Reel Life, Reel Students, Reel Experiences: Videos as a Teaching and Learning Tool

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Why videos?

- Benefits
- Limitations

Learning: In Our Own Words series

- Production
- Teaching Guides

Teaching with the videos

- Pilot project
- Tips and tricks
VIDEO #4 Choosing Sources

Learning: In Our Own Words

1. University Life
2. Learning Skills
3. Doing Research
4. Choosing Sources
5. Google/Internet
6. Libraries
7. Writing + Citing

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Why videos?

**Benefits**
- Cognitive and emotional impact
- Increases memory, comprehension and learning
- Addresses multiple intelligences a variety of learning styles (auditory, visual)
- Appealing to digital natives

**Uses**
- Visual demonstrations & information
- Document experiences

See: Berk (2009)
Why not?

- **Limitations**
  - Passive medium
  - Less useful as a talk medium
  - Difficult to present abstract ideas & arguments
  - Less effective for presenting nonvisual information

Hampe 1999
What were we thinking?

- Create a series of videos using the student voice and experience
- Film first year students during the year to discover the development of their academic literacy skills
- Use these videos as an instructional tool to engage students in critical thinking discussions
What did we do?

- Unscripted, real conversations with first year students
- 20 students (September 2010), 15 (January 2011); 8 (April 2011)
- On location in September 2010 and January 2011
- In studio (scripted by students) in April 2011
- Question: What has been your previous experience doing research?

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What did we create?

- **Academic literacies**: processes of research, writing and learning skills are interdependent and integrated

- 7 modules:
  - University Life
  - Learning Skills
  - Doing Research
  - Choosing Sources
  - Google/Internet
  - Libraries
  - Writing & Citing

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How to develop a teaching tool?

- Create a teaching toolkit for instructors
- Learning objectives for each module
- Guide includes:
  - Summary and transcript
  - Quick (less than 15 mins) discussion questions ("ice-breakers")
  - Sample lesson plans to use with the videos to promote active learning (20-30 minutes)

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Teaching principles

- Student-centered
- Peer pedagogy or peer-learning empowering (Boud, Cohen and Sampson, 2001)
- Meaningful learning (Karppinen, 2005)
Karpinnen’s Meaningful Learning

- Meaningful learning is:
  - Active
  - Constructive and individual
  - Collaborative and conversational
  - Contextual
  - Guided
  - Emotionally involving and motivating

- Karpinnen (2005)

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The medium is part of the message

- “videos are just one component in the complexity of a classroom activity system. The learning outcomes depend largely on the way videos are used as part of the overall learning environment” (Karppinen, 2005, p.233)
- Just viewing videos is not enough to contribute to learning
Active Learning Activities

- After viewing videos
  - Self-reflection
  - 1 minute response papers
  - Open discussion
  - Small group discussion
  - Think-Pair-Share
- Followed by hands-on exercises:
  - Scholarly vs popular sources
  - Evaluating sources

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How did we teach with the videos?

- Pilot in Fall 2011
  - 1 first year Sociology course in a Lecture hall (over 200 students)
  - 1 first year Human Rights and Equity Studies course in library (20 students)
  - 1 general undergraduate research drop-in workshop in library (3 students)
Teaching critical thinking with videos

- The case of the lecture hall
  - 1st year sociology class of 200 students
  - No assignment; introduction to library and how to find scholarly articles in sociology
  - Video #4 Choosing Sources
  - Discussion question: What is a scholarly source? Why are you expected to use scholarly sources in your research in university? Can an online video (E.g. YouTube) ever be used as an academic source?
- The medium became the message

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Teaching critical thinking with videos

- The case of the 55 mins. in library class session
  - 1st year Human Rights and Equity class of 20 students
  - Assignment: annotated bibliography
  - Video #4 Choosing Sources
- Discussion question: In the last part of the video students talk about the importance of evaluating sources and choosing scholarly sources in your research, but what is a scholarly, academic source? Why not use Internet sources?
- Hands-on activity: determine if periodical/article is scholarly or popular

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Student feedback on how engaging the video was

- **Strongly Agree**: 58%
- **Somewhat Agree**: 20%
- **Neither Agree or Disagree**: 18%
- **Somewhat Disagree**: 4%
Student Feedback

**Figure 4.** Student feedback on the importance of hearing other student experience on video

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Challenges

- Time constraints
- Librarian, instructor, faculty buy-in
- Autonomy over content of class
- Technical issues
Tips on teaching with videos

- Align video selection with learning objectives
- The shorter the video the better (3-5 minutes max.)
- Use video as a jumping off point for class discussions
- Include active learning activities & techniques (Karpinnen 2005)
- Introduce video’s purpose and follow-up activity
- Preparation is key (especially technical issues)

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Next steps...

- Actively promote videos to T.A. and faculty for use in tutorials
- Explore providing workshops to teaching assistants and faculty on how to use the videos
- Further studies on the videos and development of critical thinking skills

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Questions?
Learning: In Our Own Words

Series

- Videos and Teaching Toolkit
  http://www.library.yorku.ca/cms/learning-commons/learning-in-our-own-words/

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Bibliography


