

Instructional Video Design Template

Video Concept Summary	
Working Video Title:	Women Who Changed History: Catherine the Great
Audience:	Undergraduate students in a World History course focusing on 18th-century European women in power.
Purpose:	This video helps students discover how Catherine the Great carved out power and influence in a world dominated by men, highlighting her leadership, reforms, and cultural contributions.
Main Message:	Catherine's story shows how vision and smart strategy can break barriers and reshape an entire empire's future.
Video Length:	4 minutes and 45 seconds
Video Modality	Animated explainer video

Video Design Rationale

Audience & Purpose	<p>This video was created for college-level World History students.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discover key turning points in Catherine's rise to power.2. Analyze her leadership through Enlightenment ideals.3. Reflect on her impact as a transformative historical figure.
Structure & Sequencing:	<p>To keep students engaged, I have broken the video into seven clear sections. Starting with a curiosity-driven hook, each scene builds on the last, reflecting Catherine's journey from outsider to Empress. This structure supports Mayer's segmenting principle by allowing learners to process each part without overload (Fiorella & Mayer, 2018, p. 466).</p> <p>The sequence includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening Hook Curiosity-based historical question2. Humble Beginnings Childhood and early challenges3. Marriage into the Russian Court Power dynamics and adaptation4. Strategy and Struggles Learning, building influence5. The Coup Turning point of power acquisition6. Leadership & Legacy Reforms, achievements

	7. Closing Reflection Leadership summary and emotional takeaway
Tone & Presence:	<p>The narrator guides viewers with a warm, curious tone, one that evolves with the story's emotion, from intrigue to tension to triumph. This mirrors Brame's (2016) findings that conversational tone boosts engagement. Music shifts throughout: regal orchestral themes elevate scenes of power, while soft classical piano evokes introspective moments. These audio cues reinforce mood and signal transitions (Fyfield et al., 2022, p. 155).</p>
Visual Support:	<p>Viewers see portraits, maps, and timelines that visually anchor the story. A palette of regal golds, reds, and blues keeps things visually cohesive without overwhelming the viewer. These elements reflect the signaling principle, helping direct learner attention to what matters most (Fyfield et al., 2022, p.155; Mayer, 2005).</p>
Managing Attention:	<p>To hold learner attention, each scene starts with a curiosity question and uses precise pacing to avoid information overload. Visuals and narration are closely timed to help students connect ideas more easily. I ensured that the storytelling format was a contrast between "what was vs. what could be" to keep the viewer emotionally invested (Duarte, 2010).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curiosity: Each scene opens with a question that sparks interest (Fiorella & Mayer, 2018). ● Pacing: Intentional pauses and scene breaks prevent overload (Brame, 2016). ● Narration and Visual Sync: Dual coding is reinforced through synced voiceover and visuals (Brame, 2016).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reinforcement: Catherine's traits, resilience, strategy, and vision are revisited throughout.
YouTube Insights:	<p>This video also draws from successful YouTube storytelling strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Structure: A modern archbook, rising action, and resolution keep viewers engaged (Video Creators, 2023). ● Curiosity: Scene transitions pose intriguing questions, supporting segmentation and engagement (Fiorella & Mayer, 2018; Fyfield et al., 2022). ● Tone: Narration varies in tone and rhythm to hold interest (Primal Video, 2022). ● Audio-Visual Sync: Maps and portraits align with narration to apply the modality principle (Brame, 2016).

Video Structure Outline

Use this space to outline your video structure. You might include time stamps, key sections, and a rough flow of content.

Time	Scene Title	Visuals	On-Screen Text	Narrator's Scene Question	Scene Synopsis
Scene 1: 0:00-0:20	Women Who Changed History: Catherine the Great	Bold title Animated map of Europe spanning to Russia Historical portraits of Ivan the Terrible , Peter the Great, and Catherine	Catherine the Great of Russia (1729–1796)	What does it take for a young woman, born to the throne, to rise and rule one of the largest empires of the world?	Introduces Catherine's era, male rulers before her, and hints at her rise.
Scene 2: 0:20-0:50	Humble Beginnings	Historical picture of Stettin harbor illustration Animation Young Catherine reading	Catherine's birthplace	If you were born into a small principality, with no claim to a crown, how far could ambition take you?	Description of Catherine's childhood in Stettin, explain that she had no early claim to royalty but was studious and curious in nature.
Scene 3: 0:50-1:20	Marriage into the Russian Court	Animated timeline 1729–1745 Catherine & Peter wedding historical portrait Russian Court historical painting	Timeline markers	What would you do if you found yourself in a royal court full of political traps, and your future depended on navigating them?	Marriage at 14, describes how she adapted to Russian culture by educating herself, and building alliances with the Russian Court .
Scene 4: 1:20-2:00	Struggles and Strategy	Portrait of Grand Duke Peter painting Historical looking picture from style of the time of Catherine writing at her desk by candlelight (AI generated) Painting showing Catherine entering court with supporters gathered	None- scene supported through visuals and narration	Could knowledge and quiet alliances win you a crown?	Highlights Catherine's strategic reading of Enlightenment ideas and careful networking to prepare for future leadership.

Scene 5: 2:00–2:45	The Coup	<p>Animated timeline graphic fast-forward to 1762</p> <p>Historical painting of Catherine on the balcony with a crowd below, soldiers, and cannons ready.</p>	Timeline description from 1745 marriage to 1762 coup	When the chance came to act, would you risk everything?	Describes the “Bloodless Coup” of 1762 when Catherine seized the throne, beginning her 34-year reign.
Scene 6: 2:45-3:40	Leadership and Legacy	<p>Split screen: Left side: An animated scroll with added text of major achievements /Right Side: Show a historical painting of Catherine meeting with her court</p> <p>Full Screen: An animated map of Russia shown expanding from when The Grand Duke of Peter held power to when Catherine began her reign</p>	Scroll lists reforms (legal, education, Enlightenment ideas)	How can one leader transform a nation?	Summarizes Catherine’s reforms in law, education, and cultural growth, and her role in expanding Russia.
Scene 7: 3:40-4:25	Closing Reflection	<p>Animated Timeline graphic, Catherine’s final portrait before death and end of reign “The Lawgiver” portrait by Dmitry Levitzky include a famous quote from Catherine the Great in a bold, easily visible gold or yellow color over her portrait.</p>	<p>Death Nov. 1796 Reign Ends after 34 years</p> <p>Quote: “I value progress and innovation. It is through embracing change and challenging the status quo that we can build a stronger and more prosperous nation.”</p>	What made Catherine the Great a pivotal woman in history?	A reflection of Catherine’s qualities: resilience, vision, leadership, and her impact on Russian and world history.

*Classical orchestra music throughout the video, Drums and Trumpets during “The Coup” scene.

*Sound effects: crowd murmurs during “Marriage in the Russian Court” scene, horse hoofs, and crowd cheers.

References

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- Fyfield, M., Henderson, M., & Phillips, M. (2022). Improving instructional video design: A systematic review. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 38(3), 155–173. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.7676>
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