

# VIDEO CAMERA AS OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

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Teachers and students will learn to use the video camera as an overhead projector to create presentations and facilitate public speaking in the classroom and beyond.

## Invitation for learning

Public speaking is very important to many Pacific island educators. We want our children to be able to stand in front of an audience to make reports and tell stories. In Kosrae, for example, children worked in teams to illustrate posters that focused on topics of social and environmental concern: water and beach pollution, traffic safety, nutrition, and tobacco and drug abuse. After considerable rehearsal, they present their posters to parents and community members at a public gathering. Video cameras are classroom technologies that can promote public speaking.

Most of us have experienced the computer as an overhead projector, when people attach their laptops to computer projectors or television monitors to make *PowerPoint* presentations. Video cameras can also function as overhead projectors. Children can arrange their visual information – poster collages, photographs or postcards, paintings or drawings, 3x5 inch file cards with quotations, even illustrated books – on an easel or chalkboard. The camera, mounted on a tripod, sends a live signal to a television monitor. Children work as a team, with the camera operator zooming in on each of the visual elements in the sequence of the speech. The presenters stand next to the television, pointing and referencing these overheads as they talk.

Karaoke machines can function as public address systems. Children hold the microphone as they speak. A public address system, even when used in a classroom, changes and enhances the public speaking experience. Soft-spoken children become audible to their audience and themselves.

## Directions

Working in teams of 3-5, learners will make an oral presentation using the video camera as an overhead projector. Teams will:

1. Prepare a 5- to 7-minute oral presentation on a topic of social, cultural, or environmental importance, including a sequence of 10 visual elements (e.g., drawings, photographs, book illustrations, small objects, file cards with quotations). Label (caption) each of the visual elements to be presented.
2. Set up a presentation station, including (a) an easel tray or presentation table, (b) a camera on tripod, attached to a television monitor, and (c) a public address system (e.g., boom box or karaoke machine). The camera can be distanced from the television monitor by attaching an RCA extension cable to the camera's AV cable.

### 3. Assign roles:

- *Camera operator.* The camera operator sits beside the camera and uses the zoom to frame each visual element as it is displayed on the easel tray.
- *Display manager(s).* The display manager sits beside the easel tray and holds, props, or otherwise displays each visual element in the sequence of the speech.
- *Audio manager.* The audio manager sits beside the public address system, adjusting the volume as appropriate and communicating with the presenters if they are holding the microphone too close to or too far from their mouths.
- *Presenters.* Presenters handhold the microphones and introduce their team and topic. They deliver their speech, making active use of the overheads as displayed on the overhead monitor. They point to and describe the visual elements and explain their importance to the topic. They also engage their audience by eliciting questions and comments.
- *Audience.* Audience members are expected to listen actively and contribute to the presentation. They should be arranged in a semi-circle close to the presenters and prepared with questions and comments. An audience designee thanks the speakers at the conclusion.

4. Rehearse the presentation first without an audience and then with an audience (perhaps a group of classroom peers) critiquing the performance. Practice and refine as needed.

5. Make the presentation for another class in the school or a gathering of parents and community members. If the topic is of broad community interest, the presentation can be re-purposed as a video poster presentation (see Unit 5) or an *iMovie* slideshow to be broadcast on community television.

### **Classroom applications**

Student teams may find it easier to work from poster collages – creating their visual material (pictures and text captions) on poster paper. The display manager’s role then becomes simpler; all that is needed is to display this one poster during the presentation. If teachers do not have access to poster paper, students can prepare their overheads on notebook paper or file cards. The overheads are often most effective when colored with crayon or markers.

### **Stretching our imaginations: Dare to dream**

This activity involves team planning, creative materials development, rehearsal, and live presentation in front of an audience. After all of this work, a logical next step is to produce a video to be shared with families on their home VCRs or broadcast on community television. We suggest our video poster technique (see Unit 5).

Working in partnership with communities to research topics of significance to island life, educators can produce knowledge and media in schools that impact the social and political discourse of the villages. Educators can support students to research and share important information with their communities, while validating and honoring the village wisdom of the ages.