



Presenting: Moving Images

LEVEL 1 2 3 4 5

Mountain Madness

WHAT THE WORK SHOWS: These students successfully use a song, scene changes, and animation to highlight a possible consequence of continual housing development.



In this work the students demonstrate:

- confident use of animation to present a persuasive message
- an understanding of shot continuity
- ability to mix and balance two sound sources.

Conveys an idea(s) or mood by beginning to combine visual features with verbal features:

- Establishing shot (mountain) sets the scene.
- Range of shots – wide-angle, close-up – to direct viewer attention.
- Zoom out to reveal, and final zoom in to focus attention.
- A number of related sets and props.
- Effective use of a song as the text form.
- Natural use of sound effects helps create the mood.

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

As part of their language work, the class had been focusing on the settings as a narrative developed. They also applied this to well-known stories such as "The Three Billy Goats Gruff". They identified how a story might be considered in terms of the backdrop to the events, as in a stage play. The chart (reconstructed here) was built up for this story.

Backdrop	Events
A field	goats walking about
A bridge	goats decide to cross the bridge each goat approaches and crosses

But the class also saw that more detail could be provided within a particular backdrop, or scene, by coming closer to the action, or by taking a different viewpoint:

<i>Field</i>	all the field	part of the field in more detail	the exit gate
<i>Bridge</i>	whole bridge	underneath where the troll is	the middle of the bridge

Scene changes were an important focus during the storyboarding of their animated persuasive video.

Teacher-student conversations

These conversations show the students can:

- explain an idea or mood to be conveyed
- begin to explain one or more of the following points:
 - how the visual and verbal features combine to convey the idea or mood
 - how they help to achieve the producer's purpose
 - how the visual and verbal features used show some awareness of audience
- use appropriate terminology to plan for and/or explain the techniques used.

Initial set and filming planning, after the script was written:

Teacher: What's the setting for your animation?

Group: A mountain.

And the land around it.

Teacher: Which parts will you be showing in more detail?

Group: A river. Men chopping trees.

The bird's nest.

And the egg hatching.

A road.

Teacher: Have you thought how you will get closer in your video?

Group: For most of the scenes we make a set that shows things more clearly, like the fish in the river.

We come up close to the chopper too.

We think that for our road, we might start there [points to sketch in the storyboard], and zoom out to show the whole scene again.

Teacher: So what's the first thing the audience will see?

Group: The whole mountain area, to show them where it's happening.



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Teacher: Filmmakers call that an "establishing shot". It reveals where the film is taking place – like an introduction. In your plan you want to finish closer to the bird. Why did you decide to do that?

Group: Because that's something we want people to think about – if we keep chopping down trees, we mightn't see the birds again.

Teacher: I like the idea you have for finishing.

CURRICULUM LINKS

English in the New Zealand Curriculum

Achievement Objectives

Level 3: Viewing and Presenting Functions

Viewing: Reading visual and dramatic texts, including static and moving images, students should respond to and discuss meanings and ideas, identifying and describing the effects of and links between verbal and visual features.

Presenting: Using static and moving images, students should use verbal and visual features to communicate information, ideas, or narrative through layout, drama, video, or still photography.

Levels 3 and 4: Viewing and Presenting Processes

In achieving the objectives of understanding and using visual language:

Exploring Language: Students should identify important features of verbal and visual language and use them to create particular meanings and effects.

Thinking Critically: Students should identify and discuss ways in which verbal and visual features can be combined for a particular purpose and audience.

Processing Information: Students should view and use visual texts to retrieve, interpret, organise, and present information coherently; use appropriate technology, including fluent handwriting, for effective presentation.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum, pages 40–41

WHERE TO NEXT?

To move these students towards the next learning step, the teacher could encourage them to:

- experiment with other ways to create scene depth where the houses are added to the environment – e.g., blocks of increasing thickness placed under the houses, to raise them from the background
- consider other angles for the chopping sequence – storyboard this again, retaining the same props and character types.

REFERENCE

Ministry of Education (1994). *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.