

BEST PRACTICES

FOR AN EDUCATIONAL VOCAB VIDEO



Here at Project Ed, we're excited about creating videos that enhance the ways teachers teach and students learn.

We've examined the different methods used to create effective, educational vocabulary videos and have compiled a best practices list below. Although these tips are specifically for vocab contests, the ideas can be used for any of the Project Ed contests. We hope these 3 tips help you create a compelling vocabulary video that teaches - and one that wins the Grand Prize.

1. Use the Word Correctly.

In order to truly teach, an educational video needs to present accurate information. Many times we see great videos, but the vocabulary word or concept in the film is used incorrectly.

Here's an example: Let's say you're teaching the word "exuberant" in your film--which is an adjective that means "full of energy, excitement." If the expression on your talent's face is too extreme, the viewer might think exuberant means ecstatic or astonished. It's tricky!

Be sure all words in your video are spelled and pronounced correctly. If it's a GIF or vocabulary contest, please use the definition we provide in the contest brief in your video. Here's a good example:

PRO TIP:

In your video, be sure the talent says the vocabulary word very clearly. As the talent is saying the vocabulary word or is saying the vocabulary word in a sentence, at the same time, place the vocabulary word and/or the whole sentence on screen.

This reinforces the word and highlights the way it's used in a sentence. It's fine to do this occasionally, not all the time!



2. Teach it Twice. At Least.

Teaching a word or concept multiple times reinforces retention and understanding.

Below are three of the many different possible story structures you can use to create an effective educational video.

Keep in mind these should be treated as guidelines. These are intended to help spark creativity, not inhibit it.

The “Ah-Ha!” Approach



This structure works because it sets up an Ah-Ha moment that leads viewers to understanding the content. With this structure, there are two different examples of the word or concept shown first. Then, the word is defined and explained, giving the audience context for what happened in the first two examples. Finally, a third example is given to reinforce the newly-learned material.

[Click here for a video example of the “Ah-Ha!” approach.](#)

The Guiding Hand



This approach works well because it tells us what we’re going to learn right at the beginning of the video. After introducing the vocabulary word, demonstrate the meaning of the word using two examples. Next, define the word or concept. Finally, give a concluding example which will drive home the meaning of the word or concept. This allows the viewer to see the newly learned material in another context.

[Click here for a video example of the “Guiding Hand” approach.](#)

The Common Misuse



This structure is effective because it raises a common misuse, then teaches the real meaning, and finally shows the idea used in the correct context.

[Click here for a video example of the “Common Misuse” approach.](#)

3. Minimize Distractions.

A story with minimal distractions helps make the content understandable to the target audience of mostly middle school students.

Minimize all distractions in your story to keep it as simple as possible. For the shots in your video, ask yourself if all of the visible elements on screen are necessary to tell the story. If it doesn't add to the story, take it out. For the audio, apply the same idea - if the audio doesn't help tell the story, leave it out.

This might mean cleaning up your bedroom or turning off the noisy air conditioning. Doing so will greatly increase the production value of your videos and make understanding the educational content that much easier. Here's a good example:

PRO TIP:

Ask a trusted friend or family member to watch the video. Afterwards, ask if they are able to explain the word or concept taught in the video. If they can't, ask them which parts of the video were effective in teaching and which ones were not. Use this feedback to improve your video's educational merit.



The Checklist.

Does my video use the word correctly?

Does my video teach the word at least twice?

Does my video have minimal distractions?

ONE MORE TIP:

Watch TV commercials. Note the wide variety of ways the advertisers attempt to make the name of their products memorable. After that, think of the vocabulary word or concept you're teaching as a "product" in a commercial. What can you do to be sure the viewer notices it, understands it and remembers it?

Thanks for Reading.

The educational videos you make will change the way teachers teach and students learn - how awesome is that?

We hope these tips have sparked your imagination. If you combine them with your creative ideas, we hope they will help you create educational videos that teach a lot more... and increase your chances of winning a grand prize!

Best of luck in the contests and happy creating!

The Project Ed Team

[Ready to win that Grand Prize? Check out our current contests here.](#)

Never miss an update!

