

of others, processing elements of group dynamics). And more.

Perceiving Dependencies and Options

Television is such a pervasive constituent in the life of today's youngsters that they have no awareness of its scope. The technological media of communications and environment mold us in ways that we do not see. Video Studies must try to carry the idea that "the medium is the message" past the threshold of perception. By helping our students look at themselves and their work in new ways, we can work the epiphany that accompanies seeing new patterns to something more important – consciously molding patterns for oneself.

So an early necessity in teaching video is helping kids discover what role TV watching plays in their lives. Also, what is the full spectrum of television's opportunities for information, entertainment and interaction. Hardware isn't necessary in devising activities that address this need.

2) Learning the Turf: TV Study

With an understanding of themselves as video consumers, students are ready to participate in a more formal study of the television medium. Two perspectives can help the teacher discover ideas that will lead the kids in understanding television.

Surveying Local Broadcast Institutions

This is a "micro" perspective that includes study of local video mediums. Kids should examine who controls these institutions, the jobs existing within each, what service they provide the community, what programming they carry and should carry, the audience being reached and what effect the programming has both in terms of "content" and "massage."

Defining TV as Mass Communication

This is a "macro" perspective. The emphasis is on discovering larger patterns and issues which tie the medium into society as a whole. Concerns here might include these topics: what is the history of the medium; what is the nature of national network broadcasting; who regulates the medium; can new technological developments expand and alter TV; how has the medium effected our culture; what ought its future be?

3) Choosing Weapons: VT Making

The content of a new medium is the form of an old medium. For the most part, television today carries the forms that were developed for earlier drama, radio, motion picture and newspaper mediums. In using portable and simple-to-operate video systems, most of us (like broadcasters) tend to use the medium from the perspective of these older, known mediums. To a certain extent, this is fine: kids ought to be provided with experiences that promote their critical and creative competencies

with regard to current television forms. At the same time, we need to be particularly sensitive to the unrevealed potentials of this new medium. It is clear that portable video systems can do things that no other medium can do. We need to create opportunities and tolerances for our students to explore and chart the full domain of videotape.

Production Modes

Here is a checklist of production modes that kids should be introduced to: Dramatic (theater games, improvisations, original teleplays, adaptations of stage productions); Documentary (studies of other cultures and sub-cultures, portraits of friends and institutions, investigative reporting on school or community issues); Bio-Documentary (self-portraits, studies of own family and peer groups, reflections on facets of one's own culture and environment); Group Processing (role-playing, values clarification games, ethnography of the video class, tape exchanges with kids in other programs at other locations); Journalistic (street-shooting, in-depth interviews with playback to subject, school newscasting); Experimental and Non-Figurative (video-feedback, collage and resynthesis of broadcast materials, non-narrative studies of motion, time, place); Mixed Media (tapes designed for use within other performing contexts – music, dance theater, recitation, the plastic arts.)

4) Making Changes: Purposeful Video

The focus now turns outward. Emphasis falls on locating a problem and then trying to effect it in some known way. The process here centers on the concept of a "student-task force" and it incorporates four active phases: research, production, presentation and evaluation.

This final portion of the framework ties together the preceding ones. Much exploration of various "study" and "making" facets of Video Studies has equipped students to use their new critical and creative skills for a purpose. Working as a group, they put their artistries and understandings to task. They use video to communicate a message of their choice to a specific audience outside the class. The criteria for success become objectified and concise - of effecting real change.

FRAMEWORK II

Video as a Communication Tool Serving Education

It is not enough that video and television enter the curriculum as a new and legitimate subject. Video should be used for the purpose of breaking down - not reinforcing - the anachronistic structure of our schools.

Here then is another very short framework. It prescribes another set of concerns that ring those of the preceding framework.