



Viewing to Learn: Summarizing Video

Why learn to view?

With the explosion of video available on the web, video sources become even more significant sources of information. Encourage students to use video as sources, but emphasize the need for critical analysis of both the medium and the message.

Pre-select a video and demonstrate critical viewing for your students before starting a research project. Video resources are available on many topics. Here are a few suggestions:

- *Google Video* has a collection of [historical videos](#) from the National Archives.
- [C-Span Classroom](#) provides video clips on issues related to government and politics.
- [United Streaming](#) is a video database that your district may subscribe to.
- Any major television station web site will have video clips from the newscasts. [WCCO](#) has a special feature each night called [Good Question](#). (These could be examples for student videos produced in response to a research question.)
- [YouTube](#) allows anyone to upload and share a video file. While not recommended a resource for research projects, you may find clips that will be useful to teach media literacy and how to view for learning. (*YouTube* may be blocked by your district.)

Media literacy may be as important as text literacy. Very generally media literacy has five important concepts that you may want to review with your students:

1. All media messages are constructions
 - All media are all carefully put together, or "constructed," to achieve a specific result. Media makers have a variety of "construction tools" they can use. For videos, these tools include the script, actors, sets, lighting, music, camera angles, editing, and special effects.
2. Each person interprets messages differently
 - The creators of a video are trying to convey a certain meaning. Two people can watch the same video and each will interpret its message differently, based on their age, culture, life experiences, values, and beliefs.
3. Media have commercial interests
 - Most media is brought to you by large corporations that are in business to make money. Advertising is their biggest source of revenue. A video may appear to be documentary but actually be advertising.
4. Media have values
 - The people and companies that create media messages have their own values, opinions, and biases. No matter how hard a reporter or editor tries to be objective, her own values shape what she considers important and how she will present information. There are no neutral or value-free media messages.
5. Each medium has its own language and style and uses certain jargon, devices and styles.
 - News clips may be a common source for information. News outlets are looking for an audience. Drama brings in viewers. Watch and listen for the facts.

(Adapted from **Cable in the Classroom's** Media Literacy 101
<http://www.ciconline.org/medialiteracy101>)

A Guide to Viewing to Learn: Instructions for the students

Always keep your purpose in mind when viewing a video as a research resource. When you are viewing to find information, you are listening to learn. It's active mental work.

Listen for the main idea and supporting points

Before viewing, read any introductory text. Consider what you already know about the topic. You are viewing to broaden your understanding of a topic and to find information that will either support or contradict your assumptions about a topic. Imagine what key words you might hear and what images you may see in the video.

Often you will need to view a source more than once

Listen for the main idea of the selection the first time through. As in written works, video documentary and news story information is often structured with an introduction followed by the main points. Take notes as you view, identifying each point. Listen for transitional cues, scene changes and transitions. If you can't write a summary of the main idea and supporting points the first time, view again before you move on to the next phase.

View again for details

The second time through, look for specific details. You already have the main ideas. Now it's time to focus on the facts or statistics that the narrator or subjects use to substantiate the story. Have your pen handy, but keep the other hand ready to pause and replay so that you can note details like statistics, places, dates and names.



Viewing to Learn: Summarizing a Video Clip

Information for a Bibliographic Citation

A bibliographic citation contains all the information another researcher needs to locate a resource. Note the URL that points to the actual source and URL of the actual video file.

Creator/Producer: _____

Title: _____

Date of video: _____

Publisher of the video: _____

URL of the web site: _____

URL of the video clip: _____

Date accessed: _____

Summary:

Describe the main idea (thesis) of the video clip. Write the main idea in one complete sentence.

List important supporting points

Note specific facts or statistics



Viewing to Learn: Analyzing a Video Clip for Intent and Bias

View the video or video clip and the following questions:

1. Who created this video?
2. What techniques were used to get my attention?
3. How might someone else understand the message differently than me?
4. What values or views are represented? Is bias evident? What values or views have been omitted?
5. Why was the video created?