

Details

Innovative Assessment: How to Incorporate Video Essays in Your Classroom - 206

In today's episode, we will explore how teachers can guide their students through the process of creating video essays. You'll hear some of my favorite movie-making tools for students, plus how to access my free graphic organizers you can use to plan for your next video essay project.

Link to live show notes: <https://classtechtips.com/2023/03/14/video-essays-206/>

Introduction

Hello there, my name is Monica Burns and welcome to today's episode of the Easy EdTech Podcast!

I'm a former NYC public school teacher and started the Easy EdTech Podcast in 2019 to share my favorite tips, tricks and strategies for technology integration. You'll hear stories from my time in the classroom, the work I do now with schools and districts, and my travels to different EdTech events.

Each episode is designed to give you ideas you can try yourself, share with a colleague, or bookmark for later in the school year — so don't forget to head to my website classtechtips.com/podcast for all of the show notes and resources from today's episode.

If you're listening to this episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or Google Podcasts, or another podcast player you'll see the show notes link in the description, too.

Promotion/Reminder

This podcast is sponsored by my new webinar on ChatGPT! It's called "How to Use ChatGPT: Time-Saving Secrets for Busy Educators" and I'm hosting it live this March. You can register for the live event, or catch the replay by going to ClassTechTips.com/ChatGPT. That's my website, ClassTechTips.com and add a slash ChatGPT. Anyone who registers for the event will get my free ebook, "60+ Must-Try ChatGPT Prompts for Teachers."

Today's Intro

This week's episode is titled: *Innovative Assessment: How to Incorporate Video Essays in Your Classroom*

Video essays are a powerful and engaging way for students to express their understanding of a particular topic or concept. By combining video footage with voiceover narration, students can create a multimedia presentation that showcases their knowledge and creativity. To create a video essay with students, there are free tools you can use.

In this episode, we will explore how teachers can guide their students through the process of creating a video essay. And I'll share some of my favorite movie-making tools for students. Don't forget to download my [graphic organizers](#) you can use to plan for your next video project.

Let's dive into How to Incorporate Video Essays in Your Classroom!

Episode Transcript

So what is a video essay?

A video essay is a short film that explores a specific idea or theme. It typically uses various forms of media, such as video, images, and text. In a video essay, a student presents a clear thesis or argument. They use a variety of visual and audio elements to support their ideas and engage the viewer.

If you are new to using video essays but have introduced traditional essay writing techniques in the past, I encourage you to revisit the same checklists, supporting materials, and rubrics and add on if needed.

First off, you'll want to think about the elements you want to see in the final product. There are some key things a student can include in a video essay:

- A **strong introduction** that sets the stage for the rest of the essay. It should clearly state the thesis or main argument with text on the screen or audio voiceover.
- A logical and **well-structured body** that presents evidence, examples, and analysis to support the thesis or argument. They might include transitions with animations and music to indicate different points.
- A **conclusion** that summarizes the main points of the essay and offers some final thoughts or takeaways.
- A clear and engaging **visual style** that uses a variety of media. This could include video, images, and text, to illustrate and enhance the ideas being discussed.

- Good **audio quality**, including clear and audible narration and appropriate use of music and other sounds. Showing students exemplars and non-exemplars can help them understand the importance of this point.

Overall, a successful video essay should be well-organized, visually engaging, and even thought-provoking. It should provide a fresh perspective on the topic and offer the viewer something new and interesting to think about. You might ask students to lead a discussion about the topic afterward or ask for feedback after sharing their project with their classmates.

You might be wondering how do you choose the right tool for your video essay?

If you are deciding on what movie-making tool is the best fit for creating a video essay, there are a few things to consider. Here are some tips for figuring out which app or website is the best one for creating a video essay:

- **Consider your specific needs and goals.** What are you trying to achieve with your video essay? Do students need a lot of advanced editing tools? Will a simple and straightforward tool get the job done?
- **Decide on a few must-have features.** Look for an app or website that offers the features and functionality that your students need. This might include things like the ability to import and edit footage and add text and graphics. I suggest using a tool that lets students easily create transitions and add effects.
- **Re-examine your toolbox.** I often use the phrase “embrace your place.” If there are tools you’re already using that can accomplish the task of creating a video essay, make sure to try out that one first.
- **Ask for recommendations.** Find out what your colleagues are already using and love. Alternatively, you might read reviews and research to find out what other people are saying about the app or website. This can give you a sense of its reliability, ease of use, and overall quality.
- **Try out a few different options.** Many different tools will help you accomplish the same goals. You may want to check out a few options to see which one feels the most intuitive and user-friendly. Many apps and websites offer free trials or demos, so you can test them out before making a decision.
- **Don’t be afraid to ask for help or advice.** If you’re unsure which app or website is right for you, you can always reach out to friends, colleagues, or online communities for recommendations.

I have some favorite Tools to share for Making a Video Essay that will set you and your students up for success. Ultimately, the best app or website for creating a video essay will depend on your individual needs and preferences. However, by considering your goals,

researching your options, and trying out a few different options, you should be able to find the right one for you.

First on the list is Adobe Express

This free, web-based app allows users to create videos, graphics, and web pages. It has a variety of templates and design options to choose from and a free version for educators. Check out some of their [recent creative challenges that I've linked in the shownotes for today's episode!](#).

Next is Adobe Premiere Rush

[Adobe](#) Premiere [Rush](#) is a video editing software that allows users to quickly and easily edit and produce professional-quality videos. It is a step up from Adobe Express and is available for desktop and mobile devices. It includes features such as automatic color grading, audio ducking, and the ability to add titles, graphics, and transitions.

Another wonderful option for video essays is Flip

[Microsoft Flip](#) (formerly Flipgrid) is a web-based platform and mobile app that allows educators and students to create and participate in video discussions. Students can use this tool to create short videos using a green screen and other features like adding text to the screen.

One of my favorite tools is Canva for Education.

Canva is a graphic design platform that allows users to create visual content such as social media posts, advertisements, and presentations. It is available online and as a mobile app and offers a wide range of templates and design tools, as well as the ability to upload and use custom graphics and fonts. You can use [Canva for Education](#) for free to create videos and graphics.

For Apple users out there, iMovie is a fantastic option.

[iMovie](#) is a free video editing app available for Apple devices, including iPad, iPhone, and Mac OS. It is user-friendly and has a variety of features, including the ability to add music, text, and special effects to videos.

Finally, Final Cut Pro is a powerful tool for Apple users to explore.

[Final Cut Pro](#) is a professional-grade video editing software for Apple users. This video tool is used by editors and filmmakers and offers a wide range of advanced features. It may be something students want to explore if they are passionate about filmmaking.

If you want to find examples of video essays, there are a few places you can go. First, you may want to search for “video essays” on YouTube or Vimeo. Check out [my free download](#) with YouTube tips for teachers in the shownotes.

Try searching for specific themes related to topics students are studying. For example, “literature analysis video essays” or “civics video essays” to find more specialized collections of videos. If you are searching for examples along with your students, you might want to check out [my article for Edutopia](#) full of tips for online searches which you’ll also find in today’s shownotes.

Creating a video essay with students can be a fun and rewarding experience for both teachers and students alike. Not only does it provide students with a creative outlet for expressing their understanding of the material, but it also allows for a deeper level of engagement and understanding. I’d love to hear your thoughts and help you celebrate your students’ creations. If you share in social spaces, tag me @ClassTechTips on your favorite platforms, including [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

So let’s make this EdTech easy with some key points from the episode...

Consider your specific needs and goals.

Decide on a few must-have features.

Re-examine your toolbelt.

Revisit your favorite resources like checklists, rubrics and graphic organizers.

Remember, you can find the shownotes and the full list of resources from this episode on classtechtips.com/podcast and finding today’s episode #206!

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Outro

Thank you for tuning into another Tuesday episode of the Easy EdTech Podcast. If you are listening on Apple Podcasts or Spotify, or another favorite app, don't forget to hit the "Follow" button – this way next week's episode will be waiting for you first thing next Tuesday morning.

And if you want to share an idea from the episode with a friend or colleague, text, tweet or post the link on your favorite social media platform – and of course you can tag me @ClassTechTips with any questions!

Episode Resources

- Connect with Dr. Monica Burns on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- [Free Movie Making Graphic Organizers](#)
- [Adobe Premiere Rush](#)
- [Microsoft Flip](#)
- [Canva for Education](#)
- [iMovie](#)
- [Final Cut Pro](#)
- [Vimeo](#)
- [Adobe Express Creative Challenges](#)
- [7 YouTube Tips for Teachers with a Free Download](#) (Blog Post)
- [How to Create a Video Essay with Students](#) (Blog Post)
- [6 Apps and Websites To Make Video Journals](#) (Blog Post)
- [5 Tips for Teaching Students to Improve Their Online Searches](#) (Edutopia Article)
- [Writing Without Limits Strategies for Encouraging Creativity with Katharine Hsu](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [Build Communication Skills with a Video and Storyboard App for Students](#) (Blog Post)
- [Movie-Making Activity to Strengthen Classroom Community](#) (Blog Post)
- [Boost Student Writing During Be An Author Month](#) (Blog Post)

- [The Benefits of Using Moviemaking in Your Classroom with Jessica Pack](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [4 Quick Tips for Creating Movies with Students](#) (Blog Post)
- [Movie-Making on Chromebooks: Simple Steps for Getting Started](#) (Blog Post)
- [4 Best Practices for Video Journals](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [Movie-Making in the STEM Classroom](#) (Blog Post)
- [3 Ways to Motivate Students to Write](#) (Blog Post)
- [The Connection Between Spelling, Technology and Classroom Instruction](#) (Podcast Episode)