

DFM 2

Short Film Assignment

TASK: Produce, Direct, Shoot and Edit a 6 -7 minute fiction (narrative) short film with at least one character and location. Your film should combine at least two of these elements of cinematic storytelling:

Action – The movement of the character (s) flows from one shot into the next. Fast editing and a variety of angles and camera movements establish the pace of the sequence. A mix of close up shots keep the audience close to the action, while wide shots establish location.

Dialog – Cut from one character to the next as they talk and react. This “shot – reaction shot” editing can be used to show one person looking intently at an object as well (i.e. staring at a donut they desire)

Cross-Cutting – Two stories are occurring at the same time in different places. Cut between them.

Flashback – A character in the present flashes back to something in the past. It can be just a few shots or glimpses, or a full scene. Another version of this is a “flash forward,” which could be a character daydreaming about what could be.

Voiceover Narration – We see the world from a characters point of view and hear their “inner monologue” as they comment on the world or tell their story. They can be commenting on what is happening right then, or their past. They are speaking directly to the audience. Or, the Narrator can be omniscient and anonymous – a commentator taking us through the story.

Locations: You can shoot this assignment on campus, or take a camera for the weekend and shoot it off campus.

Actors: Your actors can be students in our class or students from outside the class.

STEPS

To produce your film, do the following:

- Form your crew.
- Brainstorm ideas.
- Type a one paragraph “summary” or “synopsis.”
- Make a “shot list.” This is just a chronological list of what happens in your film. Be as detailed as possible—include your camera angle/shot and don’t leave out any plot points.
- Draw a storyboard. It should contain every shot you can think of. (Scroll down to the “Action Sequence” assignment below for the storyboard form. You can print and use this form.)
- Give your film a title.
- Complete your “Pre-Production Packet” containing the following:
 - The pieces you’ve already completed—your summary, step outline, and storyboard.
 - A crew list. Share contact information with your fellow crew members so you can communicate
 - A list of main characters, with a one-sentence description of each. (it may be just one character).
 - A list of locations. Where are you shooting?
 - A list of props (items) and costumes you will need for your film.
 - A list of equipment you will need to shoot your movie.
 - A production schedule. Do you plan to shoot in class? What days? Outside of class? How long will it take? Look at a calendar with your crew to come up with a shooting schedule.

Due date: _____