Lesson Plan

**OBJECTIVES**  This lesson helps students understand that documentaries are a type of storytelling that explores factual stories and issues using film or video.

**STUDENT OUTCOMES:** By the end of the lesson students should know the difference between fact, fiction and opinion, and be prepared to create documentaries in class.

**MATERIALS/RESOURCES:**

Viewing Guide

Vocabulary Sheet

Documentary examples

Master Viewing Guide

**INTRO:**

Ask students what they already know about documentaries. After soliciting a few answers, divide students into teams of three and tell them that they are going to begin looking more closely at what distinguishes documentaries from other forms of media.

**ACTIVITY:**

**Day 1 – Viewing Clips**

1. Give each student a copy of the "[Introducing Documentaries: Viewing Guide](http://www.pbs.org/pov/docs/Copies%20of%20Viewing%20Guide.pdf)" handout. Tell them they are going to be viewing a clip from a documentary film and that each person on the team should look for the answers to one of the questions, except for question 4, which can be answered by anyone (or everyone) on the team.
2. Review the vocabulary on the handout — not as a list of terms for students to memorize, but as language that teams should use to discuss what they've seen.
3. Choose a clip from the list below to watch. These are examples of Child Development Documentaries.
   1. <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/national-geographic-in-the-womb/>
   2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mun-qxkIRBs>
   3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97pb0dQAjIE>
   4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZM4A1sQUhpo>
   5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oe5_blT71GM&list=HL1337895373&feature=mh_lolz>
   6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsIZSo01olw>
4. While students are viewing clips, create a master display on which you can record yes/no answers from each team. The important thing is that everyone has a chance to see their results in combination with everyone else's.
5. Solicit and display results for the yes/no parts of the handout. Remind students that they were all looking at different clips and ask if they can make any generalizations about the techniques that are commonly used in documentaries.
   1. Master Viewing Guide
6. You are the filmmaker
   1. What do you want to see in a documentary?

**CONCLUSION:**

Wrap up by asking students to name some important things they learned about documentary, not only from their own investigation, but also by listening to answers from the other groups.