Art Class Videos

Why Videos?

One way to add variety to art instruction can be to show videos in class. The ubiquity and straightforwardness of video-editing software makes it easy for teachers to create their own engaging content.

Prerecord Demos The logistical struggle is real when demonstrating a technique to groups of 20-30 students. Presenting your demo as a video allows you the freedom to walk around and manage behavior or distribute supplies while the video plays. If it seems students need a refresher during class, they can re-watch portions of the video.

Flip the Classroom The “Flipped Classroom” model relies upon students learning concepts and methods on their own, allowing for longer in-class art-making time. While simply watching a video on YouTube can be a thrill in itself for students, a few simple editing techniques can help hold their interest and perhaps drum up excitement about the topic.

Keys to Success

Embrace the Medium Upend the students’ expectations: Play around with animation. Film in an unexpected location. Use metaphor or analogy to get a point across. Tell a story. Use students as characters. Portray yourself in a light your students have never seen you in.

“I could never make videos, I can’t stand to see or hear myself!”

Use Narration Wisely “Ok, hello class! So, today I’m making a video for you guys and in the video I’m going to be showing you guys a really great art thing that I know you’re really gonna like!” No. Get. To. The. Point. My early videos certainly suffered from excessive wordiness, so for demo videos, I’ve found it easier avoid filler by recording the action first and doing voiceover narration afterwards.

Take Advantage of Text If there are key points you want to emphasize, captions can be effective. It’s easy to tune out a droning voice, but when coupled with text, your key points can take on more significance, especially if it’s not overdone. Keep the text interesting, memorable, and concise.

Be Snappy Have you ever been completely captivated by one of those BuzzFeed Tasty videos? Those editors are masters of holding attention through fast cuts, good angles, and speed alterations. Keep in mind it’s not necessary for art students to see every single step of a technical process -- just consider what the highlights are.

Watch your video a few times and notice when your mind starts to wander...

then consider that your students’ attention spans are probably half of what yours is.

Hold Your Audience Changing up the tone of your voice, showing multiple angles, and the adding music and sound effects all help to keep your audience interested in what’s on the screen. As a rule of thumb, I try not to stay focused on the same angle or image for longer than 20 seconds.
Video Shooting and Editing Tips

All video editing software has slightly different features, these tips were designed for iMovie, but would work easily with Windows Movie Maker or Final Cut Pro.

- When changing the speed of your video, click the ‘preserve pitch’ button to avoid having the sound be all chipmunk-y.

- Find clips or songs from other YouTube videos. Type into Google: Youtube to MP4 (for video) or Youtube to MP3 (for audio) There are all sorts of online converters, though they work with varying results...

- You can record voiceover using the mic on your computer, though I’ve found the mic on my phone to be clearer... depends on your device.

- Make images in Photoshop or PowerPoint to insert into a video.

- Watch rap music videos for fun editing ideas, if students don’t exactly catch the reference it’s fine, it may at least give the video a comforting familiarity.

- Sound effects can be effective, if not overdone. Most video editing programs have some preset ones, but there are tons on YouTube you can download.

- Make use of the cropping tool to break the monotony of shots -- it can be nice to occasionally zoom in on what you’re filming.

- Do a screen recording. You can record the action happening on your computer screen through QuickTime Player. This can help if you want to: create a quick animation using frames in PowerPoint, record a video online, record the steps of creating something in Photoshop...

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