



Course Overview

This capstone-level course challenges high schoolers to explore the evolving field of Mass Communications through the lens of visual, audio, and immersive media. Students will develop media literacy, technical production skills, and storytelling strategies across a variety of formats—including film adaptations, short-form media, virtual reality, and audio content. Through collaborative and individual projects, students will build portfolios that reflect their understanding of audience, purpose, message, and medium. This course prepares students for college-level media studies, digital storytelling, journalism, or careers in film, broadcasting, and design.

Unit 1: From Page to Screen – Exploring Film Adaptations

Unit 2: Telling Stories Through Short Film

Unit 3: Selling the Story – Creating a Commercial

Unit 4: Crafting Worlds – Stop Motion Set Design

Time Frame

4 Weeks

Time Frame

6 weeks

Time Frame

4 weeks

Time Frame

6 Weeks



Focus of the Unit

In this unit, students will explore how written texts—such as novels, plays, or short stories—are adapted into films. Students will analyze the creative and technical decisions made in adapting a story for the screen, considering how narrative structure, character development, themes, and visual storytelling are translated or transformed. They will evaluate the effectiveness of these adaptations and consider the implications of altering source material for a different medium and audience.

Focus of the Unit

Students will explore the process of short film creation from concept development to final editing. They will engage in each stage of media production—planning, scripting, filming, editing, and presenting—while applying communication theory, narrative structure, and technical skills. Emphasis is placed on collaboration, visual storytelling, and understanding how messages are crafted for audiences.

Focus of the Unit

In this unit, students will learn how to plan, script, film, and edit a persuasive commercial. They will analyze how media messages are crafted to influence specific audiences and apply advertising techniques to create a compelling product or service promotion. Emphasis will be placed on audience analysis, persuasive strategies, media ethics, and production skills.

Focus of the Unit

In this unit, students will explore the fundamentals of stop motion animation through set design. They will learn how physical environments enhance storytelling and mood. Using simple materials like cardboard, markers, and crafting tools, students will design and build a miniature set to be used in a short stop motion scene. The emphasis is on visual composition, spatial awareness, and creative problem-solving, with connections to production design in media.



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Unit 5: Introduction to Virtual Reality in Mass Communication

Unit 6: Communicating Change - The Basics of Campaigning

Unit 7: Telling Stories Through Sound - Radio & Podcasting

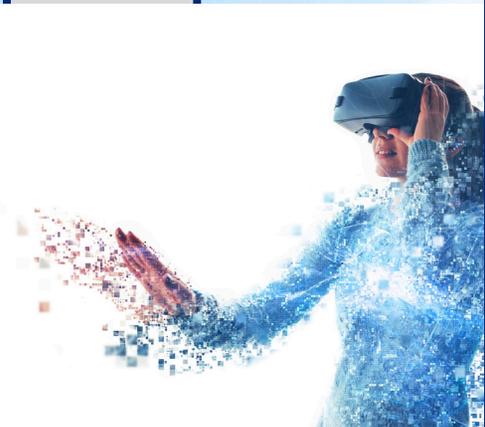
Unit 8: Sound in Motion - Introduction to Foley and Sound Design

Time Frame 4 Weeks

Time Frame 4 weeks

Time Frame 4 weeks

Time Frame 4 Weeks



Focus of the Unit

This unit introduces students to the fundamentals of Virtual Reality (VR) as a communication tool. Students will explore how VR is used in journalism, marketing, education, and storytelling.

They will learn basic principles of immersive media design, experience sample VR environments. Emphasis will be placed on understanding audience engagement, spatial storytelling, and the ethical use of immersive technologies.

Focus of the Unit

This unit introduces students to the foundations of campaign communication—how messages are crafted and distributed to influence public opinion, mobilize audiences, and promote change. Students will explore how campaigns work in political, social, and marketing contexts. They will create a basic campaign strategy, develop key messages, and design promotional media using tools such as posters, videos, social media, and speeches.

Focus of the Unit

This unit introduces students to the art and craft of audio storytelling through radio and podcasts.** Students will analyze existing podcasts and radio programs, explore sound design and scriptwriting, and learn how to plan, record, edit, and publish an original short podcast episode. Emphasis is placed on voice, structure, timing, audience engagement, and technical skills like audio editing and microphone use.

Focus of the Unit

This unit explores the role of Foley artists in enhancing visual storytelling through sound.** Students will examine how sound effects are recorded and synchronized with visual media. They'll experiment with everyday objects to create soundscapes, record original effects, and apply them to short video scenes. This unit emphasizes creativity, timing, technical precision, and understanding how sound influences audience perception.

Unit Title	Unit 1: From Page to Screen – Exploring Film Adaptations
Time Frame	4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does adapting a story from one medium to another change its meaning or impact? • What choices do filmmakers make when adapting written works, and why? • How faithful should a film adaptation be to its source material? • How do cinematic techniques (lighting, music, editing) enhance or alter a story compared to written language? • In what ways can a film adaptation deepen or weaken the original theme or message of a text? • How does the interpretation of a character differ between text and screen?

	Focus of the Unit
	<p>In this unit, students will explore how written texts—such as novels, plays, or short stories—are adapted into films. Students will analyze the creative and technical decisions made in adapting a story for the screen, considering how narrative structure, character development, themes, and visual storytelling are translated or transformed. They will evaluate the effectiveness of these adaptations and consider the implications of altering source material for a different medium and audience.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Know and use the elements and principles of media arts (e.g., time, space, motion, sound, narrative). • 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Apply techniques and processes to create original media works, such as adapted screenplays and short film scenes. • 9.1.8.D / 9.1.12.D – Analyze and demonstrate purposeful use of materials, tools, and technologies in creating a media adaptation. • 9.1.8.H / 9.1.12.H – Use media arts tools and equipment safely and responsibly during pre-production and performance.
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Learning Targets
I can propose a thoughtful adaptation plan for a literary work that considers narrative restructuring, character development, and visual style for a contemporary audience.
Learning Targets
I can develop and defend a nuanced position about whether a film adaptation enhances, diminishes, or reimagines the source material's central themes.

Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can justify adaptation changes based on medium constraints, target audience, and artistic vision, supported by analysis of the source material.
Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can recognize and critique how adaptation choices reflect or challenge dominant ideologies, stereotypes, or cultural assumptions.



Resources	Books to Movies- Ex: Harry Potter, The Hunger Games.
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Unit Title	Unit 2: Telling Stories Through Short Film
Time Frame	6 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

Essential Question(s)

- What makes a story effective when told through film?
- How do short films use limited time to develop characters and plot?
- What visual and audio techniques help communicate a film's theme without dialogue?
- How does each stage of production (pre-, production, post-) contribute to storytelling?
- What roles and responsibilities are necessary when producing a short film?
- How can editing influence the emotional tone or pacing of a story?

Focus of the Unit

Students will explore the process of short film creation from concept development to final editing. They will engage in each stage of media production—planning, scripting, filming, editing, and presenting—while applying communication theory, narrative structure, and technical skills. Emphasis is placed on collaboration, visual storytelling, and understanding how messages are crafted for audiences.

Standards

- 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create media.
- 9.1.8.B / 9.1.12.B – Recognize, compare, and use media, techniques, and processes in various art forms.
- 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Use media, techniques, and processes to produce original works.
- 9.1.8.F / 9.1.12.F – Use appropriate technology, tools, and equipment in the creation of media art.
- 9.1.8.H / 9.1.12.H – Demonstrate safety procedures while handling media equipment

Learning Targets

I can evaluate how story structure, pacing, and camera movement affect tone and audience impact.

Learning Targets

I can write and revise a script using professional formatting and feedback.

Learning Targets

I can apply cinematic techniques (e.g., mise-en-scène, shot composition, lighting) intentionally in my film

Learning Targets

I can manage a production schedule, assign roles, and coordinate a team



Resources

Lights Out (College Short Film) Exploring student films on youtube

Unit Title	Unit 3: Selling the Story – Creating a Commercial
Time Frame	4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes an advertisement effective? • How do advertisers use storytelling to sell a product, service, or idea? • What persuasive techniques do commercials use to influence their audience? • How does the target audience shape the design and tone of a commercial? • What ethical considerations should advertisers make when promoting a message? • How do commercials reflect or influence social values and trends? • How do visual and audio elements work together to create a memorable commercial? • What are the key steps in producing a professional-quality commercial? • How can editing, music, and pacing affect the tone and impact of an ad?

	Focus of the Unit
	<p>In this unit, students will learn how to plan, script, film, and edit a persuasive commercial. They will analyze how media messages are crafted to influence specific audiences and apply advertising techniques to create a compelling product or service promotion. Emphasis will be placed on audience analysis, persuasive strategies, media ethics, and production skills.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A – Know and use the elements and principles of each art form. • 9.1.8.C – Identify and use media, techniques, and processes to create original works. • 9.1.8.H – Demonstrate and maintain materials, equipment, and tools safely at work and performance spaces.
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Learning Targets
I can analyze how commercials use symbolism, music, and editing to influence viewers.

Learning Targets
I can create a commercial that aligns content and tone with a specific target audience.

Learning Targets
I can apply branding principles like logos, slogans, and color psychology in my video.

Learning Targets
I can lead a production team through pre-production, filming, and editing phases.



Resources	Super Bowl Commercial Archives/Ad Council Public Service Announcements
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Unit Title	Unit 4: Crafting Worlds – Stop Motion Set Design
Time Frame	6 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)		Focus of the Unit
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What role does set design play in telling a visual story in stop motion animation? 2. How do materials, texture, and color influence the mood and tone of a scene? 3. How do limitations in materials lead to creative design solutions? 4. What are the similarities and differences between real-world and miniature set design? 5. How does an effective set enhance the believability of an animated story? 		<p>In this unit, students will explore the fundamentals of stop motion animation through set design. They will learn how physical environments enhance storytelling and mood. Using simple materials like cardboard, markers, and crafting tools, students will design and build a miniature set to be used in a short stop motion scene. The emphasis is on visual composition, spatial awareness, and creative problem-solving, with connections to production design in media.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Know and use elements and principles of media arts (e.g., space, texture, form, color, line). • 9.1.8.B / 9.1.12.B – Recognize and use materials and techniques for building physical sets. • 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Create original works using craft and construction skills to support storytelling. • 9.1.8.H / 9.1.12.H – Demonstrate safe and effective use of tools and materials during set construction.
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Learning Targets
I can analyze how professional stop motion studios (like Laika or Aardman) use set design to support narrative and character development.
Learning Targets
I can justify my artistic choices using principles of design (contrast, balance, unity, etc.).

Learning Targets
I can incorporate camera movement, foreground/background layering, and scale effectively in my set design.
Learning Targets
I can adapt my set design for animation by considering frame composition and movement over time.



Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Making of Coraline” (YouTube – Laika Studios)/ “Wallace & Gromit: Behind the Scenes” – BBC & Aardman Animation/ “The Nightmare Before Christmas” Set Design Featurette/ Pixilation/Stop Motion Design Clips from Vimeo/YouTube creators (e.g., PES, Guldies)
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Unit Title	Unit 5: Introduction to Virtual Reality in Mass Communication
Time Frame	4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes virtual reality different from other types of media? • How can virtual reality be used to tell a story or deliver a message? • In what ways is VR transforming communication in journalism, entertainment, and education? • What are the technical and creative challenges in designing a VR experience? • How do immersive environments affect how we interpret and respond to media?

	Focus of the Unit
	<p>This unit introduces students to the fundamentals of Virtual Reality (VR) as a communication tool. Students will explore how VR is used in journalism, marketing, education, and storytelling. They will learn basic principles of immersive media design, experience sample VR environments. Emphasis will be placed on understanding audience engagement, spatial storytelling, and the ethical use of immersive technologies.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Understand and apply media arts elements such as space, perspective, motion, and interaction in digital environments. • 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Produce original digital content using emerging technologies. • 9.1.8.F / 9.1.12.F – Use digital tools and technology in the design and production of immersive media experiences. • 9.1.8.H / 9.1.12.H – Demonstrate safe and effective use of equipment and tools in creating digital/VR content.
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Learning Targets
I can analyze how virtual reality changes the relationship between media creators and audiences.
Learning Targets
I can design a VR or 360° experience concept that demonstrates clear audience targeting and storytelling intent.

Learning Targets
I can compare VR with traditional and digital media in terms of narrative impact, engagement, and ethics.
Learning Targets
I can evaluate the ethical responsibilities of immersive media producers, including user safety, representation, and consent.



Resources	CoSpaces Edu/Google Expeditions / Google Arts & Culture VR Tours/ThingLink VR/360
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Unit Title	Unit 6: Communicating Change – The Basics of Campaigning
Time Frame	4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is media used to persuade or inspire others? • What makes a campaign message effective? • How do visuals, slogans, and stories work together to communicate change? • How can young people use media to advocate for causes they care about? • What ethical responsibilities do communicators have when creating persuasive content?

	Focus of the Unit
	<p>This unit introduces students to the foundations of campaign communication—how messages are crafted and distributed to influence public opinion, mobilize audiences, and promote change. Students will explore how campaigns work in political, social, and marketing contexts. They will create a basic campaign strategy, develop key messages, and design promotional media using tools such as posters, videos, social media, and speeches.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Identify and apply elements of media design (e.g., text, image, space, movement, color) to develop campaign messages. • 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Use media tools (posters, social media, video, audio) to produce campaign content. • 9.1.8.F / 9.1.12.F – Demonstrate skill in using media technologies (graphic design tools, video editing, podcasting software).
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Learning Targets
I can evaluate how language, visuals, and media shape public opinion in successful campaigns.
Learning Targets
I can apply branding and persuasive techniques to design a cohesive multi-platform campaign.

Learning Targets
I can research and analyze the rhetorical strategies used in political, advocacy, or commercial campaigns.
Learning Targets
I can reflect on the ethical responsibilities involved in persuasive communication and campaign messaging.



Resources	Canva
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Unit Title

Unit 7: Telling Stories Through Sound – Radio & Podcasting

Time Frame

4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

Essential Question(s)



- How can stories be told effectively without visuals?
- What makes a podcast or radio segment engaging?
- How do voice, pacing, and sound effects influence storytelling?
- In what ways do radio and podcasting give voice to different communities?
- How can students use audio storytelling to inform, entertain, or inspire?

Focus of the Unit



This unit introduces students to the art and craft of audio storytelling through radio and podcasts.** Students will analyze existing podcasts and radio programs, explore sound design and scriptwriting, and learn how to plan, record, edit, and publish an original short podcast episode. Emphasis is placed on voice, structure, timing, audience engagement, and technical skills like audio editing and microphone use.

Standards

- 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Understand and apply media arts elements (e.g., time, sound, rhythm) in audio production.
- 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Create original works using audio production tools (e.g., podcasting software, microphones).
- 9.1.8.E / 9.1.12.E – Demonstrate processes of planning, editing, and refining sound-based projects.
- 9.1.8.F / 9.1.12.F – Use equipment and technology appropriately for recording and mixing audio content.

Learning Targets

- I can analyze the narrative techniques and pacing used in professional podcasts.

Learning Targets

I can edit audio using software (e.g., Audacity, GarageBand) to enhance clarity and impact.

Learning Targets

I can incorporate sound effects, music, and transitions to improve audience engagement

Learning Targets

I can publish or present a polished podcast that demonstrates professional quality and audience awareness.



Resources

But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids/iMovie/Garageband

Unit Title	Unit 8: Sound in Motion – Introduction to Foley and Sound Design
Time Frame	4 Weeks



INNOVATIVE
ARTS ACADEMY

	Essential Question(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do sound effects enhance storytelling in film and video? • What makes a sound feel “real” or “believable” on screen? • How do Foley artists create sounds using everyday objects? • In what ways can sound design manipulate audience emotion and experience? • What is the relationship between visuals and sound in media?

	Focus of the Unit
	<p>This unit explores the role of Foley artists in enhancing visual storytelling through sound.** Students will examine how sound effects are recorded and synchronized with visual media. They'll experiment with everyday objects to create soundscapes, record original effects, and apply them to short video scenes. This unit emphasizes creativity, timing, technical precision, and understanding how sound influences audience perception.</p>

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1.8.A / 9.1.12.A – Identify and apply elements of sound (e.g., pitch, duration, volume, rhythm) in media productions. • 9.1.8.C / 9.1.12.C – Use tools such as microphones, recorders, and audio editing software to create original Foley and sound effects. • 9.1.8.E / 9.1.12.E – Demonstrate refinement and editing of media through sound mixing and synchronization with visual content. • 9.1.8.F / 9.1.12.F – Practice safety and proper usage of sound equipment in a studio setting.
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Learning Targets
I can design and create original Foley effects that enhance the mood, tension, or comedy of a visual story.

Learning Targets
I can record and mix multiple audio tracks (dialogue, Foley, music, ambiance) into a balanced final soundscape.

Learning Targets
I can use audio editing tools (e.g., equalization, fading, panning) to fine-tune the quality of my project.

Learning Targets
I can critique the use of sound in professional film clips and student-created projects using industry vocabulary (e.g., synchronization, reverb, layering).



Resources	Garageband, Youtube, The Secret world of Foley, Behind the Scenes examples
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