Teacher's Guide
for Audiovisual Education

for all levels of Compulsory Education

as part of the National Curriculum

The present Teacher's Guide accompanies the activities of the *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education*. The activities can be led by educators from any discipline with no prior knowledge of the audiovisual.

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Dear teachers, dear friends,

Acquaintance with audiovisual expression is part of an effort to expand our cultural awareness, as new ways of communication arise. People around the world use images and sounds to narrate their sorrows, proclaim their hopes, and search for friends and fellow travellers in the paths of knowledge and social justice.

We have assembled in a *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education*, in the form of a 'loose' Curriculum, a series of suggestions for activities that develop audiovisual awareness. The present *Teacher's Guide* accompanies these activities. The material was first compiled and processed in the 'Audiovisual Expression Workshop' of the 'MELINA – Education and Culture' Program (1995-2004). It has since been improved and enriched. It is a work in progress.

Teachers, who will choose to lead their students in these activities, will discover the charm of expressing oneself with the means of images and sounds. They will also realise that they can do quite a lot of things without having any prior knowledge of the audiovisual. With this work, we hope to contribute to the preparation of teachers for a school for the future. We also hope that the Greek state will someday include audiovisual education to teachers' core training and, eventually, to the national compulsory curricula. We believe that your own creativity and care and passion, alongside the inherent dynamics of audiovisual communication and art expression, will advance in meaningful and exciting ways how culture is taught in school!

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Good luck and have fun!

Menis Theodoridis

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SECTION I – PEDAGOGICAL REMARKS

Which is the syllabus?

There is no syllabus! This constitutes a central choice of the present effort. Traditionally, the composition of a detailed syllabus for a module aims at the systematic covering of the maximum content about the subject, often leading to a superficial accumulation of knowledge, while facilitating assessment. This is not our way. **The 'literacies and familiarisation activities' approach** that we follow, advocates choosing and developing in class only a few key-concepts of crucial importance. The students are not expected to integrate any predefined cognitive content – which, after all, is always determined by the dominant epistemologies on the subject. The teachers are offered a multitude of possible activities in diagram form; which ones they will choose and how they will develop them in class is their own prerogative. Moreover, the activities have no 'right answer'; no desired responses or attitudes are expected from the students. Students learn through experience; they develop their creativity, as well as their ability to think for themselves and work with others; they come in contact with alternative ways of thinking and expression; and they start building their own attitudes and opinions with regard to art.

Is there a handbook?

We offer the teacher two documents:

1. The *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education* proposes activities categorised **according to age group**: for pre-school and early primary school pupils; for middle primary school pupils; for late primary school students; and for early secondary school students. The presentation of the activities is organised in four columns:
   - The first and most important column comprises the **expected learning outcomes**, i.e. what the learners are expected to be able to do at the completion of the activity. In this way the teachers can shape their teaching and control its effectiveness.
   - In the second column, the **pedagogical rationale** of the activity is presented, including the pedagogical methodology proposed. The column includes pedagogical issues and aims, and methodological remarks.
   - The third column indicates potential **specific applications of the activity**. The examples help clarify the aims of the activity, while also providing suggestions for its implementation in class.
   - The fourth column refers to helpful **educational material**.

2. The present *Teacher's Guide to Audiovisual Education* contains guidelines, lesson plans and advice for the effective application in class of the activities proposed in the *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education.*

Additionally, the two documents are accompanied by a:

3. *Supplementary Educational Material DVD* (to be published).

How will the children work in class?

They will work in **group hands-on activities**. We believe that art education activities are best served by the **cooperative model of teaching** and particularly the **project method of learning**, where learners are engaged in the creation of a collective work. The discussions between the learners in order to decide what to do and how, are an internal part of the educational process, which exceeds in importance the mere cognitive content of the lesson. We should note though that this is not an easy approach for the teacher; it needs determination and patience.

In early primary school, children have often a difficulty in working as members of a group. If this ability hasn't been cultivated earlier, then the activities must be very simple and focused on very clear aims, so as to facilitate the communication between the pupils. The teachers should consider the expected learning outcomes as a secondary target and prioritise pleasure, creativity and the coherence of the small groups.

In late primary school, the students have often gained experiences from extracurricular collective work, such as cultural activities and environmental activism, which can be incorporated creatively into audiovisual education activities in school. Nevertheless, if this is not the case and the students have gained no culture of collaboration as yet, the teachers should accordingly adapt the lesson, starting from easier activities, focusing on the learning process, and setting aside any ambition of the class producing complicated audiovisual works.

Can we do all that in the limited time we have?

The time is never enough. One must keep in mind that some art education activities may take place in the frame of other subjects, serving primarily the educational aims of these (see below the question of interdisciplinarity). Therefore, the same activity may be repeated in different contexts and thus gain new meanings. During art education classes per se, it is important to teach activities-'models', so as to familiarise the students with methodology and concepts, which they will then be able to use in other classes. One should also keep in mind that art education activities combine many aims and cultivate simultaneously various abilities and skills, which can then be used in other disciplines.

Can art education activities be part of interdisciplinary teaching?

Yes, they can and they should.

Every kind of collective art expression – such as painting or composing music in groups, theatrical or dance performing, producing films or photo-narrations – necessitate the formation and negotiation of personal opinions in a group, the composition of different abilities and actions for a common goal, the creation of a final product, addressing some kind of audience in the public sphere. This common structure of all collective art expression makes it particularly apt for use in interdisciplinary teaching.

To give some examples of interdisciplinary uses of audiovisual expression, the following activities may support effectively the teaching of different disciplines:

- photographic and sound recording by the students, as pre-research and / or documentation for any topic to be studied – such as the flea market, archaeological monuments, public utilities, public transport, the forest;

- interviews, sound or video recorded by the students, can provide information and the opportunity to approach a topic from different viewpoints;

- critical study and analysis of audiovisual documents – such as fiction films, news stories, documentaries, advertisements, scientific records – originating from a specific era and / or referring to a specific topic;

- creation by the students of audiovisual representations of topics related to the lesson.

One must have in mind, nevertheless, the main danger of interdisciplinary activities, which is not to fulfil the educational aims of either discipline, or both.

Let us see this danger in a specific example:[1]

It is often proposed as an audiovisual education activity combined with the subject of history, to set up and photograph in class a scene representing some historical era or historical event (British Film Institute's 'Classroom resources for teachers' include a similar suggestion), such as the everyday life in the agora of classical Athens or a morning in the house of a potentate in the Othman Empire, or the peasant revolts in Thessaly in early 20th century.

In such as a representation, the teachers may strive enthusiastically for historical accuracy of architectural and costume detail, which is not the primary objective of the activity. On the one hand, they may feel that the main gain for the students with regard to history is the methodical research for information about the 'look' of the event or era in books, paintings and other representations. These representations, however, are saying more about the era they were made than about the era they refer to, and this is important for the students to understand. More important still is that the students understand the functioning of the historical era or event itself, its causes and effects, rather than accurately represent it. On the other hand, teachers often think that the fact of setting up and photographing the scene is enough for cultivating the audiovisual awareness of the students. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Therefore, the activity may fail both as a history lesson and as audiovisual education.

With regard to the history lesson, **the research on an era or an event is better not to be exhausted in the accuracy of scenographic detail. The primary objective should be to understand.** About a historic event one should ask, for example, how it came to be, what was the role of different factors and different people, who was there, what expectations and hopes determined the actions of each person and each social group, why the event happened in this specific location, how this event shaped future events etc. These kinds of questions should be put and researched in the sources and discussed in class, so as to cultivate the students' historical awareness.

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[1] Theodoridis M. (2008), 'Audiovisual expression as a frame for interdisciplinary activities' [in Greek], Journal *Επιστήμες Αγωγής* [Education Sciences], Special Issue: *Art and culture as a flexible field for interdisciplinary approaches*, Editions of the University of Crete, pp. 167-170.

Correspondingly, the interpretations and estimations produced by this process will be the material for the photographic representation of the event. Beyond any 'lace and sword' accuracy, what is important in order to cultivate students' audiovisual awareness is **the presentation of functions and relations by the means of direction, performance and visual recording**. Who and how will dominate each image and who will be marginalised, how people's relationships will be presented spatially and visually, how space will be photographed etc. These kinds of questions provide opportunities for creative solutions with regard to frame, points of view, lighting, performance, and then – of course – scenography.

Therefore, if the above project is jointly led by a specialist in history teaching and a specialist in audiovisual education, the students' gain will be maximised. However, a teacher of a specific discipline with the help of the present *Guide* and its accompanied *Program of Study* will also be able to lead effectively and productively the project. One should always remember though that if the project exhausts itself in a conventional, superficial representation, the students may have fun but they will miss the opportunity to broaden their awareness with regard to either history or the audiovisual. To produce spectacular and 'aesthetically pleasing' images is not the aim of audiovisual education and it does not promote the educational objectives of other disciplines either.

Consequently, when planning art education activities as part of the teaching of another discipline, the teachers should ask themselves:

a) What exactly does this activity teaches with regard to the primary discipline? Which competences and skills does it cultivate? What kind of questions and understanding does it promote with regard to the cognitive content of the subject? Which aspects of the activity should be prioritised? Is it worth the time it needs?

b) Does this activity promote the aims of art education, which ones and how?

Which is the role of the teacher in art education activities?

During an art education class per se, whether this is about art in general or an art in particular, teachers should limit themselves mainly in the role of coordinator and facilitator of children's free expression. Every educational aim is pursued by the means of creative activities, while primary among these aims is the cultivation of children's initiative and originality in art expression. Teachers should educationally support the process: from time to time reminding the children of the frame and objectives of each activity, and motivating them to search for alternatives and solve their problems collectively in a productive way.

Teachers who wish to meaningfully contribute to students' efforts for audiovisual expression, for example, do not need to necessarily have filmmaking know-how (although, ideally, they would have the help of a professional). The questions posed in class do not need to be about the technicalities of using a camera or lighting. It is much more important to ask: Why do you make this film? Why have you chosen this subject? Do you like it and why? Is there something that annoys or frightens you in it? What do you want to say? How do you intent to show what you want to say? How do you know that the audience will understand what you want to say and not something else?

Finally, teachers, apart from their educational and coordination responsibilities, also need to play the role of a potential audience for their students' creations; a non-expert but thoughtful audience, ready to communicate with the product of their work in each phase of its production.

What about assessment?

Assessment in the context of the activities that we propose here may refer to the following:

- **Assessment of the final work** created by each group, **by the audience** to which it was addressed. As an example, let us describe the methodology successfully used in some schools:

  Before the beginning of the event, the students-audience choose between themselves a group of judges (about 10% of the students present). The judges are then divided into two smaller groups with equal number of members. A third group is formed by 2 or 3 of the adults present. The members of each group sit together to watch the presentations. Each group does not communicate with the other groups or the rest of the audience. At the end of each presentation, each member of the three groups marks the presentation in a scale of 1 to 10. Then, each group calculates the average of the marks their members have given to come up with the group's mark of the presentation. So, after the process, three different marks for each presentation are announced to the audience. **This process makes everyone understand that assessments are always subjective (and possibly wrong) but they are respected when they are the result of a defined and democratic process**.

- **Assessment by each group of the contribution of each of its members**. The members of the group assess collectively the contribution of each other in their work, using criteria such as involvement, work and effort, initiative and creative originality, use of persuasive argumentation, flexibility and tolerance. The teacher guides the process but does not participate in it. The assessment is concluded inside the group but its results are not announced to the rest of the class or anyone else.

- **Assessment of the activity by the teacher**, according to the criterion of attainment of the expected learning outcomes (marking percentage of success). This assessment functions as part of a personal pedagogical diary of the teacher, which may also include notes as to 'what went well and what did not'. If the activity is taught by more than one teacher, in the same or different classes, a comparison between these diaries and a discussion between colleagues may prove really valuable.

Can art education help us 'become better people'?

Art education activities familiarise children with the value of alternative viewpoints. The subjective viewpoints of the Other, every and all others, on even the most common topics or objects of our everyday lives, the different views on the world surrounding us; these may be of the most important social characteristics of the arts. Children should be taught to acknowledge and respect them. By the means of

properly designed art activities, they can come to realise that things gain different meanings according to different viewpoints, and that understanding the subjective viewpoints of each member of the group, enriches us, helps us to respond critically and effectively to reality, and contributes to communication and culture.

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SECTION II – INTRODUCTION TO AUDIOVISUAL EDUCATION

Audiovisual Communication, Expression and Education

Audiovisual communication constitutes an alternative, integrated system of multimodal communication which is different from, although it may include, the language of words (written and spoken). **Audiovisual communication is the formulation of meanings by the means of the flow of images and sounds. It allows many kinds of expression.** In other words, audiovisual expression can produce different kinds of audiovisual texts, such as narratives, poems, essays, references, declarations, propaganda, advertisements.

Presently, people learn this system of communication through practical experience, mostly as receivers of daily consumed audiovisual messages. Nonetheless, we believe that it is possible, necessary even, for all citizens to acquaint themselves with audiovisual communication in a more holistic fashion. With this goal in mind, we propose an intervention for the systematic acquaintance of students with audiovisual expression in formal education. Such an intervention should be similar to teaching a 'parallel language'. It should not be considered just as a further step in contemporary arts education, but as an effort to develop students' ability to handle a complex system of intercultural communication and a powerful tool for the dissemination of ideas.

Artistic audiovisual expression refers to forms of artistic expression which result from the creative use of audiovisual media and tools. These are tools which allow: the recording of images and sounds, either directly from the environment or created through the use of animation and/or digital techniques; the multi-levelled processing of the recorded images and sounds; and the playback (reproduction) of the final visual, audial or audiovisual product, addressed to either a restricted or a wider audience.

In this general category of artwork, we may include contemporary forms of artistic expression, such as cinema, art photography, animation, video art, creative sound recording (radio staging), comic strips and all forms of computer generated audiovisual expression, such as computer graphics and design, 3D animation, virtual reality installations.

Students' systematic acquaintance with artistic audiovisual expression is a crucial part of teaching 'reading and writing' of audiovisual texts, in the same way that literature (artistic expression with words) is essential in the conventional teaching of languages.

So-called **'media communication'** uses the same audiovisual tools, but for the purpose of information exchange and dissemination, social and mass media activities, such as journalism, interviewing, advertising, and publicity activities.

Systematic acquaintance with students' **everyday audiovisual culture** (TV, Internet), combined with acquaintance with **artistic audiovisual expression** (different forms of cinema, different forms of photography, video art, video installations, etc.), will confirm students' confidence in audiovisual communication, thereby providing a context for their critical appreciation of art and media.

In international bibliography, one encounters two groups of concepts, referring to two similar yet significantly different educational fields: on the one hand, 'media education or literacy'; on the other, 'film or cinema education or literacy' – and somewhere in between, the recently introduced term of 'screen literacy'.[2]

We propose here the use of the wider concept of **'audiovisual education'**. We define as audiovisual education **the educational process which aims at cultivating the learners' audiovisual awareness, familiarising them with all the fields of audiovisual expression**:

- All kinds of **artistic audiovisual expression**. The purpose here is art expression. Educational activities familiarising learners with these fields of audiovisual expression are usually referred to as **'film or cinema education'**.

- All the kinds of **media communication**. It is possible that these activities too offer the chance for artistic expression, but this not a priority or an expectation. Educational activities familiarising learners with these fields of audiovisual expression are usually referred to as **'media education'**.

What about equipment?

All these years, we have been concerned with the minimum necessary equipment for the activities we propose. Our intention is for the activities to be applicable in every Greek school, with the minimum possible cost – a cost that the school itself, possibly with the help of local authorities and/or parents' associations, will be able to cover.

When the number of students is small, for most activities it is enough to have a digital camera or mobile phone and a laptop.

For a primary school with a larger number of students, which wishes to invest in audiovisual equipment, we propose the following [We include indicative 2017 prices]:

- **1-2 good compact digital cameras** (at least 9MP resolution). Compact cameras do not necessitate any technological expertise in order to produce an adequate photo; even a young child can take a photo by just pressing a button. This allows the learner to focus on the photo's composition (framing, spatial relations, symmetries etc.) and semiotics (significations) instead of its technical aspects.

  The cameras should have a zoom lens (at least 3X). Zoom lens facilitates learners' efforts to accurately control their framing and allows them to compose frames even in close spaces.

  Each camera should also have an LCD screen and a viewfinder, large buttons, rechargeable lithium battery, charging and data USB cables. Each camera should also be accompanied by at least **2 memory cards** (at least 2GB each).

  [The sum cost for the two cameras is about 500-600€]

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[2] For further analysis of the two fields, see Theodoridis M., 'Audiovisual Education… Dead-ends and Pathways: Program of Study for Audiovisual Expression' [in Greek] in Thessaloniki Film Festival(2003), *Film Narration*, vol. 2: http://www.filmfestival.gr/educational_programmes/cinema_entypo.htm

Most digital cameras can also record video. If properly chosen, they can be used for this purpose too, making unnecessary the purchase of proper video cameras.

- **1-2 light video tripods** [2X140€]

- **1-2 pairs of self-powered speakers** that deliver high enough volume sound output for easy hearing in class and are connectable to a laptop. [2X60€]

- At least **2 digital voice recorders** [2X100€]

  Each recorder should have a headphone output port and an external microphone input port. Accordingly, each should be accompanied by a **headphone set** [no more than 20€ each set] to control the process of recording and **an external electret condenser microphone** [not more expensive than 60€ each] to assist in the collection of sounds, reducing unwanted ambient sounds.

  It is advisable to have separate devices for recording image and sound, even when technology allows us doing both with the same device. The reason is that, in primary school, different activities focus on image and different ones on sound.

- At least **4 laptops** of a recent generation, with the corresponding software, and at least 17" screens. To be located in the same classroom, each to be used by a group of 4-5 students. [4X600€]

- **Colour printer** [150€]

For a secondary school, additionally to the above, we recommend the following:

- A **digital video camera** with (any) memory card recording system. Alternatively, a (photo) camera with a good video recording function (ask for expert advice). It should have a headphone output port and an external microphone input port, rechargeable lithium battery, charging and data USB cables. [500-700€]

- **2 memory cards** (at least 25GB) for the above video camera. [2X30€]

- **2 (spare) rechargeable lithium batteries** for the above video camera [2X20€]

- At least **4 computers** (desktops or laptops), with the corresponding software, and at least 17" screens. Each should have installed **semi-professional video editing software**. [4X(600+100)€]

- **1 external, portable, hard disk** of at least 1TB. [60€]

All schools (primary and secondary) should have at least **1 multi-purpose hall with the possibility of medium darkening** for screenings during the day**.** The hall should be equipped with a good **public address system** (amplifier, loudspeakers, microphones), as well as a strong **video projector** (at least of 2500 ANSI LUMEN [about 1000-2000€]) and a sufficiently large **screen.**

Larger schools should additionally have **2-3 smaller multi-purpose rooms** with the possibility of medium darkening, equipped with portable self-powered speakers [300-700€], portable video projector (1800 ANSI LUMEN [500-800€]) and screen. These rooms are often natural sciences labs or arts workshops too.

What teachers who 'want to try' should know?

For teachers who want their class in the activities comprising the *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education*, we propose several 'methodological tools', hopefully contributing to their easier and more fruitful application. Some of them can be used for a multitude of activities; others for just a few of them. Teachers do not need to read all the methodological tools in advance; they can just study the ones needed for the activities they have chosen.

A few Bibliographic Suggestions

(for anyone wishing to explore more!)

1. British Film Institute, (2003), ***Look again! A teaching guide to using film and television with three-to eleven-year-olds***

2. Buckingham, D. (Polity, 2003), ***Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture***

3. Craggs, C.E. (Rutledge, 1992), ***Media education in the Primary School***

4. Hobbs, R. (Teachers College Press, 2006), ***Reading the Media in High School: Media Literacy in High School English***

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SECTION III – METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS
FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF AUDIOVISUAL EDUCATION

Every 'tool' refers to corresponding activities in the ***Program of Study for Audiovisual Education***.

Tool 1 – 'Frame and kinds of frame'

(Useful for activities of narrating using images, of spatial recording and of studying film excerpts)

Introduction to Frames and Shots in Audiovisual Literacy:

The borders of an image along with all the content within it, is called a **frame**. A still photograph is a frame. Frame is also the image that we see in any particular moment of a film.

In cinema and television, a continuous unit of moving images is called a **shot**. When the continuous flow of the shot is interrupted, the shot changes. A shot has duration. During a shot, the frame may change either because the camera moves in relation to the subject depicted or because the subject moves in relation to the camera; however, as long as the continuous flow of shooting is not interrupted, the shot goes on. A shot is usually named after its most dominant frame.

Depending on how close or far away appears the subject depicted (usually a character), i.e. depending on how much space the subject takes in the image, a frame or a shot may be:

Wide: The character appears to be far away, while the frame includes the character's surroundings (landscape, buildings etc.). A wide frame provides information about the location where the action takes place (see example below).

WIDE:

Where is the main character? What are the surrounding conditions (i.e. season of the year, time of day, weather) at that moment?

Medium: The character dominates the frame. Above and below the character, there is no visual space left; however, on the left and/or right sides, there may appear other characters, other objects and/or spatial elements. In a medium frame our attention usually is focused on the character and the character's relations to space and other characters (see example below).

MEDIUM:

Who the main character is (gender, age, clothes etc.)? What does the main character do?

What are the other people doing? How are they connected to each other? How are they interacting? In what distance are they standing from each other?

Close-up: The subject (character or object) depicted fills the entire frame and appears only partially in it (e.g. a character's head or hand may cover the entire image). A close-up on a face makes possible for the audience to observe its expressions.

CLOSE-UP:

How does the character feel? Is the facial expression in contradiction with the words uttered? Where are the eyes looking?

Moreover, a close-up on an object may be used to stress its importance or draw attention to it. The choice of frame allows the film directors to lead our gaze and stress the importance of the elements they want.

Note: When naming frames, scale is defined by the human body. Therefore, a frame showing, for example, a whole spoon with no free surrounding space is not defined as a 'medium shot of the spoon', but rather as a 'close-up ', using as criterion the fact that, if in this image a person was holding the spoon, only the palm of his/her hand would fit in the specific frame. Moreover, the above three types of frames (and equivalent shots) are used here only for educational purposes. Professionals in cinema or TV use a much wider range of types of shots.

## Tool 2 – 'Cyclical photographing or sound recording'

(Useful for activities where the main classroom equipment is used by the entire class in turns)

It is very important that every member of the class participates in all activities. For this reason, the main audiovisual equipment of the classroom must be handled and used by every single student. While waiting their turn to try an activity, the teacher should prepare the students, showing them how to use effectively the equipment. Instructions should be clear and simple. The teacher should repeat the instructions aloud, while guiding the student who uses the equipment.

Let us take the example of all the class shooting the same subject (e.g. Activity 14). All students should shoot what the activity asks them to and not something else. But what can students do when waiting their turn to use the camera? A very creative way to prepare for the use of the camera is to search for the frame they will shoot, using a **'paper frame'**. The teacher says:

'Using a paper frame, you will prepare your photo, by searching in advance what you will shoot and how. Follow my instructions so that you will make your own paper frame. Then I will explain how to use it.

Take a sheet of paper size A4. Fold it half, by bending it over itself; then fold it in half again; unfold. Draw a black circle where the creases intersect on both sides of the sheet (step 1). Fold the sheet again. Starting from the marked corner, measure 5cm on the longer side of the folded paper and 4cm on the shorter side, and draw a rectangle. Use scissors to cut off the rectangle (step 2). Unfold the sheet again. Now, there is a window of 10cmX8cm on its centre. This is our paper frame (set 3).

step 1   step 2   step 3
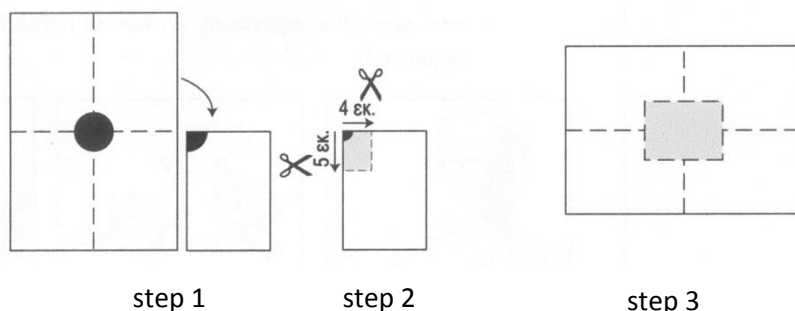
step 4

If we bring the frame in front of our eyes (step 4) at a distance of about 30cm and look at our subject through the window, we have a rough impression of the photo we would shoot. We can move the paper frame, go closer or further away from our subject, until we are satisfied with the frame. If we close one eye while looking through the paper frame, we get an even better result. So, while waiting for our turn to use the camera, we can move around with our paper frame searching and trying to decide how the photo that we will shoot should be.

In the same way, in an activity of sound recording of a short phrase by each student (e.g. Activity 2), students waiting their turn can prepare their phrase and practice the enunciation.

Tool 3 – 'Mediation: Group work on the same subject'

(Useful for activities where the same work is assigned to different small groups, in order to produce alternative viewpoints on the same subject)

Assigning the same subject to a number of small groups is a useful pedagogical option. For example, assigning to different small groups the photo recording of the same public place (square, open market, mall, train station, historic sight) may reveal different viewpoints on the subject (e.g. Activities 23, 24).

Step-by-step procedure:

- The class considers the short introduction explaining the basic frames and shots of an audiovisual text (see Tool 1 above; for additional explanations see also the Glossary at the end of the *Guide*)**.** Then, the class is divided in smaller groups of 3-4 students.

- The teacher explains the objective and rules of the activity. Members of each team then collaborate in order to present **one final team result** rather than a portfolio of separate personal projects. The procedure for most activities requires that:

- Each member of the team participates in the activity. To start with, each member of the group contributes a personal suggestion as to 'what should we choose to shoot?' (brainstorming). In AV experienced groups, this step might include indicative, rough photos by each member. Team members discuss each other's suggestions and the way each could be integrated in the group's project.

- Team members 'negotiate' with each other and agree on the collective shooting that will represent their team's final product (as in the example below). For example, in a public park, 'are we going to focus on some litter in a corner, or on a beautiful collection of plants in another corner, or on some children playing around?' Each group may decide differently.

- Collective shooting, according to the agreed plan. Let us say that the assignment is to 'describe a specific public area by shooting **two wide, two medium and five close-up shots'**. This may require a number of alternative shots for each of the images that will be finally used in the group's visual description.

- Later on, back in class, the members of each group decide on the sequential arrangement of their photos, and may also add comments/captions in order to present their own opinion regarding the area described. To reach their final product, group members discuss with each other regarding the selection of the most successful photos, the order of presenting them, the content of any possible captions, as well as the mode of their presentation (e.g. projection of the photos one after the other in a kind of a PowerPoint or printed photos and written captions exhibited on a wall).

- Each team presents its final result to all the other groups, after which a discussion about similarities and differences that might have occurred between the groups takes place.

- Each team is evaluated by all other teams using criteria that have been determined in advance (such as clarity, originality, well-rounded opinions, articulation of conclusions and proposals, etc.).

Apart from the audiovisual competences developed in this kind of activity, an effort is being made to offer opportunities to realise how many different viewpoints can emerge facing one and the same subject, thus realising the value and the dangers of mediation.

Alternatively, the entire class as a group could combine all the wide, medium and close-up shots and then collectively decide upon a new presentation of their visit by choosing and using two wide, two medium, and five close-up shots that represent their documentation of the place as a whole. Also, the whole presentation could be supplemented by some sound recording including on-the-spot recorded sounds, music, commentary etc.

Tool 4 – 'Mediation: The role of the reporter'

(Useful for activities where each small group produces audiovisual products based on information provided by its representatives)

Mediation is one of the most important characteristics of social organisation and culture and a practice in which we are constantly engaged. For example, education as a whole constitutes our mediated relationship with knowledge, an artist-mediator invites us to view the world from his/her perspective, our political life is primarily based on politician-mediators representing us in decision-making centres, while acquiring information about current events requires at least some partial acceptance of a journalist-mediator who researches, observes and judges 'on our behalf'. On the one hand, the act of mediation, enabling us to be informed about a subject, is based on our trust of whomever we choose as our information source-mediator. On the other hand, we must always remember that while the mediator's personal perspective aids us in our understanding of the subject in question, it always constitutes a selective view of that subject. For that reason, we must always use our critical judgment when receiving information through a mediator.

The above observations are formulated in a highly theoretical language and cannot, of course, be addressed to young children. Nevertheless, they can be experienced by the children, through properly planned activities; enriching them and helping them develop a critical approach to all mediated information (in TV, the Internet etc.)

When a group of students assigns to one or more representatives the collection of information (photo recording, interview, Internet research etc.), they should learn to trust and use their work; however, they should also learn to recognise that this work is the product of selection with regard to reality. The group has to compose its own collective viewpoint.

For example, in Activity 4, the pupils draw the content of a closet they have not seen based on information provided by their representatives. They can thus find out that descriptions of the same things by different 'reporters' are different. After finishing their drawing, they compare it with the 'real thing', thus finding out that no mediation is absolutely faithful to reality.

Tool 5 – 'Photo-narration'

(Useful for activities where each small group produces an audiovisual text by the means of static or moving images, such as the recording of places or class visits, or the audiovisual interpretation of literary texts)

In an audiovisual narrative, although the main characters take part in the action all the time, **we do not necessarily see them all at the same time**. At any point of the narrative, **the frames guide the viewers' attention** to where the director (or comics' artist or…) has decided is most important for his/her purposes.
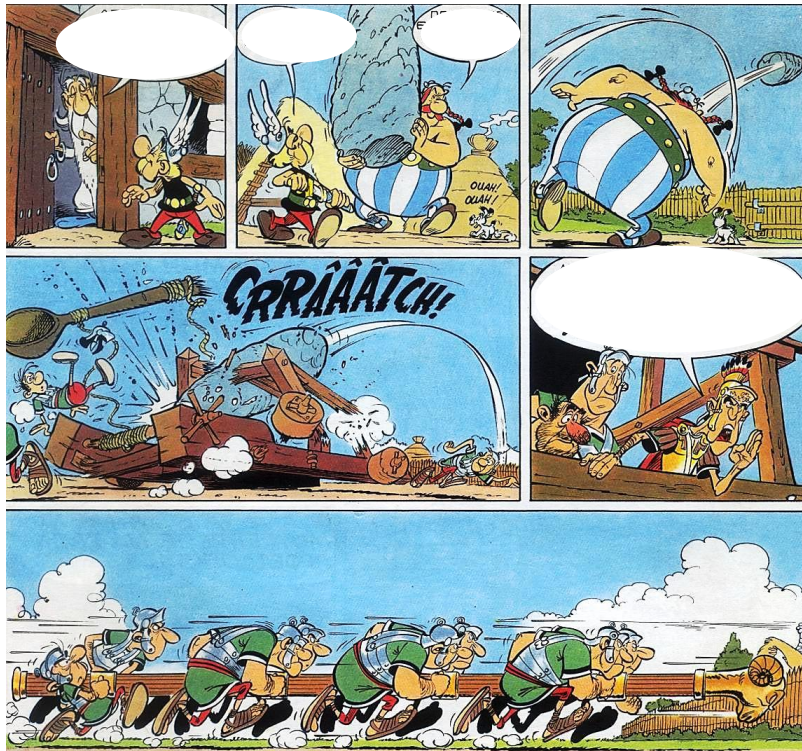
Excerpt of *Astérix: Le Cadeau de César* (1974) by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo

A narrator tries to tell her/his story in the most exciting way. Similarly, the audiovisual narrator (i.e. the director) tries to tell audiovisually (i.e. communicate by the means of images and sounds) her/his story in the most exciting audiovisually way. By viewing individual images sequentially, we mentally create the continuity of the story, while the predominant elements are those that the director intended to highlight. Remember though: Different directors who tell the same story produce different narratives because they focus on different elements of the story and select different images to tell it.

Lack of mobiles!

Blah…blah…blah…

Blah…blah…blah…

I've been waiting here for more than half an hour!
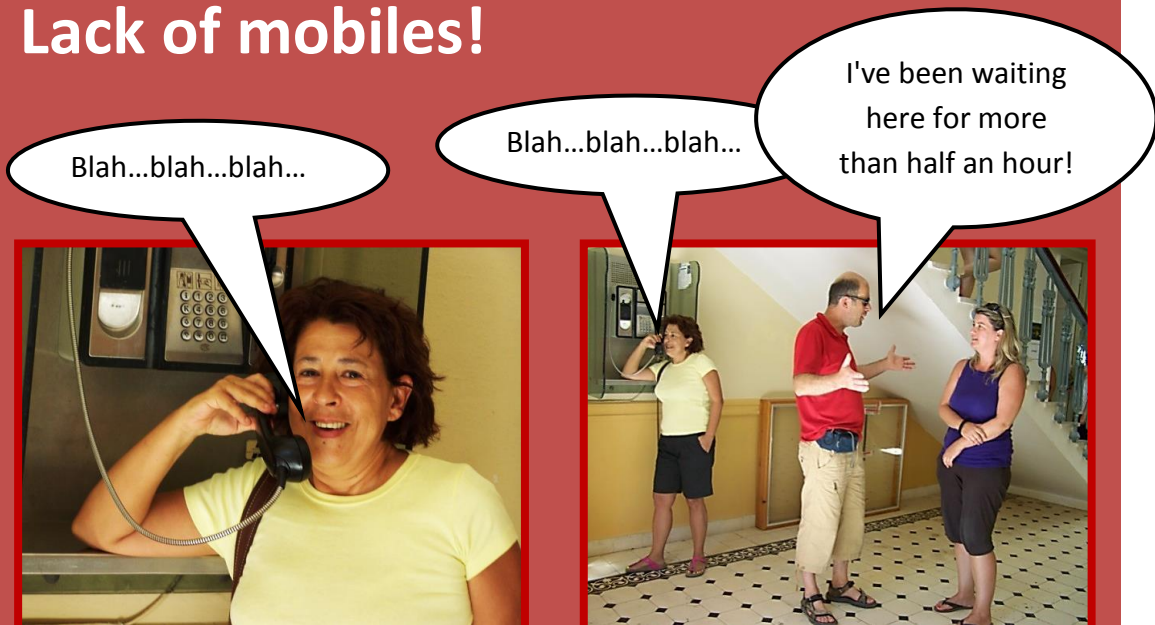
Two separate photos narrating a continuous action:
Close-up shot and juxtaposed Medium shot
Dialogues and sounds in bubbles

The above is an example of a photo-narration. A similar type of audiovisual narration characterises cinema! An important difference is that **in a film**, the images are presented **one after the other** on the screen; **in a comic book**, the images appear **one beside the other**. Of course, there other differences too: films are moving images accompanied by sound, while comic books contain static images accompanied by written captions.

While the above constitute an introduction to the mechanism of audiovisual narration addressed to older students, much younger children – even of preschool age – can become familiarised with the audiovisual mechanism by participated in hand-on activities.

Photo-narration is a characteristic instantiation of audiovisual discourse, i.e. it is an audiovisual text.

Let us point out the main collective decisions necessary for the group production of a photo-narration, of which the topic and context is given in advance by the teacher (the simpler version of Activity 5): 'narration of the simple, everyday activity (e.g. "I wash my hands") using four consecutive photos'

- Which child will appear in the photos?

- Which are the four most important phases – steps of the process, which we should show in our photos?

- How are we going to show (shoot) each step?

- From the 3-4 photos we shot for each step, which one we will choose to represent it?

- The collectively chosen four photos, in which order will they appear?

- How are we going to present our photo-narration to our audience (e.g. consecutive projection of the photos on the wall or printing of a poster with the spatial co-existence of the photos)?

More complicated decisions need to be taken when the audiovisual narrations include more images, or captions or sounds, or when groups have to choose their own topics, or when the narrations necessitate fiction composition, dramaturgy or acting.

For any kind of decision, the process is more or less the following: formulation of propositions, argumentation – negotiation, collective decision in a democratic way, implementation of the decision, checking the result, presentation to some audience – feedback, (possibly) improvements.

After going through the introduction, small groups may plan their own narration-projects, for example:

'To produce a fictional photo-narration using **10-12** consecutive still photos (**at least: two long shots, three medium shots and five close-up shots**) either in a comic strip form with printed simultaneous photos accompanied by written sounds in bubbles (dialogue, short texts, sounds), **or** in screening form with consecutive photos accompanied by recorded/downloaded sounds (like a video or a PPT)'. The projects can be planned in creative steps, as in the example below:

Step 1: Make up your own simple story. Limit the story's action to one specific time and place involving not more than to 1-2 main heroes. It will help if you create a story with heroes of your age. Write the dialogues using everyday language	**Participants may create brief stories from their daily youth life, such as:** • **The mobile phone which shouldn't …** • **A wrong SMS …** • **When the sandwiches were lost …** • **So close and yet so far …** • **'Would you like to be in my position?'** • **'I'm not interested! It's your problem!'** • **'Mind your own business!'**
Step 2: Plan your photos on paper (create a written plan or a storyboard). The 10-12 photos may all picture moments of the story's action each focusing on what you consider as most important at each moment (at least: two long shots, three medium shots and five close-up shots).	**Long shots** to reveal information about the place and the environment where the action takes place **Medium shots** to reveal information about who are the people involved, what are they doing, their relationships and their positions in space **Close-up shots** (faces, details) to reveal information about reactions and important elements at each moment
Step 3: Choose your actors.	
Step 4: Shoot your photos. For each of the 10-12 photos of your plan you may have to shoot a number of alternative photos and later choose the best	**For each photo of your plan, try to shoot at least 3-4 different viewing angles and distances from your subject as well as trials to achieve the right expressions on your heroes' faces**
Step 5: In what sequence will the final 10-12 chosen pictures be arranged?	**Depending on the sequence of the final photos and of the bubbles (or sounds) you may be explanatory or even surprising. Discuss ideas and create a spicy narration!**
Step 6: In what format will the photo narration be presented to the audience (e.g. as a slide show on screen, as a printed poster which is put on display, etc.)?	**If poster, continue with step 7 and display your printed poster on a wall:** **If slide show, move to step 8.**
Step 7: Add bubbles. Your computer allows insertion of bubbles with short text. Different fonts may reflect shouting, whispering etc.	**Usually bubbles are pointing to the speaking person. They can even point to a person who speaks but is out of the picture, or even they may point to more than one persons who say the same words at the same time**
Step 8: Add sound. You can record dialogue corresponding to each photo, or music that will boost your narration or sounds mumbled or downloaded	
HAVE FUN!	

Tool 6 – 'Captions'

(Useful for activities where captions can be added to images)

Captions provide an exciting opportunity to creatively combine written speech with visual expression. Let us list their main functions and, thus, discover how complicated mind processes necessitate their use:

- As titles, captions may **comment on** the visual material, expressing the creator's opinion on the subject depicted (therefore offering a proposition for its reading-interpretation) or provide **additional information** (a function similar to 'voice-over' narration in a documentary). Titles can inform, criticise, mock or glorify; titles can be original or referring to something else, they can be poetic verses or short sentences… or longer ones.

- As 'bubbles' over the characters containing dialogue or thoughts, captions create dramaturgical context. By the means of bubbles, the creator can introduce speech. Apart from words, bubbles may contain symbols or punctuation marks, revealing the characters' emotions.

- As 'bubbles' containing sounds rendered in written speech, captions provide a certain **audial dimension**.

When the creator decides to introduce written speech on the images, s/he alters the **rhythm of the narrative flow**. The appearance of a dialogue 'bubble' in a frame, after a series of frames without written speech, draws attention and changes the flow of perception; the effect is similar to a very short or very long verse interrupting the flow of a poem. Moreover, apart from its expressive potential, the use of written speech combined with images constitutes an excellent **preparative exercise for the relation between moving image and sound** in film narration. Importantly, the presence of written speech in audiovisual narration should not describe-repeat what the image already saya; it should **add a new dimension to its reception-understanding**.

See also Tools 5 and 8.

Tool 7 – 'Kinds of sound and kinds of speech in AV texts'

(Useful for all activities of audiovisual narration)

By understanding the general categorisation of sounds in an audiovisual text, children become aware of the creative potential of the audio processing of a film. One can distinguish three kinds of sound in an audiovisual work:

1. **Noises** (e.g. sound of steps, thunders, cars, cracks, squeaks)

2. **Music**

3. **Speech**. Key for interpreting and audiovisual text is **the kind of speech** that is dominant in it:

- Often in a film or a show, we hear a voice guiding us through what we see. It may explain, for example, when and where the events that we watch take place, provide information complementing what we see on screen and filling gaps in our understanding, or pose questions inviting us to give our own answers. The person speaking does not appear on screen. S/he addresses us, the audience, and yet tries to go unnoticed; like **a hidden teacher**! It is as if s/he made the film.
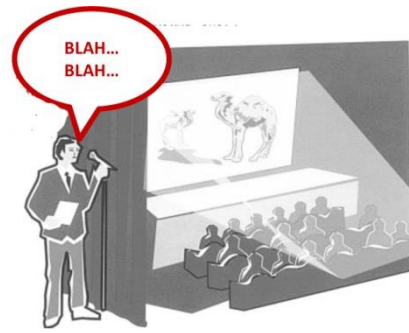
This kind of speech is called **voice-over (commentary)**. It is use quite often in documentaries, educational films and advertisements.

- **Similar is the speech of a presenter.** S/he may guide us, add explanations and information to what we see, or take interviews from experts. S/he is supposed to be trying to inform us for the topic under consideration in the best way s/he can. What is important though is that a presenter is **visible**. S/he **'hosts'** the show and takes us through everything we see and hear. Even if s/he does not appear always on the screen, s/he is present and evident.

It is often the case, that the presenter welcomes us in the beginning of the film or show and bids us farewell at the end. Presentation is the kind of speech that is immediately addressed to us, the audience. It is very usual in TV shows and the news.

- Another kind of speech is used by those who answer to polls or interviews: i.e. the **guests**. They appear on the film or show only to answer posed to them, when and for as long as the director chooses.

In this category belong the participants in TV debates, round tables, reality shows or games, as well as **the people who tell their own story** to the audience.

When guests speak, they may address the presenter or the audience.

- Finally, an important category of speakers are those who **interpret roles**, as characters of a fiction, i.e. an imaginative narrative; in fiction films and soap operas, for example, when we hear characters speaking to each other or – sometimes – to themselves. Actors pretend to be people whom they are not. They interpret dialogue as written in the script. They don't address the audience, usually. They give the impression of speaking to each other without knowing that we are watching them!

Something more:

Sometimes, when a film is in another language than our own, we hear the characters speaking in their language and simultaneously read a translation of what they say. This written translation is called: **subtitles**.

Sometimes though, instead of being subtitled, a foreign film is **dubbed**. In a dubbed film, we hear the characters speaking our own language, although initially the actors spoke a different language. This happens because some actors have interpreted the roles in our language after the film was made; this was recorded and then added on the finished film, replacing the original, foreign dialogues.

Dubbing is a difficult process. In order to dub a film, specialised technicians divide the work in small units of 2-3min. Then, the dubbing actors rehearse each small unit many times. They try to give their voice a similar timbre, tone and expression to the voice of the original actors. They also try to synchronise their words to the movements of the original actors' lips. When they complete one small unit, they move to the next.

Dubbing a voice-over, when the presenter does not appear on screen, is much easier because the dubbing actor doesn't have to synchronise his/her words to anyone's lips.

In animation films, all the voices are dubbed of course, even in the original film.

And more:

When we hear any kind of speech in a film, **it is not necessary that we see whoever speaks on the screen**. In a film, sometimes we hear someone speaking without seeing him/her; we may see those who listen instead, or what the speaker sees, or what s/he thinks. When we don't see the speaker, the speech is **'off screen' (OFF)**. When we see the speaker, the speech is **'on screen' (ON)**.

Similarly, all sounds heard in a film are categorised as either ON screen or OFF screen, according to whether their source appears on the screen or not.

Tool 8 – 'Kinds of shooting angles'
(Useful for all activities of audiovisual narration, and particularly for Activity 14)

In order to shoot the photo of a person (in fiction, a character), we usually place the camera opposite to them, in such a way as to face them at the height of their eyes. So, if the character is standing straight, so is the photographer, holding the camera at the height of the character's eyes (image 1). If the character sits, then a **'straight-on' angle** demands the photographer to sit down too, and place the camera at the height of the character's eyes. However, if the character is sat and the photographer remains standing, then the camera will view the character in a **'looking-down' angle** (Image 2). Then again, if the character stands but the photographer sits down, then the camera will view the character in a **'looking-up' angle** (image 3).

'Subjective' or 'point-of-view' frame, we name the frame which shows what a character sees at a specific moment, through the very eyes of the character (image 4). The teacher should explain that in order to shoot such a frame, we have to place the camera in the position of the character's eyes.

image 1

image 2

image 3

In a subjective frame (see the photo on the right), we see what the character sees, as if through her eyes:

subjective or point-of-view frame
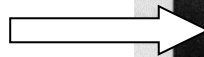
image 4

Activity 14 – 'The cat's walk': In order to familiarise themselves with the concepts of point of view and subjective frame, the children are invited to shoot a series of photos showing how a cat perceives the everyday world. Which means that the camera should be placed at the height of the head of a cat. When our cat looks at **another** cat, then we have a straight-on subjective frame (image 5). When our cat looks a human, without angling his head upwards, then he will only see her legs (image 6). Then, if he looks at a table from below, then we will have a looking-up subjective frame, and we won't be able to see much of what is on the table (image 7). And what will happen if our cat climbs on a tree or a curtain? Then, of course, we will have a looking-down subjective frame (image 8). Obviously, out cat-hero will never appear in his own subjective frames. We see the world through his eyes.

image 5

image 6

image 7

image 8

Combining photo-comics, different angle framings and games of perspective, the children can also narrate fantasy stories! See the photo-narration below, where the following techniques are used:

- Games of perspective, in images 9 and 12. The girl's hand is placed close to the camera and is well lit. The boy is placed faraway from the camera and is also well lit. An effort is made with regards to the choice of the surroundings, so as not to reveal the illusion.
- Framings from different hights and distances. In image 11, a looking-down middle frame is chosen, while the boy has kneeled so as to look even shorter. In image 10, a looking-up close-up frame of the girl is shot, in order to emphasise the characters' supposed difference in size.
- The succession of the frames creates the illusion that they all belong in the same space, without differentiations of distance, and that the boy-dwarf and the girl-giant look always each other.

image 9   image 10   image 11   image 12
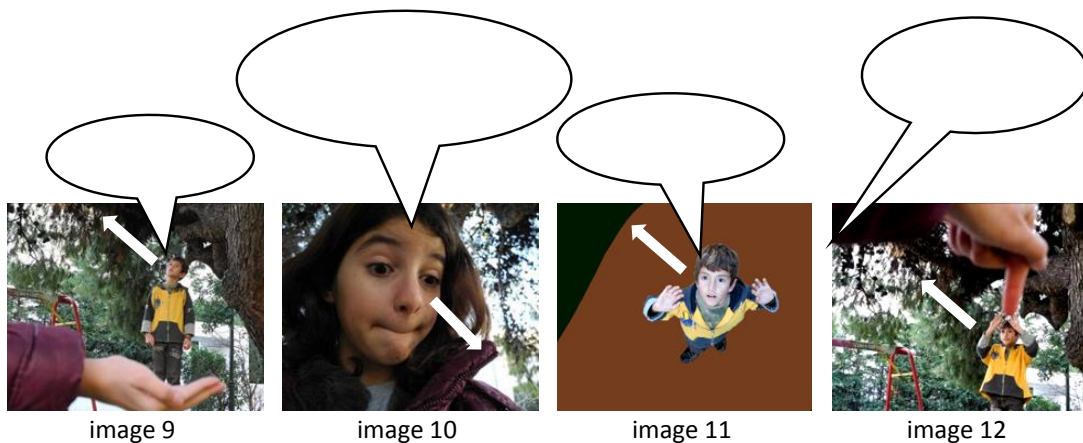
In this example, the children realise that separate, successive images (i.e**. images 'in a flow'**, either still images **one beside the other**, as in photocomics, or moving images **one after the other**, as in cinema) constitute a narrative text. Consecutive images are often perceived as belonging to the same narrative space and narrative time. An image appearing between two others is not interpreted independently from them. It is perceived in combination with the other images, as part of the overall narrative. Obviously, such a complicated explanation cannot be addressed to the children; however, the mechanism of perception and sense-making of consecutive images is simple in itself, and the children already know it in practice.

As described in Tool 5 above, in any audiovisual narrative, although the characters are supposed to take part in the action all the time, we do not see them doing so all at the same time. Each image shows us only what the narrator considers important at that point of the narrative. By viewing individual images sequentially, we mentally create the continuity of the story, while the predominant elements are those that the director intended to highlight. Different directors who tell the same story produce different narratives because they focus on different elements of the story and select different images to tell it.

Tool 9 – 'Using image semiotics'

(Useful for all activities of audiovisual narration, and particularly for Activities 16 and 27. Detailed instructions for these two activities follow.)

Activity 16 – 'One hero – many variations'. It is an activity of introduction to the fact that the director constructs the audiovisual text in different levels, as well as to semiotics of scenography and acting. The concept of the receivers-the audience of the audiovisual work is also introduced – see Tool 13.

The class votes for their classmate who will be the topic of the photo-shooting. Later, the activity may be repeated, so as to give the opportunity to other children to fulfil this role. The chosen child will be shot in five different ways:

- Our classmate **'as we usually see him/her'**. Here, the class has a series of choices to make, which include thoughts on what they think for this classmate and what they are used seeing him/her do:
    - Where we will place him/her?
    - What will appear around him/her?
    - What will s/he do?

    When the class decides how to set up their classmate's photo-shooting, they intuitively realise that this is a process of expressing their opinion about this person. It is not objective; it is the process of constructing 'their truth' (introduction to documentary).
- Our classmate **'as we would never see him/her'**. Once again this is a process of expressing their opinion, by inversion. Additionally, it gives the class the opportunity to create an image of the absurd, as they perceive it. It may focus on a space, a positioning of the body, a face expression, a piece of clothing… It can be quite amusing and provides a first introduction to explicit creative choices.
- Our classmate **'as the positive hero/heroine of a fairy-tale'**. Attention should be given in not reproducing stereotypical gender and other roles.
- Our classmate **'as the negative villain of a fairy-tale'**. Again, attention should be given in not reproducing stereotypical gender and other roles.
- Our classmate '**as an actor/actress advertising a product'**. A different group of question should be put here:
    - Which product should we advertise?
    - Which potential buyers we want to persuade?
    - How will our actor/actress relate to the product? In which place? In which position?

Obviously, the children's age does not allow for any in-depth consideration of these questions. The activity is very introductory.

After the photo-shooting is over, the class decides the final five photos, one for each topic. Then, a short discussion may follow drawing attention to the ways their classmate differs from the one photo to the other. Essentially, this discussion aims to be a first elementary theoretical processing of the activity. It needs not to be sophisticated. It is enough for the class to question why the photos are so different, although in all of them appears the same child.

For the next phase of the activity, the five chosen photos should be pasted the one near the other, **with no specific order**, on a long rectangular cardboard. Each photo should be assigned a sequence number from 1 to 5, which will be written under the corresponding image. Then, on a separate piece of paper, which we will name 'answer sheet', we will write the topics of the five photos, once again without keeping any specific order, e.g.:

- Aleka as a fearless warrior

- Aleka as we would never see her

- Aleka advertising a smartphone

- Aleka as we usually see her

- Aleka as a terrifying witch

Then, the carboard with the five final photos and the answer sheet will be given to the members of a different class, who will be asked to correspond the topics to the photos. The next day, the members of the initial class will see whether the topic of each photo was successfully recognised by the audience of the other class. If some photos are wrongly corresponded, then a discussion will follow searching for 'the elements in the photos that may have confused our audience'

This final discussion is very important for the conclusion of the activity because it introduces the class members empirically to a theoretical reflection on the semiotic dimension of every element in a photo, as well as to the fact that the audience may provide multiple 'readings' of the same audiovisual work – see also Tool 13.

Note: In the activity as described in the *Program of Study*, the class divides into smaller teams and each team functions also as audience for the others, so as not to involve a different class. Nothing essential changes.

Activity 27 – 'One object – many variations'. Extending the logic of Activity 16, we attempt investing with different meanings the same object by the means of photography.

This is a simple, introductory activity referring to the semiotic elements participating in the depiction of an object, as well as to the fact that the director constructs the audiovisual text in different levels. It also introduces the concepts of documentation and of the target audience of an audiovisual text. Young participants may become aware of the various interpretations which result from photographing the same object in different contexts, as well as the significance of composition and background details in an image.

Step-by-step procedure:

The class is divided in smaller teams. Each team chooses a common, everyday object, which they will have to photograph in five different ways.

FIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SAME OBJECT!
1   **'The object as we usually see it'. Here, several issues are worth discussing within each group; such as, how they usually see this object, what this object means to the majority of people, and how these implicit (unseen) meanings can be translated into an image. Intuitively, young participants will realise that since they express their personal opinions in the photo, the photo expresses their own 'truth'; therefore, recording 'reality' is actually reflection of what they consider as reality.**
2   **'The object as we would never see it'. This will result in a nonsensical/absurd image, including creative interventions that are obvious to the viewer as such. Participants will create a non-realistic image, one which, although can be entertaining, cannot be related to a usual sense of 'reality'.**
3   **'The object as dominant element of a social interaction'. Participants will create a second 'realistic' image, in which people also take part. Each small group will consider how their object is used, who may use it and in which social context. They will also have to find in which way all these things will be shown in one photo.**
4   **'The object as a main character of a fairy-tale'. This will result in a fictional image. It is an opportunity to create a non-realistic image which will have to be implicitly consistent with some kind of narrative. Here again, the creator's role is explicit.**
5   **'The object as an advertised product'. This will result in an image belonging to the virtual 'reality' of advertisement. Teams will have to consider questions, such as who the potential buyers that we would like to convince are, and which setting will best promote the product (location, possible human presence, props, etc.).**

In the process of creating each variation, the teams will have to shoot several photos and then discuss and decide which of these best expresses their intentions. Moreover, a short discussion may take place regarding how their chosen object appears different from one photo to the another. This process of reflection, negotiation and decision-making, can often be more important than the actual activity of photo-shooting!

The following step aims at the realisation of the importance of the audience's reactions. The idea is to provide participants with the opportunity to realise the potential multiplicity of interpretations and reactions of an audience.

We usually do this on a projected slide show and participants express their opinion. Then of course, if we want to engage a bigger audience, we may exhibit each group's creations on a wall or upload them to some kind of a e-platform, inviting other young participants (audience) to reflect on them. The five photos, printed or uploaded, should be presented **in random order.** A sequence number (from 1 to 5) should be assigned to each of them. A separate 'answer sheet' should have to be

prepared, i.e. a form on which the five ways of representation are listed in random order, e.g.:

ONE OBJECT – FIVE VARIATIONS

Answer Sheet

Each object is represented in five different ways. Please, identify each photo, by marking the number of the photo next to the corresponding description, as listed below:

OBJECT DEPICTED: / group:

The object represented 'as an advertised product' is shown in photo No:

The object represented 'as we usually see it' is shown in photo No:

The object represented 'as a dominant element of a social interaction' is shown in photo No:

The object represented 'as we would never see it' is shown in photo No:

The object represented 'as a main character of a fairy-tale' is shown in photo No:

Hopefully, as many participants as possible will respond and each of the teams will collect the answers related to their chosen objects and will check whether their audience correctly corresponded the photos to their descriptions. If wrong answers are given for some images, the photographers will have a discussion among themselves in order to identify the specific elements in the photos that might have confused their audience.

Throughout the activity, discussion doesn't have to be sophisticated; participants simply need to reflect on the specific elements that differentiate the five photos, given that the same object appears in all of them.

Through the repetition of the activity, participants will become more aware of the theoretical issues involved in photographing an object, such as: What elements of the object should the image depict? Who will decide whether these elements or some others will better reflect the object's characteristics? How could these elements be highlighted by the process of photo-shooting? How will the object be better placed? How will the background contribute to the intended result? How will the lighting be arranged? What will the dominant colours in the image be?

Furthermore, participants could also bring to the group paintings of objects and/or photographic representations of objects, which could be analysed in detail based on the criteria discussed or drawn from the young participants' own creative experience.

Tool 10 – 'Comparison of AV works with similar subjects'

(Useful for all activities of studying film excerpts, and particularly for Activities 8, 9, 20, 36, 48)

Viewing and critically analysing existing audiovisual works is a fundamental activity for familiarising oneself with audiovisual expression. Viewing a variety of audiovisual texts in an audiovisual expression class is the equivalent of reading literary and everyday texts during a language lesson. However, when screening audiovisual texts, one needs to consider certain conditions which contribute to better developing the viewers' awareness:

- Audiovisual works are best viewed on a **large screen** and by a broader audience. Historically, the invention of film and cinema technology as a medium for projecting moving images to an audience has changed radically the human experience of audiovisual communication. For more than a century, the shared viewing of films on a large screen in a dark room has become an important cultural experience. At the time, the process of watching a film by oneself on a film editing machine, pausing it frequently or even searching back and forth for shots, was considered a studying mode rather than properly viewing a film. Television and video, computer and smartphone technologies have gradually offered this possibility to everyone and changed our viewing habits. Nevertheless, fully experiencing a film cannot be done individually on our computer screens. Viewing an entire film on a large screen in a darkened room and with good sound conditions is essential for receiving all that it has to give, while sharing this viewing with others is an important collective experience that we should not deny our children. This experience can be replicated in a youth centre environment, for example, by a rudimentary audience of three to ten participants, watching without distractions a film, on a relatively large screen or on a white wall, in a fairly darkened room and with fairly clear sound conditions.

- Moreover, after the viewing of the film, it is quite important to provide the viewers with an opportunity to **talk about the film** with each other. The audiovisual texts can be stimuli for lively human communication and idea exchange. We are always enthusiastic to talk about films we enjoyed! Let us not forget in this 21st century of technological marvels that we are still the descendants of social groups that once spent their nights together sitting around fires, watching shadows and reflections, and sharing stories.

The participants' age determines to an important extend their ability to systematically approach and comparatively study audiovisual works. Therefore, we recommend that these activities be used to gradually familiarise the children with some basic methodology of analysis and critical study, and NOT to expect them to analyse in depth and fully appreciate classical films. For this reason, many of the audiovisual texts viewed in class should originate from the current popular youth culture and NOT be chosen for their cultural and aesthetic value. Already known popular stimuli may attract the participants' attention and help us 'activate' their critical thinking.

A most important part of these activities are the lengthy and thought-provoking discussions that frame the viewings. We should stress here that the issues discussed should not prioritise cognitive content; they aim at cultivating the participants' analytical and critical skills (i.e. comparing, organising, forming and applying criteria, negotiating terms and personal views etc.). These activities may also contribute to building the participants' self-confidence, and particularly with respect to having and expressing an opinion about the audiovisual messages they receive.

In conclusion, the choice of audiovisual texts to be used in simple activities of critical analysis, may follow the tastes and preferences of the class itself; however, the gradual initiation to artistic audiovisual expression should be guided by film experts.

We will now consider a few examples, starting with activities addressed to younger ages and, then, proposing activities addressed to older ones.

- Classification of animal representations found in different kinds of TV shows – **Activity 8 – 'So similar and yet so different'**

- Comparison of battle-scenes in different kinds of TV shows (e.g. an interstellar battle in an amination series vs. a Medieval battle in a historical film). In this comparison, children may be invited to discuss, for example: What kinds of weapons are used in each battle? And what kinds of defences? Which battle is more lethal? In which kind of show, battles appear more often? Are there any characters who don't participate in the battle?

An interesting way to approach comparisons is to compile **two-entry tables.** These allow to compare, according to specific parameters, versions of the same character (or other element) as appearing in different audiovisual works.

See below an example from **Activity 20 – '…Herculeses of every kind'**. The table was filled by middle-primary school pupils.

	HERCULES 'Hercules: The Legendary Journeys', TV series (1995–1999), starring Kevin Sorbo	HERCULES Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, 'Gli amori di Ercole / Hercules vs. the Hydra' (1960), starring Mickey Hargitay	HERCULES R. Clements, J. Musker, 'Hercules', animation film (1997)
Age	Young man in his late 30s	Young man in his early 30s	Young man in his early 20s
Origin	Son of Zeus	Probably mortal	Son of Zeus
Body type	Very tall, thin and muscular	Compact and muscular	Very muscular
Hair	Light brown, straight, longish hair	Brown, curly, short hair	Strawberry blond, wavy and rich, medium-length hair
Eye colour	Blue eyes	Brown eyes	Blue eyes
Clothes	A light-coloured sleeveless shirt, long brown leather trousers, a very wide black leather belt	A very short tunic that leaves naked the upper part of his body and most of his thighs, a wide belt	A short tunic, a breastplate, a wide belt and a cloak
Enemies	Several evil gods in human or monstrous form, or beasts sent by evil gods	- Evil lords - Lernaean Hydra (a three-headed dragon) - A hairy giant	- God Hades (in the form of a frightening human, like Frankenstein, with flames for hair) - The Titans (powerful giants) - Lernaean Hydra (a many-headed dragon)
Preferred ways of combat	Kung-fu. His enemies often have superpowers (they throw fires, they become invisible etc).	Wrestling. Sword.	Muscular strength similar to Superman. Sword. His enemies have superpowers.
Allies	Iolaus. He watches or prepares the hero's action. When Hercules fights, he cheers him on.	No close help-mates. Several friends give him a helping hand. The people consider him a leader.	- Pegasus: a winged horse with human character - Philoctetes: an old man, a satyr, a hero educator. He gives courage to Hercules.
Women	Enemy women: -Evil goddesses -Queens who look down on him or want to chase him away Defenceless women who need help.	- Deianira: weak, defenceless, she loves him - Hippolyta: strong, ruthless, deceitful	- Megara: superficial and cocky but in the end, she sacrifices herself for her love. - Singing women

Common people	Peasants defenceless against the fury of the evil gods. They don't take part in the action. The soldiers seem fake.	The people revolt against the unjust and evil lord. They follow Hercules as their leader.	The common mortals are like the audience of a theatrical performance. Some are sceptical and rude; afterwards, however, they clap and become fans of Hercules.

To compile such a table, a long and detailed discussion must take place in class; after all, this discussion is the most essential part of the activity.

As they grow, students may attempt comparisons of excerpts from a wider variety of audiovisual works, from popular to high culture, from commercial to art cinema, from classical to experimental – e.g. **Activities 38 and 48**.

They should be invited to think about questions such as: Did all the excerpts that we watched narrate the same story? In which ways are they different from each other? Do we have different opinions about them? How can we describe and compare our opinions?

Hopefully, we will lead our students away from vague questions, such as 'What does this story tell us?', which reduce analysis to a simple description of the 'story' and its 'moral'.

Tool 11 – 'Interviewing an adult'

(Useful for all interviewing activities, and particularly for Activities 33, 34, 42)

It is common for teachers of specific disciplines to value interviews solely as far as they contribute to the cognitive content of their module. To give an example, they value the interview of a prominent scientist who refers to concepts of their subject. We wish to stress here, however, the educational value of the interviewing activities per se, and particularly the ones that involve the students' peers, families and everyday acquaintances. Conducting an interview for any matter, the students may record interesting stories, original ideas, even significant misunderstandings, which provide material for critical analysis.

We propose two different approaches, exemplified by Activity 33 and Activity 34.

Activity 33 – 'Take a poll!' In this activity, the students pose specific pre-formulated questions to adults that fulfil specific criteria. A rudimentary analysis of the answers follows, where criteria for **quantitative** classifications of the answers are chosen and a simple distribution sheet is compiled.

The example below [original in Greek] is included in the educational material of the 'MELINA Project – Education and Culture': M. Theodoridis et al., **'Rains of all kinds'**, in the Book of Activities, 1996, p.25. It is designed for early-primary school children.

THE QUESTION		
You wish to go on a picnic. Just before leaving, thick clouds gather in the sky. What would you do?		
ANSWER SHEET		
Who answers?	**I would do something else indoors.**	**I would still go for the picnic.**
1st		
2nd		
3rd		
For every answer, we mark X.		

Of the three people I asked:
...... would do something else indoors.
..... would still go for the picnic.

It is important for the students to understand that the formulation of closed-ended questions, which requires the formulation of specific multiple-choice answers, helps us in researching particular aspects of an issue and leads us more easily to conclusions. In the same time, however, they should understand that it excludes other aspects of the same issue, that may have led us to different interesting observations, which we have chosen to ignore because we want to focus on a specific aspect of the issue under consideration. In the example above, we are interested to learn how many people would change their initial plans and how many wouldn't. We chose to ignore other potentially interesting information, such as whether the interviewees would invite friends for dinner or go to the cinema.

Older students can process more complicated questionnaires on more difficult subjects in interviewing activities incorporated into different disciplines.

The example below [original in Greek] is included in the educational material of the 'MELINA Project – Education and Culture': M. Theodoridis et al., for the subject of Geography, 2001. It is designed for late-primary school students.

A great supplement for your city's 'file' would be a sound-file with interviews of random inhabitants from different parts of the city.

We will study these interviews in order to draw some conclusions. For this reason, we need to ask every interviewee the same questions. The questions should be carefully formulated so as to help the interviewees to give clear answers, as well as to help us organise and process these answers.

Some indicative semi-structured questions:

a. How many years do you live in this city?
b. What keeps you here? Give us at least three important reasons for staying in this city.
c. In your opinion, which are the most unpleasant characteristics of this city, the ones you wish could change soon?

The students form small teams. Using a sound-recorder, and equipped with spare batteries, each team launches to the city to find their interviewees: three inhabitants of the city who are not friends or relatives of the students. Each team should address to each interviewee ALL the questions. Each team ideally will work on a different day and on a different part of the city.

Before going out, the students should practice by interviewing the teacher or their class-mates. They should practice posing the questions but also some introductory phrases to initiate the interview. A good introduction addressed to a stranger would be:

'We are students of the …. Grade of the … Primary School in … We are conducting a research for the subject of Geography. We would like to ask you some questions about your opinion for our city. Could you give us a few minutes?'

If the person accepts:

'What is your first name? How many years do you live in our city? In which are do you live?

Each question is asked in the pre-decided order. The first question is asked and answered, then the second etc., until ALL questions are asked and answered. One student only asks each question and should give time to the interviewee to complete her/his answer, not speak over or interrupt her/him. If the interview does not want to answer a question, the students should be polite and proceed to the following one. In the end, the students should thank the interviewee for her/his time.

If the class manages to collect the answers of 9 to 12 inhabitants, a more difficult step is how to organise them. For example:

- *How many answers regard transport issues?*
- *How many answers regard urban planning?*
- *How many answers regard work, unemployment etc?*

This activity familiarises the students with the systematic methodology of the survey, gives them the opportunity to address adults on equal terms and to cultivate the ability to communicate in a structured way. It also makes them aware of the value of oral speech as significant source of information, as does the following activity.

Activity 34 – 'Oral interview 1'. In this activity, the children try to record the individuality and oral testimony of the interviewed adult. They try to approach **qualitatively** the answers. It is a very interesting activity which can easily be included in a language class. In the earlier classes of primary school, children cannot yet conduct a proper interview; however, they can familiarise themselves with the process and ethics of recording oral speech. Older students can go deeper, of course.

The example that follows is designed for early-primary school children. The example given in the *Program of Study* is designed for late-primary school children.

The topic of the interview can be defined by a very simple question, inviting the narration of personal memories, such as:

- Is there a New Year's Eve (or other celebration) that you will never forget? Tell me about it.

- Do you remember a wonderful (or horrible) journey? Tell me about it.

- Is there a friend (or relative or…) whom you haven't seen for many years? What do you remember of her/him?

- Do you remember a moment when you badly needed help? What happened?

The activity's methodology is the following:

- Each class member borrows the school's sound-recorder for two days and records the answers of two members of her/his family; the older they are, the better.

- The question should be chosen and formulated in advance, in class. It should be the same for all class members. It should be written on the board and discussed in class, so that every child understands it. Then, they should all practice posing the question clearly and persuasively. Special care should be

given not to form a model of desired answer in the minds of the children. They should understand that all answers are welcome and respected.

- Each class member must learn and practice how to use the sound-recorder: how to place the recorder close to the interviewees and with the microphone directed toward them, and how to start and stop the recorder.

- They should learn not to interrupt the interviewees. They should also realise the difference between the kind of interview they are about to conduct, which aims at recording the personal world of the interviewee, from the interrogation-interview they usually see in TV. They should learn not to be impatient when interviewing people, allowing them to pause and think. When they are certain that the interviewee has completed her/his answer, they should ask 'Do you remember something more about that day? Do you want to add something more to this story?' and wait again. During all this time, the recorder must remain on. In the end of the interview, they interviewing child should thank the interviewee, saying something like 'Thank you very much! What you told me was beautiful and it will be very useful in school!'

- It is not expected that the interviewing skills will be obtained immediately nut it is important to be cultivated early on.

- As soon as a sound-archive is submitted, the teacher should record the name of the interviewing pupil and of the interviewed adults (e.g. Kostas interviewing granddad Kostas and aunty Katerina). Then, the teacher should listen to each interview, to form an overall impression and to choose which parts are interesting to be played back in class. After explaining to the pupils that there is no time to listen to the entirety of every interview in class, s/he will play back a small excerpt from each interview. S/he may choose to play back some longer excerpts too, when they are particularly interesting or can be educationally useful. These interviews may provide rich material to study in a language lesson, such as local and social dialects and accents, unusual and idiosyncratic expressions, differences in style and expression, emotional tone and voice volume. Sometimes, the narratives are also interesting from a historical point of view, as they record the personal dimension of events that we would otherwise know only as formal data.

- We wish to stress that conversation in class is an essential part of this activity. If the application of specific methodologies and the use of specific technologies constitute the practical part of the activity, then conversation in class and the codification of some rudimentary conclusions constitute its theoretical processing.

As we have already noted, in younger ages, linguistic and historiographic processing of the interviews cannot go in depth. It is sufficient for the children to learn how to patiently listen to others, to respect the individuality of each interviewee, and to function critically locating similarities and differences between the different answers. At an older age though, the students can analyse deeper.

The teacher may find useful the book:

- Paul Thompson, with Joanna Bornat, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, 2017

Tool 12 – 'Classification of AV works'

(Useful for all activities of studying AV works or film excerpts, and particularly Activities 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 20, 22, 29, 30, 31, 36, 39, 40, 41, 48)

The process of classification of audiovisual works by the children themselves can be very educative, even when the result is over-simplifying, as it usually is. The effort to classify the works in class contributes to the cultivation of skills of analysis and organisation, logical argumentation and critical negotiation. Each time a film or audiovisual excerpt is screened in class, it would be useful for the participants to collectively fill a classification sheet, placing the work to some very simple categories (such as, silent vs. sound film, colour vs. black and white, fiction vs. documentary) and supporting their choices referring to specific elements of the work. The correctness of their classifications is secondary from an educational point of view, and will certainly increase along with their experience and the gradual development of their criteria.

The following text may be given to late-primary school and early-secondary school students. It should be discussed while studying specific films.

According to the way the director chooses to address the audience, we classify films as:

- **FICTION**, which narrate invented stories. These are the films we usually watch in theatres or television. With regard to their topic and the way they treat it, they may be comedies, westerns, adventures, mysteries, thrillers, horror films, children's films, and many other genres. The classification of films into genres depends on the person who conducts it; it is not scientific or objective.
- **NEWS STORIES**, of which the purpose is to inform us about current affairs.
- **DOCUMENTARIES**, which record the real world around us and invite us to view it through the eyes of their director.
- **ADVERTISEMENTS**, which try to convince us to buy certain products.
- There are many other forms of audiovisual expression, which may use moving images and sound with novel ways; these include **experimental films** and **video-art**, **musical videoclips** and **videogames**.

According to the techniques used for the construction of their moving images, we classify films as:

- **Live-action:** These films are shot by a camera, which records photographically (analogically of digitally) live action.

- **Cartoon animation:** In these, all the action, locations and characters are first drawn and then given motion with specific techniques.

- **Other kinds of animation:** There are other techniques by which inanimate objects are given motion, such as puppet animation, clay animation, cut-out animation.

  We should note here that films using puppets moved synchronously by puppeteers, such as 'The Muppet Show', are technically live-action recordings of a puppet show, and not animation.

  Nowadays, animation techniques involve the use of computers and have become very elaborated. Often, a film mixes live-action with animation techniques in a seamless way, constructing images which appear to be photographed but are in reality the product of digital collage. Sometimes, the result is astonishing!

When an audiovisual work is viewed in class, and if time and the participants' age allow it, they may classify it according to the above categories, by filling the following sheet, which is inspired by the educational material of the Program 'Let's Go to the Cinema' (1999).

FILM CLASSIFICATION DATA

Film title: ....

Director's name: ....

Production year: ....

Production country: ....

Names of some of the starring actors and actresses: ....

....

Black and white	☐	Silent film	☐
Colour	☐	Silent film with music	☐
		Sound film	☐

Construction techniques:

Live-action cinematography (analogical or digital) ☐

Animation ☐

Other techniques ☐

Kind of film:

Fiction ☐

With regard to its topic, we could call it:

....

(e.g. comedy, western, adventure, mystery, thriller, horror, children's)

News Story – reportage ☐

With regard to its topic, we could call it:

....

(e.g. political, business, crime, cultural, sports)

Documentary ☐

With regard to its topic, we could call it:

....

(poetic, social, political, ethnographical-anthropological, historical, educational, industrial, touristic, medical

Advertisement – propaganda ☐

Video-art ☐

Musical videoclip ☐

Other audiovisual expression ☐

Tool 13 – 'The audience / The receivers of an AV work'

(Useful for all activities of studying AV works or film excerpts, and particularly Activities 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 20, 22, 29, 30, 31, 36, 39, 40, 41, 48)

There is no doubt that every text and every art work is mentally addressed to some receivers, and the same is true for audiovisual texts and art works. The creators may not determine their audience, they may not choose it consciously; however, from the moment a work is publicised, the research for its audience constitutes an interesting dimension of its analysis – e.g., **Activities 36 and 48**. In other cases, the audience of a message is clearly determined and consciously chosen, to such a degree that in order to study it, one necessarily has to determine its effectiveness with regard to its target-audience – e.g. **Activities 16, 27, 37, 38, 46**.

According to the activity and the age of the participants, different criteria for classifying the kinds of audience of a work may be selected. The choice of these criteria, may direct the way the work is analysed. Such criteria may be:

- Age (e.g. pre-school audience, children's audience, youth audience, adult audience, senior audience)
- Gender
- Socio-economic position
- Profession (e.g. politicians, teachers, artists, scientists, University students)
- Ethnicity
- Personal preferences (e.g. football fans, amateur gardeners, art lovers)
- Medium (e.g. book readers, cinema goers, television viewers)

Of a kind of audience, one may ask, e.g.

- How would it respond to this work?
- Which elements of the work target it?

Of a work, one may ask, e.g.

- Which categories of audience does it target and how?
- Are there categories of audience that would remain indifferent to it?
- Are there categories of audience that would hate it?

Tool 14 – 'Art technology'

(Useful for activities researching the function of technology in audiovisual expression, and particularly Activities 35, 36, 48)

We think it useful to include here a few reflections on the contribution of technology to art creation, as we have formulated them in a previous occasion[3]:

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[3] Theodoridis M. (2002), 'Acquaintance with Audiovisual Expression: Proposals of the Program "MELINA – Education and Culture" for the establishment of audiovisual education in school' (in Greek), *Η Λέσχη των Εκπαιδευτικών* [The Educators' Club], No 27, Patakis: Athens, pp. 33-38.

A common cliché to avoid when approaching audiovisual expression is the 'humanity of the traditional tools': i.e. the misconception that the so-called 'academic' arts are characterised by humanity and tenderness because of their use of traditional tools (the pen, the brush, the chisel), while all other form of expression is dominated by faceless technology, formalisation and consumption of cheap paracultural products, the shiny and illusive charm of mass excitement. Moreover, contemporary forms of audiovisual art expression are often condemned for their dependence on technology; it is said that their use of equipment and machinery delimits a space determined by the 'mediation of technology' to the detriment of the 'human' initiative of the artist.

Such simplistic views overlook the determining role of technology in the traditional arts, where a choice between a castor-hair and pig-hair brush determines the aesthetic result. To select a specific way of diluting one's oil colours or mixing them with varnish are determining technological choices leading to visible aesthetic results, as are the selection of a wide-angle lens or a specific image processing software. It is natural that new technologies will be employed creatively by contemporary artists in order to construct new desired results, which will produce new desired meanings. In a similar way, the construction of the belly of a violin by an innovative manufacturer with the use of some new processing technique, the adjustment of the 'bridge' where the strings are stretched, presuppose in-depth knowledge (empirical or scientific) of many technological parameters and constitute fundamental technological preconditions for the proper performance of a work of music. Music composition too follows closely technological evolution, creating works for pianoforte, when previously was determined by the technological capacities of cembalo. Accordingly, a film-director uses creatively CinemaScope or a new type of crane, technologies that were once new and allowed a series of novel expressive ventures in cinema. Nowadays, contemporary art has overcome simplistic delimitations of materials and media. Artistic creation transcends the borders between the arts and technology is disseminated, as the need for expression seeks new paths and ways, without needless confrontations and fake evaluations of the different materials and tools of expression.

In the same way that Iannis Xenakis toils over a computer for the timbre of his musical composition, Akira Kurosawa toils for the rhythm of a scene or the length of a shot, and Richard Avedon (a master of the art of photography) works for many hours to subdue his lights and developers so as to achieve the shadows and contrast he wants. While the uninitiate may be impressed by the presence of a camera and other sophisticated equipment, Theo Angelopoulos waits patiently for the winter to come in order to achieve the appropriate atmosphere and Krzysztof Kieślowski anxiously 'paints' the chromatic unities of his films. Finally, in the same way that Yerassimos Sklavos takes his last breath under the burden of the granite he was trying to subdue with his electric chisel, Tonia Marketaki departs under the unbearable burden of her artistic angst.

Audiovisual expression is a form of contemporary artistic creation which, using new ways, takes us a step further on the path of human toil, social reflection and cultural evolution.

These reflections are addressed to the teacher, of course, and we do not recommend them to be taught in class. They could provide some useful directions though, for discussions regarding the role of technology in the production of an audiovisual work – **Activities 35 and 48**. The influence of cinema technology on audiovisual expression may be also discussed when we compare the narration of the same scene by three different directors in three different films from different eras – **Activity 48**, where the difference between black-and-white and colour film

technology is pointed out, among others. Similar references may be made in **Activity 36**, where – depending on the participants' choices – the expressive differences between silent and sound films may be discussed. Finally, a very simple introduction to the artistic potentialities of different technologies, provides **Activity 35**, where the class may discuss questions, such as:

- What are the differences between a photo you took with your mobile and an older photo you found in the family album? (the ways of viewing and storing them nay be mentioned)
- In which circumstances taking a photo with your mobile is preferable to using a sophisticated, professional camera?
- Can we know whether flash was used to take a photo by looking at it?

Tool 15 – 'Writing a review of an AV work'[4]

(Useful for activities of classifying and studying audiovisual works or film excerpts, such the activity of Tool 12 above, or Activities 48 and 51)

When writing the review for a film, we try not only to express our personal opinion but also to answer questions that any viewer may have when watching it. For each film we can formulate tens of questions and each of them will give their own answers.

1. **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE I.D. OF THE FILM**

   This information should always be given in the introduction of your review. Which is the title of the film? Who is its director? How long is it? When was it produced? Much of this data you could already have filled in the classification sheet of Tool 12.

2. **QUESTIONS ADDRESSED BY THE FILM**

   In our opinion, which is the main topic of the film? What does the film say about this topic? Is it convincing?

   What do we think about it? Do we agree with the way the film presents it? Is the topic important to us? Would we present it in a different way? Is there something important about the topic that the film did NOT say?

   Are there other issues addressed by the film? Do we have to say something about some of them?

3. **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CINEMATIC LANGUAGE OF THE FILM**

   What impression the film's images have on us? Do they remind us the everyday reality around us? Did the creator of the film choose to take us to a journey of imagination, to make us see the world in a different way?

   What impression do we gain from the characters in the film? Do they seem real? Do they give the impression to be like us?

   What do we feel of the film's rhythm? Is it slow or fast? Is it playful? Is it melancholic? Is it appropriate to the topic of the film?

   Do we have any observation about the music of the film?

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[4] 'Writing a review of an AV work' was written with the advisory co-operation of Yiannis Bakoyiannopoulos.

Did we observe any elements in the film that made us think that it is different from the films we usually watch? Can we describe them? Are there other elements that remind them of other films we have seen? Are there moments in the film which we will remember for a long time?

Could we say that this film is like an article we read in the newspaper? Or is it more like some thoughts we shared with a friend? Or like a story a friend told us? Or a poem? Or a joke?

4. **QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR OVERALL IMPRESSION**

Did we like the film? Was it sincere? Was it clear? Did it provoke questions that we will think for many days to come? Did it remind us of our own experiences?

What aftertaste did the film leave? Optimism? Disappointment? Puzzlement? Trust? Anger? Irony?

As we said in the beginning, the questions posed about a film are many. Sometimes, we may wish the director to answer them. Yet, directors often answer: 'What I wanted to say, I said it with my film. Now is your turn to tell us what you understood!'

Good reviews can only be written by attentive viewers. They interpret the answers that the film gives, in their opinion always. This does not mean that there are answers for every question. For every film, but also for every reviewer, some questions make sense and have interesting answers; and some don't. Particularly when there is a limit to the number of words a review should have, the reviewers should only choose to address the questions that will help them to formulate better their view of the film. In order to write a just and responsible review, it is not enough to watch a film once. It is better to see the film more than once, with much attention. And you should always remember that a review expresses the reviewer, not the film's creator.

Have fun!

*

SECTION IV – SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

In this section, we offer some indicative descriptions of lesson plans corresponding to some of the activities proposed in the *Program of Study for Audiovisual Education*.

Activity 1 – 'Photo I.D.s'

The aim of the activity is the creation of a basic audiovisual product for simple everyday needs and play. Simultaneously, a first familiarisation with the technical parameters of photography is cultivated. For this reason, the pupils should participate as actively as possible in the process of taking the photos, at least pushing the camera's button.

Using as simple equipment as possible (an automatic compact camera), the class takes two photos of each of their members: a close-up (I.D. photo – image 1) and a medium frame (full-body photo). For all the photos, we use the same neutral background, preferably a wall of a not to light or too dark shade. For the full-body photos, we can shoot the pupils in groups of four. We place the four pupils against the wall with some distance between them and take the photo (image 2). Then, we print the photos in relatively small dimensions (10x12). We use scissors to separate the full-body figures (image 2). Then, we take an A3 paper sheet (or more, depending on the number of the pupils) and paste the photos on it. We match in pairs each pupil's I.D. photo and the corresponding full-body photo (image 3). We take the A3 sheets to the photocopier and reduce them to A4 black-and-white copies (image 3). For each A3 sheet we can make 5-6 black-and-white copies.

The final product of this process is 5-6 close-up and 5-6 full-body photos of each pupil. These will be cut, in pairs or individually, to be used in the following activities.
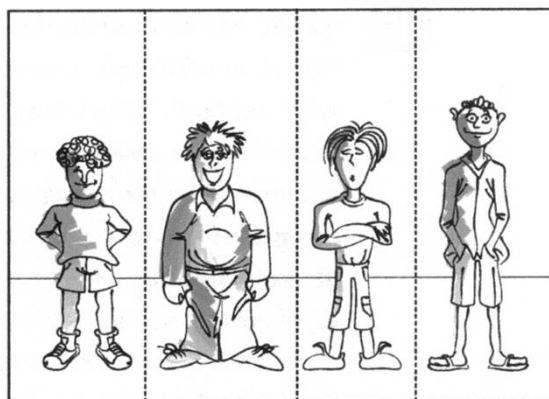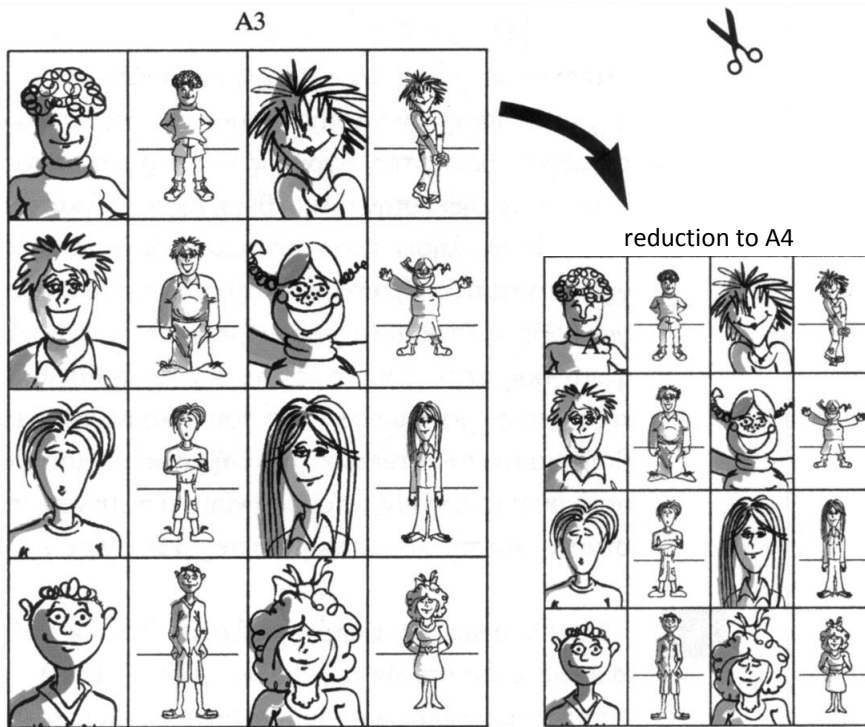

image 1
(close-up)

image 2
(medium)

A3

reduction to A4

image 3

In these activities, the photos function as 'signifiers', 'signifying the corresponding, represented pupil:

   a. They may be pasted in lieu of a name on files and boxes where the work of each pupil is stored.
   b. Sometimes, before the pupils enter the classroom, the teacher pasts a photo of each of them on some position in the classroom. When they enter, each pupil must find their photo and stand in front of it.
   c. The teacher forms little series of 5-6 photos. The pupils depicted pupils should form the same series, corresponding themselves to the photos. If the close-ups were used by the teacher, the pupils should stand close to each other. If the full-body photos were used, they should keep a distance between them. When the exercise is achieved, the photos are re-arranged and the pupils try to form the new series.
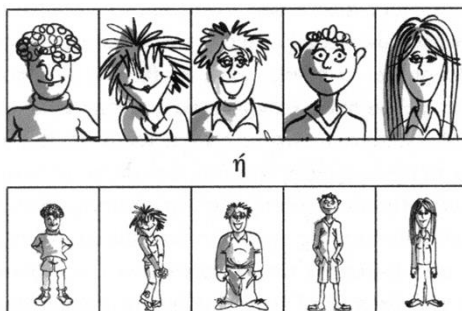

ή

image 4

Activity 11 – 'From a very close distance'

Familiarisation with the close-up frame. We construct a two-entry matrix: on the first vertical column, we paste clos-ups of the class members; on the first horizontal line, we draw objects and other elements that should be photographed (image 4).

PUPILS \ TOPICS	(pencil case & schoolbag)	(face)	(legs & shoes)	(hands in a position)
(Elli)	(close-up photo of Elli's pencil case & schoolbag)	(close-up photo of Elli's face)	(close-up photo of Elli's legs & shoes)	(close-up photo of Elli's hands in this particular position)
(Nora)				
(Ilias)				

image 4

In most cases, several pupils would need to collaborate in order to set and shoot the photos that correspond to each of them. In order not to confuse the photos corresponding to each pupil, a good idea is to assign a number to each class member and then write the numbers in small pieces of paper and include the paper in the composition of the photos. The photos will then be printed and pasted in their corresponding place. The final result can be hanged in the classroom.

Activity 31 – 'Film or Book?'

The traditional response to such a question would be to support the superiority of written word. It is a common observation that there is a reduction in the popularity of book-reading and writing, particularly among the young, as compared to the increased consumption of images. Then again, very few people have had the good fortune to experience the ideological and aesthetic complexity of audiovisual works, the quality and even spirituality an audiovisual art work may have. Accepting the value of the millennia-old written tradition, we forgive and forget easily the sheer volume of worthless written production. In other words, there are no more or less valuable ways of expression. There are only more or less valuable works.

Aim of this activity is students' involvement with a process of critical approach of both written and audiovisual expression. By attempting comparisons between similar stories narrated by the means of different expressive media, the students are invited to learn the richness and specificity of each medium. The come to realise the expressive aspects of written narration that cannot be turned into images, while also realising the expressive aspects of audiovisual narration that cannot be translated into words. Through such activities of systematic comparison, the students are introduced to the problematics of intra-medial and intra-cultural translation.

This activity was first published in a slightly different form[5] in 1994. It consists in comparisons between classic children's novels and their cinematic versions. The

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[5] Menis Theodoridis, 'Videotape or book? Introduction to Audiovisual Expression', in the journal *Ανοιχτό Σχολείο* [Open School], No 50, November-December 1994.

description of the activity follows, along with accompanying instructions addressed to the students. The teacher who wishes to put into use the activity is advised to prepare a series of cards containing the activity's instructions. Of course, teachers may prefer their own formulation of the instructions instead of the ones proposed here.

Students are divided into teams. To each team is assigned the study of a work, first in its audiovisual version. A project follows: collective composition project, teams of 4-5 children, phase of individual work, phase of discussion, preparation of team presentation etc.

(Card 1)

Do you like watching films on TV?

Which ones do you like? Space adventures, fantastic beasts, pirates, wizards, fearless heroes and heroines? Funny or moving films?

Would you ever expect to watch a film for homework? Really! For this course, you will have to study a film very-very carefully.

You must all watch the film assigned to your team. You may borrow the film and take it home to watch alone or you may arrange to watch it together with other members of your team.

The home study of the films should not last more than a week. A discussion follows in class between the members of each team (15-20 min), where all of them describe the parts they most liked and listen to the others' opinions.

After the discussion, each team receives a sheet of paper with 1-2 short excerpts of the corresponding novel. These excerpts need not be chosen for their autonomy. They may begin in the middle of a chapter and stop after 2-3 paragraphs. It is advisable though to choose moments of narrative tension. It is also useful to choose an excerpt of description (e.g. of a character or a situation) and an excerpt of dialogue between two or more characters.

Then, the students are given the following card and are asked to read and discuss in class the written excerpts (20-30 min).

While they read the card, the teacher distributes to each student the book that her/his team studies. Considering that the books of the activity will be re-used many times, from a different team in each academic year, it would be advisable for the school to buy 5-6 copies from each book. The students borrow them for the duration of the activity and then return them to the school.

(Card 2)

Have you ever thought that many stories you watch on TV were first written as books?

Some of them were read many-many times and were loved by generations of children long before you were born. These books were translated in many languages and their stories became known all over the world. Then, they were made into film and thus came to be known by you.

For example, read these two written texts. They are parts of the initial book that was used as an inspiration to shoot the film you have watched. Can you remember to which part of the film corresponds each text? Can you flip through the book and try to find the exact

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pages from which the texts come?

You may ask yourselves why to read a book, when you already know the story from the film? Yet, the story of the film is never exactly the same with the story in the corresponding book. The film's story is usually shorter, as there is no time in a film to put so many things as in a book, and there are other changes too: the characters are different, the places, the events. In a book you will usually find more details.

Take the book home! Try to find one or two events that don't appear at all in the film. Keep a note of the pages, so that you can compare your findings with the findings of your classmates.

(Card 3)

Collect the events you have found **in the book that don't appear in the film**. Check with each other that the events indeed don't appear in the film. Write down on a sheet all the numbers of the pages. Now think whether there are events **in the film that don't appear in the book.** Discuss and decide as a team: **who has gained most** in this case, the reader of the book or the viewer of the film? Your choice mirrors the pleasure you took personally in the book and the film. It is personal and subjective. Other people may feel differently. What is the opinion of the other teams for the works they studied?

(Card 4)

Now, let us proceed to a different task: What is the team's opinion for the scenes that **appear both in the book and the film**?

Choose 2 or 3 scenes that appear both in the book and the film, and that you all liked. Find the pages in the book that the scenes appear. Each of you, read the pages again, alone at home.

Take a trip through your imagination and live along the characters of the story, their anxieties and joys. Feel as if you were in the same rooms with them, wearing clothes similar to theirs.

When you meet again in class, discuss and decide: for these scenes in particular, which kind of narration **did you like most**, the written narrative of the book or the cinematic narrative of the film? What is the opinion of the other teams for the works they studied?

(Card 5)

This is the last and most difficult task.

We know that in the case of the works we have studied, the novel was written first; much later, after the novel was read and loved by many children, the film was made. So, we may ask ourselves: Does the film render successfully the 'spirit' of the book?

Write down a rough list of the main characters of the book (the 'protagonists'). Then, try and find **in the book** the description of each of them. **Try to imagine every character** according to the book's descriptions: the features of their faces, their height and stature, their clothes, their movements… Do you think that **the actors** playing the corresponding characters in the film are close to what you imagined? Are the characters in the film similar

to the descriptions of the book? How many of the characters in the film are similar to their descriptions in the book and how many are not?

You may also do this kind of comparison for locations and events that appear **both in the book and in the film**.

All in all, do you think that the film was mostly faithful to the book or not? Try to form a conclusion on which all of you team agrees.

Then, you may present your conclusion to the other teams and listen to their conclusions about the works that they studied.

Finally, you may compare your conclusions with these of other classes that have studied the same works.

We must observe that it does not matter whether the students choose the book or the film versions. Becoming aware of the differences and relations between written word and cinematic narration, developing critical thought and discourse, coming in contact with works of art and culture – these are invaluable gains for the students; we don't need to impose them any 'correct' answers.

And let us also observe here that the reception of an audiovisual text is a mentally active process that does not differ essentially from the reception of a written text. The receivers perceive a text and give sense to the givens of the expressive media by decoding signs and symbols, mentally constructing the narrative flow, and completing thus their own readings.

With regard to the works to be used for this activity, the main issue to consider is availability of both versions, i.e.:

a. There must be a good edition of the book, appropriate for the students. If the original is not in the language of the class, a good translation must be found. Most of the classics appear in many editions. It is advisable to choose a complete edition of the text, of a certain typographic and aesthetic quality. The shortened adaptations for younger children should be avoided.

b. There must be a decent film adaptation of the work, both appropriate for the students and relatively easily accessible. Finding the films may prove difficult. Many of older ones, that are no longer covered by copyright laws, are easy to find in the Internet. The most recent productions can usually be rent or bought in DVD. Others can be found in public archives or through specialised sites. Ideally, the state and public organisations should make special deals with the producers and distributors, so as to provide the schools with the films they need.

   As a principle, we prefer to work with live-action films that follow more or less the plot of the book. Of course, cartoons and free adaptations may also be aesthetically valuable and useful to study, but less so in this particular activity.

Indicative propositions:

1. **Rudyard Kipling*, The Jungle Book* (1894) and *The Second Jungle Book* (1895).**

   <u>film:</u>

   Stephen Sommers, 'Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book' (1994), starring Jason Scott Lee, Cary Elwes and Lena Headey

   <u>and cartoon animation film:</u>

   Wolfgang Reitherman, 'The Jungle Book' (1967)

   <u>and live-action & computer animation film:</u>

   Jon Favreau, 'The Jungle Book' (2016)

2. **Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (1850).**

   <u>film:</u>

   George Cukor, 'David Copperfield' (1935), starring W. C. Fields, Freddie Bartholomew, Lionel Barrymore, Madge Evans, Maureen O'Sullivan

   <u>and:</u>

   Delbert Mann, 'David Copperfield' (1970 tv film), starring Robin Phillips, Ralph Richardson, Ron Moody, Laurence Olivier

   <u>and:</u>

   Simon Curtis, 'David Copperfield' (1999 tv film), starring Daniel Radcliffe, Ciarán McMenamin, Maggie Smith

   <u>and also:</u>

   Armando Iannucci, 'The Personal History of David Copperfield' (2019), starring Dev Patel, Jairaj Varsani, Tilda Swinton, Hugh Laurie

3. **Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (1839).**

   <u>film:</u>

   David Lean, '0liver Twist' (1948), starring Alec Guinness, Robert Newton, Kay Walsh, John Howard Davies

   <u>and:</u>

   Roman Polanski, '0liver Twist' (2005), starring Ben Kingsley, Jamie Foreman, Barney Clark

4. **Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (1862).**

   <u>film:</u>

   Jean-Paul Le Chanois, 'Les Misérables' (1958), starring Jean Gabin, Bernard Blier

and:

Richard Boleslawski, 'Les Misérables' (1935), starring Fredric March, Charles Laughton

and:

Riccardo Freda, 'I miserabili' (1948), starring Gino Cervi, Valentina Cortese, Hans Hinrich

and:

Lewis Milestone, 'Les Misérables' (1952), starring Michael Rennie, Debra Paget, Robert Newton

and:

Tom Hooper, 'Les Misérables' (2012 musical film), starring Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe

5. **Daniel Defoe**, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

film:

Luis Buñuel, 'Adventures of Robinson Crusoe / Aventuras de Robinson Crusoe' (1954), starring Daniel O'Herlihy, Jaime Fernández

and:

Rod Hardy, George T. Miller, 'Robinson Crusoe' (1997), starring Pierce Brosnan, William Takaku

and cartoon animation film:

Vincent Kesteloot, Ben Stassen, "Robinson Crusoe" (2016)

6. **Robert Louis Stevenson**, *Treasure Island* (1883).

film:

Victor Fleming, 'Treasure Island' (1934), Wallace Beery, Jackie Cooper

and:

Byron Haskin, 'Treasure Island' (1950), starring Bobby Driscoll, Robert Newton

and:

John Hough, 'Treasure Island' (1972), starring Orson Welles, Kim Burfield

and:

Fraser Clarke Heston, 'Treasure Island' (1990 tv film), starring Charlton Heston, Christian Bale, Oliver Reed, Christopher Lee

and:

Steve Barron, 'Treasure Island' (2012 tv film), starring Eddie Izzard, Toby Regbo, Donald Sutherland

and cartoon animation film:

Hal Sutherland, 'Treasure Island' (1973)

7. **Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*** (1884).

film:

Michael Curtiz, 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' (1960), starring Eddie Hodges and Archie Moore

and:

Peter H. Hunt, 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' (1986, episode of the tv series *American Playhouse*), starring Patrick Day, Eugene Oakes, Samm-Art Williams

and:

Stephen Sommers, 'The Adventures of Huck Finn' (1993), starring Elijah Wood, Courtney B. Vance

and also:

Joan Darling, "The Adventures of Con Sawyer and Hucklemary Finn" (1985, episode of the tv series *ABC Weekend Specials*), starring Drew Barrymore, Brandy Ward

8. **Mark Twain, *The Prince and the Pauper*** (1881).

film:

William Keighley, 'The Prince and the Pauper' (1937), starring Errol Flynn, Billy and Bobby Mauch
and:
Richard Fleischer, 'The Prince and the Pauper / Crossed Swords' (1977), starring Oliver Reed, Raquel Welch, Mark Lester, Charlton Heston

and:

Giles Foster, 'The Prince and the Pauper' (2000 tv film), starring Aidan Quinn, Alan Bates, Jonathan and Robert Timmins

9. **Jules Verne, *Voyage au centre de la Terre*** (1864).

film:

Henry Levin, 'Jules Verne's Journey to the Center of the Earth' (1959), starring James Mason, Pat Boone, Diane Baker, Arlene Dahl

10. **Jules Verne, *Vingt Mille Lieues sous les mers*** (1869-70).

film:

Richard Fleischer, '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1954), starring Kirk Douglas, James Mason, Paul Lukas, Peter Lorre

and also!

Georges Méliès, 'Vingt Mille Lieues sous les mers' (1907)

11. **Jules Verne, *L'Île mystérieuse*** (1875).

film:

Cy Endfield, 'Mysterious Island' (1961), starring Michael Craig, Joan Greenwood, Michael Callan, Gary Merrill, Herbert Lom

12. **Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*** (1847).

film:

Robert Stevenson, 'Jane Eyre' (1943), starring Joan Fontaine, Orson Welles

and:

Franco Zeffirelli, 'Jane Eyre' (1996), starring Charlotte Gainsbourg, William Hurt, Anna Paquin

and:

Robert Young, 'Jane Eyre' (1997 tv film), starring Samantha Morton, Ciarán Hinds

and:

Cary Joji Fukunaga, 'Jane Eyre' (2011), starring Mia Wasikowska, Michael Fassbender

13. **Louis Pergaud, *La Guerre des boutons, roman de ma douzième année*** (1912).

film:

Yves Robert, 'La Guerre des boutons' (1961), starring André Treton, Michel Isella, Martin Lartigue, Michel Galabru, Jean Richard

and:

John Roberts, 'War of the buttons' (1994), starring Liam Cunningham, Gregg Fitzgerald, Colm Meaney

14. **William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*** (1954).

film:

Peter Brook, 'Lord of the Flies' (1963), starring James Aubrey, Tom Chapin, Hugh Edwards, Tom Gaman

and:

Harry Hook, 'Lord of the Flies' (1990), starring Balthazar Getty, Chris Furrh, Danuel Pipoly, James Badge Dale

15. **J. R. R. Tolkien,** *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy: *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954); *The Two Towers* (1954); *The Return of the King* (1955).

<u>films:</u>

Peter Jackson, 'The Lord of the Rings' film trilogy: 'The Fellowship of the Ring' (2001); 'The Two Towers' (2002); 'The Return of the King' (2003), starring Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Liv Tyler, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Austin, Cate Blanchett, John Rhys-Davies, Christopher Lee, Billy Boyd, Dominic Monaghan, Orlando Bloom, Hugo Weaving, Andy Serkis, Sean Bean

16. **Harper Lee,** *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960).

<u>film:</u>

Robert Mulligan, 'To Kill a Mockingbird' (1962), starring Gregory Peck, Mary Badham, Phillip Alford, John Megna

17. **Johanna Spyri,** *Heidi* (1881).

<u>film:</u>

Allan Dwan, 'Heidi' (1937), starring Shirley Temple

<u>and:</u>

Luigi Comencini, 'Heidi' (1952), starring Elsbeth Sigmund, Heinrich Gretler, Thomas Klameth

<u>and:</u>

Werner Jacobs, 'Heidi' (1965), starring Eva Maria Singhammer, Michaela May, Jan Koester

<u>and:</u>

Delbert Mann, 'Heidi' (1968 tv film), starring Maximilian Schell, Jean Simmons, Michael Redgrave, Jennifer Edwards

<u>and:</u>

Paul Marcus, 'Heidi' (2005), starring Emma Bolger, Max von Sydow, Geraldine Chaplin
<u>and:</u>
Alain Gsponer, 'Heidi' (2015), starring Anuk Steffen, Bruno Ganz, Katharina Schüttler

<u>and the tv cartoon animation series:</u>

Isao Takahata, 'Heidi, Girl of the Alps' (1974)

18. **Roald Dahl,** *Matilda* (1988).

<u>film:</u>

Danny DeVito, 'Matilda' (1996), starring Danny DeVito, Rhea Perlman, Embeth Davidtz, Pam Ferris, Mara Wilson

19. **Roald Dahl,** *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964).

<u>film:</u>

Tim Burton, 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' (2005), starring Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Freddie Highmore

20. **J. K. Rowling,** the Harry Potter series of novels: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997); *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998); *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999); *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000); *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003); *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005); *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007).

<u>the series of films:</u>

Chris Columbus, 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' (2001); Chris Columbus, 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets' (2002); Alfonso Cuarón, 'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban' (2004); Mike Newell, 'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire' (2005); David Yates, 'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix' (2007); David Yates, 'Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince' (2009); David Yates, 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 1' (2010); David Yates, 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2' (2011), starring Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Ralph Fiennes

A complementary activity can be devised, inviting the students to compare novels to their graphic novel adaptations, following all the above steps.

Could we create something of our own using as inspiration the books we read and/or the films we watched?

If the teachers wish to complement their class with a corresponding activity of audiovisual production, we propose the following: The students choose a very simple and short scene for a book they love. Then, they try to turn it into a photo-comics (for younger children) or into a short film (for older ones).

Activity 35 – 'Studying family photos'

The teacher asks the students to bring in class older and more recent family photos. It is important to write in pencil on the backside of each photo the name of the student who brought it. It is advisable that the teacher photocopies or scans and prints the photos, instead of using the originals. If the originals are used however, they should be placed in protective transparent files. The students are divided in teams. Each team is given 4-5 photos and has to answer for each photo the following questions:

- The people who took this photo, which event did they want to remember? (e.g. a trip, a picnic, a family moment, a celebration)

- Can we guess who took the photo? (Was it an adult or a child, a family member or a stranger, a professional photographer? – see **Activity 13**.

- Are there elements in the photo that help us guess whether it was taken before or after our birth? Could the student who brought the photo help by telling us who is depicted in it?

- Is the photo colour or black-and-white?

- Was it shot in day light on artificial lighting?

- Can we guess whether flash was used?

The answers should be marked on a specially prepared answer sheet. Students should try to answer all the questions for all the photos. Yet we should all know, both students and teachers, that in many cases our estimations may be wrong.

Another variation of the activity is the following. The questions to be answered are the same.

'Three generations of children!'

The teacher asks the students to bring in class three family photos depicting children of different generations:

- a childhood photo of a grandparent (or other family member of this generation)
- a childhood photo of a parent (or other family member of this generation)
- a photo of the student

The photos, when brought from home, should be accompanied with the necessary information for the students to compile a presentation, e.g.:

image 1

Grandfather,
Konstantinos Papageorgiou,
aged 8, in 1924

image 2

Father,
Antonis Papageorgiou,
aged 8, in 1956

image 3

I,
Kostas Papageorgiou,
aged 10, in 1995

image 4. I, **Kostas Papageorgiou**, aged 32, in a 2017 'selfie'.

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Activity 36 – 'Variations on a theme'

This is an activity based on viewing and discussing groups of excerpts from a variety of films and other audiovisual products, all of which depict the same topic (e.g. scenes with people eating, scenes taking place in ports, scenes involving travelling by train, chase scenes, space war battles). The activity is aimed at the comparison of types of audiovisual texts and the messages they convey. The criterion of selection of the excerpts is not only to depict the chosen topic but also to exemplify very different types of audiovisual texts (such as, fiction films of different styles, movements and countries, documentaries and news stories, advertisements and children's cartoons).

Step-by-step procedure:

Step 1: Choosing the topic.	e.g. people eating, ports, travelling by train, chase scenes, space war (anything that the participants find interesting)
Step 2: Selecting the excerpts, all of which should depict the topic. (*As excerpts will originate from very different sources, a form of editing may be necessary to put them in some order*)	The excerpts should represent a wide variety of genres, reflecting a wide variety of styles and conventions, including popular culture, classical cinema, TV shows, advertising. Each excerpt should not exceed 10min, while the whole lot should not be longer than 60-70min in total.
Step 3: Preparing the questions, which should be the same for all excerpts.	• Questions to be answered after viewing each particular excerpt. • Questions to be answered after viewing the entire group of excerpts.
Step 4: Viewing and discussing	Discussion and negotiating collective answers provide opportunities for the development of critical thinking and rational argumentation.

For example, an activity for the comparative study of 'eating scenes' may include the following excerpts:

- the scene where Charlie Chaplin, being famished, eats a sandwich stolen from a baby, from the film 'The Circus' (Charlie Chaplin, 1928),

- the scene where Chaplin offers his own food to a hungry Myrna, from the same film,

- the scene in which a father and his young son eat in a restaurant, from the film 'Bicycle Thieves' (Vittorio De Sica, 1948),

- or 'eating scenes' from other **fiction films**,

- 'eating scenes' from the documentary 'The Story of the Weeping Camel' (Byambasuren Davaa, Luigi Falorni, 2003),

- 'eating scenes' from the documentary 'Super Size Me' (Morgan Spurlock, 2004),

- or 'eating scenes' from other **documentaries**,

- 'eating scenes' from **a television adventure series** (e.g. 'Hercules', 'Zina', 'Robin Hood'),

- 'eating scenes' from a **popular soap opera**,

- 'eating scenes' from a **cartoon series**,

- 'eating scenes' from a **home video of a birthday party**,

- 'eating scenes' from an **advertisement**.

The whole lot of excerpts should not be longer than 60-70 min of screening time in total. Since after each excerpt some questions are to be discussed, the screening may take place in two separate days.

Preparing and discussing the questions:

Immediately after watching each excerpt, the class divided into smaller teams and assisted by the teacher, answers to certain questions. In the case of the 'eating scenes' selections, the questions may be:

PART ONE (questions after watching each excerpt):

1. How many people were pictured as eating?

2. Did any of the characters look like they were very hungry?

3. Did the people eating appear to belong to one group or to separate, smaller groups?

4. Were there any other people, who were not eating, pictured in the scene? What were they doing?

5. Were there any characters pictured as talking to each other during the meal? What were they talking about?

6. Who cooked the food that the characters were eating?

7. What type of sounds did we hear during the meal?

8. In this particular excerpt, did we have the impression that we were watching the characters from far away, from quite near, or from very near?

   (If the students have completed the relevant activities and are familiar with the types of frames, this question could be phrased as: In this particular excerpt, which type of frame-shot was dominant?)

9. Does this particular excerpt seem to focus on some other topic apart from eating? What title would you give to it?

Anyone who might think these questions naive or obvious, should consider that they are key starting-points for aesthetic and social comparisons between, e.g., a food scene from the classical film 'Bicycle Thieves' and a corresponding one from a popular television soap opera. Participants do realise that they are very different, of course! But how do they differ? Apart from the opportunities such questions provide for categorisation and classification, they provide a framework for productive social and aesthetic reflection. Comparing films that share one major common characteristic but are made by different directors and represent a variety of film aesthetics, can lead the students to consider issues that go far beyond the remarks of the type of 'what the story was about', to which the participants usually focus.

Depending on the age of the students, a basic distinction between fiction and documentary may be introduced.

The following questions are addressed to **late-primary school students**. They are to be answered collectively, after discussion.

To start with, let us talk about two words with which you might not be familiar:

document: **Something which is a proof of something else**

fiction: **A story which is created by someone's imagination. Such a story may be based on true experiences.**

- *What exactly do we mean by characterizing a film as 'fiction' or 'documentary'?*

- *To which of these two categories does the excerpt you just watched belong?*

In your opinion, which of the following characteristics are included in the excerpt which you watched? (more than one characteristic may be chosen)

☐ **'Commentary', i.e. someone who talks without being seen in the frame-and guides the viewer.**

☐ **An event from a character's daily life.**

   Who is this character?

☐ **Events and social interactions taking place in a city or community.**

☐ **Conflicts between characters. Who are the characters who are in conflict with each other?**

☐ **Narration of a real story which was recorded as it happened.**

☐ **Narration of an imaginary story which was filmed with actors portraying the characters of the story.**

☐ **Songs and music.**

☐ **Interviews.**

☐ **Statistical facts and information acquired by research.**

The completion of the above questionnaire is easy. Apart from providing students with the opportunity to better recall the audiovisual excerpt they have watched, it directly introduces them to some basic concepts of cinematic expression, such as commentary, characters, conflicts. In addition, it invites the participants to distinguish between the elements of a documentary (e.g. interview, information, narration-recording, statistics) and those of a fictional film (e.g. actors who portray characters, imagined narratives).

In your opinion, which emotions were most dominant in the excerpt you have watched?

☐ **Humour and irony**
☐ **Anger and indignation**
☐ **Suspense and mystery**
☐ **Surprise and anxiety**
☐ **Tenderness and love**
☐ **Sorrow and despair**
☐ **Uncertainty and pessimism**
☐ **Trust and optimism**

The above questionnaire aims at helping participants recall, after a short discussion, their impressions about each of the excerpts they have watched several days earlier. Needless to say, this activity does not result in any in-depth analysis of the excerpts. However, the participants' answers are of interest since, in the course of the study of other excerpts for this activity, their emotions will vary. If we compare the final collective answers of a team with those of another which watched the same excerpts, any differences of opinion may lead to a productive discussion. In this way, students gradually become aware that the reaction to a work of art is not necessarily the same for everyone and that from one person to another, subjective differences in opinion may occur.

Alternatively, older school students may collectively fill the 'Film Classification Data' sheet, provided in **Tool 12**.

PART TWO (questions comparing the excepts):

In a second phase, after having screened and discussed all the excerpts, the teacher introduces the problematics of comparisons and categorisations.

Can you group the excerpts that you have watched into some kind of categories, according to common characteristics? e.g.:

- colour vs. black-and-white

- sound vs. silent

- documentary vs. fiction

The teams may need to watch the excerpts being discussed several times during the process of comparisons. This means that some basic viewing equipment (i.e. a laptop or a DVD player and a television) will be needed.

As it is obvious, the above suggestions are based upon specific audiovisual excerpts and allow comparisons between the opinions of the participants. In the example presented, although the topic of eating and its social dimensions comprise the main focus of the activity, the complexity of audiovisual expression is always present and unknowingly becomes a part of the students' understanding. In this activity, dealing with the topic of 'eating' does not aim to achieve a cognitive goal, such as the presentation of some information either about human biology or nutrition content. Rather, it focuses on the **ways of audiovisually presenting** 'eating scenes' and on experiencing different audiovisual works, suggesting completely different visual and social contexts. The excerpts may be regarded as evidence of ways of living and ways of thinking, as evidence of cultural particularity, that invite us to confront them critically by formulating questions and collectively draw conclusions. At the same time, the observation of excerpts from audiovisual works familiarises the students with a variety of aesthetic styles, which express the particularity of their creators, different ideological choices, as well as different contextual conditions; thus, the students gradually develop their own personal understanding of cinematic aesthetics and style.

As we have already mentioned the process of classification of audiovisual works by the students, into rough and often simplistic categories of films may be a powerful educational tool, enhancing their argumentation and negotiation skills, and essential for the development of critical thinking. Each time they watch a film or a film's excerpt, it may be useful to ask them to collectively classify it in simple categories (e.g. silent vs. sound, colour vs. black-and-white, fiction vs. documentary,

simple film technology vs. extravagant film technology) and to try to support their choice by examples – see again **Tool 12**.

PART THREE (students' experience and expression):

Can you think of similar 'eating scenes' **from your own daily life? Could you shoot a series of photographs** of an 'eating scene' of your choice?

Thinking and discussing in class on the questions posed by the teacher, hopefully leads the students to form their own attitudes toward the discussed topics. A variety of interpretations and disagreements about the treatment of the topic by each excerpt, may arise. Students may be led to realise that the way of presenting a topic reflects different social and historical conditions. Finally, students may recognise similarities or analogies with their own culture, which may lead them to suggestions about the approach and depicting of topics drawn from their own surroundings. These possible reactions provide an opportunity for a creative activity designed so that the students will **express their own opinions by using their own, simple, audiovisual tools**. A simple camera or a mobile phone can become excellent tools for activities inviting the students to **record their own social and cultural environment**. This record may be similar or contrasting to the ones offered by the experts they have previously watched. In fact, by looking back at the corresponding scenes of the films, the students will have some good guidelines for their own suggestions or counter suggestions. As a result, the initial activity involving the study and analysis of an existing audiovisual product will evolve into an activity involving the production of an original audiovisual product.

Activity 48 – 'One book… three film directors!' and more

This activity is based on excerpts from fiction films by different directors, which are characterised by an obvious shared characteristic, such as dealing with the same issue or adapting the same scene of a book. Its aim is to compare between the use of the audiovisual expressive and narrative ways by different directors.

After watching each excerpt, a first step for older students to take is to fill the 'film classification data' sheet provided in **Tool 12**.

And a few further steps…

This activity may also be combined with **Activity 31**: a work of literature may be studied in parallel with several of its film adaptations. This leads the students to realise the different narrative and interpretive choices of directors of different ideologies, historical contexts, production systems and technological equipment, who come to express not only their individuality but also their social context.

After watching three different film adaptations of the same literary excerpt, we discuss our impressions about them, what we liked in each of them, what differences we observed between them.

Then, we choose a very short scene (1-2 min) from the film that we liked most. We try to set up the scene in class, as closely as we can to the original. We carefully study each shot: what it includes, what happens, how the camera describes actions and emotions. For this purpose, a particularly useful tool is to make an '**a posteriori storyboard**' (see **Glossary**) for our chosen scene.

After that, we distribute the acting roles and the crew posts between us.

The actors will act without changing their attire. All student-actors learn and rehearse their roles. As the scene is very short, no student has to learn more that two or three lines.

We devise an improvised shooting. We do not try for scenographic accuracy, only for the spatial layout and positioning of bodies and objects. We focus in particular on framing, shot duration and shot sequence, which must follow as closely as possible the film.

In order to come in contact with different film-narration ways, we will shoot the scene in three different ways:

1. We place the camera on a tripod, in a distance that allows it to frame the entire space of action. The actors interpret the action continuously. We take a continuous shot of the action from the beginning to the end, without moving the camera at all. Obviously, the shot will have the same duration as the action. Let us call this version: the 'theatrical record', as it looks like the view of the audience in a theatre performance.
2. We then shoot the same action in a series of separate shots, following our storyboard as closely as possible.
3. Finally, a difficult task, which may need several shooting rehearsals. We shoot the same action always, and in a continuous shot as in version 1. This time however, we hand-hold the camera, approaching and distancing ourselves from the actors, trying to reproduce the storyboard in a continuous shot.

The result is sure to provoke a fertile discussion.

*

SECTION V – GLOSSARY

The terms explained below comprise a choice of the most commonly used terms referring to aesthetic and technical concepts in cinematic expression. They are grouped per topic.

A version of the definitions in Greek, as well as the illustrations (drawings by Christos Gousidis), first appeared in the educational leaflet 'Cinematic narration: Storytelling with images and sounds from the Program "Πάμε Σινεμά;" [Let's go to the cinema!]', Ministry of Culture, Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, Thessaloniki Film Festival, text & educational planning: Menis Theodoridis, Athens 2001. They were republished in the journal *Ερευνώντας τον κόσμο του παιδιού* [Researching the Child's World], special issue: Childhood and Cinema, (E. Kourti ed.), Ελληνικά Γράμματα, issue 9, pp. 173-176.

BEFORE SHOOTING THE FILM

SYNOPSIS

Synopsis of a film is the short, written narration of its plot.

SCRIPT or SCREENPLAY

Script or screenplay of a film is the detailed written description of the entire film. It usually does not include images; however, it describes in words the action, the ambiance, elements of the visual and sound universe of the film, as well as acting, in the way that these are expected to be in the film when shot. Moreover, it includes the full dialogues and other speech that are to be heard in the film.

SCENE (originally, a theatrical term)

Scene is a unit of action that happens continuously in the same location and time of the day. When location or time changes, a new scene begins.

- Depending on whether the scene is meant to be filmed in studio or on location, a scene is marked as **interior** (INT.) or **exterior** (EXT.). A scene shot in studio (INT.) may represent a closed or open place, e.g. a living room or a street. Correspondingly, a scene shot on location (EXT.) may also depict a closed or open space, e.g. a kitchen or a park.

- Depending on the hour when the scene takes place, it is characterised as **day** (DAY) or **night** (NIGHT), which indicates the kind of lighting to be used for the shooting of the scene.
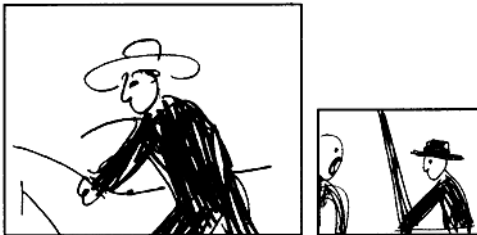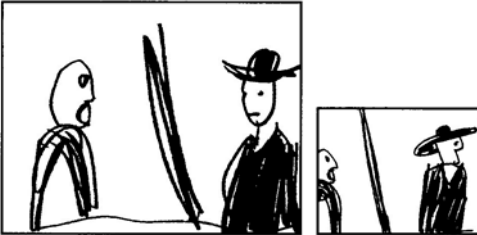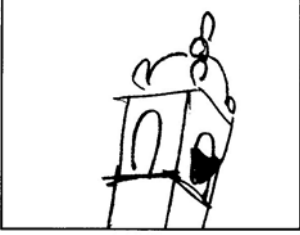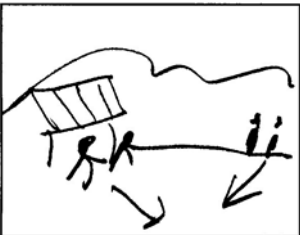
STORYBOARD

Storyboard is the detailed plan of a film's narrative in images and words, where the director describes before the shooting how s/he wants the film to be. It usually consists of a series of drawings, accompanied with notes. It is an expression of the film's **decoupage** (i.e. arrangement of shots – for the definition of the term 'shot'

see below). Therefore, the storyboard describes each shot in the order that the audience will see them on the screen, along with directions as to how it must appear and be shot. One or more drawings visualise the main moments of each shot. In the case of sound films, the storyboard also describes the sounds to be heard in each shot. A detailed storyboard may accompany or replace the **shooting script** (a script that includes the arrangement of shots and technical shooting directions) as a guide during the shooting of the film. After being modified during the shooting, the storyboard may also be used as a guide for the editor, who will edit the film by connecting the shots and the sounds in the way that they will appear to the audience during the screenings of the film.

For educational reasons, the students are asked to create the **'a posteriori storyboard'** of a scene, making rough sketches of the beginning and continuation of each shot, and putting them the one after the other, in the order that they appear in the final, edited film (see the illustration below). Beside each sketch, they describe in simple words the shot's action and the dialogues and sounds heard in it.

Illustration – Part of the 'a posteriori' storyboard of a scene from the film *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) by John Sturges

1.9. MEDIUM SHOT panning right-to-left follows CHRIS as he dismounts, ties his horse and turns to the OLD MAN; it ends up in a double tight medium shot.	
	OLD MAN (ON and in the end OFF): *You must excuse them. They are farmers here. They are afraid of everyone and everything. They are afraid of rain, and no rain...*
1.10 CLOSE-UP OF THE OLD MAN OVER-THE-SHOULDER OF CHRIS	
	OLD MAN (continues ON): *... The summer may be too hot, the winter - too cold. The sow has no pigs, the farmer is afraid he may starve. She has too many, he's afraid she may starve.*
1.11. CLOSE-UP of CHRIS. He looks at him thoughtfully. He seems to understand.	
	CHRIS: *There's no need to apologise. We didn't expect flowers and speeches.*

1.12. CLOSE-UP OF THE OLD MAN	
	OLD MAN: *Tomorrow is the anniversary of the founding of the village…*

1.13. DOUBLE TIGHT MEDIUM SHOT of CHRIS and the OLD MAN	
  They turn toward the sound (OFF)	**OLD MAN:** *… They will be celebrating – then, you will see them in a better light.* **The OLD MAN's words are interrupted by the loud ringing of a bell (OFF).**

1.14. DOUBLE TIGHT MEDIUM SHOT of two other members of the group who turn toward the sound (OFF).	
	Continues the ringing of the bell (OFF).

1.15. LONG LOW SHOT of the church's bell tower, where the bell swings back-and-forward as it rings.	
	Continues the ringing of the bell (ON).

1.16. VERY WIDE HIGH SHOT. The village comes to life. The villagers come out of their houses.	
	Continues the ringing of the bell (OFF). **Screams of panic are heard from far away (ON and OFF).**

UNITS OF FILM EXPRESSION

FRAME

Frame is the image that we see in any particular moment of the film. A still photograph is a frame.

- Depending **how close or far away** appears the subject depicted, i.e. depending on how much space the subject takes in the image, a frame may be:

Wide: The character appears to be far away, while the frame includes the character's surroundings (landscape, buildings etc.). A wide frame provides information about the location where the action takes place. Where are the characters and in which conditions (season of the year, time of the day, weather)? Who are around them, how close are they standing, what relations do they have between them?

Sub-category of the wide frame is the **extreme wide** frame (shows locations from a long distance; humans may be just visible or not at all)

Medium: The character dominates the frame. Above and below the character, there is no visual space left; however, on the left and/or right sides, there may appear other characters, other objects and/or spatial elements. In a medium frame our attention usually is focused on the character and the character's relations to space and other characters. Who the character is (gender, age, clothes etc.) and what does the character do? And what about the other people appearing: who are they, how do they interact, in what distance are they standing in relation to each other?

Sub-categories of the medium frame are often classified as follows: **full** frame (shows the entire character from head to toes); **American** frame (shows the character from head to mid thighs); **tight medium** frame (shows the character from the waist up).

Close-up: The subject (character or object) fills the entire frame and appears only partially in it (e.g. a character's head or hand may cover the entire image). A close-up on a face makes possible for the audience to observe its expressions; therefore, it can communicate emotions. How does the character feel? Is the facial expression in contradiction with the words uttered? Where are the eyes looking? Moreover, a close-up on an object may be used to stress its importance or draw attention to it. The choice of frame allows the film directors to lead our gaze and stress the importance of the elements they want.

Sub-categories of the close-up frame are often classified as follows: **head-and-shoulder** frame (shows the character from the chest up); (simple) **close-up** (shows the head); **extreme close-up** (shows part of the face or a detail of an object).

The French term *amorce* refers to the part of a character or an object, placed very on the edge of the frame and partially left out of it, which in a way "re-frames" the main subject.

- Depending on the **shooting angle**, i.e. depending on the height of the positioning of the camera and therefore the point from which we are viewing the subject, a frame may be:

Eye-level (shooting at eye-level, straight on)
High (shooting from above)
Low (shooting from below)

SHOT

Shot is a continuous unit of moving images. When the continuous flow of the shot is interrupted (**CUT**), the shot changes. A shot always has duration. During a shot, the frame may change either because the camera moves in relation to the subject depicted or because the subject moves in relation to the camera; however, as long as the continuous flow of shooting is not interrupted, the shot goes on. In a scene with fast **rhythm**, shots may be extremely short (1-5 sec), while in a calm and slow narrative, shots may be many seconds or even minutes long, and they may include many movements of the camera. A long-duration shot comprising a narrative unit is called **sequence-shot**. There are films where a single sequence-shot may include the action of one or many events. There are even cases, where an entire film is comprised by a single sequence-shot!

- Depending on the kind of frame (i.e. the distance from the subject) in a particular moment, the shot at that moment is **close-up**, **medium**, or **wide**.

- Depending on the **shooting angle** in a particular moment, the shot at that moment is **eye-level**, **high**, or **low**.

- Depending on the **movement of the camera** when shooting, the shot may be:

    - **Static**, if the camera doesn't move

    - **Pan** (panoramic): The camera rotates on a vertical axis, revealing what there is to the right or to the left of the initial frame; in the way we turn our head right or left.

    - **Tilt**: The camera rotates on a horizontal axis, revealing what there is above or below of the initial frame; in the way that we turn our heads up and down.

    - **Tracking** (or **traveling**): The camera is placed on a moving mechanism and changes position, traveling in any direction on the ground; forward, backward, from side to side, diagonally, circularly etc. In a full crew, when shooting tracking, the camera operator handles the camera, while the grip(s) execute(s) the tracking movements.

- Coming closer or moving away of a subject with the use of a particular lens, without moving the camera, is called **zoom**.

- A shot is called **subjective**, when we (the camera) are looking from a particular character's point of view.

SOUND

In sound films today, sound recording usually takes place during the shooting (even when the sound recorded is not to be used raw). **Direct sound** (speech, music, noise) is called any sound of the film if it was recorded live during the shooting.

Dubbed sound is called the sound that was matched to the image after the shooting, during editing.

- **"ON"** is characterised any sound of which the source appears INSIDE our frame at that moment (e.g. a speaking person, a ringing bell)

- **"OFF"** is characterised any sound of which the source does not appear in our frame at that moment (e.g. when we see a person standing silent, while hearing another person speaking whom we can't see)

SOME ROLES in FILMMAKING

Director: the film's creator, the audiovisual storyteller, the person most responsible for the look and sound of the finished film, the addresser of the audiovisual text

Producer: the person responsible for all the financial decisions of the film, including finding financiers (the people who give the money) and distribution; often also the legal representative of the film

Screenwriter: the dramatist, the writer of the film's script (see above)

Production manager: the person responsible for the administration of all the phases of film production

Cinematographer: the person responsible for shooting the film's images so as to better serve the director's vision

Editor: the person connecting the shots and the sounds of the film, creating flow and rhythm, so as to better serve the director's vision

Sound recorder / sound mixer: the person responsible for the sound universe of the film so as to better serve the director's vision

Set designer: the person responsible for the physical surroundings in which the film's action will take place so as to better serve the director's vision

Script-supervisor: the person who keeps track of everything needed to establish the impression of continuity from shot one shot to the next.

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