

Lesson Blueprints: Documentary Analysis

Lesson Title: Teamwork Interview 3:3

Grade Level: Middle and High School

Essential Question:

How do we use cooperation skills to stage an interview for a documentary?

Materials:

- Pens/pencils
- Means to watch CWK documentary “Cooperation” (This can be found in the Middle School section of the Character and Life Skills bucket)
- Worksheets from last two sessions

Teacher:

1. Have students sit in their groups of three (3) from the previous sessions and distribute their worksheets. These will be their interview teams.
2. Review the past lessons on documentary interviews and B-roll footage. Ask students to not only recall the documentaries they watched, but to discuss the elements of the interview and the B-Roll footage with critical eyes and ears.
3. Tell students that today’s goal is to stage an interview as if it were going to be filmed for a documentary. Each group will present its interview and describe the B-roll footage that would accompany the interview in the film.
4. Tell students that today they are going to watch and discuss another CWK documentary called “Cooperation.”

With only a week before the opening night of *Time Flies*, it’s no surprise that the Wesleyan Players are working overtime to memorize their lines. What many people might not realize, however, is the extraordinary amount of effort and teamwork that goes on behind the scenes in order to make a play successful. Like the actors, everyone backstage plays a crucial part in the production. It takes everyone cooperating and working together to achieve success. The cast members know that if they can’t depend on their backstage counterparts, and vice versa, they won’t reach their desired goal: a perfect performance.

5. Tell students that while they watch the video they should focus on the skills the group of students in the video use to cooperate successfully.
6. After watching the video, discuss the story. Discussion and self-reflection questions can include:
 - What are the specific skills the theatre players and crew need to use to successfully cooperate and present a theatrical production?
 - What qualities do the theatre players and crew show? Create a list on the board.
 - What evidence is provided in their actions and in their words? (**Note:** Students should notice listening, trust, taking responsibility, being considerate, persevering, respectfulness, etc.)
 - How do those skills apply to producing a documentary?

7. Tell students they are going to apply the same concept of the skills necessary for cooperation to prepare and present interviews on the school-related topics they selected in session 1.
8. Explain that the members of the team must select one role each:
 - **The Interviewer** — The interviewer will ask the questions prepared in previous lessons. This person must be a good listener, because the answers from the questions might make him/her think of a different question than the one on the prepared list. The Interviewer may use notes.
 - **The Subject** — The subject will play him/herself or the role of the expert and answer the questions asked by the Interviewer. This person must be able to think on his/her feet, answer questions, and be comfortable with the topic. The subject may not use notes.
 - **The Director** — The director oversees the interview and B-Roll subject selection. After the interview, this person will describe the five different B-Roll shots that will be included when this is filmed as a documentary. The Director uses notes and other visual support to help complete the story.
9. Give the teams time to select roles and practice their interviews.

Set the stage and audience space and have students sit where they can see the presentations. Ask students where they think the interviewer and the subject should be placed. They should be prepared to explain their answers. Factors to be considered include:

 - Since the class is not currently using a camera but there is an audience, how will students need to sit so the audience will be able to see the faces of both the Interviewer and the Subject?
 - If a camera were being used, where would it need to be?
 - Where should the Director be positioned during the interview? Why? For his/her presentation? Why?
10. Have several groups present their interviews and B-Roll descriptions.
11. While watching other groups present, audience members should watch for and be prepared to discuss:
 - The ways the presenters demonstrate cooperation skills.
 - The documentary interview skills.

Note: At no time should anyone pass judgment on the presentations (i.e., “That was really good,” or “That stunk!”). Talk only about the elements and the demonstration of skills. After all, reviewing a presentation is a form of cooperation.

Conclusion:

Close by asking the students: On a scale of 1-5, where one is the lowest score and five is the highest, how would you rate the class’s cooperation skills today? Explain. How are cooperation skills necessary for a producing a strong documentary interview?