

Characteristics of Youth-Produced Film and Video

While not a genre in the traditional sense of the word, youth-produced film and video has a distinctive set of characteristics when the production process does not follow traditional Hollywood structure and content. The following provides a set of guidelines for understanding and teaching youth-produced work from a youth-focused perspective:

What defines youth-produced film and video?

- Self-conscious and reflective about the lives and experiences of young people.
- Presents a distinctively non-Hollywood, non-adult point of view.
- Provides a medium for youth to express their thoughts, feelings and views in a creative and expressive way.
- Produced collaboratively, with a focus on democratic production process.
- Mentored by experienced, trained peer video makers, and engaging, action-oriented instructors.
- Produced through principles of "situated practice" and youth focused pedagogy.
- Built around story - with an emphasis on exploring or challenging traditional narrative structure.
- Video is usually the medium rather than film.
- Short! Most youth-produced videos are under 10 minutes, largely due to the context in which most of them are produced (in-class or after-school programs, limited budget) which means the videomakers must grapple with issues of character development, story arc, verisimilitude in under 1/10th of the time of a feature length film. Youth can discover the freedom of this short format, and rather than feel limited by it, take the opportunity to explore single important events, or one or two central characters.