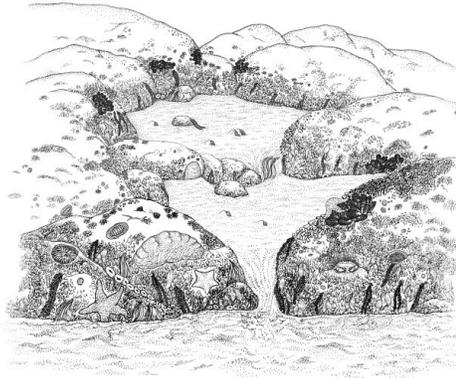


One-Minute Documentary



Topic
Multiple

Grades
PreK-12

Site
Outdoors

Duration
1 hour

Materials

- Smart phone, iPad or other mobile device with filming ability
- Checklist or rubric, one per student

Vocabulary
documentary, narrator, evidence

Next Generation Science Standards

Practices

Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information

Overview

In this culmination activity, students demonstrate their understanding by creating a one-minute documentary.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Create a one-minute documentary utilizing scientific vocabulary.
- Use visual evidence to support a claim, based on their unit of study.

Background

This is a culmination activity, designed for the end of a unit in which students have gained an understanding of a new concept, such as ecosystems or human impact on their community. This activity works well with topics that offer students visual evidence to help them support a claim. For example, a student learning about human impact in Elkhorn Slough might record video of the dairy, barn or smoke stacks to help support her claim.

Students will use smart phones (phones with video cameras) or tablets with cameras to create a one-minute narrated documentary. A documentary is a factual non-fiction film about animals, events, places, people, etc. Even very young children can do this with little supervision. As students video record a subject for one minute (without cuts or editing), they simultaneously narrate the video. With their narration, students explain how what they see is evidence for a specific claim.

Teacher Preparation

For this lesson, students will need smart phones, iPads or other mobile devices to record their documentary. If you don't have access to these at your site, try holding a smart phone drive where community members can donate their old phones to your school – without a monthly plan, these phones can't make phone calls or send text messages, but they can still be used as cameras.

Depending on your students and the amount of equipment you have, have students work individually, in pairs or in small groups. Or you can have students take turns recording over a longer period of time.

Before beginning this lesson, create a checklist (for younger students) or rubric

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VOCABULARY

documentary: a non-fiction film, often with a narrator

narrator: a person who describes or explains something to the audience, in text or film

evidence: observable facts used to develop an idea or conclusion



TEACHER TIP

Having students narrate *while* they record eliminates the need for students to spend time editing their video. However, students may need to record multiple takes before they are comfortable with their narration.

(for older students) outlining the required content for the documentary. This document can be a list of questions students must answer (e.g., “What living thing resides in this habitat? How do you know?”) or a list of vocabulary words students must use appropriately within their documentary. For pre-literate students, rather than asking students to use a checklist, you can have older students or adult volunteers interview them as they record.

Procedure

1. **REVIEW VOCABULARY.**
Review major vocabulary and concepts students have been studying related to the topic of their documentary.
2. **IF STUDENTS ARE UNFAMILIAR, INTRODUCE “DOCUMENTARY.”**
Write the word **documentary** on the board. Ask students if they’ve heard this word before, but don’t ask students to define it yet. Tell students they’re going to watch a documentary. Show a sample short developmentally appropriate documentary, such as a clip from a Disney Nature film or from BBC’s *Planet Earth* (see other example: <https://youtu.be/uWPhPVMpFOs>). After they watch the sample, have students think-pair-share about what they think a documentary is. Write their ideas on the board, guiding them toward an accurate definition of a documentary. Students should understand that a documentary is a **non-fiction** video, often with a **narrator**.
3. **INTRODUCE ACTIVITY.**
Tell students that they will each make their own documentary, where they will be the narrator. Explain to students the topic of their documentaries, tell them where they will record it, and hand out the checklist/rubric. Depending on the topic, students might record in their school yard, at a field site, or inside their classroom. Give students the devices and show them how to record video while narrating. Model recording a sample documentary about a common object, like a pencil.
4. **STUDENTS DISCUSS EVIDENCE.**
Tell students that in their documentary, they will look for **evidence** that supports their claims. Discuss some possible evidence they might observe, based on the topic.
5. **STUDENTS FILM A DOCUMENTARY**
When students find the appropriate evidence, they can stop and record the while they narrate what they **observe**. Remind students to utilize the checklist/rubric as they record.
6. **STUDENTS SHARE DOCUMENTARIES.**
When students complete their videos, you can watch them as a whole group, have students show each other in small groups, or publish them to a class website or video website (i.e., Teacher Tube or Vimeo).

Extensions

- **Geography and Science:** Once students complete their documentaries, have

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them embed the videos onto a class-wide collaborative Google map, in the exact location where they recorded the video. (If you're working with very young students, parent volunteers or older student volunteers can help post the videos.) Once completed, the class can virtually walk through the map, watching each video, to gain a greater understanding of how all the smaller habitats make up a larger ecosystem.

- **Math:** Students can make one-minute documentaries about other topics, as well. For example, have students make documentaries about a specific geometric shape (i.e., cylinder) and how that shape is used in the real world.
- **English Language Arts:** Students can create one-minute documentaries about phonics rules. For example, "this is the letter A. The letter A moves around a lot and, based on where it's standing, it makes a different sound." Other students can watch these videos to learn about phonics rules.
- **Physical Science:** Younger students can make one-minute documentaries about common objects, describing their physical properties. This can also help with language development.

Standards

Next Generation Science Standards www.nextgenscience.org

Supports Practice 8: Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information.

Common Core State Standards www.corestandards.org

Language Arts, W.K-12.6

Writing: With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

Head Start Framework

Language Development

- Develops increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, experiences, ideas, feelings, opinions, needs, questions and for other varied purposes.
- Uses an increasingly complex and varied spoken vocabulary.

Science

- Uses senses and tools to gather information and investigate materials.
- Increases ability to observe and discuss common properties and comparisons among materials.
- Develops growing abilities to collect, describe and record information through a variety of means, including discussion, drawings, maps and charts.
- Begins to describe and discuss predictions, explanations and generalizations based on past experiences.
- Expands knowledge of and abilities to observe and describe the natural world and natural processes.

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