. Lettering stencils may be helpful, too. Participants can make guidelines with a ruler or T-square and pencil, then erase the lines when the poster is finished. They could also enlarge and mount computer-generated type or art on their posters and fliers.
- “Graphic design” is the profession of people who work with the design and production of “primarily” printed information. People who do graphic design work can often be found in advertising agencies, on the staff of newspapers and magazines, or at printing businesses. The group may be interested in researching graphic design at the local library or arranging a visit with a local graphic designer.





- The group might be interested in taking on the job of designing publicity posters for a local group or event. Theme T-shirts are another type of “wearable poster” design project the group might enjoy trying.
- Have the participants look around, either in the building where you’re meeting or in the area, for examples of posters that catch their attention. If the group is meeting in a public building, have the teams go outside and look for examples. (The activity called “Scanning the Visual Environment” on page 93 has suggestions for how to do this.) Have the participants talk about why the layouts are or are not effective.

DESIGN A POSTER OR FLIER HANDOUT:

Sample Projects

Create a poster or flier for a [event name] at [place]. Write a creative title for the event. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a poster or flier advertising a [event name] for senior citizens. Write a creative title for the event. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a flier for a [event name] for kids in elementary school. Write a creative title for the event. The fliers will be sent home from school with students and must attract kids as well as their parents. Include a tear-off form that parents must fill in and return to the school to register their kids. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a poster or flier advertising [event name] to raise funds to send a club to camp. Write a creative title for the event. These could be distributed door-to-door or placed in local businesses and gathering places. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a recruiting flyer or poster to get [volunteers] to come to a [community service activity]. Write a creative title for the event. These will be placed on bulletin boards around town. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a poster or flyer to advertise a [fund-raising event] to raise funds for [cause]. Write a creative title for the event. These could be distributed door-to-door or placed in local businesses and gathering places. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

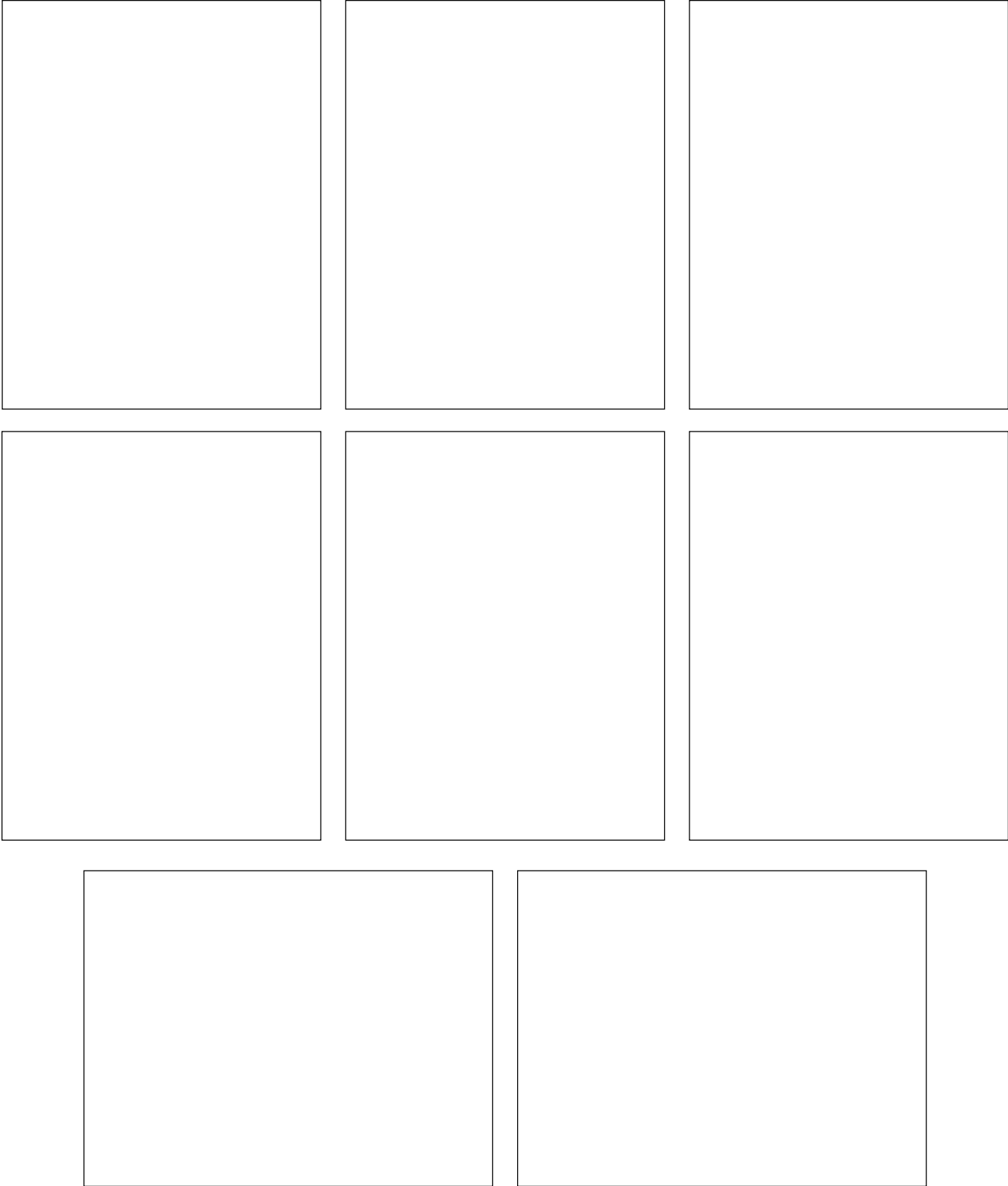
Create a poster or flier to recruit new members to a club or group. Write a creative title for the event. The target age group is 9- to 14-year-olds. These will be passed out at school and also pinned up on bulletin boards. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

Create a poster or flier advertising a new book [invent a title] on [topic]. These could be placed in local businesses such as bookstores and [topic-related stores or gathering places]. Include the “what,” “when,” “where” and “how to get more information.”

DESIGN A POSTER OR FLIER HANDOUT:

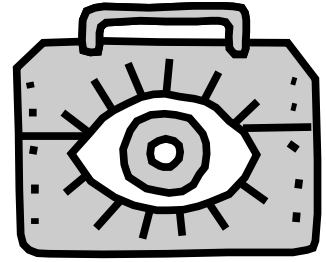
Thumbnail Sketch Page

Use this page to draw quick, rough thumbnail sketches of your project ideas.



PROJECT:

Design Presentation Graphics



PURPOSE:

To provide experience in designing and using presentation graphics

MATERIALS:

- Overhead projector and screen
- Overhead transparency film (enough for presentation sets and projects)
- Overhead markers
- “Designing Presentations That Work” overhead transparency presentation set (on pp. 110–121)
- “It’s a Dog’s Life” overhead transparency presentation set (on pp. 122–130)
- Cellophane tape
- Pencils
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Hat, box, basket or similar small container
- “The Creative Process” skill sheet (on pg. 59; one per person)
- “Designing Presentation Graphics That Work” skill sheet (on pg. 67; one per person)
- “Planning Grid for Overhead Transparencies” handout (on pg. 103; one per person)
- “Font Sheet” handout (on pp. 104–105; one per team)
- “Storyboard” handout (on pg. 106; one per team)
- “Circle Sheet” handout (on pg. 107; one per team)
- “Group Project Suggestions” handout (on pp. 108–109; enough copies for one activity per team)

Note: This project can be adapted for poster presentations by substituting poster board for the overhead transparencies and projector.

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. It will be helpful if the group has experienced at least a couple of the design warm-up activities before doing this project. While all of the elements and principles are important to the design of presentation graphics, warm-ups that focus on line, color, type, emphasis, balance or unity are good ones to start off with. If you can do only two design warm-ups, choose one from the design elements and one from the design principles.
2. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people’s presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don’t be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people’s feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
3. Photocopy and cut apart the projects listed on the “Group Project Suggestions” handout or create your own and write them on slips of scrap paper. Place the slips into a hat, box or other small container.
4. Photocopy the “Designing Presentations That Work” and “It’s a Dog’s Life” transparency presentation sets onto overhead transparency film.

During the meeting:

1. Tell the group they’re going to design several overhead transparency-type presentation graphics. Ask the participants why they think using graphics during a presentation might be valuable. (Charts and diagrams can help clarify spoken words, images help keep the audience interested and help them remember important points, projected summaries of spoken points help people with low hearing, illustrations assist nonreaders.)
2. Point out the following advantages of overhead transparencies:
 - They are easy and inexpensive.
 - They are portable.
 - They don’t require a totally darkened room, so the audience can see to take notes.

MATERIALS CONTINUED:

- “How Did I Do? A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project” skill sheet on pg. 72; one per person)
- “What I Learned” self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Room with work tables and chairs, windows that can be darkened and electrical outlets

TIME:

2 hours

- You can face the audience while presenting.
 - They provide a friendly, hands-on way to present to small- to medium-sized groups.
3. Review “The Creative Process” and the “Designing Presentation Graphics That Work” skill sheets with the group.
 4. Present the overheads from the “Designing Presentations That Work” and the “It’s a Dog’s Life” overhead transparency presentation sets. (It’s more fun if you can get individuals from the group to volunteer to present one or more of the overheads.)
 5. Divide the group into pairs and have the teams take turns drawing an activity slip from the hat.
 6. Explain that the teams will have about an hour to prepare and practice using overhead transparencies to accompany a presentation on the topic they have drawn. Encourage all team members to participate in the final presentation.
 7. Distribute the markers, overhead transparency film, and the “Planning Grid for Overhead Transparencies,” “Font Sheet,” “Storyboard” and “Circle Sheet” handouts. Encourage them to use the:
 - “Planning Grid for Overhead Transparencies” to help them align letters on the overhead transparency sheet.
 - “Font Sheet” to trace letters to help them keep the lettering size in a readable range.
 - “Storyboard” sheets to make idea sketches or to write notes to use during their presentations.
 - “Circle Sheet” to help them draw circles for pie charts.
 8. When the teams have finished preparing and practicing their presentations, you can ask for volunteers or have the teams draw numbers from a hat to determine the order in which they will present their team’s final product to the group. Ask them to include a brief explanation of the subject matter. When each team finishes its presentation, ask the audience to point out the presentation techniques they used and the things they did well.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask the group what they liked about the activity and about using overheads. Ask if anyone in the group has ever tried using presentation graphics computer software. Point out that a number of computer software programs allow speakers to organize their presentations in advance by entering their notes into outlines, then creating their graphics using templates provided in the program.

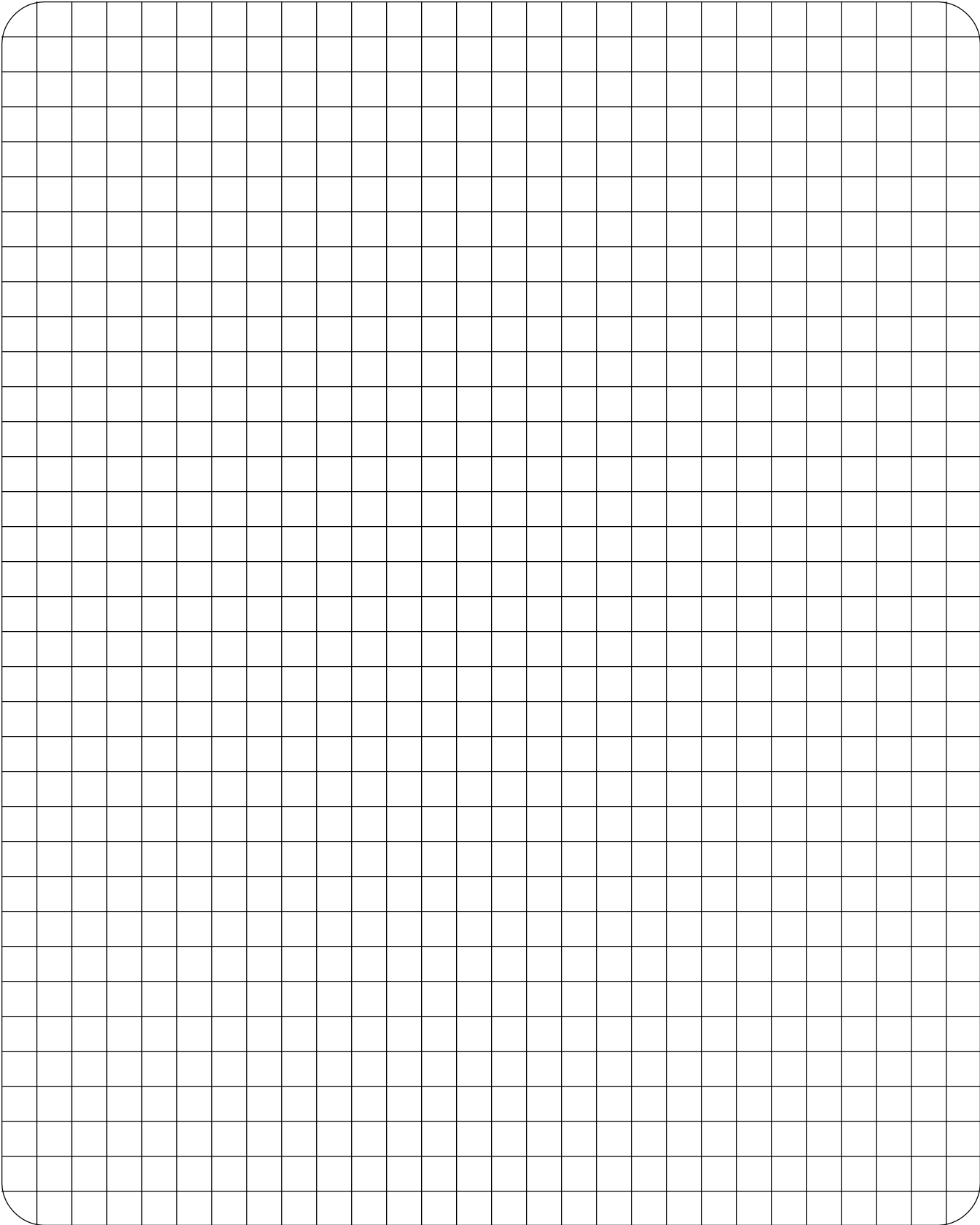
You can also have the participants use the “How Did I Do? A Self-Check for Evaluating Your Design Project” skill sheet to reflect on their work.

TRY THIS TOO:

The group might be interested in creating longer illustrated presentations on topics they choose. They may also be interested in researching computer presentation graphics and multimedia applications.



**DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS HANDOUT:
Planning Grid for Overhead Transparencies**



DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS HANDOUT:

Font Sheet

Font – A set of all of the letters and punctuation marks within a particular size and style of type.

Franklin Gothic ITC Bold, 36 point*

**Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj
Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss
Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 12345
67890 ` ~ ! @ # \$ % ^ & * () _ - +
= { } [] | \ : ; “ ” < , > . ? /**

Franklin Gothic ITC Bold, 48 point*

**Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 12345
67890 ` ~ ! @ # \$ % ^ & * ()
_ - + = { } [] | \ : ; “ ” < , > . ? /**

* ©Copyright International Typeface Corporation

Franklin Gothic ITC Bold, 56 point*

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff

Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll

Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww

Xx Yy Zz 1 2 3 4 5 6

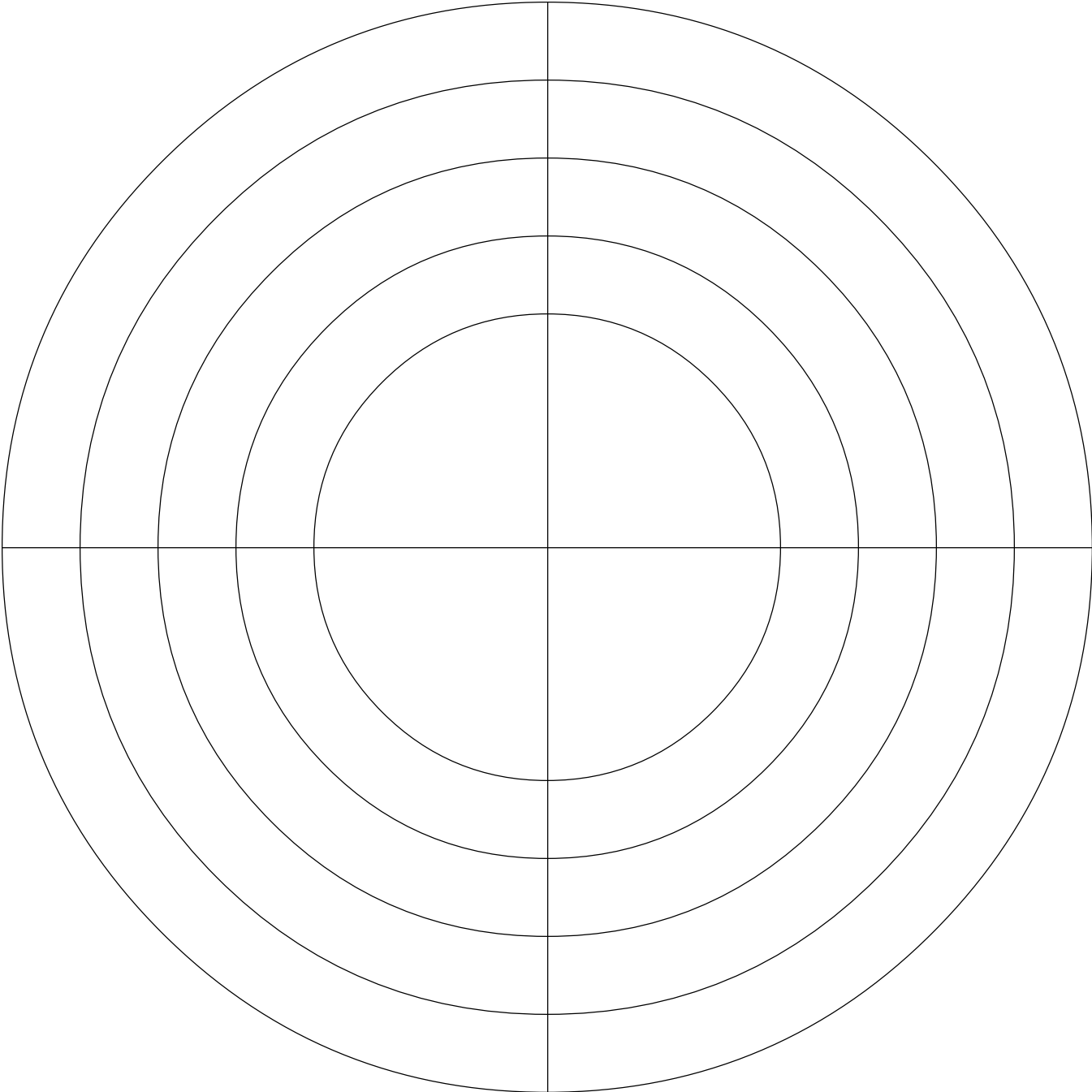
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* ©Copyright International Typeface Corporation

Circle Sheet



DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS HANDOUT:

Group Project Suggestions

Make two overheads about "The Beach."

Overhead 1:

Format: Bulleted Text

Title: "Tips for a Fun Trip to the Beach" (or write your own creative title!)

Bulleted Text: Write your own creative items!

Overhead 2:

Format: Bar Graph

Title: "Hours Spent Swimming at the Beach" (or write your own creative title!)

Data:	Month:	Hours:
	January	0
	April	1
	July	20
	October	4

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "Chocolate Chip Cookies."

Overhead 1:

Format: Text Table

Overhead 2:

Format: Bar or Line Graph

Title for both overheads:

"Average Chocolate Chips Per Cookie" (or write your own creative titles!)

Data for both overheads:

Brand:	Ave. No. of Chips:
Nibbler	8
Chipisco	5
Generic	2
Doorway	10

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "Lawn Mowing."

Overhead 1:

Format: Bulleted Text

Title: "Lawnmower Safety Tips" (or write your own)

Bulleted Text: Write your own creative items!

Overhead 2:

Format: Bar or Line Graph

Title: "Hours Spent Mowing Lawn" (or write your own)

Data:	Month:	Hours:
	January	0
	March	2
	May	6
	July	8
	August	6
	September	3
	October	1

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "My Family Tree."

(Note: Each person in the group may wish to do his or her own family tree.)

Overhead 1:

Format: Title

Write your own creative title!

Overhead 2:

Format: Flow chart showing family tree

Data: You provide!

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "How to Eat a Sandwich Cookie."

Overhead 1:

Format: Bulleted text explaining step-by-step process
Write your own creative text!

Overhead 2:

Format: Diagram of a Sandwich Cookie
Create your own information!

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "The Parts of a Tennis Shoe."

Overhead 1:

Format: Title

Title: Write your own creative title!

Overhead 2:

Format: Diagram of tennis shoe
Create your own information!

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "A Typical Teen's Room."

Overhead 1:

Format: Title
Title: Write your own creative title

Overhead 2:

Format: Floor plan (diagram) of room
Content: Use your imagination!

Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

Make two overheads about "Soft Drink Preferences of Students."

Overhead 1:

Format: Table

Overhead 2:

Format: Pie Chart (use circle sheet as a drawing aid)

Title for Both: Write your own creative titles!

Data for both overheads:

Brand:	% Students Who Prefer:
Choke	25%
Popsy	25%
Fountain Brew	15%
Vern's	10%
Generic	25%

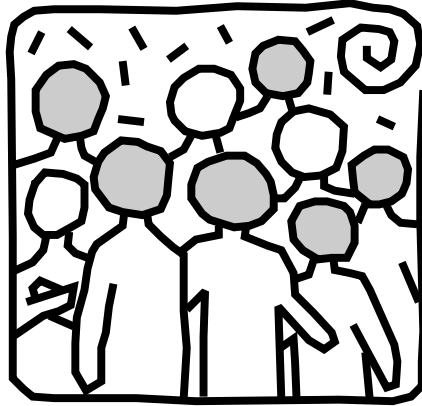
Be prepared to talk for a minute from each overhead.

PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:



Presentation graphics are visual aids used to clarify and highlight public speaking.

PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:



Consider the Audience:

- Use an easy-to-read typeface and size.
- Keep text brief and use a simple layout.

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS: “Designing Presentations That Work”
Overhead Transparency Presentation Set

Consider the Audience:

Don't make type
too small for your
audience to read.

(This is too small!)

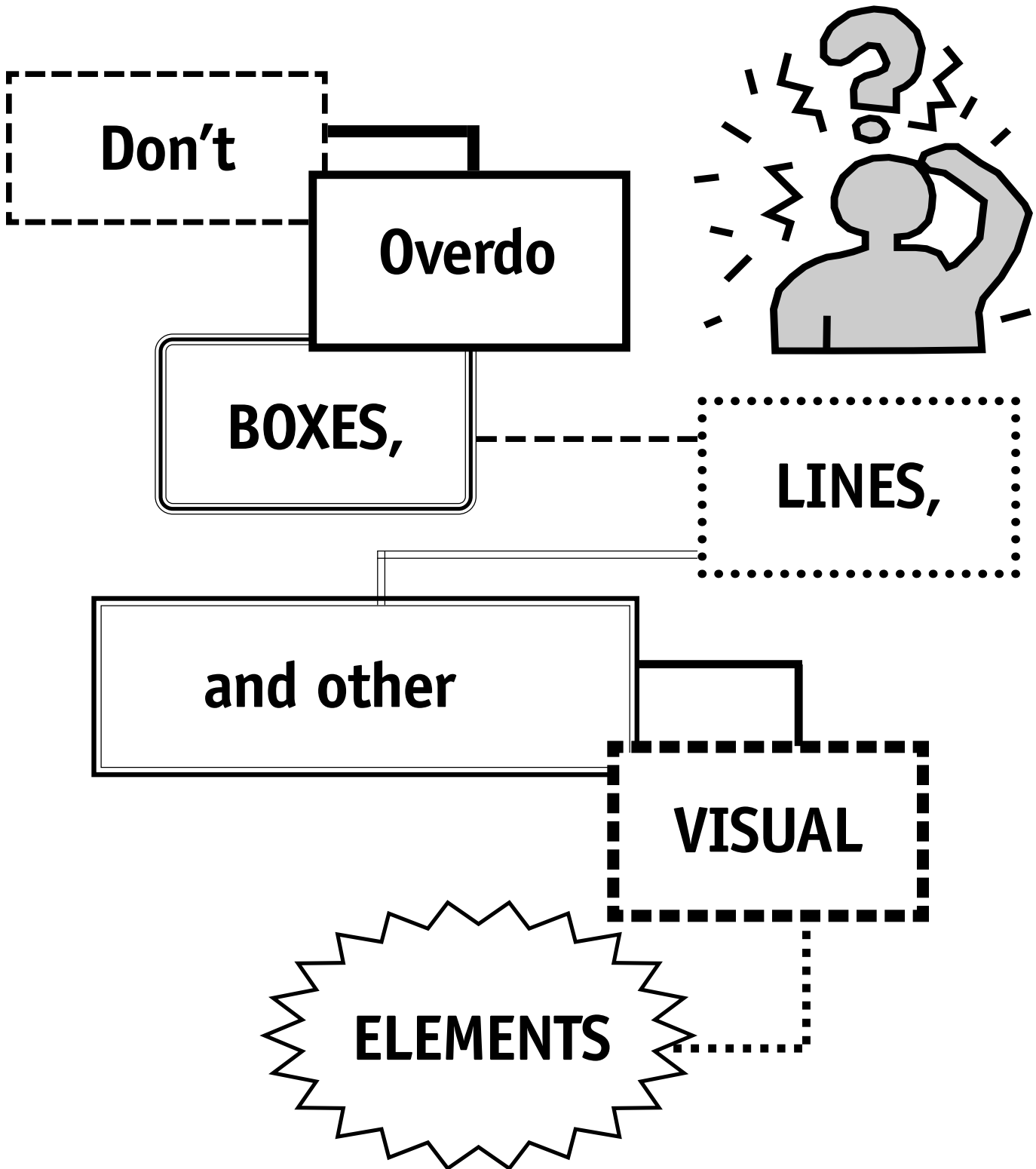
Consider Your Audience:

**D S T
O T Y
N A P
' C E
T K !**

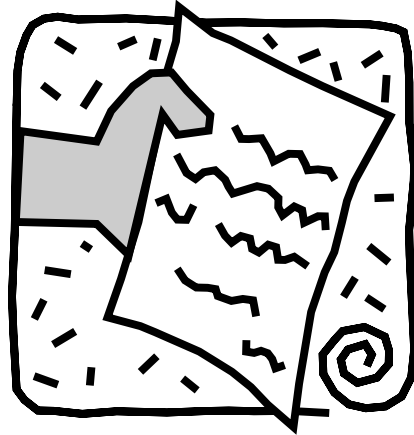
Consider Your Audience:

**Angled type takes more
effort to read!**

Consider Your Audience:



PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:



Consider the Information:

- Proofread and check for accuracy.
- Use visual emphasis to highlight important points.

Consider Your Information:

Don't try to put everything you plan to say on one presentation graphic like this one because your audience will spend their time reading and not paying attention to you. Instead, break your message down into a series of concepts or, better yet, edit it down to a much shorter version that summarizes the main point you wish to make – in other words:

“Keep it short!”

Consider Your Information:

IF ALL GRAPHIC ELEMENTS ARE THE SAME SIZE, WEIGHT, STYLE AND COLOR, LIKE THIS, YOUR VISUALS WILL LACK VISUAL EMPHASIS.

Use variations in

size,

weight,

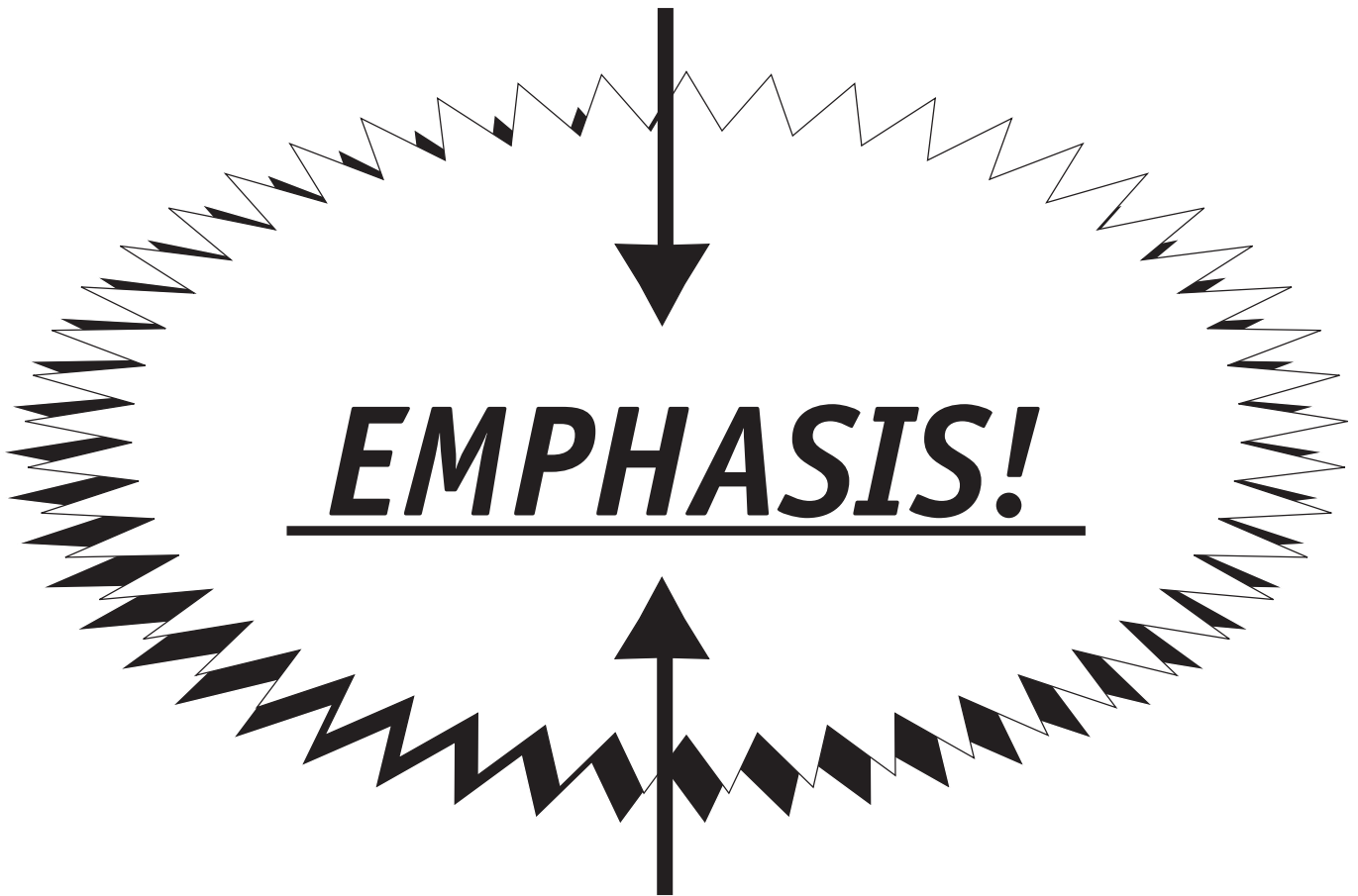
style

& color

to create visual emphasis.

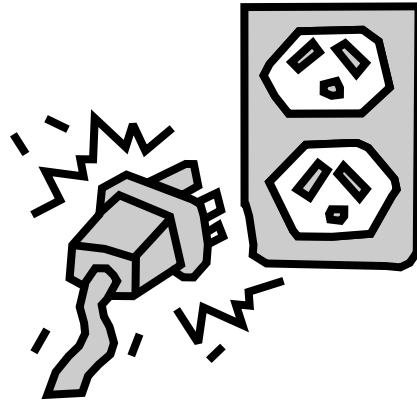
Consider Your Information:

Too much



can be overpowering.

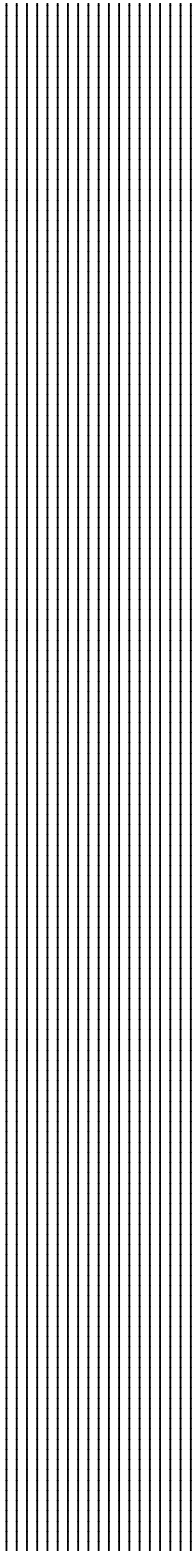
PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:



Consider the Presentation Environment:

- Plan time to double-check room set-up and equipment.
- Always have a backup plan!

Overhead Projection Techniques:

- 
- “Reveal” text on bulleted lists, using a piece of paper or make a series of overheads adding one step to each.
 - Write information on the overhead as you present.
 - Highlight points with marker on the overhead as you present.
 - Use overlays for presenting multistep processes or ideas.
 - Turn off the projector when you’re done making a point.

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

“It’s a Dog’s Life” Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



It’s a DOG’S Life!



Format: Title



The Basics



Bones



Water



Trees



Cats



Leash



Shoes

Format: Bulleted List



Daily Time Use

ACTIVITY	HOURS/DAY
Sleeping	12.0
Eating	4.8
Chewing	3.6
Barking	1.2
Scratching	2.4
TOTAL	24.0

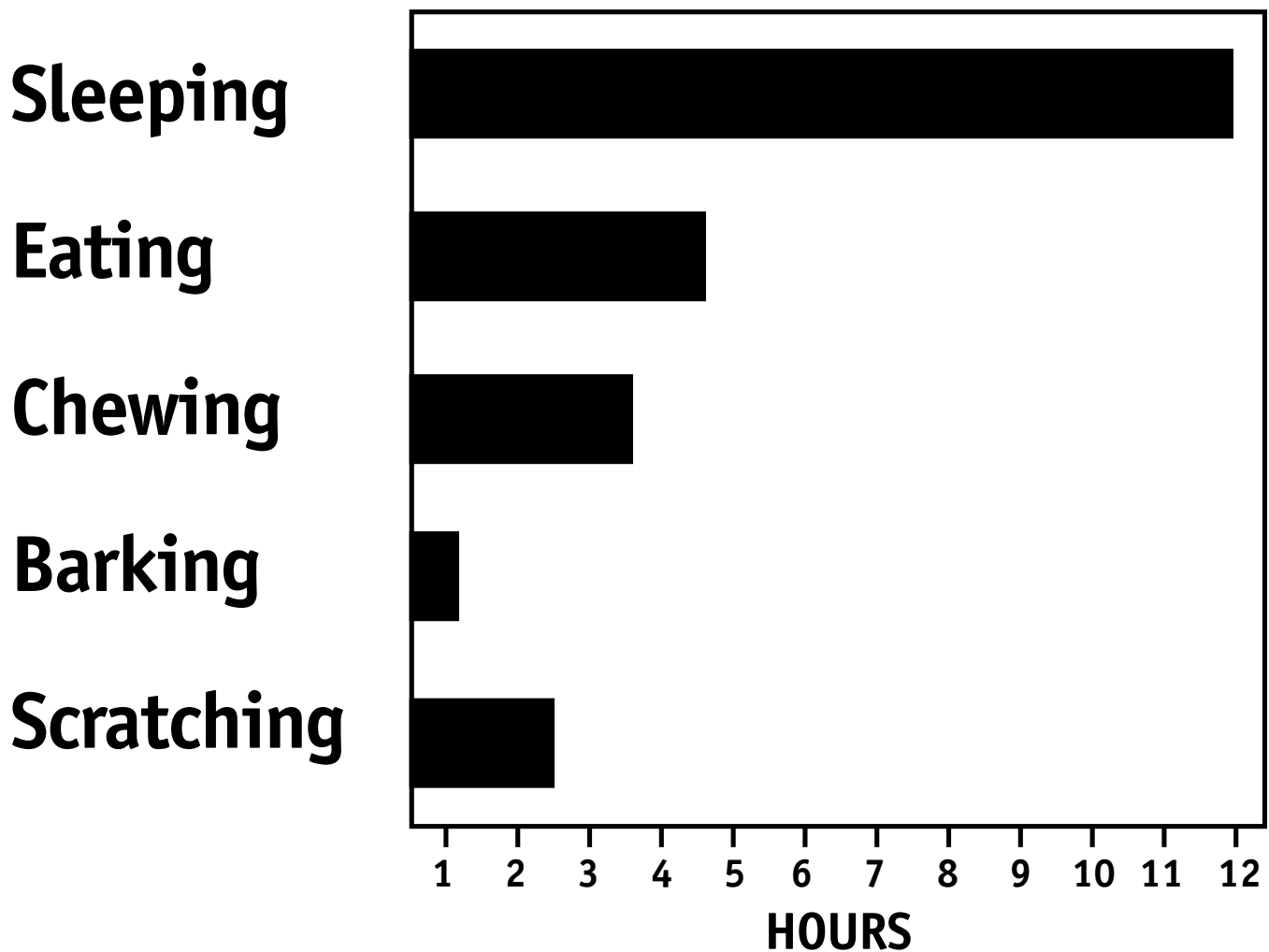
Format: Table

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

“It’s a Dog’s Life” Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



Daily Time Use



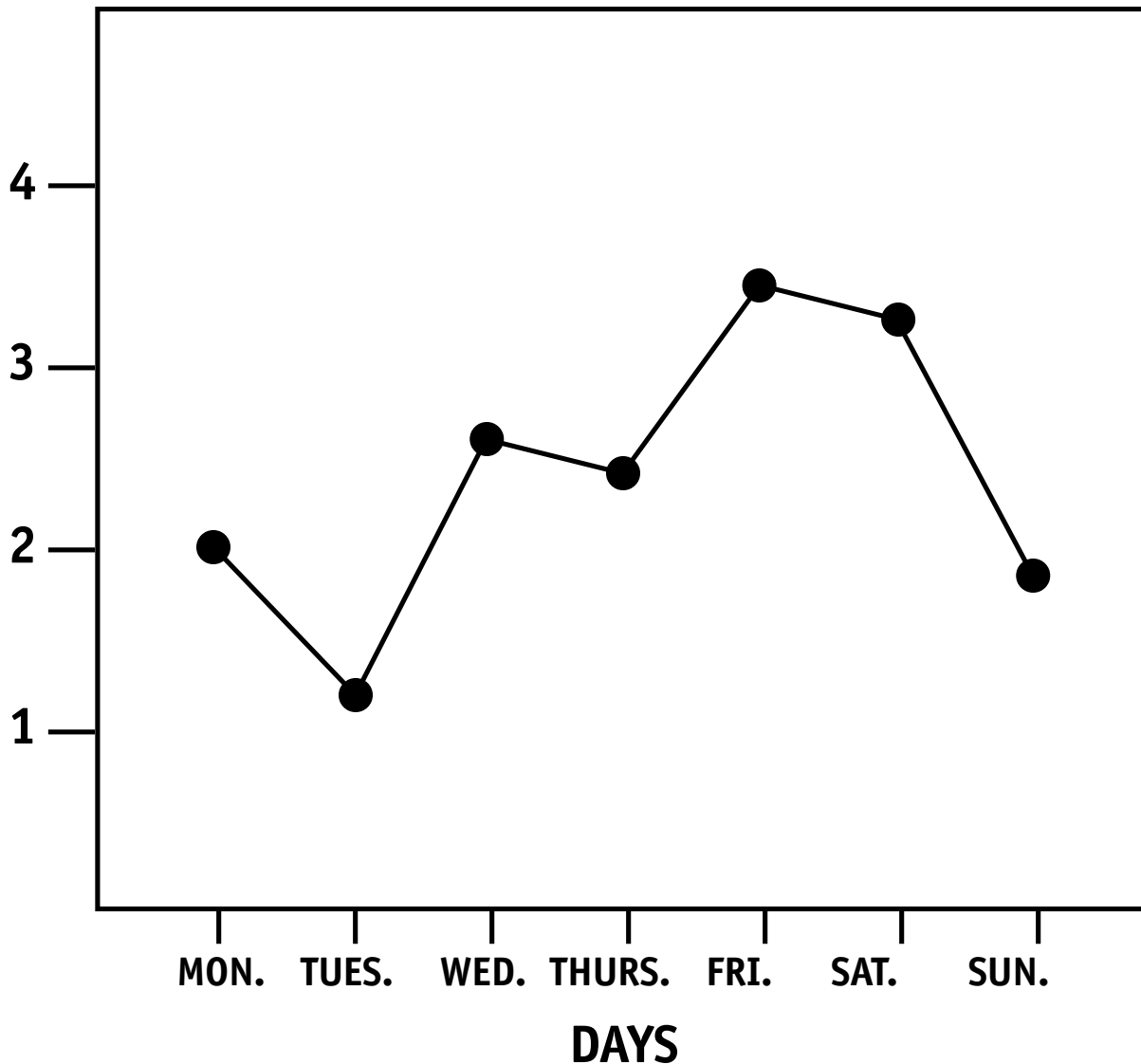
Format: Bar Graph

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

"It's a Dog's Life" Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



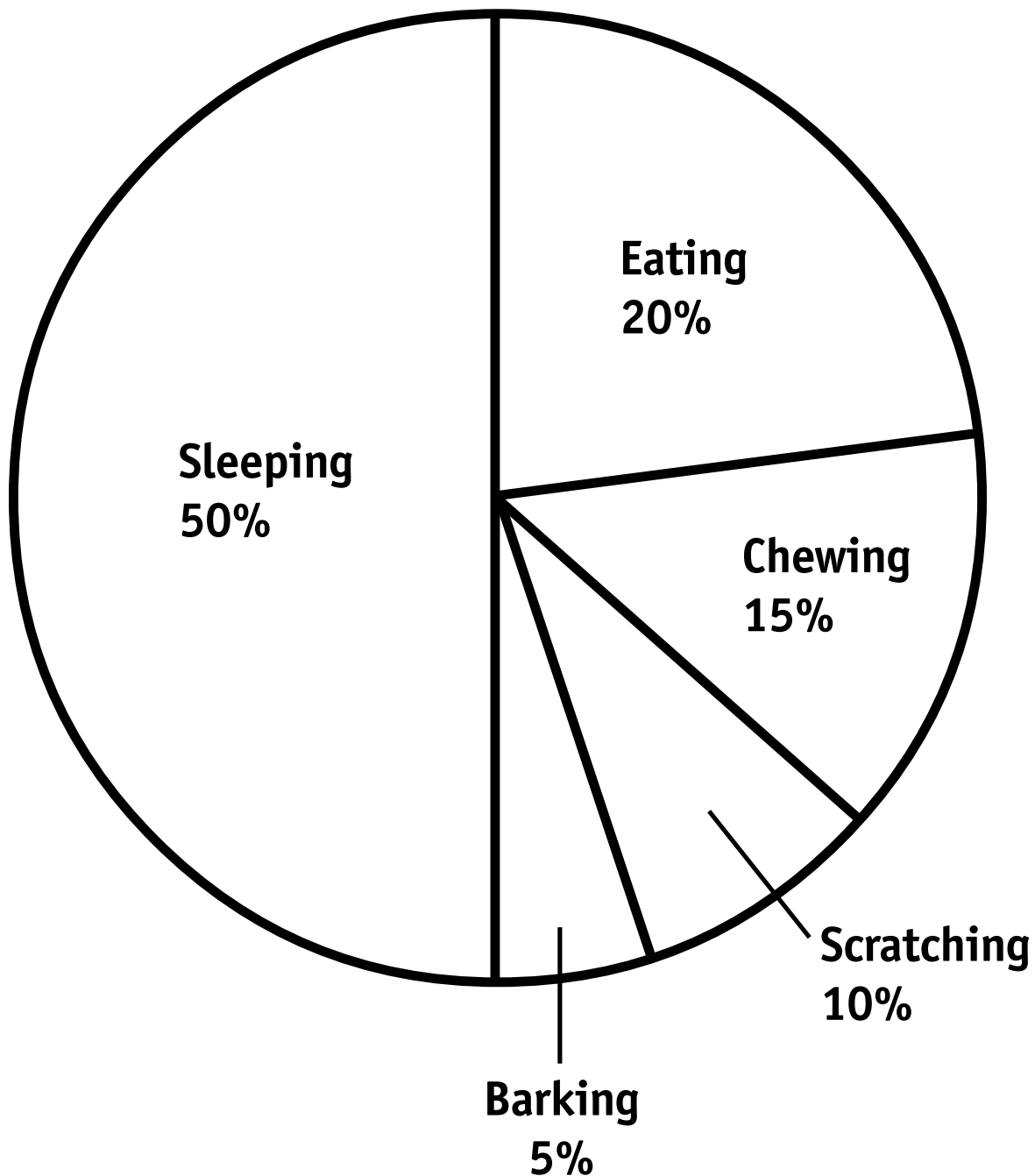
Barking Hours



Format: Line Graph



Daily Time Use



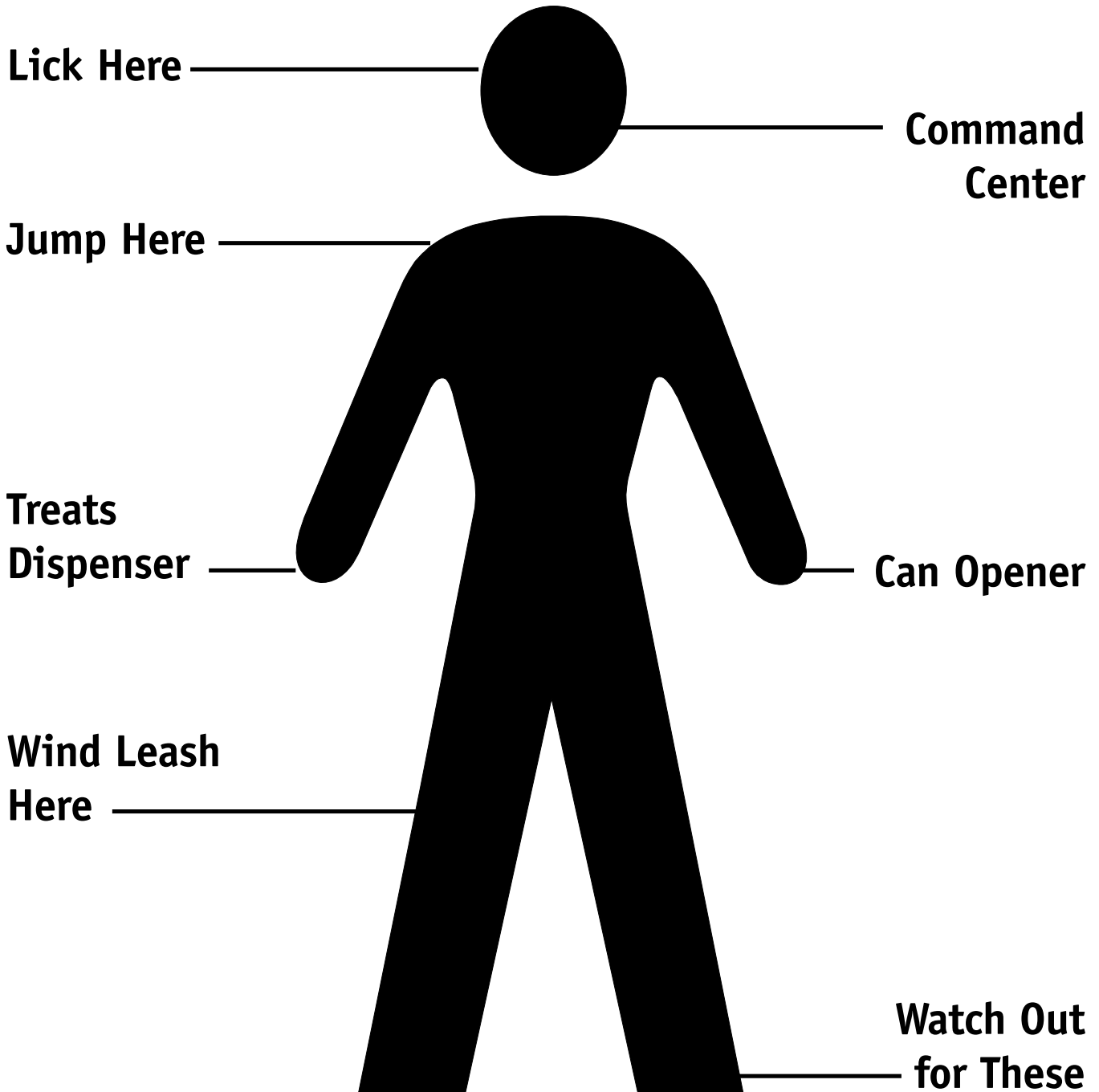
Format: Pie Chart

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

"It's a Dog's Life" Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



Dog's Best Friend



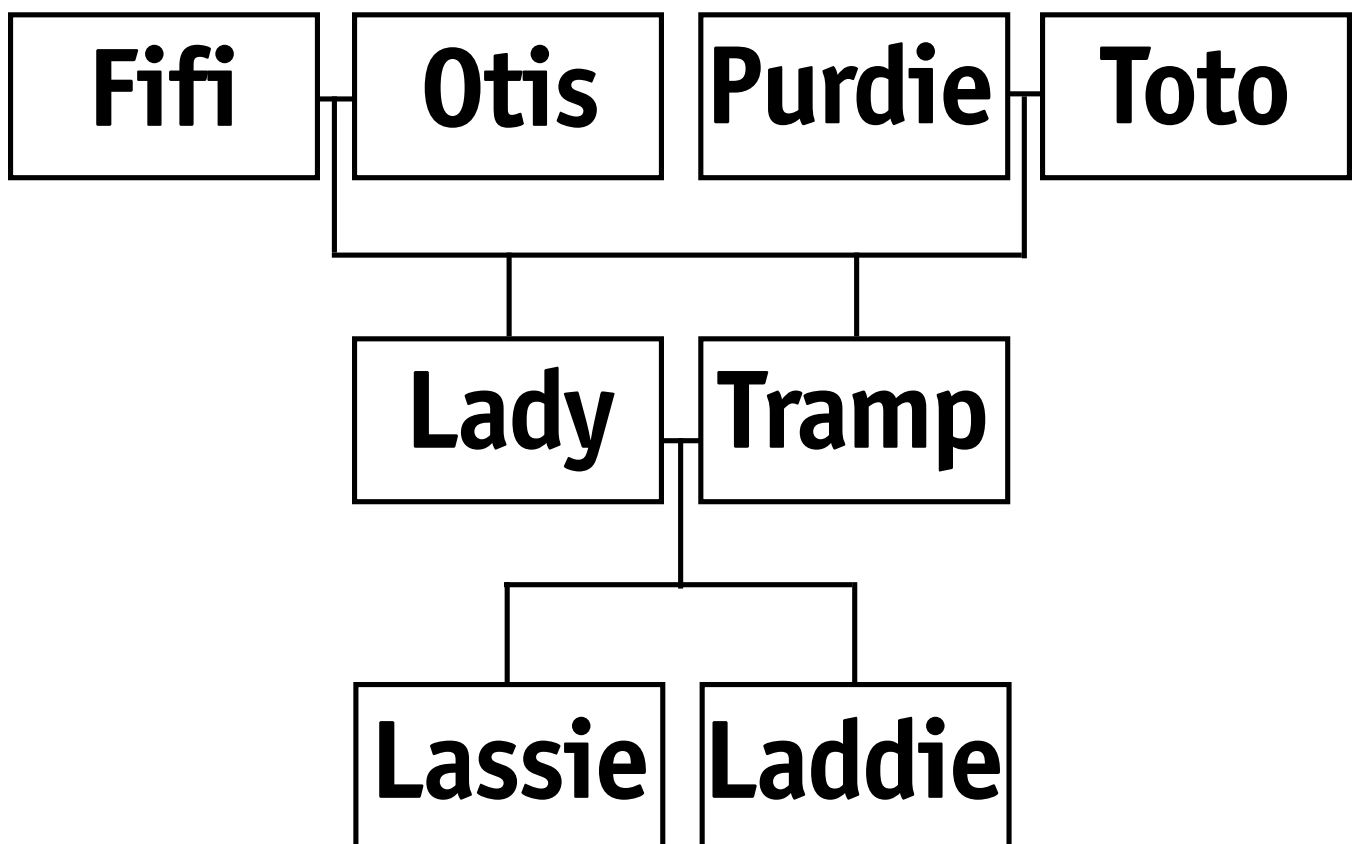
Format: Diagram

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

“It’s a Dog’s Life” Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



Dog’s Family Tree



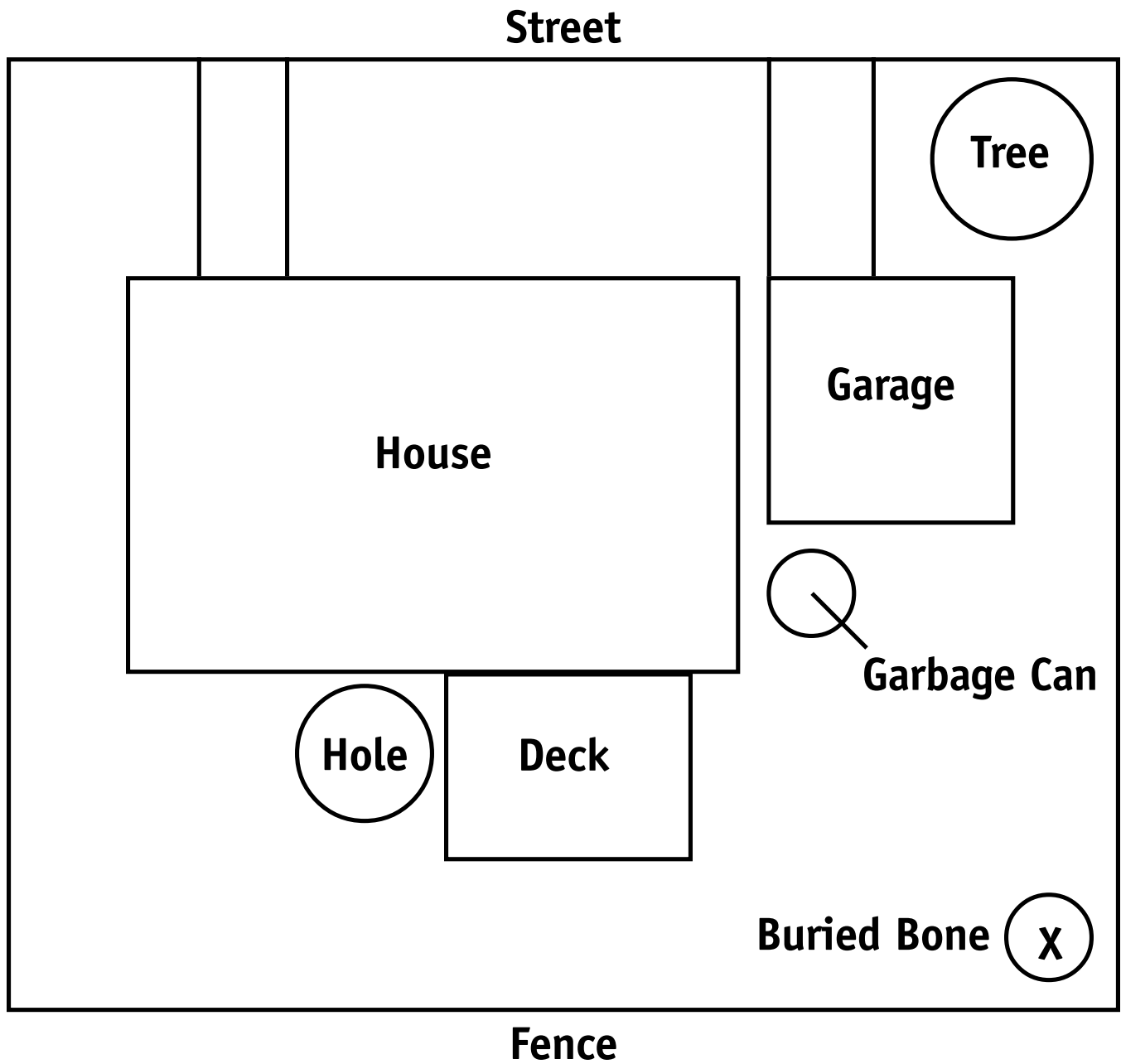
Format: Flow Chart

DESIGN PRESENTATION GRAPHICS:

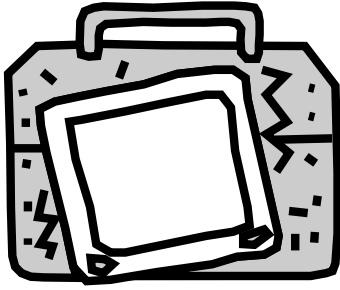
"It's a Dog's Life" Overhead Transparency Presentation Set



Dog's World



Format: Map Diagram



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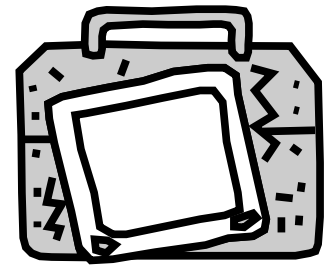
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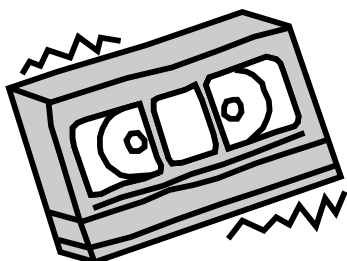
What Leaders Need to Know



A Little History

Technology is a part of just about every home and office these days. Since we use high-tech equipment of some kind each day, most of us don't realize that these inventions have been around for only a couple of hundred years or less. The kids in your group would probably find it hard to imagine themselves living in the early 1800s. At that time, there was no way for people to transmit a message quickly over long distances. Samuel F.B. Morse then invented the telegraph, a system of instant electronic communication. That incredible advance in technology might seem almost trivial to kids today when people can easily communicate with people all over the world.

Since the 1800s, we've welcomed the inventions of the telephone, camera, phonograph, radio, motion pictures, television, videocassette recorders (VCRs) and compact discs (CDs). Besides the impact of these inventions, the television cable industry and satellites have made the world a smaller place. Cable and satellites provide powerful, collective media experiences for people across the country and around the world. Computers are also an important aid in communication. People now instantly "talk" to each other through computer messages and electronic mail (email). Computers make it possible for us gather information and communicate with people anywhere



in the world without ever leaving our home, business or school computers! We've come a long way from the telegraph days to the laser discs, two-way interactive video, CD-ROM, hypermedia, desktop video conferencing (DVC) and digital versatile disc (DVD) of the 1980s, 1990s and beyond.

Why Learn About Video, Media & Technology?

Video, media and technology touch almost everyone's life in some way daily. The equipment mentioned above is commonplace in schools, homes and businesses. Kids need to understand these technologies so that they are well prepared for their futures as workers and citizens in a high-tech world.

Where Do You Start?

Giving kids hands-on experience using video, media and technology is the best way to build skills in these areas. Think about the technologies that are available to you and the young people in your group.

Video & Audio Production

Do you have access to a camcorder for video production? If you have cable television, then you probably have community access through your cable station. Find out what they provide in terms of equipment and training in video production.

(Cable companies are required by law to provide access to equipment and programming for people who live in the communities they serve.) A glossary of video production terms is available on page 132 to help you become more familiar with some of the concepts that are unique to this area.

What about an audiotape recorder/player? Kids can create mock radio talk shows, or practice being disc jockeys by using simple household tape recorders. They may also be able to access a computer equipped with microphone, speakers and audio editing software in order to record and edit their project digitally.

Computers & the Internet

Your group can get access to computer programs and the Internet in many ways. Families of kids in your group may have computers at home. Your local library may have computers and access to the Internet available for public use. What about businesses in your community? Ask about their interest in helping young people use and experience technologies in the workplace. Do you or a member of your group know someone who is particularly skilled in computers who would be willing to share his or her expertise? Don't overlook young people! Kids tend to learn quickly and often are more computer literate than the adults in a family! Ask high school or college students to serve as computer resource people to your youth group.

Video Production Glossary

“Action” – The director’s cue to begin taping

Audience – Everyone who will view a particular videotape

Audio – The sound portion of a videotape

Camcorder – A small one-piece video camera

Close-up (CU) – A camera shot in which a person or object is seen very close and fills the frame

Director – The person who gives leadership to the location video shooting by giving directions and calling out cues to on-camera talent, camera operators, props people and others

Documentary – A type of film or video that illustrates a real situation or issue, or tells the story of real people; a nonfiction story that is shot with the real people involved in the situation or story, no actors are used

Edit – To select and electronically assemble two or more audio and video segments

Edit in the camera – To create an illusion of an edited program by carefully planning an overall tape and then shooting the segments in the order in which they are to appear in the final program

Extreme close-up (ECU) – A very close shot of a portion of an object or person

Fade in or out – Audio: To gradually increase or decrease the volume of the sound; Video: To push a button on the camera that makes the picture slowly appear from black or disappear to black

Focus – The sharpness and clarity of the picture

Monitor – A television set that can transmit audio and video signals from videotape

Pan – To move the camera from left to right or from right to left while shooting

Postproduction – The process of editing, adding graphics, music and special effects to a tape after all the footage has been shot

Pre-production – The planning stages of video production; usually involves identifying the message and audience; outlining and script writing; research; scheduling; rehearsing; and budget planning

Producer – The person who gives overall leadership to the production of a tape, including message, audience, content, scheduling, budget and making sure deadlines are met

Special effects – Transitional effects such as fades, wipes, dissolves;

digital effects such as flips or flying video scenes

“Stand by” – The director’s cue that everyone should ready themselves to begin shooting video

Talent – The people whose voices are heard or whose faces appear in front of the camera

Teamwork – In a video production, crew members working together effectively to complete a tape

Theme – The overall idea for a program

Tilt – To move the camera up and down while shooting

Time cues “5, 4, 3, 2, 1” – The director’s cues that the action and taping will begin in five counts

Titles – Any graphic material or words that are shown on camera

Two-shot – Framing two people or objects with the camera lens

Video – The picture portion of the videotape

Videotape – Magnetic tape that can record a television signal

Zoom in or out – The gradual getting closer or widening of the camera shot accomplished by using the camera’s toggle button to zoom in (get closer) or zoom out (get farther away)

Just What Is the Internet?

The Internet offers computer users a way to communicate worldwide (for example, through email) and find information on any topic, organization, government or business (for example, through the World Wide Web or WWW).

This worldwide network consists of thousands of connected computer networks using the same language or “protocol” to communicate. (See page 133 for a glossary of Internet terms.) What sets the Internet apart from more traditional forms of publishing is that it offers immediate two-way communication in a way

that print and broadcast media never could before. For example, the Internet allows you to watch a television show or read a newspaper and immediately “visit” the related Web site or Internet address and offer feedback to the media outlet on what you have seen or read.

Internet Glossary

Address – The unique location of an information site on the Internet, a specific file (for example, a Web page) or an email user

Bookmark – A saved link to a Web site that has been added to a list of saved links so that you can simply click on it rather than having to retype the address when visiting the site again; also called “favorites”

Browser – A software program that lets you find, see and hear material on the World Wide Web, including text, graphics, sound and video; most online services have their own browsers; also called “Web browser”

Chat – The “live” exchange of typed email messages between two or more computer users, generally using a protocol or set of rules called “Internet Relay Chat” (IRC); despite the name, online “chatting” is generally done with a keyboard, rather than verbally

Domain name – An Internet address that usually contains some version of the organization’s name and an ending indicating the type of organization such as .com (corporations or commercial entities), .edu (educational institutions), .org (nonprofit organizations), .mil (military organization), .net (network provider), and .gov (government institution)

Download – To copy a file from one computer system to another; from the Internet user’s point of view, to download a file is to request it from another computer (or from a Web page on another computer) and to receive it

Email (Electronic mail) – A way of sending messages electronically from one computer to another, generally through a modem and telephone line connected to a computer

Emoticon – Computer users’ attempt to convey emotion with a keyboard; tip your head to the left to read the smiley :-) and wink ;-) and other emoticons

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) – A compilation of questions (and the answers to the questions) new participants in a newsgroup or visitors to a Web site most frequently ask; generally posted as time- and patience-savers for veteran participants and users, who often ask new users (or “newbies”) to check the FAQ before asking redundant questions

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) – A method for transferring files (for example, computer games and other software programs) across computer networks

Home page – The main or first page of a World Wide Web site that is the starting point for a particular person, group or organization; often includes an informal table of contents and links to other parts of the Web site

HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) – The standard computer language used to create World Wide Web (hypertext) documents; HTML code includes a set of tags or labels that indicate such things as whether a piece of text is a headline or part of a bulleted list, the size of a graphic or the cells of a table, and the Web page to which a link directs users

HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) – The standard method comput-

EMOTICONS

Icon What it Means

:-)	Smile
;-)	Wink
:-(I’m sad
:-D	Laughing
:’-O	Crying
%(I’m Confused
:-o	I’m Surprised
:-O	I’m very surprised

ABBREVIATIONS

BTW = By The Way

CUL8R = See You Later

IMO = In My Opinion

IMHO = In My Humble Opinion

J/K = Just Kidding

LOL = Laughing Out Loud

ROFL = Rolling On the Floor Laughing

TTFN = Ta-Ta For Now

ers and networks use to transfer information over the Internet

Hypertext link – An easy method for retrieving information by choosing highlighted words or icons on the screen; the link will take you to related documents or sites

Internet – A worldwide collection of computer networks that allows people to find and use information and communicate with others

ISP (Internet Service Provider) – A generic term for any company that can connect your computer directly to the Internet

Continued on page 134

Internet Glossary, continued

Netiquette – Rules or manners for interacting courteously with others online

Newsgroups – Online discussion groups categorized by specific subjects (not necessarily news) that allow readers to send or “post” messages

Online service – A company that provides its members access to the Internet through its own special user interface, as well as additional services such as chat

rooms, children’s areas, travel planning and financial management

Search engine – A program that performs keyword searches for information on the Internet

Spam – Unsolicited bulk email that can be sent to literally thousands of people at the click of a mouse; because it is often used to advertise get-rich-quick schemes, pornographic Web sites and various hoaxes, spam is one of the most despised forms of email on the Internet

URL (Uniform Resource Locator) – The World Wide Web address of a site on the Internet; for example, the URL for the White House is <http://www.whitehouse.gov>

World Wide Web (Web or WWW) – A hypertext-based system that allows you to browse through a variety of linked Internet resources organized by colorful, graphics-oriented home pages

When you’re helping kids develop communication skills, it’s important to know that the Internet — especially the World Wide Web — can provide them with opportunities to apply all of the skills introduced in this toolkit, including graphics, video, vocal and written. Young people can write text, create a graphic identity to make that text come alive, write a speech that explains the information they have written, and produce a video to more clearly illustrate their message. Then they can publish all of those pieces on a Web site and gain a worldwide audience.

Millions of young people are online in America today, using the Internet at school, at their local libraries, at home and as part of after-school activities. Young people are using the Internet to:

- Answer questions or do research.
- Publish their own unique ideas and creative works.
- Communicate with their peers by email.
- Join groups or clubs that meet online (“virtually”).
- Shop.
- Get directions and maps.
- Play games.

The Internet is a valuable medium for young people to explore as part of a communications project because:

• **It’s a great research tool** – Most forms of the communication processes covered in the toolkit require the person creating a message to conduct at least some research. The Internet offers easy access to:

- **Government** documents with information on demographics, statistics, history and a host of other topics that young people may need to know about.
- **Universities and other research organizations** that provide information on just about any subject your group may be interested in.
- **Organizations** whose ideas, products and networks may help young people complete a project, compare ideas and communicate with other people interested in their topic.
- **Newspapers, magazines, broadcast networks and other media outlets** that provide in-depth views of contemporary issues, ideas and opportunities.

• **It’s a good way to share your message** – The Internet can serve

as a communication or publishing medium that allows:

- Young people to have their message widely seen or heard with little or no duplication expense.
- Ideas and creative concepts to be immediately updated or tested and can provide ways to get feedback from a variety of audiences.
- Young people to use a wide range of communications media to express their ideas.

What Leaders Need to Know About Internet Safety

When working with young people on the Internet, keep in mind that – just like in the real world – there are places that are appropriate to go and others that are inappropriate. Online interactions with strangers can pose risks to children who are trusting and curious. As young people become more skilled at using the World Wide Web, email and other forms of online communication, situations may arise that they will need help clarifying and dealing with. So, it’s extremely important for young people and the parents and volunteers who work with them to be aware of some basic Internet

safety practices. You must also be able to respond to questions young people may ask as situations arise.

Here are some ways you can ensure the safety of the young people you work with as they explore the Internet:

Review Internet safety guidelines with kids before they get involved in online activities.

Review the “Safety Rules for Online Time” skill sheet (on pg. 151) with kids before going online.

Following are the URLs (Universal Resource Locator or Internet address) of sites on the World Wide Web that provide safety rules and links to other Internet safety information:

- **“Child Safety on the Information Highway,”** *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.* (<http://www.missingkids.org/>)

An online brochure containing information for parents on reducing online risks to children as well as online safety rules for families and children.

- **“Staying Street Smart on the Web,”** *Yahooligans, in cooperation with The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and Interactive Services Association.* (<http://www3.yahooligans.com/docs/safety/>)

Provides guidelines for young people and links to information parents should know about online safety.



- **“Parents Guide to the Internet,”** *U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C.* (<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet>)

A 16-page booklet (available in Adobe Acrobat format) that provides basic information for parents on Internet use and tips for ensuring that children have safe, productive and enjoyable experiences on the Internet.

Involve parents from the start. Before going online with young people, let parents or guardians know that their children will be using the Internet and that it will be a supervised educational experience. Think about providing a permission slip for parents or guardians to sign if you will be using an Internet browser without “parental controls.” Permissions slips are often required for classroom Internet use in schools. This could also contain Internet safety and behavior guidelines (such as the “Safety Rules for Online Time” skill sheet on pg. 151) for the child to read, discuss with a parent and both sign.

Use “parental controls” or Internet filtering software when possible. Many Internet service providers allow subscribers to activate “parental controls” for their online accounts. These controls offer a range of options such as closing off specific chat areas and communication features like “instant messages” or limiting access to the World Wide Web. Software is also available for purchase and use with Internet browsers that will make sites containing objectionable words or phrases inaccessible. *Keep in mind that automated parental controls and Internet filtering software are not foolproof and should never take the place of adult supervision.* It is important that you stay involved with your group as they are online and talk with them about their experiences.

Use role-plays and guided discussion to help kids anticipate how to respond to Internet situations they may encounter. Even though young people may be familiar with general guidelines for Internet safety, it still may not be easy for them to come up with appropriate responses to some of the real-life situations they may encounter online. The “Offline Chat About Online Time” activity on page 166 can help your group think through, discuss and make good decisions about situations that might come up while they are online.

Basic Communication Processes Still Apply!

Whether you’re writing a speech for student council elections, creating a videotape for mass distribution or making a Web page to display on the World Wide Web, the basic principles of communication apply. You must have something to say! And you must consider your audience very carefully. Craft your message so that it is directed to the specific group or kind of individuals you’re trying to reach. You can use the Video, Media and Technology Planning Form on page 136 to help your group get started on a project they’ve identified.

When beginning a **video project**, for example, you must ask and answer these basic questions:

- What is our message? (for example, “Don’t Drink and Drive”)
- Who is our audience? (for example, young people aged 16 to 21)
- How will we reach them? (for example, produce a video for use in high school classrooms)

Video, Media & Technology Planning Form

All video, media and technology projects require careful planning. To produce a project that has meaning for the users, the following questions must be asked and answered before you get started.

1. What is our goal? What are we trying to say or accomplish with this project? (For example: inform, entertain, demonstrate, sell a product or program, create awareness of an issue)

2. Who is our audience? Who do we really want to reach with our message? Be as specific as possible. (For example: young people aged 5 to 9 or 14 to 19; all adults, parents, teachers, community leaders)

3. What is our specific message or objective? What exactly are we trying to communicate through this project and what do we hope people learn from it?

4. How long should this video, media or technology project be? (For example: Many television and radio commercials last 30 seconds, news stories no more than 2 minutes, interviews or profiles no more than 5 minutes, television sitcoms 30 minutes [with commercials], and Web sites may contain one or hundreds of pages.)

5. What are the possibilities for how this project could look (for example, like a news program, advertisement, funny skit, powerful drama, interview with interesting people)? Use the space below (and on the back of this sheet, if necessary) to brainstorm as many ways as you can to create a video, media or technology project that fits with your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 above.

6. Determine what your budget and timeline are. What costs will you incur in the development of the project? (Think about the costs such as audiotapes, videotapes or CD-ROMs, renting equipment, making or buying props, creating or commissioning graphics and any other expenses you might incur.) What is your targeted goal for completion of this project?

Budget: _____ Deadline for completion: _____

7. Decide how you'll proceed and get started! Decide on the elements your project will feature (video projects, for example, may require on-air talent, a narrator, live action, interviews, location shooting, props, music, graphics). Decide who will do what in your group. Create an outline, script or storyboard, pull it all together and create it! See the skill sheets, activities and project ideas in this section of the *Communications Toolkit* for more information.

- How can we structure the message? (for example, produce a documentary that includes testimonials by teens and parents who have lost friends or children to drunk driving)

Once you've answered these basic yet important questions, you can begin the process of creating your video project.

Life Skills

What life skills do kids and adults learn by participating in video, media and technology projects?

- Teamwork
- Leadership (particularly through the roles of producer and director)
- Time management and reliability
- Decision-making and creative problem-solving
- The ability to plan and research a project, and then organize the information
- The ability to use resources wisely
- Resiliency (for example, when a shoot doesn't go well the first time)
- Useful and marketable technical skills
- Self-confidence and self-esteem (through understanding one's abilities and having an opportunity to experience success)
- Evaluation skills and the ability to set goals for improvement
- Career exploration skills and school-to-work transitions

Self-Assessment & Evaluation

After each activity or project you lead with young people, please help them think about what they learned. Make copies of the "What I Learned" self-evaluation form on page 8 and distribute them to your group. Ask them to think quietly about the

questions and make notes about what they learned, how they feel about their skills in that area and what they'd like to learn more about. Then lead a discussion with the whole group and ask if anyone wants to share what they came up with. Young people may want to keep their "What I Learned" forms to refer to later and as a way to document their learning process.

Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas & Resources

The activities in this section of the *Communications Toolkit* are starting points for helping kids learn about communicating through video, media and technology. Here are some ideas for learning more and taking your projects further.

Local Cable Television Companies

If you have cable television in your area, then you have access to a community resource that can help you with your video projects. Cable companies provide training and equipment for shooting video "in the field" (also called "on-location") as well as in-studio productions and editing. Call to find out what's available to you and your group. Cable companies are *required by law* to provide access to their equipment and facilities at no charge to people in their communities. Usually all they require is that the video you produce be aired on their local channel – which is probably a plus!

Businesses

Ask for help from the video production facilities in your area. (Look in the yellow pages of your phone directory under "video production.") Some companies will open their

doors to young people who want to learn more about the business. Ask your local video rental store if they have cameras and other equipment your group can rent. Perhaps they'd lend equipment at no charge if they were asked to support a creative project that involved kids in producing something like a documentary about their community.

Many Internet Service Providers around the U.S. offer free email or Web page hosting as a way to promote their advertisers. Some local companies may also offer free Web page hosting for public service organizations.

Colleges & Universities

Find out if any colleges or universities in your area have film, video, multimedia or telecommunications departments. Students are excellent resource people, and working with a youth group gives them a chance to gain valuable hands-on experience themselves. Perhaps they could get course or independent study credits if they help young people create videos, Web pages or other media projects for a semester. College students may also be interested in community service and having meaningful volunteer experiences.

Schools

Don't overlook the local school's media department, computer labs or library. They vary from area to area, but some school districts have cameras, editing equipment, multimedia computer equipment, digital cameras or other communications technology available for student use. Some even have television studios and two-way video interactive classrooms. Do some investigating, find out what's available and explore how your group can learn from and use the resources in your community.

More Ideas!

The beauty of using video, media and technology to enhance communication skills is that there is unlimited potential for creativity. Allow the kids time to brainstorm as many possibilities for activities and projects as they can. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- Interview people on audio or video tape to allow them to share different points of view on a topic or to give testimonials. Try a talk show format.
- Create a video or CD-ROM “family photo album.” Record interviews with elderly family members that document their life, history and family memories. Apply your production skills to a family history project. (Be sure to make an extra copy of such a project as a safety precaution.)
- Create a Web site or CD-ROM with information about your family history.
- Create a video that resembles a news segment or program.
- Create videos that reflect important issues in the lives of children, youth and families in your community. Use the tapes in civic and other community groups to focus people’s attention on issues of importance to your group.
- Write and read a poem on camera. For more visual effect, have the reader stand near the camera microphone but off-camera. Have others act out the poem on camera, and shoot graphics or other props or visuals that illustrate the words of the poem. Music playing softly in the background may add to the dramatic effect, too.
- Create a story or play and videotape it in sequence to create a dramatic production or role-play. (See the “Video Editing” skill sheet on

pg. 140 for information on how to edit in the camera.)

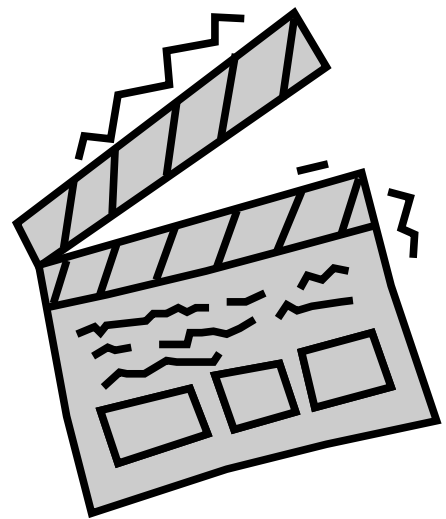
- Write and perform a song or rap and record it on audio or video tape.
- Create a video or multimedia yearbook that features classmates in action.
- Conceptualize, plan and storyboard a video even if you don’t have access to video equipment! The process itself is an excellent exercise in creative and critical thinking, problem-solving and teamwork.

Keep in mind that this project can be more than just a learning opportunity. It can also be a way to get your message into the media. (See the “Make the Media Your Partner” skill sheet on pg. 149 to learn more about how to work effectively with the media. Local radio and TV stations may welcome the opportunity to air public service messages created by young people.

Explore Careers!

Video and media—Many diverse career opportunities are available to people interested in video and multimedia production. The “Video Production Roles” handout on page 165 describes several key video-related jobs. Kids in your group could investigate the types of career opportunities that are available in industries, companies and organizations such as:

- Commercial television stations
- Cable television stations
- Public television stations
- Video production companies
- Business and corporate video production departments
- K–12 school media departments
- College and university telecommunications departments
- Satellite television and videoconferencing organizations
- CD-ROM and video laser disk production companies



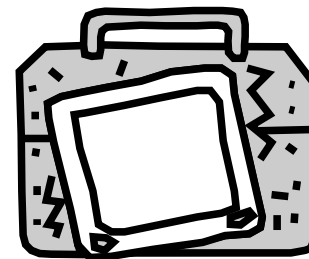
Internet—Businesses, educational institutions and nonprofit organizations use the World Wide Web to distribute information and conduct business. Web site designers work both “in-house” within organizations, or as independent contractors on projects. Many of the jobs that are available in this growing communications area are posted either on the Web sites of the employers or on Internet “job boards” that provide searchable “help wanted” listings.

Books

- *KIDVID: Fun-damentals of Video Instruction*, by Kaye Black. Tucson, Arizona: Zephyr Press, 1989.
- *How to Make Your Own Video*, by Perry Schwartz. Minneapolis, Minnesota: First Avenue Editions, 1991.
- *Lights, Camera, Action! A Guide to Video Instruction and Production in the Classroom*, by Bruce Limpus. Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press, 1994.
- *Complete Communication Skills Activities Kit*, by Leroy Hay, Ph.D., and Richard Zboray. West Nyack, New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1992. This book contains a section on conceptualizing videos and activities that focus on listening, speaking, writing, organizing information, using and interpreting body language and more.

SKILL SHEET:

Shooting Your Videos



Have you ever sat down in front of the television to watch your own videos and been disappointed with the results? Most people new to a camcorder have. Here are several tips to help you improve the quality of the videotapes you shoot.

Planning

Think through your goals and what you want to have on tape. Shoot only those scenes that you really want or need. Shooting miles of wild footage that no one will ever want to watch is a waste of time and money. Be selective and resist the temptation to turn the camera on and record *everything* that's happening.

Lighting

The single most important thing you can do to improve the look of your videos is to improve your lighting.



A video shot in poor light looks dark and grainy. Pay attention to the light source (Is it from overhead? Lamp? Sun?) and try to place your subject so that the light falls evenly across it. Never shoot into the sunlight or into a window unless you're trying to make a dark silhouette of your subject. Shoot so that your back or side is to the light source and your subject is facing the light. Use a lamp or other filler to shed more light on your subject, if possible.

Sound

In most shooting situations, the audio (sound) is just as important as the video (picture). Most camcorders have built-in microphones that work fine for recording room or ambient sound. They're also acceptable for recording subjects if the subjects are no more than 9 to 12 feet away from the camera and if the room is very quiet. You can greatly improve your audio quality by using an external microphone. You can buy or lease hand-held (like news reporters use) or lavalier (clip-on) microphones from stores that sell video equipment. Remember, if you really want the sound on your tape to be good, you need to pay attention to where the microphone is in relation to your subject. It's also important that you eliminate distracting room noise (such as blowers, voices and equipment).

Camera Technique

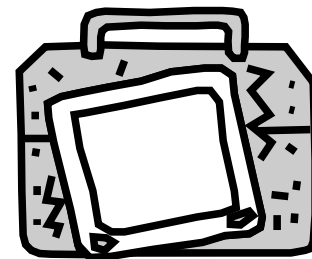
The biggest mistakes people make when using camcorders are overusing the zoom function and moving the camera erratically. Use the telephoto (zoom) lens only when you really want to get close and intimate with your subject and to create dramatic effect. But be careful. It's nearly impossible to get a stable shot without a tripod when you're zoomed in close. If you have a tripod, use it. If not, you may want to stick with medium and wide shots. When shooting without a tripod, hold the camera with two hands and plant your feet firmly, shoulder-width apart. Keep the camera as steady as possible and turn your whole body with the camera when you want to "pan" or move the camera left or right.

Have Fun!

Now that you know some of the basics of video production, go out and play with your camera! It's the best way to learn. Shoot scenes in a variety of situations and then play back and critique your results. Experiment with some of the tips given here – and then try *breaking* the rules to see what you can learn from that experience. (For example, someone decided awhile back that shaky camera movement is "in," so now we see it all the time on national television advertisements and programs.)

SKILL SHEET:

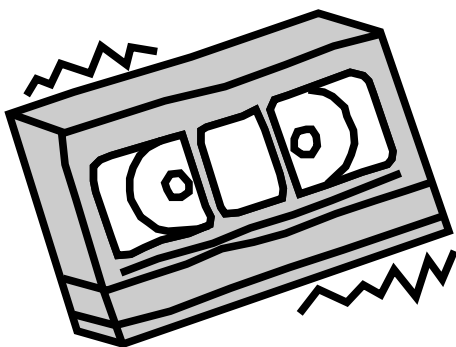
Video Editing



Editing is the art of assembling scenes to create a meaningful story or message on film or video. In the “real world” of video production, editing is a complex process with unlimited creative possibilities. The process of video editing allows you to add elements like computer graphics and music.

When editing, you can arrange the scenes you’ve shot in any order you want with creative transitions and special effects. You may be surprised to learn that, unlike film editing, there is no splicing or touching the tape in video editing. The video editing process is completely electronic. It’s accomplished through multiple tape machines, computers and an operator or “editor” who pushes buttons.

Today, the world of video editing is being completely transformed by new and changing technologies. “Nonlinear editing” has totally revolutionized the way people edit video projects. Nonlinear, computer-based editing allows you to edit high-end, broadcast quality, sophisticated video projects right out of a computer! Video production is an extremely exciting and constantly changing profession!



Getting Started: Editing in the Camera

If you are a beginner or don’t have access to video editing equipment, you can shoot your program in a way that makes it seem edited. This technique is a little tricky because you can’t change your mind once you’ve shot a scene. Preproduction planning and rehearsing are very important.

Editing in the camera means that, after carefully planning your entire video program, you shoot each scene in the order you want it to appear on the finished tape. Every scene is carefully set up so there is no extra or wild footage between shots. Here’s what you do:

1. Carefully plan your video and write a script or storyboard that describes each scene, who will be featured, narration, props and other elements.
2. Before you start taping, have the on-air talent and videographer rehearse each scene to make sure they all know exactly what will happen in every scene. You must begin taping from the beginning of your script and then add each scene in the order that you want it to appear.
3. When you’re ready to “roll tape,” the director alerts everyone by calling out, “Quiet on the set!” The videographer then puts the camera in standby mode so he or she only has to press the record/pause button to begin recording. Then the director says, “Stand by,” and counts down slowly, “Five, four, three...” The director should NOT say “two

and one.” Instead, he or she should hold up those fingers to cue the talent to begin. The camera operator pushes the record button after the director says “three” and begins taping. This ensures that you don’t hear the director counting down on tape. It also ensures that you have the 2-second pause you need for the tape to thread properly before the talent begins to talk.

Be sure the camera operator and talent know what the ending statement or action (called an “out-cue”) is for the scene. The camera operator presses the pause button at that point to stop taping and end the scene.

4. Now you’re ready to shoot the next scene. Leave the camera off until everyone is in place and ready for the next shot. (This works best if it’s within just a few minutes so that the camera stays in **pause** mode.) When you press the record/pause button again to start recording, the next scene will be added on to the last one seamlessly. (If you take a lot of time between scenes, the camera will shut off. Then when you play back your tape, you may see flashes or glitches between scenes.)
5. Don’t shoot anything you don’t want in the final program. Repeat the process of rehearsing and rolling tape only when everyone is prepared and ready to do his or her part. If people make mistakes, try to keep going because you can’t go back and retape scenes when you’re editing in the camera. Use your group’s mistakes or “out-takes” as learning tools so you can all do better next time!

Shooting Techniques

- Shoot only as much of each scene as you really need to get your point across – no more, no less.
- “Match action” between shots or scenes. This means that if you are shooting a wide shot of a scene and then you shoot a close-up or medium shot of the same scene, the positioning of people or props must be the same. For example, if you’re shooting a wide shot of a group of people and then the next scene you want to shoot is a close-up of one of those people, be sure that the person’s body positioning is exactly the same for the close-up as it was in the wide shot. Have you ever noticed mismatched shots in television programs or movies? Just for fun, watch carefully when viewing television programs to see if the director or “continuity” person made sure that the action from one scene to the next is carefully matched. For example, you might see an actor’s arm on the table in one shot, then in the next shot it’s in his or her lap. This looks quite humorous in

dialogue sequences where there are several cuts back and forth between angles.

- Cutaways are another option for adding visual appeal and interest to your tape. A cutaway is a shot that is very different than what was in the previous scene. For example, in one scene the viewer sees a young person on-camera talking about his or her pet. In the next scene, the viewer sees a close-up of the animal and hears the voice of the young person talking about the pet. (To accomplish this, the young person would need to stay off camera but very close to the microphone.)
- Remember that the sound or background noise will cut off every time you press the pause button on the camera to end a scene. If you’re in a noisy environment for one scene and then a quiet one for the next, your tape will sound abrupt at those points. Also, if you have music in one scene and pause the camera while you move into another scene (with or without music), the sound will be choppy and clipped. If you want to have music playing in a scene, have someone slowly fade the music out as part of the scene *be-*

Video Editing Skill Sheet continued

fore you pause the camera to end the scene. It will sound more natural and appealing.

- You can create simple transitions between scenes while editing in the camera. For example, use the fade in and out function on your camera when you want a softer in or out point to a scene.

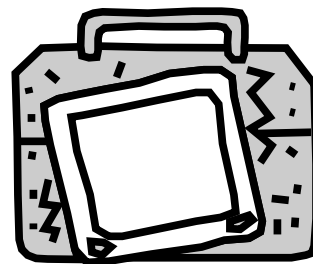
You can also use the manual focus knob to “rack focus” in or out of a scene. A rack focus is when the scene either goes from being clear and in-focus to being blurred, or from blurred to in-focus.

Another transition is a “swish pan.” This is a very quick side-to-side movement of the camera either away from the on-camera action or from the pan to the on-camera action. A slower pan from one person or object to the on-camera action also works as a softer transition between scenes. All of these transition effects can help create a sense of change or of time passing.

(See the “Shooting Your Videos” skill sheet on pg. 139 for more information on lighting, camera movement and sound.)

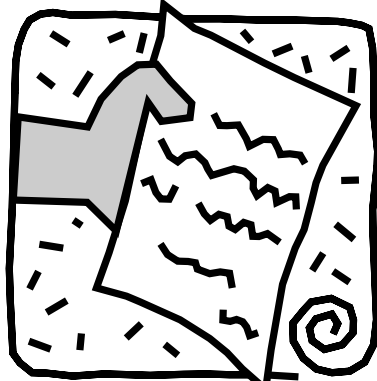
SKILL SHEET:

Writing Skills for Video



This sheet will help you adapt your writing styles to the medium of video. The “Written Communications” section of the **Communications Toolkit** has more in-depth information about improving your written communication skills.

Most of the rules of good writing apply to video scriptwriting. The information written for a narrator to read on tape is called “copy.” The copy can be read from off-camera, so that viewers see some other scene while they hear the narrator. Or the copy can be memorized or read (using cue cards or a cueing device such as a TelePrompTer) so that viewers see the “talent” on-camera as he or she talks. A few tips for adapting writing for video follow. (**Note:** The same rules apply if you’re adapting activities for audiocassette recordings or radio production.)

- 
- Write clearly and simply. Write to be heard.
 - Write in a conversational tone.
 - Keep your sentences short.
 - Use first and second person (for example, “**You** can make a difference...”).
 - Use action verbs such as “join,” “come,” “write” and “buy.”
 - Use words that clearly communicate and conjure up powerful emotional images. Use comparisons and metaphors.
 - Edit your copy. Take out unnecessary words and change verbs to communicate action and present tense.
 - Use a stopwatch to time yourself or your narrator reading the copy. Limit the number of words so that the narrator can easily read the copy within the number of seconds you need. For example, for a 60-second spot or commercial, you’ll probably need to limit the script to about 75 to 100 words. Eliminate words or sentences if the narrator cannot read the copy clearly within the amount of time you want.
 - Read the script aloud and rehearse it before you do any taping. Listen to be sure it’s clear and easy to understand. Read it aloud to someone else and ask if he or she can understand your message. Make any changes you need to keep the message clear, simple, understandable and as powerful as possible.

Sample Video Script

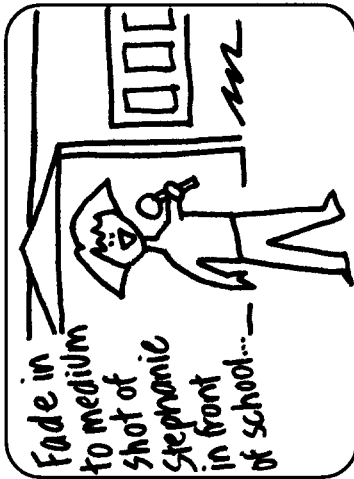
Video scripts typically are sheets of paper divided down the middle. The left column is "Video" (what you see) and the right column is "Audio" (what you hear).

Teens Tell All

VIDEO	AUDIO
Fade in to medium shot of Stephanie in front of school She walks out of shot toward front door of school.	STEPHANIE ON-CAMERA: Hello and welcome to our show, "Teens Tell All." I'm Stephanie and today I'll be taking you on a video tour of Hazelton Middle School. That's where I go, and I know a lot of kids who are anxious to tell you what it's like to go to school here. Well, it's 7:55 on a cold November morning, and our first class starts in 5 minutes. We'd better get inside.
Shot in the hallway with lots of kids milling around at lockers. Close-up of Mark, who's being interviewed by Stephanie	STEPHANIE VOICE-OVER: (MUST SPEAK LOUDLY DIRECTLY INTO MICROPHONE TO BE HEARD OVER BACKGROUND NOISE.) This is the craziest part of middle school. We call it "locker madness." We have to get our books and things before every class and it seems like there's never enough time. MARK: (Mark explains in his own words his feelings about the little time he has once he gets off the bus, gets in school and tries to get what he needs from his locker in time to get to his first class on time. He will try to make his answer about 30 seconds long.)
Stephanie on-camera outside her first class.	STEPHANIE ON-CAMERA: You know, a lot of kids feel that way. Our days start off feeling kind of crazy because we're rushing and worried about being late for our first class. I wonder if they could start school even five minutes later so we'd have time to slow down, say "hi" to our friends for a minute, and ease into our day...? Bell rings and she turns and hurriedly walks into the classroom.

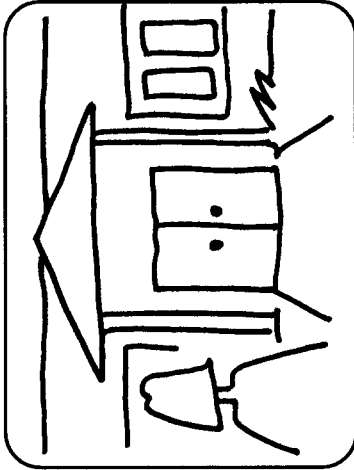
Sample Video Storyboard

A storyboard is a tool that can help you visualize the action described in your script. It will also help keep you organized as you tape your video. You can put rough sketches in the boxes to represent how each different camera shot will look on screen. Notes describing the shots and transitions can go between the boxes. Write the audio for each shot on the lines below.



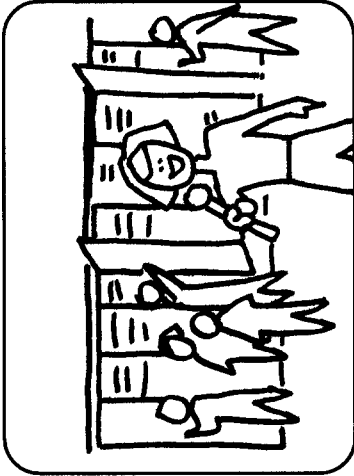
Fade in to medium shot of Stephanie in front of school...

AUDIO: Hello, and welcome to our show, "Teens Tell All." I'm Stephanie and today I'll be taking you on a video tour of Hazelton Middle School.



cut to hallway, kids milling around lockers

AUDIO: Well, it's 7:55 on a cold Nov. morning, and our first class starts in 5 minutes. We'd better get inside. (walks toward front door)

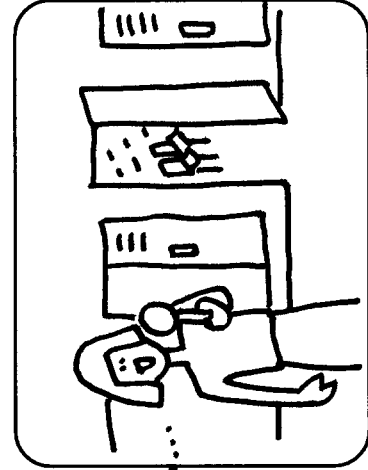


AUDIO: This is the craziest part of middle school. We call it "locker madness." We have to get our books & things before every class & there's never enough time.



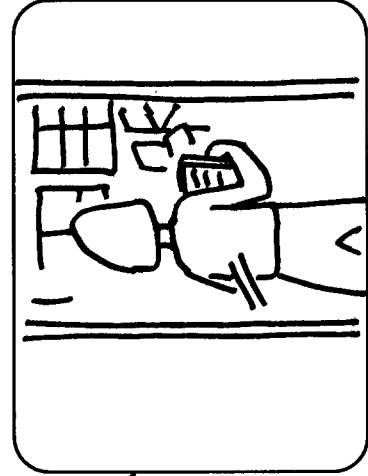
cut to outside of classroom...

AUDIO: Mark explains feelings about time, bus, locker, 1st class. (30 second interview).



pan to classroom door...

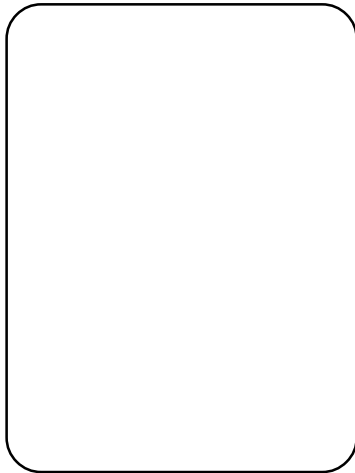
AUDIO: You know, a lot of kids feel that way... (more thoughts.)



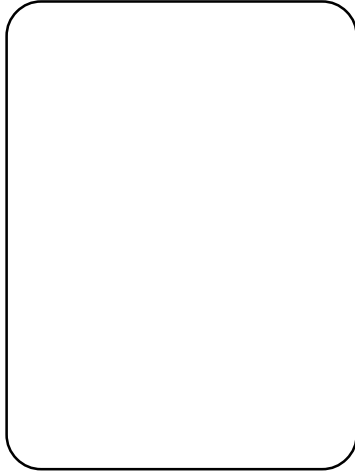
AUDIO: (Bell rings.)

Video Storyboard

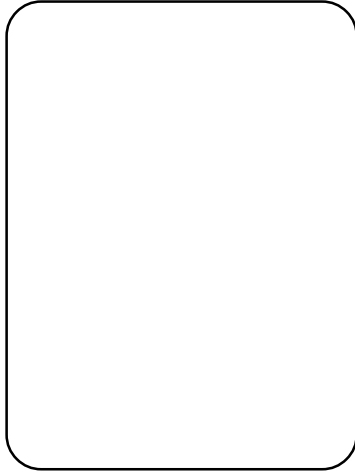
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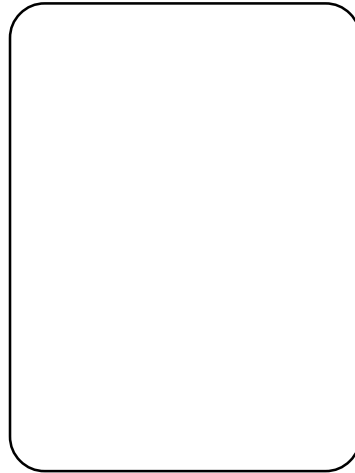
AUDIO: _____



AUDIO: _____



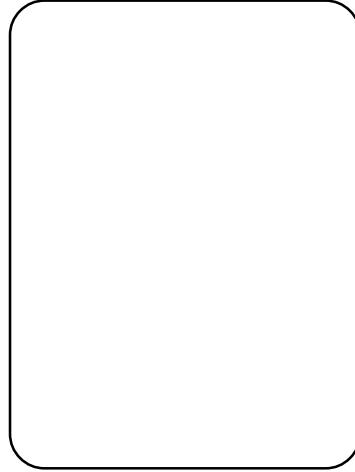
AUDIO: _____



AUDIO: _____



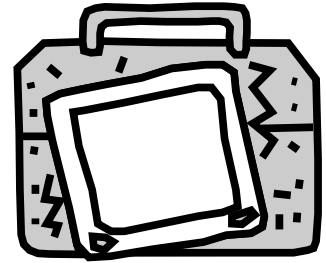
AUDIO: _____



AUDIO: _____

SKILL SHEET:

Speaking Skills for Video

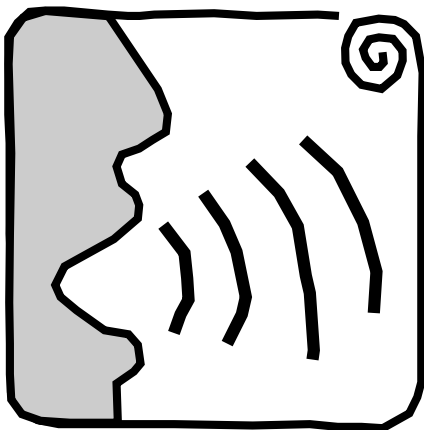


This sheet is designed to help you adapt your speaking style to video. See the “Vocal Expression and Public Speaking” section of the **Communications Toolkit** for more in-depth information about improving your verbal communication skills.

Most of the rules of good speaking and presentation skills apply to video as well. Here are a few tips to help you become a better on-camera presenter, or “talent”:

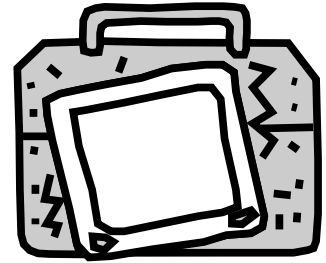
- A strong, confident voice will make your message more believable. Speak up!
- How do you make your voice sound strong and confident? Relax, breath deep, lower your voice and project from your diaphragm. (The diaphragm is the area between your chest and stomach.)
- Vary your pitch, volume and pacing to hold viewers’ interest.
- Try to sound like yourself! Imagine that you’re speaking to a friend rather than to a microphone. Try to avoid sounding like you’re reading a book, monotonous or singsongy.
- Enunciate and speak very clearly.
- Find a comfortable, medium speed. Don’t talk too fast or too slow.
- Exaggerate your delivery and put strong emphasis on key words. Be dramatic!
- Your facial expressions should be appropriate to your words. That is, don’t smile or smirk if the message is serious. Smile and look joyful if the message is positive or heartwarming.

- Stand up straight, look people in the eye and don’t fidget.
- Eye contact is extremely important and powerful. If you want to look directly at your video audience, look at the camera lens as if it were the familiar eyes of your best friend. Don’t let your eyes stray away from the camera lens while it’s recording. Wandering eyes make you look shifty and insecure. Practice by saying your script as you look at an eye-level mark on the wall. As with most things in life, the more you practice, the better you will become at this.
- Use hand gestures only if appropriate. Effective hand gestures come from being relaxed and spontaneous. (Playing with your hair, scratching and rubbing your knuckles are **not** effective hand gestures!)
- If you’re using a hand-held microphone, hold it about four inches away from your mouth.
- *Just do it!* Almost everyone is nervous about speaking in front of groups (and cameras)! The more you do it, the better and the easier it gets. Really!

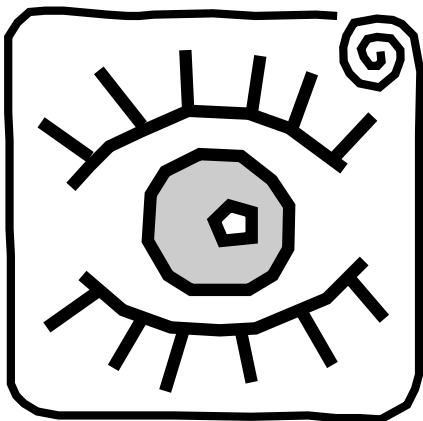


SKILL SHEET:

Graphics for Video



This sheet is designed to give you an idea of how video graphics can be used to get a message across and how the design process works. Read it with your production team, then decide as a group who will be responsible for designing graphics for your video. See the “Visual Communication and Graphic Design” section of the **Communications Toolkit** for more in-depth information about improving your visual communication skills.



The “job” of a video graphic

Video graphics can help reinforce:

- The visual identity for a product so it can be “picked out of the crowd.”
- Where you need to go or call to find the product or service.
- An image for the product or message that is geared to a target audience.
- Identification of the “talent” if it is important to show names.

The Design Process

1. Define the “design problem.” Research and organize the key points you wish to communicate in the graphic.
2. Make “thumbnail” sketches or “roughs.”
3. Get group opinions.
4. Produce final art. (Proofread carefully!)
5. Evaluate how well it worked.

Type Tips

- Medium-weight, sans-serif and thick serif typefaces read best.
- Use small “chunks” of type at a time – don’t overload the screen with information.
- Use upper and lower case – not all upper case.
- Be sure type color and weight contrasts well with the background.
- Choose colors that reinforce your message or product image.
- Use only one type “family” if possible.

- Avoid stacking type vertically or diagonally if you want maximum readability.

Logos and Symbols

You may wish to design a logo or symbol to identify your product. A good logo or symbol:

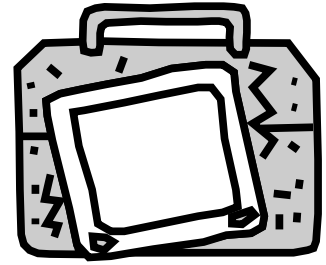
- Has positive associations.
- Provides quick and easy information.
- Can be reduced without losing effectiveness.
- Works in one color.
- Uses negative space well.
- Has “heavy” weight for good contrast with the background and other design elements.
- Shows action or flow (upwards and to the right is the most positive direction.)

And Finally...

- Keep artwork proportional to the video camera image area.
- Be sure to leave enough of a border around the artwork so the paper edge doesn’t show in the shot.

SKILL SHEET:

Interviewing Skills for Video



When you are being interviewed:

- Prepare carefully. Anticipate and be prepared to answer the questions you'll probably be asked.
 - Practice answering questions out loud before the interview. This will help you make sure you like the way your answers sound. Try to keep your answers to 30 seconds or less.
 - Speak at a pace that is neither too fast nor too slow. Find a medium pace that sounds enthusiastic but not hyper.
 - Speak up, articulate each word and don't mumble.
 - Be brief, get to the point quickly and don't ramble.
 - Listen carefully to the interviewer's questions and reactions to your answers. Don't fall into the trap of thinking about what you're going to say next instead of listening.
 - Maintain eye contact with your interviewer. "Speak" with your eyes and facial expressions.
 - Appear confident and relaxed. The best way to accomplish this is by being prepared and by practicing.
- Establish a connection or rapport with the person you're interviewing. Work to gain his or her trust and help him or her feel at ease.
 - Start out with general questions and then move toward more specific, detailed questions.
 - Ask open-ended questions that require longer answers. Avoid questions with "yes" or "no" answers.
 - Whenever you're confused about a response to a question, don't be afraid to ask for clarification. If you're confused, chances are viewers will be confused, too.
 - Listen carefully and maintain eye contact. Give the person enough time to answer your questions. Don't jump in and try to answer questions for the person you're interviewing. Be quiet, nod your head and react with your eyes and facial expressions to what he or she is saying. (Don't let your voice "run over" the interviewee's voice.)

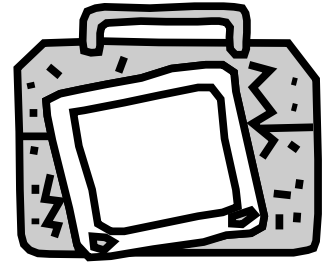
When you're the interviewer:

- Prepare carefully. Gather some background information about the person you're interviewing and prepare questions that help ensure you'll get interesting answers on tape.



SKILL SHEET:

Make the Media Your Partner



Young people who are interested in developing media relations skills have the potential to succeed at getting media attention, because the fact that they are doing the communicating is new and unique in itself. It's important, though, that young people have and use the basic skills they need to be successful. By following these guidelines, young people can increase the chances of the media becoming a partner in helping communicate the messages kids need others to hear, read or see.

Determine Your Audience, Then Find the Best Media Outlets to Reach Them

Once you know who you most need to communicate with, identify the media outlets best suited to help you get your message to that audience. For example, if kids are your primary audience, then you should have a list of all media outlets that cater to youth audiences. Some daily and weekly newspapers have special sections for kids and young people; some broadcast outlets have certain times of the day or special programs when their broadcast offerings cater primarily to kids. Use the same process if your audience is parents, teachers, or other groups. For general news that affects the wider community, most media outlets will be your target.

Identify the Outlet's Most Important Decision-Maker

Remember, you're looking for the person who either writes about your area of interest or edits the section that features your area of interest. Make a list of specific contact people (editors and reporters) for each media outlet that includes:

- Contact person's name
- Accurate mailing address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Title
- Daily, hourly and weekly deadlines
- Best times to reach or call the person

- The way the person prefers to receive information from you

Much of this information can be gained from a phone call or visit once you've identified a specific contact.

Determine the News Value of Your Story

Before contacting media outlets or specific media contacts, make sure your story is news. Ask yourself whether the story is timely, local, important to the larger community, will improve people's lives, is unusual and represents conflict. These are the things that determine what is and isn't news. The most newsworthy story is the one that meets at least one, and preferably more, of these criteria.

Just How Newsy Is It?

- Your youth group had a meeting. *No news value if a routine meeting.*
- Your youth group will have a meeting. *Little or no news value except to participants. Best placed in your group's newsletter and maybe in the community calendar, depending on the size of your group.*
- Your youth group is calling a meeting with city council representatives to discuss the need for a youth center. *Significant news value because of the importance of the topic and the fact that young people are calling the meeting.*
- Two members will represent your club at a state or national meeting. *May be of interest to local media, but would be of more interest depending on purpose of conference or role of the two members at the conference.*

(For more information on deciding news value, see the "News Writing" skill sheet on pg. 20.)

Plan Your Pitch

Before picking up the phone to make your media contact, you should:

- Write out your critical points – the 5 W’s and the H (who, what, when, where, why and how), and be sure to localize the topic or issue.
- Identify others who can speak on the topic and be interviewed, if needed.
- Anticipate the questions. Once you’ve answered the who, what, when, where, why and how, ask yourself what other questions this information might generate and be prepared to answer them. For instance, you might be asked questions such as, “Can you provide proof of your statements?” “Who else is affected by or agrees with your statements?” and “What, if any, time frames affect your story?”
- Have materials available you can share immediately if asked, such as a news release, fact sheets and other background information.
- Practice your pitch to build your confidence in your ability to get your key ideas across quickly.

Make the Pitch

- Make sure you are respecting the media outlet’s deadline times. It is best to call or phone after deadline or more than three hours before deadline to be sure the reporter or editor has time to listen to your pitch.
- Be brief! Try to craft your information delivery to take no more than two minutes.

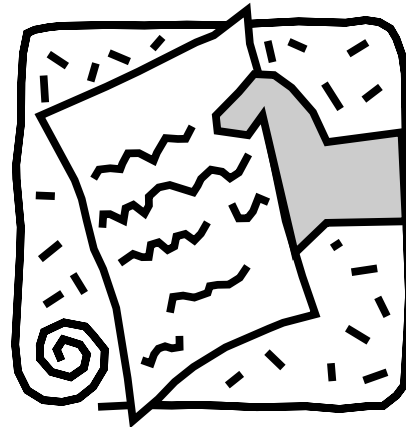
- Be accurate and factual. Never lie to the media. If you make a mistake, be sure to follow up with the reporter or editor quickly to clarify your error. But it’s best to be prepared to avoid mistakes.

Be Available

Provide the media with the names and phone numbers of people who can talk to them about your story, day or night. If there are specific times when a contact can best be reached, indicate that information when communicating with your media contacts. Once you’ve invited the media to be involved with your story, be sure you or someone else can be available to help them get all the information they need.

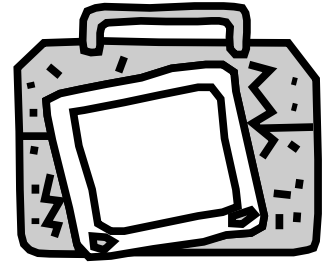
Say Thank You!

When you get great media coverage for your story, take the time to thank the reporter and the editor for the visibility they gave your issue or story. This simple courtesy will help strengthen your media relationships and make you stand out. Surprisingly, reporters and editors don’t hear “thank you” enough when they write great stories, so your courtesy would be memorable.



SKILL SHEET:

Safety Rules for Online Time



- I will not send by email or chat, or post on a Web page, personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' or guardians' work address or telephone number, the name and location of my school or my photograph without my parents' permission.
- I will tell my parents or other supervising adult right away if I run into any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents or guardians. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother, father or guardian along.
- I will not answer any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. I will show the message to my parents or other supervising adult right away.
- I will talk with my parents or guardians about setting up rules for going online.
- I will never use bad language or send mean messages online.
- I will never share my password with anyone but my parents or guardians.
- I will not download or copy any files, games or software to my computer without permission from a supervising adult.

Signature

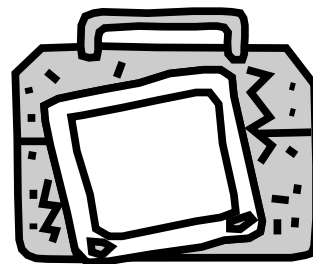
Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Date

ICEBREAKER:

Communication Treasure Hunt



FOCUS:

Building friendships and group cohesiveness

PURPOSE:

- To get kids feeling comfortable with one another
- To assess the group's experiences in various areas of communication
- To explore communication areas the group would like to learn more about

MATERIALS:

- "Find Someone Who..." handout (on pg. 153; one per person)
- Pencils (one per person)

SETTING:

Any

TIME:

10–15 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

Review the "Find Someone Who..." handout and decide if you want to make any additions to the handout to accommodate the size of your group.

During the meeting:

1. Tell the kids they're going on a human "communication treasure hunt." Pass out pencils and the "Find Someone Who..." handout and tell them they have about 10 minutes to find people in the group who fit the description listed. Tell them they can use each person only once. (Unless your group is very small.)
2. After about 10 minutes, stop the search and have the kids sit in a circle. Ask if anyone found people for all the descriptions. Ask them to share some of the special things they found out about the communication experiences of people in the group. (For example, ask whether anyone found a person who has sent an email message. If someone has, let that person talk about using email. Find out things like who they sent the message to, what system they used, how hard it was.)
3. Point out that your group has lots of "resource people" who have had a wide variety of experiences in the various communication areas. (If very few young people have had experiences in the areas listed, ask the group if they're interested in learning more about some of the areas.) Use this activity as a springboard into specific areas of communication that your group would like to explore.



(Adapted with permission from the "A Human Treasure Hunt" icebreaker in 4-H 1492, *Inner Space: Interacting with Others*, © 1991 Michigan State University.)

COMMUNICATION TREASURE HUNT HANDOUT:

Find Someone Who...

Find someone in your group who matches these descriptions. Fill in his or her name and the other information that's requested. Remember, you can only use each person once.

Find someone who...

- Has made a speech in front of a group.
- Has created a flier or poster.
- Has written a newspaper article.
- Has been on television.
- Has helped friends resolve a conflict.
- Has been part of a discussion at a meeting.
- Has used a computer to draw a picture.
- Has written a letter to the editor of a newspaper.
- Has sent an email (electronic mail) message.
- Has introduced a guest or speaker at a banquet or event.
- Has written a letter to someone famous.
- Has written a letter to a friend.
- Has been involved in making a video.
- Has used a computer to write a paper for school.

Name:

Group name: _____

Topic: _____

Headline: _____

Program name: _____

Outcome: _____

Discussion topic: _____

Picture subject: _____

Letter topic: _____

Message recipient: _____

Guest's name: _____

Letter recipient: _____

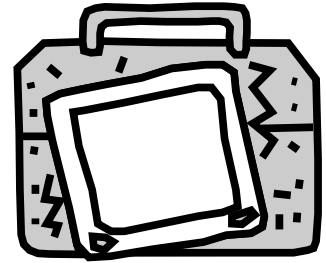
Letter recipient: _____

Video title or subject: _____

Paper topic: _____

ICEBREAKER:

Video Introductions



FOCUS:

- To help the group get to know each other
- To help the kids begin to feel comfortable seeing or hearing themselves on tape

PURPOSE:

- To give kids the chance to introduce themselves to the group
- To incorporate technology into the introduction process
- To give participants the opportunity to see or hear themselves on tape

MATERIALS:

- Camcorder and monitor or audiotape recorder
- Video or audiotape

SETTING:

Any

TIME:

10–15 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

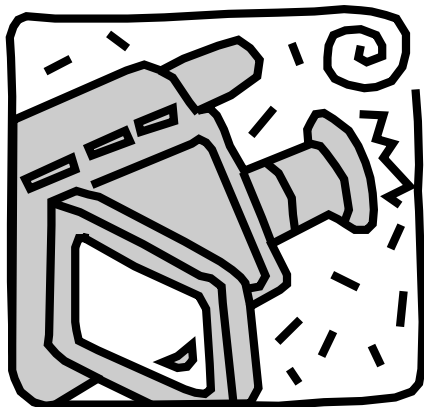
This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.

- Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
- Provide feedback in a positive way.
- Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
- Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
- Be considerate of other people's feelings.
- Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.

During the meeting:

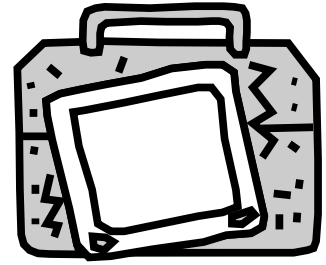
Note to Leaders: This is written as a videotape activity. If you are using an audiocassette recorder, the procedure is the same, except that you'll be using different equipment.

1. Have the group sit in a circle. Explain briefly how to turn the equipment on and off and how to pause the tape. This will help the participants begin to feel comfortable handling the equipment themselves. Tell the group that everyone will have a chance to tape and be taped.
2. Start the group off by asking the person next to you to videotape you. Talk directly to the camera and introduce yourself by saying a few things about your interests or hobbies. Then videotape the person who videotaped you doing the same thing.
3. Continue passing the camera around the circle until everyone has had the chance to tape and be taped.
4. When everyone is on tape, rewind the tape and play it back through the television or monitor. Encourage a quick round of applause after each person appears on camera to help the young people feel good about what they did.



ACTIVITY:

Create a Video Treatment



FOCUS:

Building communication and conceptualizing skills

PURPOSE:

- To help kids learn to work as a team to create a video plan or “treatment.” (You don’t have to actually create the videos unless your group wants to. Simply working on the planning process is a good exercise for the kids!)
- To give kids a chance to practice their writing skills
- To give kids a chance to practice their presentation skills

MATERIALS:

- Paper and pens or pencils (one per person)
- “Create a Video Treatment” handout (on pg. 157; one per person)
- “What I Learned” self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

TIME:

30–60 minutes (depending on the size of your group)

SETTING:

A comfortable room with space for three- to five-person teams

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.

- Listen carefully to other people’s presentations.
- Provide feedback in a positive way.
- Don’t be rude, critical or hurtful.
- Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
- Be considerate of other people’s feelings.
- Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.

During the meeting:

1. Explain to the young people that most film and video programs begin with a “treatment” (a plan or concept). Video treatments are usually created by a team of people who share different perspectives on a topic. Review the “Video, Media and Technology Planning Form” (on pg. 136). Then share something like the following with the group about what video plans or treatments include:

*Video treatments must specify the **objective**, or message you’re trying to convey to your audience. As you develop the treatment, you must work out the concept, or information on how you plan to approach the video. This includes the kinds of images, interviews, spokespersons, story line, music, historic photos and more that you will assemble to craft your message effectively. At this stage, you should try to stay open to creative ideas. (If you’re working on a mock or practice video treatment, the possibilities for what you can plan are virtually limitless!)*

*Ask yourself what the appropriate **length** is for your video to convey your message and meet the needs of your target audience. You also must envision the possible uses for your finished video. Think about who will use it or see it. Will it air on television or be shown at school, club or group meetings? Think about all the ways in which this video could be used.*

2. Divide the group into three- to five-person teams. Pass out pencils or pens and the “Create a Video Treatment” handout.
3. Tell the kids they will have 30 to 40 minutes to create a video treatment. You can either assign them all the same treatment to work on, such as “create a video that helps people get to know our school or club,” or let each group decide what they want to do. (Allow extra

time if they will choose their own topics.) Remind them that they may need to brainstorm on a variety of topics to get started.

LEADERS' HINT: Have the kids follow these rules as they do their brainstorming:

Rule 1: Do not judge ideas!

Rule 2: It's okay to be far-out!

Rule 3: Think of as many ideas as you can.

Rule 4: Piggyback on someone else's ideas.

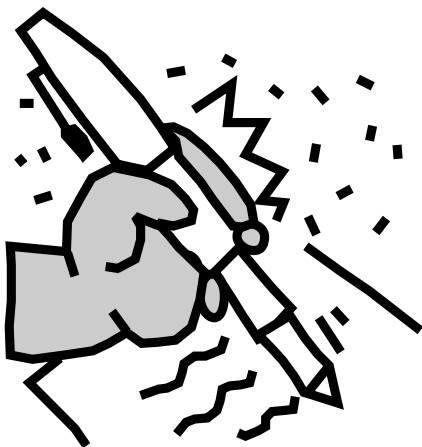
You may want to write these rules on a sheet of newsprint and display it where all the kids can see it.

4. Encourage the groups to work as teams and explain that they should try to reach consensus (group agreement) on their decisions before filling in their forms. Tell them to write their ideas down carefully and completely so someone else reading their treatment would be able to understand it.
5. Explain that when time is up, each group will be asked to present their video treatment to the whole group. Encourage each team member to present a piece of the treatment plan. Explain that they shouldn't simply read from their plan, but should embellish and give more detail than may be given in the written plan.
6. After the teams have finished their video treatments, call the teams together and ask each team to share their plans with the whole group. After each team has presented their treatment, give the other teams a chance to ask questions. Encourage positive feedback and create a fun, nonthreatening environment.

TALKING IT OVER:

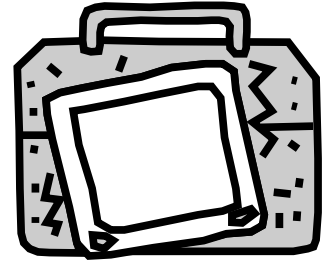
After all the presentations have been completed, ask the kids the following questions:

1. What are the advantages of working as a team to create a video plan or treatment?
2. What are some of the disadvantages?
3. What was it like trying to visualize what your video might look like? Was it easy or hard to do? Why?
4. What did you find interesting about this activity?
5. What were some of the similarities and differences among the video treatments? (The answer to this question can be especially interesting if all the groups worked on the same topic.)
6. If this was an imaginary project: Would your video treatment be different if you were actually going to produce the video? If so, how?
7. If this was an imaginary project: Are you interested in using the same process to begin planning a real video project? (If the answer is yes, set a date and get started!)



VIDEO TREATMENT HANDOUT:

Create a Video Treatment



A treatment is the first step in planning a video project. Work with your group to think through and clarify the following points.

OBJECTIVE:

(What's your message?)

AUDIENCE:

(Whom are you trying to reach?)

CONCEPT:

(What approach will you take?)

LENGTH:

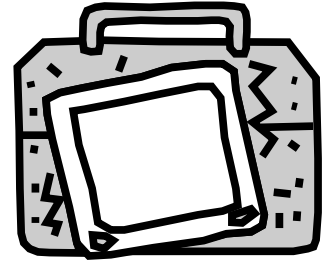
(How long should the video be?)

USES:

(How will this video be used?)

ACTIVITY:

Create a Commercial



FOCUS:

Building communication skills

PURPOSE:

- To introduce kids to the art and technology of video production
- To give kids opportunities to practice writing and speaking skills
- To give kids the opportunity to work in teams
- To give kids opportunities for creative expression

MATERIALS:

- Video camera/camcorder (one is enough but one per group is best)
- Video cassette recorder (VCR) and monitor
- Blank videotapes
- "Writing Skills for Video" skill sheet (on pg. 142; one per team)
- Paper
- Pencils
- Newsprint or other large paper
- Assortment of colored markers
- Masking tape
- Popcorn (optional)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

TIME:

90–120 minutes

SETTING:

A room large enough for small groups to spread out, make noise and work comfortably; break-out rooms or other areas for small groups work best; an extra, quiet room if you have only one camcorder

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people's feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
2. Read through the information related to video provided in "What Leaders Need to Know" and the skills sheets in this section to learn more about video production terms; planning; shooting and editing techniques; and writing, speaking, graphics skills for video. A handout on video production roles is also available on page 165.
3. Decide whether you'll have the group produce short commercials on serious issues they're concerned about, or give them a looser rein to have fun and be wildly creative. (Both options work very well. Consider letting the group decide which direction to pursue.)
4. Make enough copies for each team of the "Writing Skills for Video" skill sheet including the sample script and storyboard forms and extra blank storyboards, or provide blank paper for making scripts and storyboards.
5. Be sure your video camera batteries are charged, that all equipment is in good working order and that you or someone else is very comfortable using the equipment.

During the meeting:

1. Explain to the kids that they will form production teams to create television commercials. Explain that most commercials are 15, 30 or 60 seconds long, and that they quickly, succinctly and creatively sell a product, service or idea. Briefly explain the principles of script writing, speaking and graphics for video. (See the skill sheets on pp. 142, 146 and 147.)
2. Have the group divide into four- to six-person teams. Explain the team approach to video production and that team members will have to decide what specific responsibilities they want to accept.

No Video Equipment?

If you don't have access to a video camera (or just want to start off with a simplified activity), use an audiocassette recorder to do this activity. Talk about radio commercials instead of television. Explain to the kids that they will use their voices, sound effects, music, and more to create a commercial. No need to worry about the visuals or pictures with this version!

Tell them that some possibilities are to write the script, be the director or producer, or be part of the on-air talent.

3. If you're going to let the teams decide the focus of their videos, tell them to decide as a team whether they want to create a public service announcement on a serious issue such as teen violence or pregnancy prevention, or come up with a commercial for a product.
4. Hand out blank paper for script writing, "Writing Skills for Video" skill sheets with storyboard forms, paper and pencils to each team. Tell the teams they're working "on deadline"; they'll have a set amount of time (45 or 60 minutes - your choice) to plan, write, rehearse and tape their videos.
5. If each team has a camera, send them off to quiet spots to plan and produce their videos. If you only have one camera, set up the camera in a "studio" (a quiet room) and have the teams take turns going into the studio when they're ready for taping.
6. After all the teams have taped their videos, have them gather in the larger group. Have the teams take turns playing their videos for the whole group. Ask a representative from each team to introduce their tape and briefly explain what the issue or product is that they are "selling" in the commercial. Provide popcorn if you want to create a fun "premiere" atmosphere. Encourage clapping and positive feedback after each commercial is shown.

TALKING IT OVER:

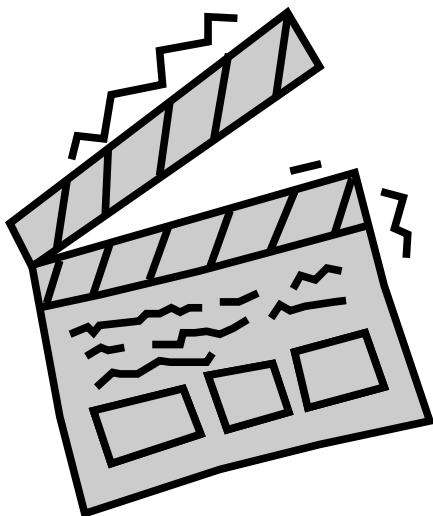
After all the videos have been premiered, encourage the kids to share how they felt about the experience and what they learned from it. Ask the group the following questions:

1. What did you enjoy most about this experience?
2. What things were most challenging?
3. Did anything surprise you about what it's like to work on a team to create a videotape?
4. Would you do anything differently if you were to do it over again?
5. Are you interested in working on other video projects in the future? If so, what kinds of things would you like to do?

TRY THIS, TOO:

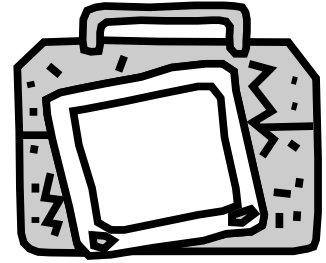
Check out the "Combining and Synthesizing" activity in *Outer Space: Discovering the Inventor in Me* (4-H 1490), which is available for purchase from the Michigan State University Bulletin Office, 10B Agriculture Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039. The activity has kids combine two unrelated objects, like a tennis ball and a shoe, to create a totally new and different "product." After the teams have created their products, have them create commercials to advertise them.

If your group is interested in creating a video project around a public service issue, contact your local television station and explore the possibility of having them work with your group to get their video project aired. See the "Make the Media Your Partner" skill sheet on page 149 to learn more about how to work effectively with the media.



ACTIVITY:

Create a Talk Show



FOCUS:

Building communication skills

PURPOSE:

- To give kids the opportunity to create a mock television talk show
- To help kids develop interviewing skills
- To give kids the chance to be interviewed on tape and critique their own performances

MATERIALS:

- Video camera/camcorder (one is enough but one per group is best)
- Tripods (optional)
- Hand-held microphones (optional)
- Video cassette recorder (VCR) and monitor
- Blank videotapes (one per team)
- Paper
- Pencils (one per person)
- "Interviewing Skills for Video" skill sheet (on pg. 148; one per person)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

TIME:

45 minutes (longer for large groups)

SETTING:

A room large enough for groups to spread out and work comfortably, and a separate, quiet room for videotaping

PROCEDURE:

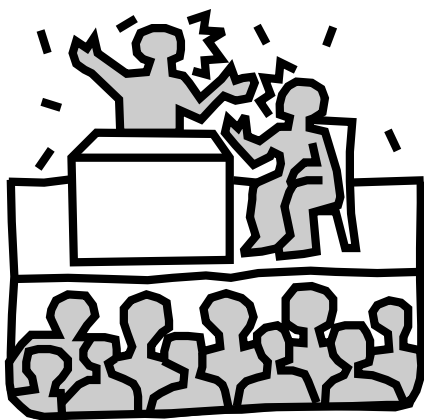
Before the meeting:

1. This activity puts young people in situations where other kids in the group will respond to their presentation skills or give feedback. It should be done only when group members respect each other and are willing to abide by the following guidelines for respectful behavior. If you choose to use this activity, review these points with your group in advance.
 - Listen carefully to other people's presentations.
 - Provide feedback in a positive way.
 - Don't be rude, critical or hurtful.
 - Be aware that everyone has differing abilities.
 - Be considerate of other people's feelings.
 - Follow the Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you would like to be treated.
2. Read through the activity and familiarize yourself with the "Interviewing Skills for Video" skill sheet. Make enough copies of it to distribute to your group. You may also wish to review the information related to video provided in "What Leaders Need to Know" and the skills sheets in this section to learn more about video production terms; planning; shooting and editing techniques; and writing, speaking, graphics skills for video. A handout on video production roles is also available on page 165.
3. Be sure your video camera batteries are charged, that all equipment is in good working order and that you or someone else is very comfortable using the equipment. Kids love using hand-held external microphones for interviews, so use them if you have them. You will need to have one person per camera to serve as camera operator. Don't forget that teen leaders make great videographers!

Leader's Hint: This activity can be as simple or as complex as you and your group want to make it. For example, the kids may want to create sets, costumes, masks and graphics, or use music to add fun and creativity to the experience.

During the meeting:

1. Explain to the group that they will each have the opportunity to be the interviewer and the guest on a television talk show that they will create. Tell them that they will need to decide whether they will portray themselves, another person (such as a politician, sports figure or actor) or a completely fictional character. Ask them to think about what television talk shows typically look like and to be creative as they plan and design theirs.



No Video Equipment?

If you don't have access to a video camera (or just want to start off with a simplified activity), use an audiocassette recorder to do this activity. Talk about using their voices, sound effects, music, and more to give clues about who is being interviewed! No need to worry about the visuals or pictures with this version!

2. Distribute the "Interviewing Skills for Video" skill sheet and briefly discuss the key points. Explain that their interviews will be done in a television talk show type setting. The interviews will help to establish who the guest is and explore interesting things about the guest. Each interview should be about 2 minutes long.
3. Ask the kids to choose a partner (preferably someone they don't know very well) and decide who will be the interviewer first. Give them about 10 minutes of "think time" for the guests to decide on their characters and for the hosts to develop questions for the interview. Both people need to prepare to be the interviewer and the guest because they will switch roles.
4. Have the teams take turns videotaping their interviews in the "studio" (a quiet room) so the other teams can't see or hear the taping sessions. If you have several cameras, set up several taping areas to save time. Give both partners a chance to be the host (interviewer) and the guest. Remember to limit each interview to 2 minutes.
5. When all of the teams have been taped, call the whole group together and distribute the "What I Learned" self-evaluation forms. Tell the kids that when their segments are shown, they should watch themselves and make a few quick notes on their handout. (Tell them that this self-evaluation is for their eyes only. It is just a way to help them focus on and think about their own presentation and interviewing skills, and to identify possible areas of improvement.)
6. Play back the interviews one at a time. After each interview, have one of the partners ask the whole group to first guess whether the characters are "fact or fiction" (real or made-up) and then to guess who they are supposed to be. Encourage clapping and positive feedback after each segment.

TALKING IT OVER:

After all the interviews have been aired, ask the group the following questions:

1. Did you enjoy the experience? Why or why not?
2. Which did you enjoy best - being the interviewer or the guest?
3. Did anything surprise you about how you looked and sounded on tape?
4. What kinds of real-life situations might you find yourself in where you are either the interviewer or the one being interviewed?
5. Did you learn anything new about being in these kinds of situations?

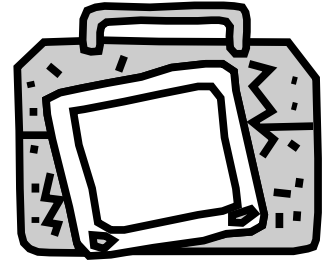
TRY THIS, TOO:

Your group may be interested in exploring other video and television possibilities. For example, many youth groups produce television talk shows that air on local cable access stations. (Cable access stations are required by law to provide equipment, training, studios and air time to local groups that want their voices heard through television in the community.) Your group may want to produce shows that explore issues that concern kids their age, promote community activities for kids, or do something you've never thought of! See the "Make the Media Your Partner" skill sheet on page 149 to learn more about how to work effectively with the media.

PROJECT:

Get Real!

Produce a Documentary



FOCUS:

Building communication skills

PURPOSE:

- To increase kids' knowledge and experience in video production
- To give kids experience producing a documentary
- To help kids produce a videotape that can be used as a project
- To give kids the opportunity to express themselves in creative ways
- To give kids the opportunity to work in teams to complete a task

MATERIALS:

- Video camera/camcorder
- Blank videotapes
- "Video Editing" skill sheet (on pg. 140; one per person)
- "Writing Skills for Video" skill sheet (on pg. 142; one per person)
- "Video Production Roles" handout (on pg. 165; one per person)
- Paper
- Newsprint (large paper) and markers
- Pens or pencils (one per person)
- Paper
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Read through the information related to video provided in the introduction and skills sheets in this section to learn more about video production terms; planning; shooting and editing techniques; and writing, speaking and graphics skills for video. A handout on video production roles is also available on page 165. The "Video Editing" skill sheet will help familiarize you with how to edit in your camera.
2. Read the "How to Brainstorm" information found on page 5 and familiarize yourself with the process.
3. Make enough copies for each team of the sample script and storyboard forms and extra blank storyboards, or provide blank paper for making scripts and storyboards.
4. Be sure your video camera batteries are charged and that all equipment is in good working order. You or someone else should be very comfortable using the equipment.

During the meeting:

BRAINSTORMING

1. Explain to the group that they will be working together to produce a documentary. A documentary presentation is a film or video that shares information or tells a story of real people and situations. (A documentary typically uses no actors or rehearsed lines.) Ask the group to brainstorm as many ideas for their documentary as possible. If they need help getting their creative juices flowing, here are some possibilities to help them get started:
 - Our Community: Is There Enough for Kids to Do?
 - Love/Hate: What Kids Think About School
 - How to Be a Better Parent: A Kid's Perspective
 - How to Be a Better Teacher: Kids' Advice for Teachers
 - Public Art in Our Community: Where Is It? What Does It Mean?
 - The History of Our Community
 - The Story of Our Town's Oldest Citizen
 - The Power of Computers: How Are They Being Used in Our Community?
 - A Day in the Life of a Dog
 - A Day in the Life of a Student at (Your) School
 - What Kids Can Learn Through 4-H
 - We're Off to the Fair: The Experiences of (Any) Club

TIME:

At least one or two planning meetings and a day or two for shooting scenes; a follow-up meeting is needed to view and discuss the final product and process

SETTING:

The planning meeting can be in any quiet room large enough to accommodate your group. The video shoots will most likely take place out in the community, wherever the group decides will work best for their production.



- Are We Safe? The Real Story About Violence in Our Community
- On the Job: A Look at (Any) Profession

After spending 15 to 30 minutes brainstorming and discussing ideas, help the group choose one topic that they're all interested in working on. If the group cannot reach consensus, they may need to vote or pull a topic from a hat.

PLANNING

2. Have the young people work together to plan their documentary. They'll need to talk about and decide on the following:

- What are the "big ideas" or questions they'd like to answer in their video? (For example, if the subject is violence in the community, the areas that they might choose from are violence against kids, violence by kids, real and perceived threats, how violence is perpetuated, violence in the media or how kids and others can help increase the peace and stop the violence in their communities.) It's best to focus on three or four main ideas rather than to try to say everything there is to say about a topic.
- What kinds of people or perspectives should they include in the video to help share information and tell the story? (For example, in a video about violence, the young people could interview a local police officer or sheriff, crime victims, parents of crime victims, mall security guards, criminal justice people, prevention-focused experts who have ideas about stopping violence, and, of course, other young people.)
- Should the video include narration or a voice-over to help tell the story? On- or off-camera narration can help bridge ideas and settings. If there will be narration, who will write it and who will say it? Will they say it on or off camera? Where within the overall documentary will it be best to add narration?

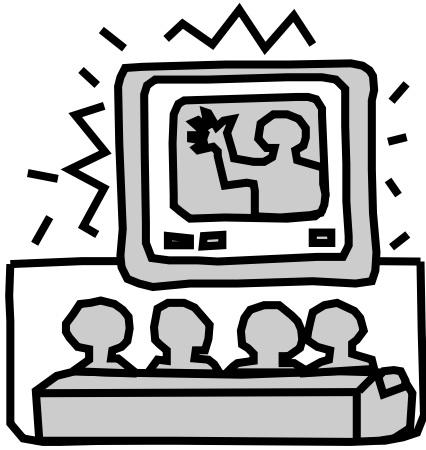
PRODUCTION ROLES

3. Distribute the "Video Production Roles" handout and review it with the group. Have the group decide which jobs or roles each person will accept. If your group is small, each person may need to take on several roles.

SCRIPTING AND STORYBOARDING

4. All film-making and video production requires careful planning. Some producers create outlines. Others create scripts or storyboards. All of these are tools to help producers put ideas on paper and create a plan for getting the film or tape completed. Your group can choose any of these options. Hand out blank paper for script writing or outlines, the "Writing Skills for Video" skill sheets containing storyboard forms, and paper and pencils to your group.

Typically, in documentary production, a complete and detailed outline is created and then all video interviews and scenes are shot. Afterwards, the writer or editor looks at everything on tape and decides how the many pieces can be put together – along with narration, music and graphics – to present the story effectively. If you



have access to editing equipment (many local cable access companies will provide people with free training and equipment), that's how you can proceed. For a more simplified project, "editing in the camera" is an option. (See the "Video Editing" skill sheet on pg. 140.) When this technique is used, the program is complete when you finish shooting the last scene. (Consider using editing in the camera as an introductory experience with documentary and other video production. If this technique piques your group's interest, perhaps they can move into more advanced projects that involve editing and post-production work. See "Beyond the Toolkit: More Ideas and Resources" on pg. 137 for ideas on how to take your video projects further.)

SHOOTING THE VIDEO

5. When the group has clearly defined what people, places and narration (if any) will be in their tape and has created a script or storyboard, then they are ready to begin scheduling one or more shooting days. If your group is editing in the camera, they will need to shoot the scenes, add narration, and tape all interviews in the order in which they want those features to appear on the tape. The "Video Editing" skill sheet discusses how to shoot so that the tape has an edited "feel" to it even though it is not edited.

WHEN THE VIDEO IS DONE

6. Creating a movie "premiere" atmosphere is always lots of fun. Consider serving popcorn or other treats and celebrate the group's accomplishment. See if the group is interested in sharing the tape with parents, friends, teachers and others.
7. Have the kids fill out the "What I Learned" self-evaluation form on page 8. Ask them to reflect privately on what they learned in producing their documentary.

TALKING IT OVER:

Ask for volunteers to share what they learned with others in the group. Ask the group the following questions:

- What would you do differently if you were beginning again?
- Would you like to "begin again" by planning to produce more videos in the future?
- How could this documentary be used as a communication or teaching tool?
- Would the topic of the documentary interest parent or teacher groups?
- Would you like to enter your documentary in the county fair or other contest?

TRY THIS, TOO:

- Contact a local television station or cable access station to see whether they would be interested in airing the documentary. See the "Make the Media Your Partner" skill sheet on page 149 to learn more about how to work effectively with the media.
- Contact your county Extension office to see if they would be interested in incorporating the video into training for adults that helps them better understand kids' perspectives.

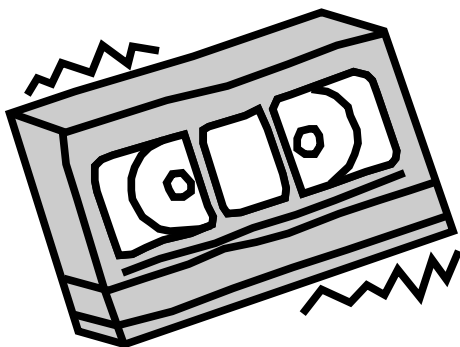
GET REAL! PRODUCE A DOCUMENTARY HANDOUT:

Video Production Roles

The following roles or jobs are part of most video production projects. As you work together to create your video, you will need to decide who will do what, so that all tasks are accomplished. If your group is small, each person may need to have more than one job. (This isn't unusual even in the "real world" of video production.)

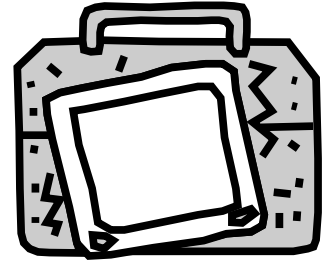
Some people are better suited to specific kinds of roles. For example, if someone in your group is artistic, that person may make a good graphic artist for your project. Allow the group members to experiment with roles and fill a variety of jobs.

- **Producer** – The person who gives overall leadership to the content, message, audience and objectives of the production. The producer coordinates many aspects of the production, such as setting up shoot days for taping on location and making sure that all the production tasks are assigned and completed. The producer also is responsible for the budget and timeline. It's his or her responsibility to see that the production is done on schedule and within a predetermined budget.
- **Director** – The person who gives overall leadership to the location video shooting. The director "directs" the on-air talent and instructs the person operating the camera (videographer) as to the type of shots to get and when to roll tape. The director is the person who calls out that most famous of movie-making lines, "Action!"
- **Scriptwriter** – The person who writes the script, copy, narration or voice-over for a film, commercial, television show or video.
- **Talent** – The people whose voices or faces appear on-camera; also called "on-air talent."
- **Graphic Artist** – The person who designs and creates visuals to enhance and support the message.
- **Videographer** – The person who operates the video camera.



ACTIVITY:

Offline Chat About Online Time



FOCUS:

Using the Internet safely and appropriately

PURPOSE:

To help participants learn to respond appropriately to situations that might arise while using the Internet

MATERIALS:

- "Internet Statements" handout (on pg. 168) copied onto scrap paper or 3-inch by 5-inch index cards
- 8½-inch by 11-inch "Agree" and "Disagree" signs (one of each per person; optional)
- "Safety Rules for Online Time" skill sheet (on pg.151; one per person)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

SETTING:

Room with movable chairs

TIME:

15 to 20 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Before the meeting:

1. Read the "Computers and the Internet" information on pages 131 to 135 of this section.
2. Copy the Internet Statements handout and cut out each of the statements or copy the statements onto 3-inch by 5-inch cards. Review the leader information for each statement.
3. Prepare "Agree" and "Disagree" signs (optional).

During the Meeting:

1. Arrange the group in a circle. Go around the circle and ask participants to say whether they have used the Internet before and what they used it for. (If participants have never used the Internet, you could ask if they know someone who has or if they have an idea what the Internet is and what they might use it for.)
2. Tell the group that they are going to get some statements about the Internet to read. Then they'll say whether they agree or disagree with the statements and why. Pass the statements around the group. Have each participant read and respond to a statement. Invite the rest of the group to respond to and discuss each statement after the individual presenting the statement has had a chance to do so.

TRY THIS, TOO:

Pass out one "Agree" and "Disagree" sign to each person. After an individual reads and responds to a statement, have the other participants hold up the sign that matches their opinion of the statement.

TALKING IT OVER:

Remind the group that the Internet is just like the "real world" – there are places that are educational and fun for young people to visit and others that are inappropriate. Just as they should be wary of strangers they meet face-to-face, they should also be wary of people they meet online. Ask them to brainstorm some rules they think families should have for online use and why. Pass out copies of the "Safety Rules for Online Time" skill sheet and read it together. Based on what they brainstormed, ask if there are any rules they think should be added to the list.

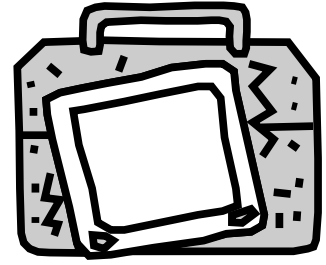
Remind the group that they also are responsible for their own behavior online and that using bad language or saying mean things to others online is irresponsible. (And could cause their Internet privileges to be cut off!) Ask them to brainstorm some situations where behavior on the Internet could create bad feelings or be a problem.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Have your group look for and discuss current news stories on Internet safety involving young people. Have your group investigate ways that people who violate the safety of children on the Internet can be reported. The group could create a public service announcement, poster, flier, Web page or other communications piece that informs kids about Internet safety issues.

OFFLINE CHAT ABOUT ONLINE TIME HANDOUT: Internet Statements



STATEMENT 1:

People can say anything they want when they're on the Internet because nobody really knows who they are or can find them. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Statement 1 Leader Information:

False! Every computer has a unique numerical address (called an Internet Protocol or "IP" address) that can be traced. The IP address is transmitted as part of any Internet message that is sent. One way that people who have sent objectionable material over the Internet have been caught is by the authorities using the IP address to trace the computer they used. This can help "narrow the list of suspects," and in many cases, has led to the culprit being identified and caught.

STATEMENT 2:

All information on the World Wide Web is checked by the U.S. government to make sure it's factual. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Statement 2 Leader Information:

False! The World Wide Web contains information created by individuals, educational institutions, businesses, organizations and governments all over the world. Anyone with a computer, the appropriate software and server space can put a Web page online. The reader is responsible for judging whether the information is accurate or how it might be biased by looking at the source and deciding if it is credible or not. The last three digits of a URL or Web address can sometimes provide a clue to the source. For example, gov=government; edu=education; org=organization; com=commercial business; mil=military; net=network. Keep in mind that most college students can create personal Web pages with the "edu" ending on the URL, so "edu" doesn't necessarily mean educational content.

STATEMENT 3:

It's okay to tell someone my name and address or phone number or send someone my picture when I'm on the Internet. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Statement 3 Leader Information:

Young people should never send personal information without their parent's or guardian's permission! This also applies to posting personal contact information or photos on Web pages.

STATEMENT 4:

When I'm using the Internet, if someone sends me a message that makes me feel uncomfortable the first thing I should do is (pick one):

- Ignore it
- Tell my parent or supervising adult
- Respond and tell the person to stop bothering me
- Tell my friends

Statement 4 Leader Information:

*The first response should be to tell a parent or supervising adult. **Never** respond in any way to messages that make you feel uncomfortable. Paying attention to the sender may escalate his or her messages.*

STATEMENT 5:

It's okay to let my best friends know my password. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Statement 5 Leader Information:

False! Just as you would never share a credit card number, never share your password. Having your password will give another person access to your email and Web privileges.

STATEMENT 6:

When I run into things on the Internet that are offensive I should (pick one or more):
a. Get out of the offensive area
b. Tell my parent or other supervising adult
c. Tell my friends

Statement 6 Leader Information:

The best response is to immediately leave the offensive area (don't click on any links that would go further) and to tell a parent or supervising adult what happened.

STATEMENT 7:

I can copy anything (for example: text, graphics, games) I find on the Internet because it's all free information.

Statement 7 Leader Information:

False! Just because you can read it for free doesn't mean that you have the legal right to copy or use it on your personal Web page. Assume that everything on the Internet is copyrighted (that is, protected from copying by United States and international law, even if it doesn't have a copyright notice). Unless the person or organization posting it indicates you have permission to copy, assume that you will need to ask for permission!

STATEMENT 8:

It's okay to copy my friend's email message to me and send it to someone else.

Statement 8 Leader Information:

This is a great way to get in trouble with your friends! Only copy someone's personal correspondence to you and send it to someone else with permission from the original sender.

STATEMENT 9:

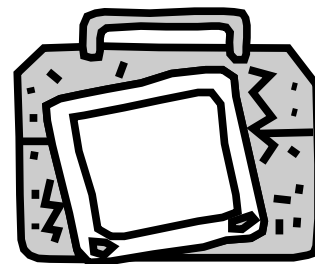
Email is private and nobody can find out what I say in it except the person who receives it.

Statement 9 Leader Information:

False! Don't assume that all email is private. For example, your message can easily be forwarded to others or printed and shared. The forward and reply features in many email programs put an automatic copy of the original message at the end of your forward or reply unless you turn off that feature. Try not to put anything in your email that you would be embarrassed to share with others!

PROJECT:

Electronic Pen Pals



FOCUS:

Using technology to practice communications skills and build friendships

PURPOSE:

- To get kids thinking about communication technologies available to them
- To give kids creative ways to practice writing and speaking skills
- To give kids opportunities to build new friendships with young people living in other parts of their state, country or world

EQUIPMENT:

The equipment you'll need will depend on the technology you and the kids decide to use or what is available to your group. Consider one or more of the following:

- Audiocassette recorder and blank audiotapes
- Camcorder, VCR/monitor and blank videotapes
- Computer with telephone hookup or modem and Internet access with email communications software
- Interactive video classroom (Many schools, community colleges and intermediate school districts [ISDs] have access)

MATERIALS:

- Newsprint or other large paper
- Markers
- Paper
- Pencils
- "What Technology is Right for Your Project" leader background (on pg. 171)
- "What I Learned" self-evaluation form (on pg. 8; one per person)

PROCEDURE:

1. Several technologies are available to you for helping kids develop "electronic pen pals." Ask your group to brainstorm all the technologies they can think of that enable people to communicate with one another (some examples include telephones, computers, fax machines, videos, audiotapes, videophones; refer to the "What Technology is Right for Your Project" leader background on page 171). List them on newsprint or large paper.
2. Ask the kids the following questions:
 - What technologies would be most appropriate for building long-distance friendships?
 - What methods would work best for this group? (Suggest that they consider what equipment they have access to, the size of group, the time commitment needed to use a given technology, and so on.)
 - Does anyone in this group own or know someone who owns a video or still camera, a tape recorder or a computer?
 - Could the group borrow equipment from a friend or family member, from a school, from the county Extension office or from a local business?
3. Once the group has chosen a communication method and acquired the equipment they will use, give them opportunities to "play" (carefully!) with the equipment to become familiar and comfortable with using it.
4. Ask the young people from what area of the state, country or world they would like to meet other kids. Brainstorm with the kids ways in which they could find other kids their age to get to know electronically. Here are some ideas:
 - Extension offices in each county of the country have lists of 4-H clubs. A county staff person may be able to suggest an interested club. Extension has many international programs, and your county Extension staff may be able to help you connect with a youth group in another country. If your groups don't speak the same language, you'll need to arrange interpreters.
 - Contact the school district.
 - Contact other youth groups in your area, such as scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA or YWCA.
 - Design a newspaper ad inviting other kids to be involved in your electronic pen pal project. Ask the newspaper in the community where you are recruiting pen pals to donate space for your ad. If the paper is unable to donate space, ask a local business to sponsor your ad or conduct a fund-raiser to earn the money you need to buy space.
 - Network. Talk to relatives and other people you know in other cities for suggestions on links you could make with kids.

ELECTRONIC PEN PALS LEADER BACKGROUND:

What Technology Is Right for Your Project?

Audiotapes

Audiotapes are good tools for sharing among friends because the technology is familiar to most people and readily available. Your group could choose to interview each other on tape or simply share a minute or so about themselves. Have your group try ending the tape with questions directed at the friends on the receiving end. This will encourage a response and give them something with which to get started. Encourage your group to carefully think through how they want to present themselves on tape – how they will start and end the tape, what questions they want to ask of the other kids and so on. Having a plan is very important and will help ensure that they are pleased with their final tape. The cost of mailing an audiotape is very reasonable so this technology is appealing from a budget standpoint as well! You may want to make a copy of the tape before mailing it if you or the group wants to keep a record of your project.

Videotapes

Videos are good tools for exploring friendships at a distance because you can *see* one another and each others' surroundings. Video pen pals can be from across the world or across the county. Perhaps if your group lives in the city you would like to get to know and better understand kids who live on a farm or in a rural area, or vice versa. Once you've located another group that wants to build a friendship through video, write a list of questions that both groups can respond to on tape. Consider ending the tape with questions about things that the kids in your group want to know about the other group of kids. This will help encourage a return tape. When you get a tape from the other group, watch it with your group. Take time to reflect on and talk about what was shared. Have your group think about the answers to the following questions:

- What did you learn about the young people and their lives?
- How does this group seem similar to you?
- How are they different?
- What else would you like to know about them?

Video tours of homes, schools, communities ("a day in the life..." approach) might be a good way for

both groups to share. Perhaps the next step is an adult-supervised face-to-face meeting with your group's new friends!

Computer Networks

If you or anyone in your group has access to the Internet or a commercial computer network, it's easy to get to know people through a computer! Your group can have real-time online "chats" with young people across the country or across the world. An advantage of using computers for building electronic friendships is that everyone is kind of "on equal ground." You can't see or hear each other, so you can start to get to know each other without preconceived notions. You communicate using the computer keyboard and type your questions and answers as you go along. Commercial networks have "chat rooms" or directories that target kids. (Hint: This activity will work best if the young people in the group have some typing ability and good writing skills.)

SAFETY NOTE: Remember that kids should be supervised as they use computer networks, because they may be able to access information that's not intended for young people. Read the "What Leaders Need to Know About Internet Safety," information on page 134 and "Safety Rules for Online Time" skill sheet on page 151.

Have your group write a list of questions in advance and encourage another group to "meet" online at a particular date and time. (This meeting should be adult supervised.) Everyone in your group should have the chance to type and respond to questions.

Keep in mind a whole new language of words and icons has emerged on the "Net." People tend to communicate in short abbreviated ways on networks. (See the Internet Glossary on pages 133 and 134.) Ask for clarification if you don't understand a particular message. You could type, for example, "I'm new at this! What does that mean?"

