

Lights, Camera, Literacy!
Lesson Plan #10

Topics Covered Today:

**Journal Writing
Documentary Film**

Outcomes:

Students will follow organizational procedures.
Students will see, hear, and use applicable vocabulary.
Students will assume a filmmaking role and collaborate with a filmmaking team.
Students will analyze narrative vs. documentary filmmaking.
Students will watch the documentary SPELLBOUND.
Students will discuss the film SPELLBOUND from a filmmaker's perspective.
Students will ask their classmates' reactions to the "Lights, Camera, Literacy!" program.

Materials:

writing journals
video cameras
Chart paper and post-its

DVD: *SPELLBOUND*

New Vocabulary: documentary, narrative film, lighting, framing, questioning techniques

Sequence of Events:

I. Journal Activity (15)

1. Today's Prompt:

How is becoming a filmmaker having an effect
on how you feel about yourself?

II. Documentary (120)

1. Introduce the concept of **DOCUMENTARY** vs. **NARRATIVE**. Remind students that the "Making of Akeelah" cited **SPELLBOUND** as helping to create an interest for the development of the **AKEELAH AND THE BEE** film.
2. Point out the differences in the process: Documentaries start with an outline of a plan, the footage is shot, and then the filmmaker decides how to tell the story through editing and finally writes a narrator's voice-over script to accompany the footage.
3. Show the **SPELLBOUND** dvd.
4. Afterward, discuss the movie from a filmmaking perspective.

III. Creating a documentary (50)

1. Tell students that you hope to create a documentary about the "Lights, Camera, Literacy!" program at your school. Their groups will film interviews of their group members that might be used in the documentary.
2. Groups write interview questions.
3. Important elements to consider while gathering footage:
 - a. **Sound Levels**
Consider using a lavalier microphone. Be aware of background noise.
 - b. **Lighting**
Be careful that the person is not in front of a window or in a dark area.

c. **FRAMING and Composition**

The person being interviewed should be looking *next* to the camera, not into it and not across the room. A medium close up shot is desirable.

d. **QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES**

Ask open-ended questions. For instance, "What do you like about the "Lights, Camera, Literacy" experience?" rather than a yes/no question like "Do you like it?"

Use follow up questions based on their answers to get more details.

4. Groups videotape their interviews.

(If time permits, these can be viewed in class.)

IV. Reflection (15)

1. Direct students to the hanging chart paper labeled:

What I Learned from *SPELLBOUND*

What I Learned About Documentaries

2. Hand out Post-its on which students write an item to post on the charts.

3. Teacher wrap-up to review and clear up any misconceptions.