

punches up camera 2. The child in front of camera 2 pretends that he has been hit in the jaw; he staggers back and then pretends to punch camera 2. This can go on as long as you can stand it. Playback the tape as soon as each group has finished. The final product will appear remarkably realistic.

2) Far and Near - a child sits in a chair and faces a line monitor. Camera 1 is positioned close to the subject; camera 2 is farther back for long and medium shots. The switcher alternates between cameras. The subject changes his expression or pose according to the shot on live, i.e., if it is camera 1 (close-up) he might stick out his tongue; if it is camera 2 he might make a gesture with his arms and legs.

Teaching Suggestions

These exercises are helpful in developing coordination between subjects, camera operators and switchers. Make certain that each person knows what he is to do before you begin.

Variations and Follow-Up

Watch a TV program and count the number of times the picture is switched. Contrast a switched program your children have made with one that uses only a single camera. When preparing scripts include rough ideas about when cameras should be switched during scenes.

EXERCISE SEVEN: Special Effects

Special effects should be used sparingly for most work by children because it is important that the technology not be directing the content. Too much reliance on fades, wipes, keys, etc., can prevent children from dealing with the central problem of how to communicate information to others. However, there are times when special effects can be useful. A fade instead of a switch can indicate

the end of a sequence and the beginning of another; a "super" can be a useful tool for creating a fantasy scene. The following exercises will demonstrate how some of these effects can be used.

1) Split screen - a child in front of camera 1. A child in front of camera 2. Split the screen vertically so that each child occupies one half of the picture. Have them attempt to pretend to shake hands.

2) Split screen - same as above but split the screen horizontally. Have one child attempt to pretend to stand on the other's head.

3) The moving split screen - a child in front of camera 1; camera 2 focused on a dark piece of paper, rug, etc. Start with camera 2 and slowly move wipe 1 across the screen from left to right so that the child can pretend to push camera 2 picture off the screen.

4) Super dance - put both faders on so that the two camera pictures are superimposed. Have children dance, jump up and down, etc. In order to accentuate the action, have camera 1 tilt up and down over subjects, while camera 2 pans back and forth over subjects.

Teaching Suggestions

These exercises require some difficult moves by all participants. Allow children time to make mistakes - often these lead you off into exciting new directions. These exercises can be done by preschool children if they have the time to practice.

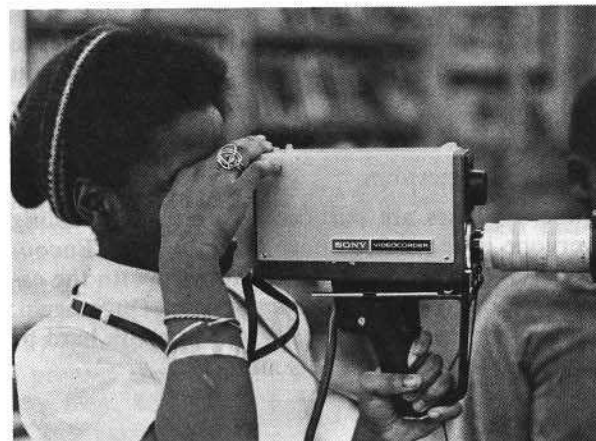
Variations and Follow-Up

By mixing close-up shots and long shots into the same super you can make interesting effects such as a giant hand chasing a little person. Discuss with class where special effects might get in the way of the content.

Portraits

KIT LAYBOURNE

This activity seems particularly good for introducing kids to the equipment. It insures that everyone is both creator and subject of a tape. There is a special focus on inductive learning of disciplined ca-



Richard Chin

mera control and on learning audio-editing. The product is invariably good, which means that kids will get a positive feedback and raise their frustration thresholds for more difficult projects.