
VIDEO RECORDING GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS

Video Recording Guidelines

(Please check your handbook for subject-specific considerations)

A video clip should be continuous and unedited, with no interruption in the events.

The clip(s) should include interactions between you and your students and your responses to student comments, questions, and needs.

The clip(s) can feature either the whole class or a targeted group of students within the class. Both you and your students should be visible and clearly heard on the video recording submitted.

Before you record your video, ensure that you have the appropriate permission from the parents/guardians of your students and from adults that appear on the video.

Introduction

In order to capture elements of instruction and student learning, you will need to produce video clips that clearly display and provide evidence of the quality of your instruction. These procedures are provided to help you produce video clips that clearly represent the teaching and learning in your classroom.

Video Quality

There is no requirement or expectation for you to create a professional-quality production. The use of titles, opening and closing credits accompanied by music or special effects are best left to Hollywood as scorers will be entirely interested in what the video shows you and your students doing within the learning segment. It is not necessary to be technically perfect and it is best if your efforts are focused on capturing evidence that meets the criteria in the rubrics. It is important, however, that the quality of the videotaped activities be sufficient for scorers to understand what happened in your classroom. As a general rule of thumb, sound quality is generally more important than video quality for understanding the teaching and learning being captured. It is a very good idea to test all video/audio equipment in the classroom BEFORE the learning segment.

Steps for Successful Video Recording of Your Learning Segment

* Make arrangements for the necessary video/audio equipment well in advance. If you are unfamiliar with the videorecording process and/or do not have access to video equipment, consider the following resources for equipment and videotaping assistance:

your cooperating/master teacher (who can identify potential resources in the school as well as assist you with videorecording);

your university supervisor;

Technology staff or students within your program's institution knowledgeable about video;

another student teacher who has done or is doing videorecording;

friends and family (for equipment);

the internet –especially YouTube- where there are a number of how-to videos¹.

* Advise your cooperating/master teacher and the principal at your school of your need to videorecord lessons for your learning segment. Although it is often unnecessary, discuss any arrangements for a camera operator with them. If you use a camera operator, look to people who already have approval to be in classrooms, e.g., your cooperating teacher, your university supervisor, designated student helpers. You will need to request formal approval of others (e.g., fellow student teachers, family friends) from the principal, and it may not be forthcoming.

* Collect the necessary consent forms from students. This is a professional responsibility that should not be ignored. Respecting students' privacy as well as protecting yourself and your cooperating teacher are important concerns.

* Think about where you and your students will be located in the classroom during the activities to be portrayed in the video. What evidence do the rubrics call for that the camera will need to capture? Will different activities require students to regroup and move around the classroom? How will the use of instructional materials be recorded? What will the camera need to capture? Where will the camera/mics need to be placed in order to optimize sound quality? If applicable, when should the camera operator zoom in or rotate the camera to a new position? (Use zooming in only when it is needed to understand what you or the students are doing, as camera operators are usually a few seconds behind the speakers in discussions and often miss the student speaking entirely as a result.)

* Meet with the camera operator to plan the taping prior to videotaping your lesson. Share your lesson plan and discuss your plans to capture the teaching and learning. Even if you are using a static camera, it is a good idea to go over the lesson and the camera placement with your supervisor or cooperating teacher to ensure you have considered as many variables as possible.

* Practice the videorecording process BEFORE the learning segment. This will provide a chance to test the equipment for sound and video quality as well as give your students an opportunity to grow accustomed to the camera.

*If possible, record the ENTIRE set of lessons. This will provide you with plenty of footage to choose the segment that best provides the evidence called for in the rubrics.

¹ While You Tube is a great place to learn how to use video equipment, clips of your teaching should NEVER be posted in public venues like You Tube, Facebook, etc. or shared with people not involved with the TPA assessment, as this violates the confidentiality of the children you teach.

* While recording, try to forget the camera is there (this is good to explain to your students as well) and teach like you normally do. Try not to introduce routines or procedures that students are unfamiliar with. If using a camera operator, advise them not to interject themselves into the lesson in any way.

* Make a back-up copy either on your hard drive, USB drive or on a cd/dvd when recording is finished.

* Watch the footage and choose clips which most effectively demonstrate your ability to teach with regard to the criteria in the Instruction Task rubrics. The rubric criteria should be your guide in choosing the portion of the lessons to submit.

* When preparing a clip(s) for submission, be sure that each clip is continuous without any edits. Use a program like Windows Movie Maker or Apple's iMovie software to prepare and save the clip(s) in the format required in your TPA handbook.

Technical Considerations

*Consider the light source before a recording is made. While some cameras may have a switch for recording in incandescent, florescent, or daylight, most low-end cameras are now completely automatic. However, where the light originates is important to consider. Do not place the camera facing the window or other bright sources of light. Also, if you want the scorer to be able to read something written on the board or on a piece of paper, be sure there is sufficient light for the camera to pick up the text clearly but not too much so that there is a reflection (especially on whiteboards). You may need to submit a separate document with the writing if it is critical to understanding the video events.

* If you are having trouble hearing yourself and/or the students, try placing the camera closer to the action OR use an external omnidirectional dynamic microphone plugged into the "EXT MIC" jack on the camera. Unfortunately some of the newer low-end cameras no longer have this jack but if it is present, using an external mic can be very helpful for sound quality. If the camera operator wears headphones plugged into the camera, the sound quality can be monitored during taping.

*Use a sturdy tripod to avoid shaking images which often stem from shots from a hand-held camera.

* Plug the camera into a wall outlet when recording if possible. If not, be sure the batteries are fully charged.

* For safety reasons, as much as possible, tape extension cords to the floor with duct tape.

Software and Equipment Considerations

TPAC has not required any particular software, cameras or editing equipment. Candidates should be using digital cameras ONLY. Digital video is much easier to use and to edit plus it

is much easier to archive. Regardless, in order to upload to the Pearson scoring platform (or any electronic portfolio vendor), the video must be in digital format.

As for considerations when seeking a camera, we are finding that an expensive camera is not necessary for the demands of this assessment. Most low-end cameras produce a picture and sound quality that is suitable for this lesson provided that the user follows the steps above. However, certain situations (groupings where the students are not facing the camera mic, lots of ambient noise, etc.) may necessitate the use of some kind of external microphone. The only way to know for sure is to test the equipment. In the past, wireless mics have worked great if they are available. If they are not, plan to spend some time finding the best place to set up the camera to catch as much of the teacher-student interaction as possible (i.e. placing the camera at the side of the room instead of the back to capture more sound) when recording the instruction segments.

Video Equipment and Editing Tutorials

If you are new to video recording or the camera you are using, be sure to read the instruction manual that comes with the camera. Even if the manual has been lost, most are available online at the manufacturer's website. Manufacturer's sometimes have online tutorials to help you learn how to use the camera. YouTube also has a plethora of videos that show how to set up and operate a camera.

When editing your video clip, it is best to use the free software that comes with your computer. PC's have the program Windows Movie Maker (found in the START menu under PROGRAMS) while Macs provide you with iMovie. Both of these are fairly simple to use and can make saving your video clip much easier. There are many online tutorials that will support you in learning how to use these programs. Below are links to tutorials that you may find useful:

Tutorials for using Windows Movie Maker to edit your video

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Getting-started-with-Windows-Movie-Maker>

Tutorials for using iMovie to edit your video

http://desktopvideo.about.com/od/imovievideotutorials/iMovie_Video_Tutorials_Learn_How_to_Use_iMovie_From_Video_Tutorials.htm