

VIDEO PRODUCTION 1-2
VISUAL DESIGN PROJECT: A Thousand Words
50 points

This project is designed to hone your abilities as cinematographers, emphasizing *mise en scene* (not sound, editing or acting). Your grade is primarily based on making a piece that exemplifies your technical skills and artistic talent in this realm.

Your group will develop a scenario that uses any and all elements of mise en scene to convey your idea or concept to the audience. This can be a literal story with characters, or it may be an abstract collage of images that establishes a specific mood or atmosphere. Be aware that using actors can easily backfire and ruin your project, due to the fact that your teammates are not professional actors and probably won't give you a believable performance. Remember that your grade is based on visual design techniques, not acting ability.

TOPIC/THEME: "Discovering something hidden"

You will create dramatic tension, suspense or humor by carefully revealing something that is hidden from the audience or a character. Your short movie should show what the character (or audience) knows, what they don't know, why they decide to "look" for that hidden something, how they look for it, and what/how they ultimately discover it.

REQUIREMENTS

Your project must:

- Be **one minute** in length (plus or minus 5 seconds)
- Use at least **three** different types of camera movement
- Manipulate depth of field for effect (shallow focus, rack focus, etc.)
- Include appropriate/creative use of color
- Use **NO SOUND** or **EDITING** (footage will be played back in the order you shoot)
- All written work (treatment, shot list, production journal) must be shared with your teammates and Mr. H. using Google Drive

The project will consist of 5 stages

PART 1: The Treatment

Once your group has selected your topic, you will meet to discuss a specific plan of action and write a detailed treatment for your project. The treatment is an outline that describes actions of characters and the scenes to give the reader a good sense of the mood and feel of your movie. You only need **ONE TREATMENT PER GROUP**.

The treatment will include:

- Your class period
- Title of the project
- Original topic name
- Names of your group members
- At least a **ONE PAGE** written treatment (describing the actions, what we see, etc.)

PART 2: Shot List

The shot list is a very specific list of every shot you will record with the camera. For each shot you must include:

- Composition (CU, FS, etc.)
- Camera movement (if any)
- Description of lighting, including color
- Camera angle (high, low, eye level, etc.)
- Length (in seconds)—this helps calculate the total length of your project.
- Other details pertinent to the shot

Example:

Shot #	Description	Length	TRT
1	ECU eyeball in B&W. Hand held	2 sec	2
2	Low angle (on floor) CU of feet walking. Track left with feet as they step over sandwich.	5	7

You should think this part through carefully as it will help you work quickly during production.

PART 3: Production

Your group will record your shots as outlined in your shot list. You need to work quickly, yet safely, keeping track of time as you work.

PART 4: Production Journal

When your project is done, each member of your team will turn in a written critique/self-evaluation of your project. These are confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than Mr. Hernandez. **See the www.mcmmediaarts.org website for how to write a production journal.**

PART 5: Screening

All projects will be screened and critiqued in class. You should give insightful, constructive criticism for each project.

GRADING

Your individual grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Completion of all requirements as outlined above
- Technical proficiency with cameras.
- Creative and effective use of the elements of mise en scene.
- Your group's ability to successfully convey your topic to the audience
- Thoroughness of the Production Journal
- Participation and effort

Take this opportunity to take creative risks and experiment with visual design! I'm much more generous with groups who try something new and challenge themselves than with those who simply copy what others have done before.