

paper to visually map out your short film. (Note in the book that even 3rd-graders do this!) Stick figures are fine, for example.

Production

Plenty on this in the book, but here you're thinking about what you will fill your frame with (and therefore what you'll be leaving out), the kinds of camera angles and perspectives you will use (low angle, high angle, dutch angle, POV), the kinds of shots you want (establishing shots, long shots, medium shots, close-ups, etc.), and how you will achieve balance in your shots using the rule of thirds. The sum of these parts will be a sense of movement and the passing of time. We should feel where the camera is taking us without thinking about the camera.

Other considerations: lighting, sound (natural, dialogue, music, etc.), scenes and sets.

Post-production

How do you carve an Indian out of a block of wood? Cut away all the parts that aren't an Indian. As film director Francis Ford Coppola said, "The essence of cinema is editing." This is where you really create your story and your particular reality. Cut away all that isn't a necessary part of your story. Editing is sometimes called "the cutting room."

Here you are thinking about arc, transitions, tying together characters and scenes, perhaps communicating through metaphor (a big idea), and where you want to take the viewer. As we've discussed many times in class, most visual stories, be they major motion pictures or 30-second pharmaceutical ads, occur in three acts: Set the scene and introduce the characters, put them in crisis, resolve the crisis.

Lots more in your book, which reminds us "not to be intimidated." We're far more interested in learning how to tell visual stories, and how they work, than we are in technical proficiency. Start small. Keep it simple. Learn from failure. And tell a story.

Submit with your YouTube (or Vimeo or whatever) URL, your script and your storyboards. Work together or alone. But do the work yourselves (no "consultants").

Be sure to sign one of the submitted documents assuring me that all of the intellectual property you are submitting is in fact your own. (In other words, your honor pledge.)