

English Language Arts: Lights, Cameras, Action, and Books! A Book Trailer

by MELISSA PURCELL

STUDENTS WILL READ a book, then create a short thirty-second book trailer using Animoto. Through the process, students illustrate their understanding of the book and communicate it to others. The book trailers can also be used to promote books to other students.

INFORMATION LITERACY/ INQUIRY OBJECTIVES:

Linking to AASL's *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*:

- ▶ Demonstrate creativity by using multiple resources and formats (1.2.3).
- ▶ Respect copyright/ intellectual property rights of creators and producers (1.3.1).
- ▶ Use social networks and information tools to gather and share information (4.1.7).

CURRICULUM (SUBJECT AREA) OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ Link to Common Core State Reading Standards for Literature 6–12, Anchor standard 2.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

GRADE LEVELS: 6-12

RESOURCES:

Library or classroom book

Computers with Internet access

Optional: digital camera, video camera, and microphone

Creative Commons (<http://search.creativecommons.org>) to find images. This is a convenient way to search one website to access Creative Commons licensed images, videos, and other media that can be found on Wikimedia Commons, Flickr, Google Web, Google Images, Blip.tv, Jamendo, and Spinxpre websites.

Animoto (<http://animoto.com>) to produce the book trailer.

Animoto is a free tool for online video creation. Students simply upload a selection of still images or video clips, then select or upload a soundtrack for their video. Animoto's program handles all processing, including editing, of the video.

Optional: Kaywa QR-Code (<http://qrcode.kaywa.com>) is a free website that has both a QR Code Generator and a QR code reader.

INSTRUCTIONAL ROLES

Before beginning this lesson, the teacher covers/reviews with students elements of a story—characters, plots, setting, themes, etc. Together the classroom teacher and the school librarian outline the plan, create templates and the rubric to be used, identify examples of book trailers to be used with students, and oversee assessment.

PROCEDURES FOR COMPLETION:

Students are asked to choose a library book to read or they can use a required classroom reading assignment. Before the students begin to produce their book trailer, the teacher and/or librarian shows several examples of trailers (thousands of book trailers are available on many sites, such as TeacherTube and YouTube). Librarian-made examples of book trailers created with Animoto are: *The False Princess* by Eilis O'Neal (<http://tinyurl.com/thefalseprincess>) and *Now Is the Time for Running* by Michael Williams (<http://tinyurl.com/runningbywilliams>). Figure 1 shows QR codes as an example of another way to connect students to the completed book trailers.

Fig. 1. QR Code Examples



The False Princess

Now Is the Time for Running

The classroom teacher and librarian show several examples of appropriate grade-level book trailers, then brainstorm with the students to identify the elements that make a quality book trailer—plot introduced, but not completely

revealed; interesting, good selection of pictures, music, or sound; makes you want to read the book; etc. Discuss other topics after viewing the trailers, such as how the book trailer compares to movie trailers that students have seen (movie trailers can also be found on YouTube).

Before beginning to work on their book trailer on the computer, students create a storyboard for a thirty-second book trailer by using a blank template and an example (see Figure 2, below). The storyboard should include:

- ▶ book title and author name;
- ▶ a statement that the book is available to check out in the library;
- ▶ at least two statements that can be used to hook a reader; and
- ▶ pictures that represent significant elements from the book.

After the students have completed their storyboards, the librarian teaches students how to search for images and videos using the Creative Commons website and how to properly cite the sources. The librarian also demonstrates how to create a video using the Animoto site. Animoto allows fifty-five characters per text slide but larger text selections can be entered on a PowerPoint slide and saved as an image file to upload to the sites. The videos can be created with Creative Commons pictures and videos from the Internet (with proper credit given) or students can use their own pictures and videos (digital cameras and video cameras are needed for this option). Animoto provides various free effects such as animations, transitions, and music. Animoto is very user-friendly and allows direct uploads to YouTube with one click of a button. There are readily available instructions available online on how to create videos using Animoto.

Fig. 2. Storyboard Example (the template will not include the brown type)

Name: <u>Ima Student</u>		Date: <u>May 20, 2012</u>
Slide 1: 2 seconds	Slide 2: 2 seconds	Slide 3: 4 seconds
Text/Picture: Veronica Roth's debut book <i>Divergent</i>	Text/Picture: Picture of <i>Divergent</i> book jacket and picture of the author Veronica Roth	Text/Picture: In a futuristic dystopian Chicago, society is divided into five factions. Picture of Chicago
Slide 4: 5 seconds	Slide 5: 4 seconds	Slide 6: 2 seconds
Text/Picture: Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent).	Text/Picture: Every 16 year-old must select the faction to which they will devote the rest of their lives.	Text/Picture: Picture of teenage girl thinking.
Slide 7: 5 seconds	Slide 8: 4 seconds	Slide 9: 2 seconds
Text/Picture: For Beatrice, the decision is between staying with her family or going to a faction she believes is right for her.	Text/Picture: Check out this intense read at your library to see if Beatrice follows her heart or follows her head.	Text/Picture: Citation slide for the four pictures used.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

A rubric given before the project is started will keep students on track and allow students to understand how they will be graded (see Figure 3, below).

PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION:

This lesson was extremely successful because it was interactive and held the students' attention. The students loved sharing their book trailers and other students loved watching them and came rushing in to check out the books that were featured. There are numerous ways to use these student produced book trailers to promote books in the library, including:

- ▶ Showing in classrooms or to the entire school through the morning announcements.
- ▶ Set them up to run continuously on a television, com-

puter, or digital picture frame in the library.

- ▶ They can be linked on the library's online card catalog system and linked on the school website.
- ▶ QR codes can be created (see Figure 1) and glued to the inside cover of the corresponding books to link directly to the book trailers on YouTube. By scanning these codes with their smartphones, patrons can view the book trailer to decide if they want to check out the book.

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Fig. 3. Book Trailer Rubric

Elements	Excellent: 3	Satisfactory: 2	Unsatisfactory: 1	Score
Book Summary	Book summary is clear and concise, with sufficient detail but does not give the entire story away. No spelling or grammatical errors.	Book summary is not clearly presented or presented in a way that spoils part of the story for a reader by giving away too many details. One or two spelling or grammatical errors.	Book summary is incomplete, off topic, or presented in a way that spoils part of the story for a reader by giving away too many details. Three or four spelling or grammatical errors.	
Pictures	High quality pictures represent a significant element from the book, such as: the main character(s), plot, setting, themes, etc.	Pictures represent an element from the book but not the most significant elements. Pictures may not be the best quality (blurry, too small, etc.).	Pictures seem random thus making it hard to understand how they represent the book or pictures may not be the best quality.	
Technical Production	Video editing software was used to create a professional looking video book trailer. Music and transitions chosen are appropriate and not distracting. Book trailer was uploaded to YouTube and marked as public.	Video editing software was used to create but most features of the software were not used. Music and transitions chosen are appropriate and not distracting. Book trailer was uploaded to YouTube and marked as private or unlisted.	No video editing software was used to produce the book trailer so video consists of recorded video only with no additional pictures, effects, transitions, or text. Music chosen is inappropriate, distracting, or makes any narration inaudible. Book trailer was not uploaded to YouTube.	
Overall Construction	Book title and author are clearly identified. Thoughts are organized and flow smoothly. Book trailer clearly states that the book can be checked out from the library. All pictures, videos, and other text sources are cited properly in MLA format on a credit slide at the end.	Book title is clearly identified but author is not. Thoughts are organized. The book trailer encourages the viewer to get the book but does not state that it is available in the library. All pictures, videos, and other text sources are cited on a credit slide at the end but there are some minor errors in the MLA format.	Book title and author are not clearly identified. Unorganized layout. Book trailer never indicates that the book can be checked out from the library. No credit slide at the end.	
Creativity	Creativity and originality enhance the viewing experience.	Shows some creativity and originality but needs improvement to draw the viewer in.	Lacks creativity and originality, which makes the book trailer boring or not engaging.	
Total Score (out of 15)				

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