

think. explore. make. reflect.	creative inquiry design thinking video production	ART 350/550
		Writing with Video
		writingwithvideo.net

production + journaling template

This template provides an outline that can be used for any problem-solving, creative inquiry, or design thinking process — including video production. Regardless of the creative task at hand, process-based writing can be a powerful tool for guiding you from conceptualization through execution of your ideas.

In the case of video production, the process is typically organized into four stages — **pre-production**, **production**, **post-production**, and **distribution** — which is how the writing prompts below have been categorized, with the exception of the last stage, distribution, which for our purposes we'll call **reflection**.

But remember, you can give the four steps any name you want, the important thing to realize is that this is essentially a map that, with only minor adaptations, illuminates a logical process for working from ideation through realization of most any idea or solution:

think → *explore* → *make* → *reflect*

idea → *research* → *synthesis* → *assessment* (complete the process, then start over)

pre-production (dream, brainstorm, conceptualize)

Topic :: What are you interested in, curious about? How could this translate into a project? Can you write a descriptive paragraph of a possible video project? How did you come up with the idea? Why is it interesting to you? Why do you want to pursue this?

Characters :: Who do you envision being in your video? Do you have specific people in mind? If so write a little bit about who they are and why you want to include them. If your ideas are less specific, describe the kinds of people you hope to include in your video — what characteristics, traits, personalities, ages, genders, nationalities, etc. do you envision?

Locations :: What locations do think would be desirable for your video and best suit your topic? Do you envision shooting more than one location? Will you require special permission or equipment — microphones, a tripod, etc.?

B-roll :: Think about your topic for a few moments and make a list of b-roll (secondary, supporting) footage that you would like to collect for your project. What will provide visual evidence for your video? You might think about places, actions, symbolic or metaphorical imagery, or photographs. What kinds of footage do you need to help the audience experience and understand the narrative? How can you collect material that is varied, informative, and interesting?

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Take Away :: What is your message? Do you have a point of view? At the end of your video, what do you want the audience to understand, feel, or contemplate? Do you want to influence their views and attitudes? Do you want them to take action? If so, can you actually write out these goals? How will your video convey this?

production (research, collect, shoot, inscribe)

Authorship :: What role will *you*, as the author/creator, play in the video? Will you narrate, ask questions from behind the camera, be a character in the video, remove your presence entirely, or use a combination of these approaches? What strategies will best allow you to craft your message?

Content :: What information do you want, or need, to include in the video? What background information will an audience need in order to understand your topic? What kinds of questions and conversations will get you the information you seek? If applicable, make a list of interview questions that may help you draw out information from your subject.

Shots :: Make a detailed list of shots you *absolutely need* for the video. Make another list of shots that you *want or hope* for. This list should include *where* you intend to shoot, *how* you intend to shoot (close up- far away, panning, tripod, hand-held, etc), and *what* you hope to get from these shots.

Anxieties and Obstacles :: Look back through your responses to the three writing prompts above and think through any obstacles or anxieties you have about your production plan. Write them down. Brainstorm possible alternative plans. Be ready to improvise.

post-production (organize, edit, synthesize)

Reflection :: How do you feel now that you have some of your footage? What did you learn during the process of shooting? Did you have any happy accidents, discoveries, tragedies, or surprises? If you were to go back and do it again, what would you have done differently?

What Do You Have? :: Log your shots (review your raw footage and make rough notes). Make two lists: *keep* (usable) material and *kill* (unusable) material. For the usable material, name and note the chunks of video that include themes, ideas, or visually interesting material. For the kill material, make brief notation of why these shots are not pertinent or successful.

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What Can You Say? :: What can you say *with the material you have*? Take a moment to consider the possible difference between what you intended to record, versus what you actually captured. Take a few minutes to improvise three different paper edits (quick written, descriptive narratives) based on the footage you have. Use your notes to help you decide which of the three ideas is the most interesting to pursue.

Reshoots :: Is there anything else you need for this video? If so, make another detailed shot list. Make notes on how you intend to shoot and what you want to get from each of these additional shots.

Evolution :: How has your project evolved so far? How have your ideas changed from your initial inspiration? Have there been surprises, discoveries, problems? Have you improvised? Capture and inscribe your experiences and your process.

Timeline :: What do you need to get done in order to assemble a rough cut (aka, rough draft or sketch) Be specific. Show your rough cut to a few classmates or other peers. Take notes on this feedback. Make additional drafts, keep getting feedback and taking notes on what you need to do next, until you arrive at what feels like a final cut / completed piece.

reflection (show, share, listen, critique, analyze)

Process :: Read back through your pre-production, production, and post-production journaling and identify what were, for you, key moments in your process. Write about how these key moments, experiences, choices led you to your finished piece.

Feedback :: How do you feel about the feedback you got on your video? As you gave feedback to other students, what things did you notice in your classmates' works? What were the most helpful and influential kinds of feedback that you got, gave, or heard others give?

Self-reflection :: What did you learn about yourself (the way you prefer to work, how you tackle problems, deal with uncertainty, synthesize information, etc.) during this project?

Future :: Your finished project is a text, a rhetorical gesture, a cultural production. Are there other audiences beyond your classmates for your work? Where else can you imagine screening/sharing this video? How and what kinds of conversations could your video start or contribute to?

Final Question :: Identify one important question your instructor or classmates didn't ask about this project. Write about that.