



# ONE BEST THING

Six-Word Story, Six Unique Shots: Enhancing  
Writing Through Multimedia

DON GOBLE



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Shots: Enhancing Writing  
Through Multimedia**





## About the Author

# Don Goble

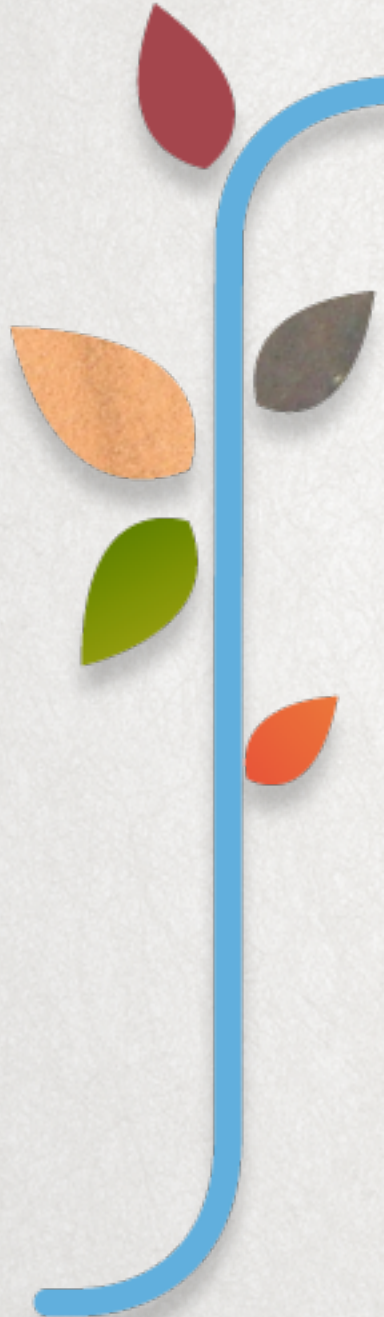
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Don Goble is an award-winning Broadcast Technology, Film, and Multimedia Instructor at Ladue Horton Watkins High School in St. Louis, Missouri. Don speaks nationally at conferences and conventions, offering educators innovative ways to incorporate video into the classroom. Don advocates for technology and digital media in the classroom by blogging for national education publications, by offering professional development to his staff and schools all over the country, and by serving as a media creator himself. Don was a part of the 2011 Apple Distinguished Educator class.





# About *One Best Thing*



*One Best Thing* is a collection of books created by Apple Distinguished Educators (ADEs) that demonstrate the use of Apple technologies to transform teaching and learning. Each *One Best Thing* book shares a unit, a lesson, or a best practice and is designed to help another educator implement a successful practice. It's a professional learning idea championed by an educator—in word and action—that others can look to for ideas and tips on how to replicate.

Enjoy this *One Best Thing* book, along with others in the collection, and discover innovative projects, lessons, and activities for use in your own learning environment.



## About the ADE Program

[Apple Distinguished Educators](#) (ADEs) are part of a global community of education leaders recognized for doing amazing things with Apple technology in and out of the classroom. They explore new ideas, seek new paths, and embrace new opportunities. That includes working with each other—and with Apple—to bring the freshest, most innovative ideas to students everywhere.

ADEs advise Apple on integrating technology into learning environments—and share their expertise with other educators and policy makers. They author original content about their work. They advocate the use of Apple products that help engage students in new ways. And they are ambassadors of innovation, participating in and presenting at education events around the world. Being part of the ADE community is much more than an honor—it's an opportunity to make a difference.



# ONE BEST THING

“Told One Lie, Trust Was Broken”



A simple six-word story, created as a video with six unique camera shots, allows students the ability to tell a powerful visual story.





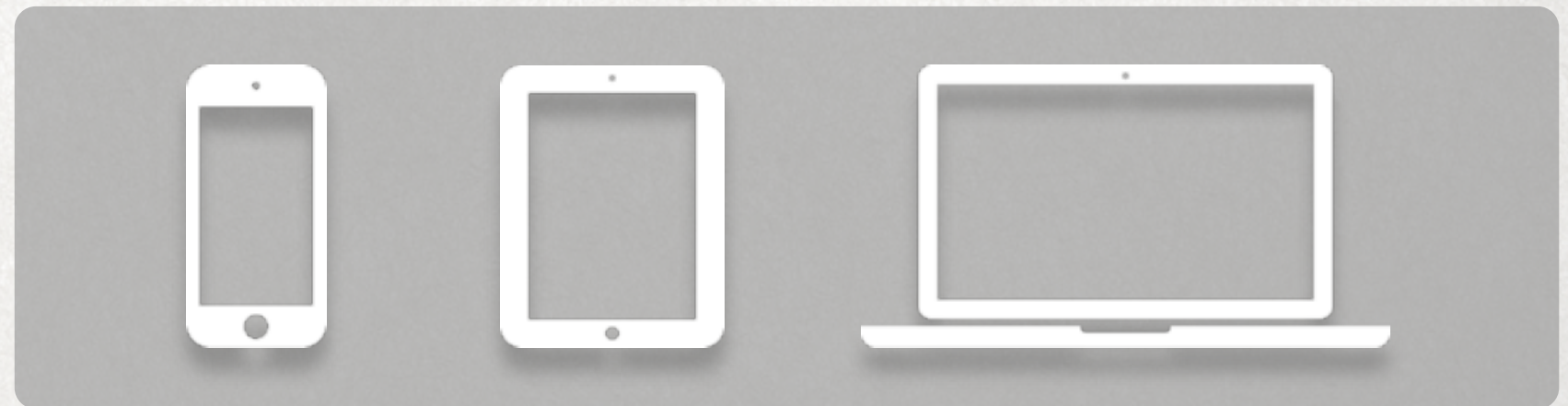
# ONE BEST THING

## Six-Word Story, Six-Shot Video

The purpose of this project is to allow students the creative freedom to tell a story through the medium of video. Through this video creation process, teachers will:

- Help students practice media literacy, media creation, and critical viewing skills
- Reach children with a variety of learning styles
- Engage students in problem-solving and investigative activities
- Begin to dismantle social stereotypes
- Provide a common experience for students to discuss

## Products Used





## Lesson Plan

**Subject:** Any course curriculum could leverage this project as a student presentation model

**Level:** Suitable for any K-12 or post-secondary student

## Chapter introduction



It is my goal to help educators around the world embrace the fact that our 21st-century learners are incredibly visually literate, and we must seize upon this literacy to change and innovate education moving forward.

## Ernest Hemingway



Tap this lens icon anywhere in the chapter, and you will unlock additional fun facts along the way!



## Common Core State Standards and media literacy

The English Language Arts Standards are perfectly aligned with digital media and video projects. Students are offered an opportunity to demonstrate independence, build strong content knowledge, respond to varying demands of audiences, comprehend as well as critique, value evidence, use digital media capably, understand different perspectives and cultures, and ultimately, successfully complete specific project goals.

### Audience

The subject prompt for this activity is open and can be customized for any K–12 or post-secondary classroom environment. As a starting point, multimedia, English, social studies, science, fine arts, and photography are excellent areas of concentration that could leverage the video project as a student presentation model.

### Focus

Finding a new and creative way to challenge my broadcast technology students is a fascinating journey for me each semester. I push myself to never offer the exact same project to my students. For the past sixteen semesters, I have been successful, with only a few brain freezes along the way. The six-word story, six-shot video has been one of my students' favorite projects.

## Anticipated result

Students write their own six-word story, but bring the visual to life in the form of a video in only six unique shots, and then publish their work to the web. Students are also encouraged to blog about their experiences and publish that work to the web as well.

### Literacy outcomes

Throughout this project, students will develop or refine their media literacy, as well as build upon their writing, reading, math, technology, and reflective skills.

### *"Chinese American, Different Cultures, Same Person"*





## Directions

Six-Word Stories will be the basis for your students' six-shot video. Basic camera angles will also serve as a main element in this activity. A best practice for your students to begin their process would be to research the web in addition to reading this chapter.

## Research

Suggested search terms to find models and learn more about the history behind six-word stories could be: six-word stories can say lots; six-word story project; six words; six-word memoirs: tell us yours, six-word stories.

Suggested search terms for your students to learn more about the video production or cinematography process would be: basic camera shots; camera angles; videography techniques; cinematography techniques; rule of thirds.

## Media literacy questions

Before students begin creating their visuals, they must answer the five key questions of any media production:

*1. Who is creating this message?*

For this project, the student is creating the message, and they will bring their own knowledge and experience to the content. Elements to consider are the student's age, grade, socioeconomic background, male or female, etc.

*2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?*

Video production values will be appropriate here: writing, font, color, light, speed, camera angles, etc.

*3. How might different people understand this message differently than I do?*

Students should understand that their cultures and experiences could be very different from other people's who may see their work. It's important for students to grasp this concept.



4. *What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?*

Again, students should understand that their morals, ethics, and values may differ from their audience's about what they include in their stories and what they decide to leave out.

5. *Why is this message being sent? What is the intended result or outcome of this production? What is the purpose of the their story? Why should the student care to tell the story? Why should the audience care to watch and listen?*

This portion should be very reflective and thoughtful for the student before beginning the video production.



## Objective

Students will tell the story of their specified subjects in just six shots. No two shots can be alike; in other words, students must use six different shots from six different camera angles. Every edit must be from a different distance. Students should be highly marked down for two shots in a row that are the same or similar.

Note: This chapter is not about how to edit videos. Therefore, any editing system can be used for the production of this project.

I believe you will find your students to be very adept at using video editing software. Students can build upon their existing knowledge of Apple software such as iMovie and Final Cut Pro, or they could use free, web-based editing tools such as WeVideo or YouTube Editor.

In addition, free video editing apps for mobile devices are wonderful choices for students to create their projects. A list of suggested apps is included.



## What you need to begin

- Camera
  - Digital photo
  - Digital camcorder
  - Mobile device
- Desktop or laptop computer
- Headphones
- Desktop editing software or mobile apps

Suggested video editing app options could be the following: [iMovie for iOS](#), [Videolicious](#), [Viddy](#), and [Video Editor FREE](#). There are many options here. Find one you like. Or students could use a free web-based solution such as WeVideo and YouTube Editor. For the desktop, [Final Cut Pro X](#) or [iMovie](#) would work well.

## Camera equipment



Any brand of equipment or video/photo app could be used to complete this project. The Canon T2i is a great option since it takes fabulous photos and videos.



Additional equipment could include a tripod and an external microphone.



## Basic Camera Shots

Students should be encouraged and allowed to choose from any of the following suggested camera shots when creating a video.

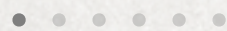
### Extreme wide

Establishes the setting of the environment or location of the subject. Camera is zoomed out as far as possible and placed a great distance from the subject to capture.

### Basic camera shots



Extreme wide shot (XWS)



### Wide

Zoom in a bit from the extreme wide shot. Place the subject head to toe in the viewfinder, with very little to no room above the head or top of the subject. Make sure not to cut off the bottom of the subject.

### Medium

Shows half of the subject; up, down, left, or right. Offers the viewer more detail in the frame.

### Tight

Zoom in on the shot and frame one aspect of the subject, offering the viewer greater detail of the subject.

### Extreme tight

Zoom in as far as the camera can go and place the camera extremely close to the object. The image will show incredible detail of the subject, and the viewer may not be able to discern what the object is.

### Low angle

Camera shows the subject from below, giving the impression that the subject is more powerful or dominant. Place the camera on the tripod as low as possible and aim up, or hold the camera on the ground and tilt up.



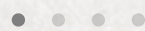
## High angle

Camera shows the subject from above, so angle the camera down toward the subject. This has the effect of diminishing the subject, making them appear less powerful, less significant, or even submissive. Raise the tripod as high as it can go, or hand-hold the camera as high as you can while still maintaining a slight angle down.

## Basic camera shots



High angle



## Bird's-eye view

Camera is directly above, simulating the view of a bird flying in the air looking straight down with no angle. This completely different and somewhat unnatural point of view can be used for dramatic effect or for showing a different perspective.

## Canted

Camera is purposely tilted to one side so the horizon is on an angle. This angle creates an interesting and dramatic effect, suggesting distortion or chaos to the viewer.

## Eye level

This is the most common camera view, which offers the viewer a real-world angle that we are all used to. It shows subjects as we would expect to see them in real life. It is a fairly neutral shot.

*Note: Avoid eye-level shots if possible for this activity! Since this is the most common shot viewers recognize, challenge your students to go beyond the norm.*



## Additional Production Requirements

### Create the story

Encourage students to be creative in how their stories are told. Every good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Within the variety of shots, students should consider how many others in that exact same situation would shoot that part of the story in the exact same way. Dare students to be different! Have them use color and light to their advantage. And don't allow students to settle on the first thought *everybody* would assume. Have them brainstorm as many ideas as they can in 15 minutes.

### Plan the videotaping

Students should outline, storyboard, and script their visual story, incorporating the variety of camera angles they have now learned.

Storyboard templates are great tools to draw out ideas. Or have them use a shot list that is prepared before they begin to videotape.

### Record audio

Students may use voiceover narration of their six words, royalty-free music, natural sound (NAT), or any other royalty-free or personally created audio they wish to help tell their stories. Be very mindful of copyright laws with audio.



### Video length

Each shot must be no less than three seconds and no longer than five seconds. Therefore the total length of the video will be 18-30 seconds.

### Timeframe for completion

This video project is highly scalable for students to complete. A minimum suggested duration would be three-to-four 90-minute block periods. If you find you have students who are capable of the video production process, you can shorten this assignment by 90 minutes. However, for students who will require more practice with camera angles and editing, I would recommend building in an additional two-to-three 90-minute block schedule days. Adjust and adapt your timing based upon your students' experience and competency during the raw recording times in production.

#### A note on copyright

Music, art, logos, and so on are private property and can't be used without permission. There are certain exceptions for journalistic work and satire.

To avoid copyright infringement, have students create their own music, video, or images.

For more information about copyright and what is



## Assessment

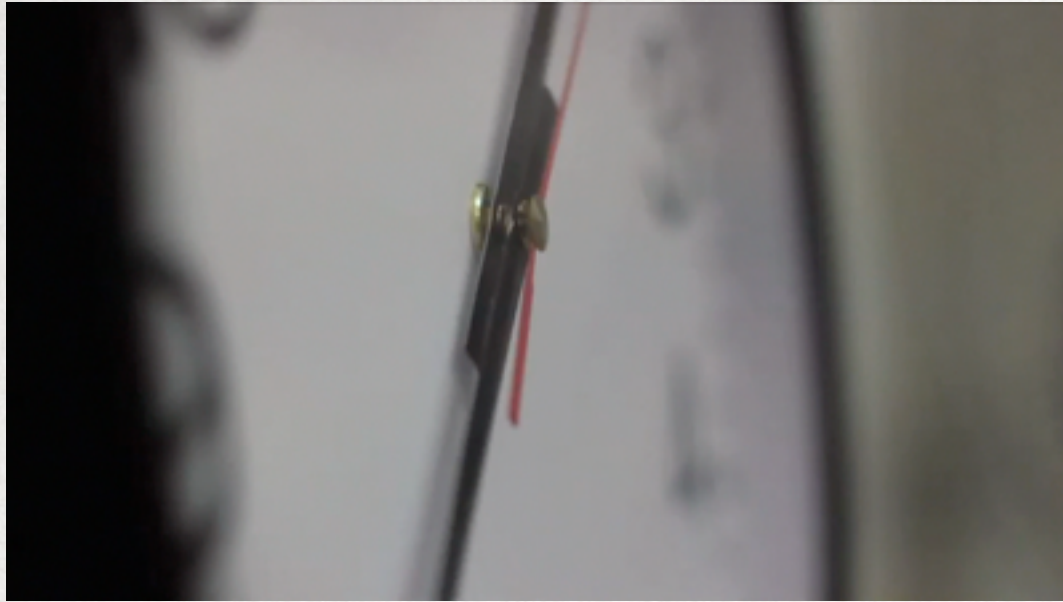
The following scoring guide can serve as an excellent rubric for grading your students' work. Feel free to use this template or create your own that works best for your classroom and content.

Content	8-10 points	12-16 points	18-20 points	Total pts. & comments
<b>Storyboard/ Script Research Content Text</b>	The story was not written well, does not illustrate the topic, and it does not get the message across.	The story was written reasonably well, dramatizes the topic, and does a good job of getting the message across.	The story was exceptionally written, dramatizes the topic very well, and does an excellent job of getting the message across.	
<b>Video Design</b>	Video is poor quality. Shots are distracting and do not illustrate topic. Camera angles were too similar.	Good video. Shots illustrate the topic and support the story. Multiple camera angles were utilized.	Excellent video. The shots presented are great at illustrating the story and topic. Every camera angle is different and unique.	
<b>Audio Voiceovers Sound Effects Music</b>	Audience cannot understand voiceovers, and sounds/music are distracting.	Audience can understand voiceovers, and sounds/music are not distracting.	Voiceovers are spoken with feeling, and sound effects or music help convey the message of the story.	
<b>Video Editing Timing Transitions</b>	Timing of audio and video is poor. Poor use of color, lighting, effects, or other transitions.	Timing of audio and video is good. Good use of color, lighting, effects, or other transitions.	Timing of audio and video is excellent. Excellent use of color, lighting, effects, or other transitions.	
<b>Met Deadline</b>	No	Late <i>*customize this section for what is acceptable to your class rules.</i>	Yes	
			<b>Total Points</b>	



**More student projects**

***Can't Wait to... Play, Inform, Perform***



***Life Begins with a Blank Canvas***



***I Might Be a Little Crazy***



***Even Broken Wings Can Fly Away***

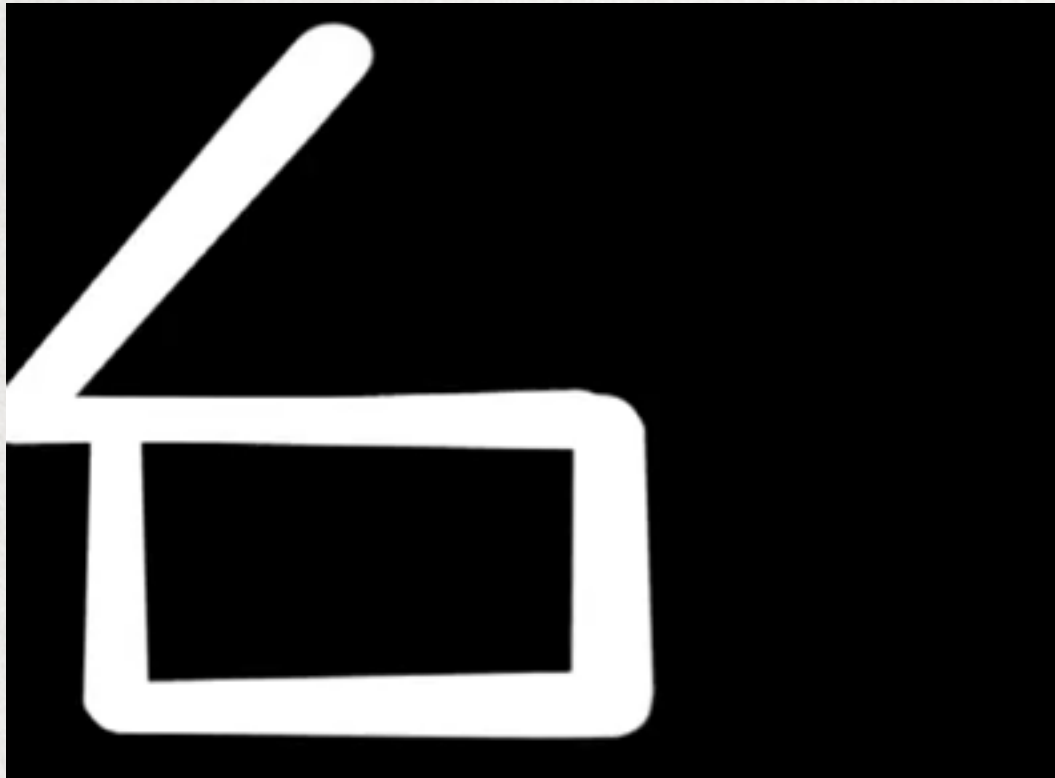




## Next Steps—Publishing

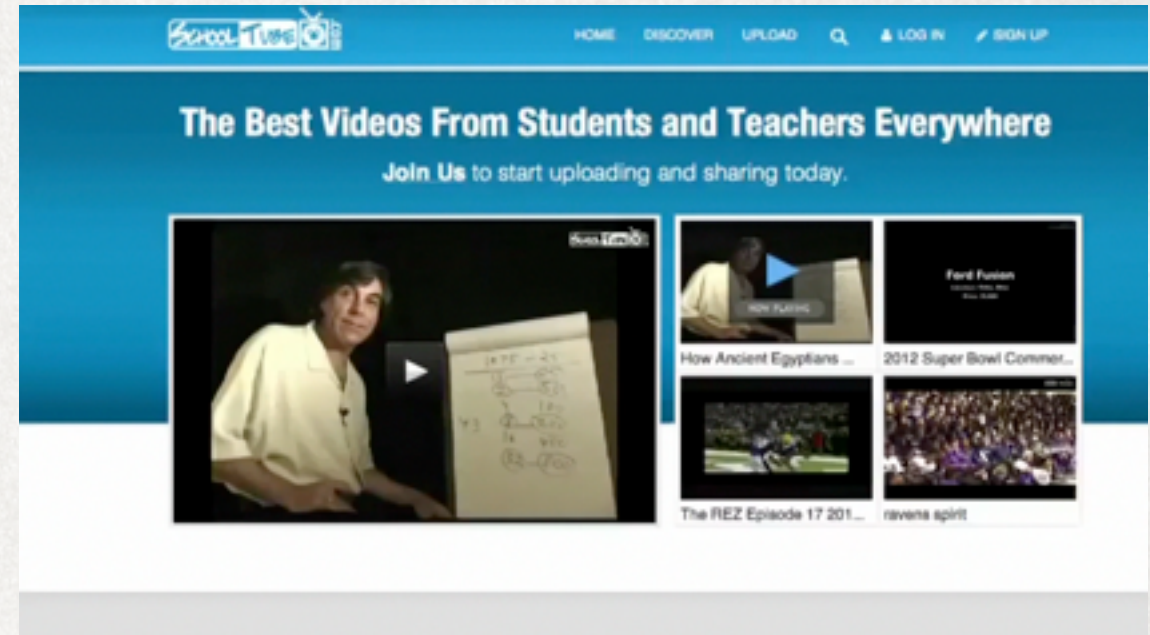
In order for students to gain the full experience of creating a video and publishing online, I would recommend posting their videos to a web host, such as SchoolTube, Vimeo, or YouTube. You will find additional resources to help you through this process on the Resources page. For our web hosting purposes, we use SchoolTube.com.

### Going global with SchoolTube



SchoolTube.com is the nation's largest K-12 moderated video-sharing platform, specifically designed for students and educators and exclusively endorsed by over 20 national education associations. Empowering students and teachers through the use of video, with a safe, informative, and fun video-sharing experience.

### How to register on SchoolTube



As of 2013, SchoolTube has registered users representing over 50,000 K-12 schools, uploading over 1,000 videos a day. SchoolTube videos reach hundreds of thousands of people each day around the globe.



## Blogging

Once the video is uploaded to SchoolTube.com, students can create a free Weebly website to embed the video, using embed code from their SchoolTube.com video web page.

Students then should write about their experiences in a blog format. Blogging is a fabulous reflective practice that enhances literacy skills and offers the student an authentic voice. I have found that my loudest students are the most quiet in the classroom. But their voices and ideas shine through in their blog sites.

To begin, have your students create a free website. The Weebly Beginner's Guide Tutorial is a comprehensive video that offers a step by step approach to successfully accomplishing this task.

Once your students have created a site, direct them to properly embed their video into their newly developed online digital portfolio, their Weebly website.

Students should then blog 5–10 sentences about the experience. A couple of good prompts would be: What lessons did you learn? In which areas did you succeed? How would you do this project differently in the future?

Finally, hit the publish button and your students are set to go!

## Weebly Beginner's Guide Tutorial

(tap icon)





## **Apps**

iMovie for iOS

Videolicious

Viddy

Video Editor Free

Film Making - Learn The Basics Of Becoming A Film Maker

Animoto

FiLMiC Pro

## **Websites**

Royalty-Free music, images, and animations

SchoolTube

Weebly

WeVideo

YouTube Editor

Ladue Broadcast Technology Student Examples

Student Press Law Center

## **Common Core Standards**

English Language Arts Standards

## **Titles in iBooks Store**

*Video Production Basics* by Steven New

*Digital Film School - for iPod/iPhone* by the Open University

*Making Movies: A Guide for Serious Amateurs*  
by Maria Langer



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Stewart Steele "*Chinese American, Different Cultures, Same Person*"

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Jane Nelson "*Life Begins with a Blank Canvas*"

Jacob Smyth "*I Might Be a Little Crazy*"

Nadia Duncan "*Even Broken Wings Can Fly*"

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Additional photos provided by: Michael Hernandez - Mira Costa High School California

Ernest Hemingway image provided by Wikipedia.

Special consideration for the students' video productions

Martean Davidson - Ladue Horton Watkins High School Video Technology Coordinator

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