

MSP 821 - Final Project – Character Creation and Introduction

Purpose:

We have watched television through the decades, identifying significant elements and changes in the industry and content over time. We have seen different types of characters, styles of filming, norms and ideals, and stories. With this project, you have the opportunity to reflect on those things, to think about what you want to see on television, and to create a character that you find compelling and unique.

This assignment is designed to serve as a culminating project where students will demonstrate their understanding of all course material as well as use creativity to design original content. This project aligns with GenEd goals, which ask that students:

- Think critically.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing
- Apply multiple perspectives, paradigms, and frameworks to problems, topics, or issues
- Describe or evaluate a work of art or creative process using appropriate terminology.

Overview:

- This project consists of a written component and a video component
- You may complete this project (written portion and video portion) alone, in a group of 2, or in a group of 3
- You will conceptualize a new television series and create a protagonist for that series.
- The main goal is to produce a video that introduces this new character in a unique, creative, and captivating way. Imagine you are creating a trailer for your character.
- You will complete a series of written tasks that will help you to create your character.
- **Please note – this project should be entirely original, student-created content. You are NOT allowed to use any content you have filmed for another course, at another college/school, or that you have previously shot (for example, your vacation footage from your trip to Italy two years ago).**

Components:

- Written Document
 - Section 1: Television Series Information
 - Section 2: Character biography
 - Section 3: Character inspiration
 - Section 4: Filming techniques and explanation
 - Section 5: Contributions list (if applicable)
- Video
 - 30-45 second introduction

Due Date and Submission:

- All sections of the written component and the video component will be due on Thursday, 4/28, by 1:00pm. We will complete this project in lieu of a final exam.
- All sections of the written component and the video component will be submitted on Canvas.
- If you are working with one or two partners, fill out the partner sign up form no later than the due date and time of this project.

Partner Selection and Project Sign Ups

Overview:

- You may complete this project individually, in a pair, or in a group of three.
- Please note, if you work in a pair or trio, I expect you to divide the work evenly and all pull your weight.
 - Those students working in pairs or trios **should fill out the contribution list section** and clearly indicate how each person contributed to the final products.
 - If I get a complaint about a group member not completing work in the group, the first thing I will check is the contributions list.
 - Any documentation you can provide that demonstrates a lack of work on a group member's part is also useful in determining if a project's tasks were fairly distributed and completed.

Sign Ups:

- I have created a Google form sign-up sheet – you must sign up on this form indicating if you work with a partner or in a trio. I need this information so that I can calculate the total number of projects we have to grade and so that I can make sure your group members receive the appropriate grade.
- Sign up date for working with a partner(s) is the due date of the project – please sign up on this form no later than Thursday, 4/28 by 1:00pm – the sign up form is on the assignment page on our website.
- You only need to sign up on this doc if you are working with one or two other people. Only one person from your group needs to sign up. I need to know who is working together so I can assign the grades appropriately.

Want to work with someone?

- If you want to work with someone, you will have to reach out to your peers.
- You can try contacting people through Canvas or look up their email address in the Cherry and White pages.
- I will also post a discussion board on Canvas that you can use to let people know you are looking for a partner.
- If reaching out to a potential partner (and likely a stranger), please be polite and respectful and do not pressure anyone into working with you.

Formatting Requirements

Late Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please note, like with all other assignments, late work will not be accepted and will receive a 0. • As stipulated in the syllabus: there will be no make-ups for the final project assignment; you must submit this assignment by the due date and time or forfeit all points for that assignment.
Written Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit all written components of this project as a single document. • Please insert a page break or section break between each major element of your document to separate each component – see my example • Your written sections should be formatted exactly as mine are in the example – same headings, use of bullet points, etc. • Submit as a word document only – all other document types will result in an automatic 0 on the assignment. • DO NOT SUBMIT any of the following: pdfs, jpgs, a pages file (the Apple word processor), a link to a Google doc, notes doc.
Document Layout/Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font: Times New Roman • Font Size: 12 point • Margins: 1 inch top, bottom, left, right • All sections singled spaced
Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will submit your video as an mp4 or mov (or compatible) file to Canvas • The video should be filmed using a smartphone – if you or your group do not have access to a smartphone, please see me so we can find you an alternative method of filming. • You may use whatever editing software you would like
Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are in a group of 2 or 3, you should complete a contributions list • This list should be a detailed account of what each person in the group produced. • This list will not be graded for points, but I will refer to it when grading. It will help me to determine fair grades based on work completed. • If you choose not to complete this list and then email me that your partner did not do any work, it will be difficult for me to help you.
File Names	<p>Use this title for both the written document and the video file. Incorrect file titles will receive a 0.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Name – Final Project • Use the last name of all group members • Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 member → Palmieri – Final Project ○ 2 members → Palmieri, Smith – Final Project ○ 3 members → Palmieri, Smith, Roberts – Final Project
Citation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you utilize music or images that are not original work (not produced by you), you need to cite those works. • If you utilize a friend/person who is not in this class as an actor, you must acknowledge his or her work. • You should cite these items at the end of your video (which will not count toward your 30-45 seconds). Please use APA formatting.

Filming and Editing Techniques List

Choose three specific shooting and editing techniques from the list below to incorporate into your video. **You may certainly incorporate more than three, but I will grade you on the three you pinpoint in your explanation document.**

These items should be chosen deliberately and the use of them in your video should be clear. You need to be able to do these well and effectively and be able explain your choice to shoot and edit in this particular way.

- Silence
- Ambient noise
- Deliberate choice of music
- Color as symbol: an abundance of color
- Color as symbol: an instance of color
- Color as symbol: A repetition of color
- Color as symbol: A contrast of color
- Symbolism – objects or settings
- Light and Dark: A contrast between light and dark
- Light and Dark: a beam or streaming light
- High angle shot
- Low angle shot
- Character breaks the fourth wall
- Extreme long shot
- Extreme close up shot
- Dutch angle/tilt
- Over the shoulder shot
- Point of view shot
- Bird's eye view shot
- Establishing shot
- Focus on the background shot
- A series of quick cuts

When selecting your techniques, remember that each technique is meant to elicit a certain reaction from the audience, draw attention to a particular person or idea, and are utilized to produce specific meaning in a text. You should select techniques deliberately in order to produce specific meaning in your character introduction. You should be reflecting on the lessons from the beginning of the semester when selecting and utilizing these techniques.

Section 1: Television Series Information

Group Members:

- List group members in alphabetical order by last name
- Use a bullet point list

Title Instructions:

- You must give your series a title.
- The title should be interesting and unique.
- The title should make sense given the content of the show and the genre selected
- Write the title of the show as the first bullet point
- Write a 3-5 sentence description in a second bullet point that explains your choice of title

Genre Instructions:

- You will identify the genre your series falls under in the first bullet point
- The genre should make sense given the content of the series
- In your second bullet point, you will explain your choice in 2-3 sentences

Synopsis Instructions:

- You will write a 8-10 sentence synopsis of the series you have created – bullet point
- Synopsis should include time period and setting
- Include the basic plot and the purpose of the show
- Identify the protagonist (the character you are creating)
- Identify any other significant characters
- Provide an overview of the series including any major conflicts
- Synopsis should be an appropriate hook for viewers
- Should be well written and well thought out

Section 2: Character Biography

Character Name:

- List character's full name

Physical:

- Identify relevant physical traits of your character. It might be helpful to think about how an author might introduce your character in a book.
- Traits might include:
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Ability/disability
 - General body type/build
 - Defining markings like tattoos or scars
 - Style of clothing/accessories
 - Place of origin that results in a specific accent
- Description should be 4-5 sentences in length (paragraph format)

Personality:

- Identify relevant personality traits that define this character
- Traits might include
 - Positives or flaws
 - Significant likes/dislikes
 - Words others might use to describe this character
 - Words this character might use to describe the self
 - Emotional capacity
- Description should be 4-5 sentences in length (paragraph format)

Life Experiences:

- Identify 3 significant events in this character's life so far
- These events should be interesting and unique
- These events should demonstrate how this character's personality has been shaped
- These events should make sense given the character's personality
- Create a bullet point for each item. Title as demonstrated in the example. Describe each event in 3-4 sentences

Current Situation:

- Identify where this character is at in the current moment when we meet him or her
- In 5-8 sentences, describe the state of this character's life – bullet point
- Details might include:
 - Where he or she is living and why
 - How he or she feels about him/herself and/or life at the current moment and why
 - Major events or conflicts currently occurring for the character
 - Mention of other characters relevant to this character
 - Upcoming projects or events this character might be engaged in

Section 3: Character Inspiration

You should only select characters from series we have watched this semester in class. The idea is that you are reflecting on the series and characters we have discussed this semester.

Character Inspiration 1

- In the first bullet point, identify the character name and the series title of the show the character came from (spell correctly)
 - The character chosen should be one we watched in class
- In the second bullet point, identify the following in 8-10 sentences
 - A clear understanding of the character selected
 - Identify why you selected this character as inspiration
 - Clearly explain how this character inspired the one you created

Character Inspiration 2

- In the first bullet point, identify the character name and the series title of the show the character came from (spell correctly)
 - The character chosen should be one we watched in class
- In the second bullet point, identify the following in 8-10 sentences
 - A clear understanding of the character selected
 - Identify why you selected this character as inspiration
 - Clearly explain how this character inspired the one you created

Character Inspiration 3

- In the first bullet point, identify the character name and the series title of the show the character came from (spell correctly)
 - The character chosen should be one we watched in class
- In the second bullet point, identify the following in 8-10 sentences
 - A clear understanding of the character selected
 - Identify why you selected this character as inspiration
 - Clearly explain how this character inspired the one you created

Section 4: Filming Techniques and Explanation

Technique 1:

- Identify the technique and time it appears in your video – see example
- Use 5-8 sentences to explain your choice
- Explanation demonstrates a clear understanding of course material – specifically the effect this technique is often used to produce
- Explanation is detailed and specific
- Explanation for the choice of this technique is well thought out
- Explanation demonstrates the coherence of the three chosen techniques

Technique 2:

- Identify the technique and time it appears in your video – see example
- Use 5-8 sentences to explain your choice
- Explanation demonstrates a clear understanding of course material – specifically the effect this technique is often used to produce
- Explanation is detailed and specific
- Explanation for the choice of this technique is well thought out
- Explanation demonstrates the coherence of the three chosen techniques

Technique 3:

- Identify the technique and time it appears in your video – see example
- Use 5-8 sentences to explain your choice
- Explanation demonstrates a clear understanding of course material – specifically the effect this technique is often used to produce
- Explanation is detailed and specific
- Explanation for the choice of this technique is well thought out
- Explanation demonstrates the coherence of the three chosen techniques

Section 5: Contributions List (if applicable)

- List each group member alphabetically by last name and provide a detailed bullet point list of that member's contribution. Do this for all members.
- Items on this list could include organization, acting, filming, film editing, brainstorming, writing scenes, writing answers to questions, editing for grammar, submission, etc.
- I expect you to divide the work appropriately and fairly among you group members.
- Please do not lie/make things up in this section. Lying about your contributions constitutes academic dishonesty and is grounds for punishment as outlined in the syllabus.