

Teaching Suggestions

Have the students practice trying not to provide too much of an answer in the phrasing of their questions. This is a common mistake. Have kids interview each other just to discover what the process is about. The less the interviewer says and the more the interviewee says, the more interesting the tape

will be.

When kids are on the street doing interviews, have them playback the tape to the person they have just talked with. New questions and deeper responses often generate this way. Also, of course, kids can see if they got what they wanted.

Video Animation

CHUCK ANDERSON

The question inevitably arises: Can animation be created with the videotape recorder? It is virtually impossible to animate still objects with the 1/2 inch videorecorders. The continuous scanning operation of the camera negates the possibility of single frame shooting such as is done with Super 8 and 16mm movie cameras. Therefore, potential video cartoonists must look to other forms of animation, such as manipulation of objects in front of the camera. The basic rationale exists for all animation: you have complete control over whatever is to be videotaped. Here is one possibility: a variation of the ancient Chinese shadow play.



Chuck Anderson

The Activity

A story or choice of characters for improvisation is made. Two dimensional puppets are created from heavy paper or cardboard. Movable limbs are achieved by connecting figures at their movable joints by means of masking tape and thread. The puppets are pressed against a translucent, taut rear projection screen. They are manipulated by long, fixed dowels that are fixed to key points of the body. The puppets and their operators are positioned on the darkened side of the screen; the video recording camera is on the other. Movie lights at low setting heightens resolution of video images.

In-Depth Interviews

KIT LAYBOURNE

In most video programs, there are many, many activities in which kids conduct the kinds of interviews that they know so well from a lifetime of watching television. This activity forces students to experience a different kind of interview. Doing



Jeff Strickler

in-depth interviews helps bring into relief the assumptions and stylistic conventions, the strengths and liabilities of standard TV fare. It also programs students to explore the unique qualities and abilities of portable video systems.