



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Elementary Daily News Show Judging Rubric

Motivational Elements (Possible 25 points)

— Entertaining aspects like music, creative approaches to stories, the use of humor, and a lively pace

- 0 = no entertaining aspects
- 1 = a single entertaining aspect
- 2 = two entertaining aspects
- 3 = three entertaining aspects
- 4 = four entertaining aspects
- 5 = five or more entertaining aspects

— Large numbers of students featured on camera

- 0 = no students appear on camera
- 1 = only anchors or reporters appear on camera
- 2 = anchors or reporters and less than five students appear on camera
- 3 = anchors or reporters and more than 5 students appear on camera
- 4 = anchors or reporters and more than 5 students appear on camera, with at least one of them featured
- 5 = anchors or reporters and more than 10 students appear on camera, with at least one of them featured

— Using anchors and reporters with personality and charisma

- 0 = no anchors or reporters used
- 1 = anchors or reporters seen too briefly to impact the audience
- 2 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show but reflect little charisma or personality
- 3 = anchors featured in much of the show, and reflect moderate personality and charisma
- 4 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show and reflect a high level of personality and charisma
- 5 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show, reflect a high level of personality and charisma & engage the audience

— Going on location outside the studio with a report or video clips

- 0 = no clips or reports from outside the studio
- 1 = outside filming is limited to music video or slide show
- 2 = scenes from non-studio locations shown as b-roll while anchors talk
- 3 = at least one report or interview is shot outside the studio
- 4 = majority of show is filmed on location but anchors filmed in the studio
- 5 = entire show is filmed on location (chroma key weather reports are accepted)

— Inclusion of segments that would be of high interest to students, including reports, interviews, and polls

- 0 = no announcements, clips, reports, scenes b-roll, polls or interviews
- 1 = one announcement, clip, report, poll, or scene of high interest to students
- 2 = two announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 3 = three announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 4 = four announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 5 = five announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students

Technical Merit (Possible 25 points)

— Sound clarity and volume

- 0 = show has no audio or is completely incomprehensible
- 1 = entire news show has significant audio problems, but is comprehensible
- 2 = audio problems persist throughout the majority of the news show
- 3 = audio problems persist intermittently throughout the news show
- 4 = show has one or two moments of audio distortion or sound level problems
- 5 = sound clarity and volume are uniform

- _ Tripod-steady but creative camera work, including proper framing, lead room, nose room, headroom
 - 0 = no tripod use and virtually no proper camera framing, lead room, nose room, or head room*
 - 1 = little evidence of tripod use or proper framing throughout show*
 - 2 = tripod steadiness evident throughout the show, but show has instances of improper framing, nose room, lead room or headroom*
 - 3 = tripod-steadiness and proper framing, nose room, lead room, and headroom throughout show*
 - 4 = tripod-steadiness, proper framing, nose room, lead room, headroom, and smooth camera movements throughout show*
 - 5 = tripod-steadiness, proper framing, nose room, lead room, headroom, smooth camera movements, throughout show, and at least one creative camera angle*
- _ Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
 - 0 = scenes filmed with bright backgrounds that result in silhouettes or no natural or man-made lighting*
 - 1 = little evidence of appropriate lighting*
 - 2 = frequent or persistent lighting issues*
 - 3 = a few lighting issues*
 - 4 = only one lighting issue*
 - 5 = appropriate lighting throughout show*
- _ Audio and Video Editing Smoothness
 - 0 = no signs that anything was edited*
 - 1 = frequent rough edit points like video jump cuts and abrupt sound changes*
 - 2 = 3-5 rough edit points*
 - 3 = 1-2 rough edit points*
 - 4 = no editing problems*
 - 5 = no editing problems; creative editing elements like the use of natural transitions*
- _ Special effects and news sets, including the backgrounds chosen for stand-up segments on location
 - 0 = no special effects or news sets other than a table or desk*
 - 1 = little or very poor use of special effects and news sets*
 - 2 = mediocre use of special effects and news sets*
 - 3 = good use of special effects and news sets*
 - 4 = excellent use of special effects and news sets*
 - 5 = exceptionally creative use of special effects and news sets*

Graphics (Possible 25 points)

- _ Number of Graphics Utilized in the News Show (including the opening graphic and credits)
 - 0 = virtually no graphics are utilized in the entirety of the news show*
 - 1 = approximately 25% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 2 = approximately 50% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 3 = approximately 75% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 4 = almost all announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 5 = all announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
- _ Size, Font Style & Legibility (graphics must be visible from the back of a classroom)
 - 0 = no graphics at all or no legible graphics*
 - 1 = approximately 25% of graphics are legible*
 - 2 = approximately 50% of graphics are legible*
 - 3 = approximately 75% of graphics are legible*
 - 4 = all graphics are well-designed in terms of size, font style and legibility*
- _ Proper use of colors so that graphical elements contrast with background
 - 0 = no graphics at all or no graphics with proper color combinations*
 - 1 = approximately 25% of graphics use proper color combinations*
 - 2 = approximately 50% of graphics use proper color combinations*
 - 3 = approximately 75% of graphics use proper color combinations*
 - 4 = all graphics use proper color combinations*
- _ The use of visual elements like clip art or pictures where appropriate
 - 0 = no clip art or pictures used in graphics*
 - 1 = approximately 25% of graphics include clip art or pictures used in graphics*

2 = approximately 50% of graphics include clip art or pictures used in graphics

3 = approximately 75% of graphics include clip art or pictures used in graphics

4 = all graphics include clip art or pictures used in graphics

— Animated graphics (static graphics are not in style in the television industry)

0 = no animated graphics

1 = approximately 25% of graphics include animations

2 = approximately 50% of graphics include animations

3 = approximately 75% of graphics include animations

4 = all graphics include animations

— Creative Styling (themed graphics that mesh with show or segment topics)

0 = no creative styling

1 = approximately 25% of graphics include creative styling

2 = approximately 50% of graphics include creative styling

3 = approximately 75% of graphics include creative styling

4 = all graphics include creative styling

Comprehensiveness (Possible 25 points)

— Academics covered

0 = no announcements, reports, interviews or segments on academics

3 = one announcement, report, interview, or segment on academics

6 = two announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academic

10 = three or more announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academics

— Extracurricular, sports, health, community, state, or national topics

0 = no announcements, features, reports, or segments about any of the above

3 = at least one announcement about any of the above

5 = at least one feature, report, or segment about any of the above

— Reports included (as opposed to show consisting only of anchors and graphics)

0 = no reports

5 = at least one report

10 = at least two reports



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Middle/Senior Daily News Show Judging Rubric

Motivational Elements (Possible 25 points)

— Entertaining aspects like music, creative approaches to stories, the use of humor, and a lively pace

- 0 = no entertaining aspects
- 1 = a single entertaining aspect
- 2 = two entertaining aspects
- 3 = three entertaining aspects
- 4 = four entertaining aspects
- 5 = five or more entertaining aspects

— Large numbers of students featured on camera

- 0 = no students appear on camera
- 1 = only anchors or reporters appear on camera
- 2 = anchors or reporters and less than five students appear on camera
- 3 = anchors or reporters and more than 5 students appear on camera
- 4 = anchors or reporters and more than 5 students appear on camera, with at least one of them featured
- 5 = anchors or reporters and more than 10 students appear on camera, with at least one of them featured

— Using anchors and reporters with personality and charisma

- 0 = no anchors or reporters used
- 1 = anchors or reporters seen too briefly to impact the audience
- 2 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show but reflect little charisma or personality
- 3 = anchors featured in much of the show, and reflect moderate personality and charisma
- 4 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show and reflect a high level of personality and charisma
- 5 = anchors or reporters seen throughout the show, reflect a high level of personality and charisma & engage the audience

— Going on location outside the studio with a report or video clips

- 0 = no video clips or reports from outside the studio
- 1 = outside filming is limited to music video or slide show
- 2 = scenes from non-studio locations shown as b-roll while anchors talk
- 3 = at least one report or interview is shot outside the studio
- 4 = majority of show is filmed on location but anchors filmed in the studio
- 5 = entire show is filmed on location (chroma key weather reports are accepted)

— Inclusion of segments that would be of high interest to students, including reports, interviews, and polls

- 0 = no announcements, clips, reports, scenes b-roll, polls or interviews
- 1 = one announcement, clip, report, poll, or scene of high interest to students
- 2 = two announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 3 = three announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 4 = four announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students
- 5 = five announcements, clips, reports, polls, or scenes of high interest to students

Technical Merit (Possible 25 points)

— Sound clarity and volume

- 0 = show has no audio or is completely incomprehensible
- 1 = entire news show has significant audio problems, but is comprehensible
- 2 = audio problems persist throughout the majority of the news show
- 3 = audio problems persist intermittently throughout the news show
- 4 = show has one or two moments of audio distortion or sound level problems
- 5 = sound clarity and volume are uniform

- _ Tripod-steady but creative camera work, including proper framing, lead room, nose room, headroom
 - 0 = no tripod use and virtually no proper camera framing, lead room, nose room, or head room*
 - 1 = little evidence of tripod use or proper framing throughout show*
 - 2 = tripod-steadiness evident throughout the show, but show has instances of improper framing, nose room, lead room or headroom*
 - 3 = tripod-steadiness and proper framing, nose room, lead room, and headroom throughout show*
 - 4 = tripod-steadiness, proper framing, nose room, lead room, headroom, and smooth camera movements throughout show*
 - 5 = tripod-steadiness, proper framing, nose room, lead room, headroom, smooth camera movements, throughout show, & at least one creative camera angle*
- _ Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
 - 0 = scenes filmed with bright backgrounds that result in silhouettes or no natural or man-made lighting*
 - 1 = little evidence of appropriate lighting*
 - 2 = frequent or persistent lighting issues*
 - 3 = a few lighting issues*
 - 4 = only one lighting issue*
 - 5 = appropriate lighting throughout show*
- _ Audio and Video Editing Smoothness
 - 0 = no signs that anything was edited*
 - 1 = frequent rough edit points like video jump cuts & abrupt sound changes*
 - 2 = 3-5 rough edit points*
 - 3 = 1-2 rough edit points*
 - 4 = no editing problems*
 - 5 = no editing problems; use of creative editing elements like natural transitions*
- _ Special effects and news sets, including the backgrounds chosen for stand-up segments on location
 - 0 = no special effects or news sets other than a table or desk*
 - 1 = little or very poor use of special effects and news sets*
 - 2 = mediocre use of special effects and news sets*
 - 3 = good use of special effects and news sets*
 - 4 = excellent use of special effects and news sets*
 - 5 = exceptionally creative use of special effects and news sets*

Graphics (Possible 25 points)

- _ Number of Graphics Utilized in the News Show (including the opening graphic and credits)
 - 0 = virtually no graphics are utilized in the entirety of the news show*
 - 1 = approximately 25% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 2 = approximately 50% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
 - 3 = approximately 75% of the announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
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 - 5 = all announcements, reports, personnel and segments have graphics*
- _ Size, Font Style & Legibility (graphics must be visible from the back of a classroom)
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 - 0 = no graphics at all or no graphics with proper color combinations*
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3 = approximately 75% of graphics include animations

4 = all graphics include animations

— Creative Styling (themed graphics that mesh with show or segment topics)

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2 = approximately 50% of graphics include creative styling

3 = approximately 75% of graphics include creative styling

4 = all graphics include creative styling

Comprehensiveness (Possible 25 points)

— Academics covered

0 = no announcement, report, interview, or segment on academics

2 = one announcement, report, interview, or segment on academics

4 = two announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academic

6 = three announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academics

8 = four announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academics

10 = five or more announcements, reports, interviews, or segments on academics

— Extracurricular, sports, health, community, state, or national topics

0 = no announcement, feature, report, or segment that covers any of the above

3 = one announcement, feature, report, or segment that covers any of the above

5 = two announcements, features, reports, or segments that cover any of the above

7 = three or more announcements, features, reports, or segments that cover any of the above

— Reports included (as opposed to show consisting only of anchors and graphics)

0 = no reports

4 = one report

8 = two or more reports



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 2: Commercial/PSA

Videos entered in this category feature thirty- to sixty-second commercials broadcast over a school's closed-circuit television system. These commercials can promote any school activity, including sporting events, club functions, field days, yearbook purchases, media center use, fund raising, etc. Or, they may be public service announcements for worthwhile activities like donating blood, or volunteering for the Red Cross. Judging criteria are as follows:

Motivational Power (25 points)

Any elements which motivate viewers (especially students) to buy the product, perform the activity, come out to the event, contribute to the fund raiser, etc. The more judges are moved to positive action, the higher this score should be, although different people are motivated by different factors. For some, excitement does the trick, while for others a sense of duty or responsibility can be just as powerful a motivator. Still a third group participates because their peers are doing so in large numbers, while other motivational ploys target a search for good price bargains or the desire to be top dog in a contest.

Clarity of Sales Message (25 points)

Although some national commercials leave viewers scratching their heads about exactly what was being promoted or what they should do after having seen the commercial, our contest encourages schools to air commercials and PSAs with clear messages. Clarity is often achieved with simplicity because, after all, you have only 60 seconds to get your message out. Repeating your message usually reinforces it, as does the use of attention-getting graphics.

Creativity (25 points)

Americans see thousands of commercials each year so commercial producers are motivated to make ads which stand out from the mainstream. That's where creativity comes in. Sometimes being creative means taking an old idea or theme and giving it a new twist, a principle of both commercials and comedy Aristotle ruminated about 2,000 years ago. Many believe, however, that a higher form of creativity involves taking a brand new approach. Hard to explain but easy to recognize, creativity elicits viewer responses like "how clever!" or "I wish I had thought of that."

Technical Merit (25 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and volume
- B. Tripod-steady but often creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient leadroom, noseroom, and headroom
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
- D. Editing smoothness
- E. Special effects, props and backgrounds



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 3: Music Video

Videos entered in this category combine any style music with video scenes that tell a story or create an artistic impression. Maximum length is 5 minutes and judging criteria are as follows:

Artistic Match Between Music and Visual Images (30 points)

One of the biggest decisions any music video producer makes is deciding exactly what video scenes will be on the screen at every moment the song is playing. Many of us hear songs on the radio or on a musical device like an iPod before we ever see the matching video, and then find ourselves amused, disappointed, surprised, entertained, etc. when we see the music video produced to go with that song. Sometimes we believe that the video matches the music perfectly, while other times we disagree with the producer's interpretation of the song's meaning or mood.

Creativity (40 points)

Music videos became a popular form of both art and entertainment in the early 1980s. Since that time thousands of them have flashed across our theatre and television screens on movies, music video channels, and both news and sports broadcasts. With all those models to choose from, it is no wonder that some music videos emulate or parody others, an approach that can still be viewed as a form of creativity. That would be especially true if a school rewrites the lyrics of a popular song or has a vocal or instrumental group or individual within the school perform the song. Many artists, on the other hand, seek their own unique sound and look, writing, performing, and filming from scratch, an approach most would argue represents creativity in its highest form, and the approach that ITV encourages. If, however, you want to use an existing song, remember to secure written permission from the artist or publisher who has the rights to the song. For more information on copyright permission, see the official contest rules.

Technical Merit (30 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and volume
- B. Tripod-steady but often creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient lead room, nose room, and head room
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
- D. Editing smoothness
- E. Special effects
- F. Props and backgrounds



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 4: Solo Male Announcer/Reporter

Entries in this category showcase the talents of male announcers and reporters. Schools submit ten clips of the same announcer, each one approximately 1-2 minutes long. Judging criteria are as follows:

Eye Contact (25 points)

In our culture, no aspect of public speaking, whether that speaking occurs before a live audience or before a camera, is more important than eye contact. Reporters and anchors should look right into the lens unless a b-roll/voice over combination is being used. Glancing at note cards is acceptable but should be kept to a minimum. Likewise, co-anchors would be expected to look at each other as well as at the camera. The same is true for reporters talking to interviewees.

Enthusiasm/Personality (25 points)

There is no question that we like to look at and listen to announcers who have charisma and personality rather than lifeless robots. For many years, news anchors and reporters were judged solely by their grandfatherly and staid on-camera presence (think Walter Cronkite or Edward R. Murrow). Modern audiences, especially younger ones, wish to be entertained at the same time they are informed and therefore put more weight on the charisma of on-air personalities, which is not to say they cannot be professional at the same time.

Versatility (25 points)

Those seeking jobs in the television industry never know what they are going to be called on to do in a studio, at a production house, or on location, so versatility is a valuable skill. (The same could actually be said for the entire job market.) Schools are encouraged to showcase their nominees for best anchor in a variety of settings rather than submit all 10 entries with someone sitting at a news desk.

Voice Inflection and Clarity (25 points)

If eye contact is number one, then voice inflection and clarity are a close second. Although movie and television actor Ben Stein has made a handsome living speaking in a monotone as a spokesman for Visine and as a teacher in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, his success is the exception and an integral part of his comedic style. Polished anchors and reporters speak clearly, slowly and with significant inflection in their voice.



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 5: Solo Female Announcer/Reporter

Entries in this category showcase the talents of female announcers and reporters. Schools submit ten clips of the same announcer, each one approximately 1-2 minutes long. Judging criteria are as follows:

Eye Contact (25 points)

In our culture, no aspect of public speaking, whether that speaking occurs before a live audience or before a camera, is more important than eye contact. Reporters and anchors should look right into the lens unless a b-roll/voice over combination is being used. Glancing at note cards is acceptable but should be kept to a minimum. Likewise, co-anchors would be expected to look at each other as well as at the camera. The same is true for reporters talking to interviewees.

Enthusiasm/Personality (25 points)

There is no question that we like to look at and listen to announcers who have charisma and personality rather than lifeless robots. For many years, news anchors and reporters were judged solely by their grandfatherly and staid on-camera presence (think Walter Cronkite or Edward R. Murrow). Modern audiences, however, especially younger ones, wish to be entertained at the same time they are informed and therefore put more weight on the charisma of on-air personalities, which is not to say they cannot be professional at the same time.

Versatility (25 points)

Those seeking jobs in the television industry never know what they are going to be called on to do in a studio, at a production house, or on location, so versatility is a valuable skill. (The same could actually be said for the entire job market.) Schools are encouraged to showcase their nominees for best anchor in a variety of settings rather than submit all 10 entries with someone sitting at a news desk.

Voice Inflection and Clarity (25 points)

If eye contact is number one, then voice inflection and clarity are a close second. Although movie and television actor Ben Stein has made a handsome living speaking in a monotone as a spokesman for Visine and as a teacher in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, his success is the exception and an integral part of his comedic style. Polished anchors and reporters speak clearly, slowly and with significant inflection in their voice.



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 6: Announcing Team

Entries in this category showcase the talents of a school's top anchor team. Schools submit ten clips of the same two announcers, each one approximately 1-2 minutes long. Judging criteria are as follows:

Eye Contact (20 points)

In our culture, no aspect of public speaking, whether that speaking occurs before a live audience or before a camera, is more important than eye contact. Reporters and anchors should look right into the lens unless a b-roll/voice over combination is being used. Glancing at note cards is acceptable but should be kept to a minimum. Likewise, co-anchors would be expected to look at each other as well as at the camera. The same is true for reporters talking to interviewees.

Enthusiasm/Personality (20 points)

There is no question that we like to look at and listen to announcers who have charisma and personality rather than lifeless robots. For many years, news anchors and reporters were judged solely by their grandfatherly and staid on-camera presence (think Walter Cronkite or Edward R. Murrow). Modern audiences, however, especially younger ones, wish to be entertained at the same time they are informed and therefore put more weight on the charisma of on-air personalities, which is not to say they cannot be professional at the same time.

Voice Inflection and Clarity (20 points)

If eye contact is number one, then voice inflection and clarity are a close second. Although movie and television actor Ben Stein has made a handsome living speaking in a monotone as a spokesman for Visine and as a teacher in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, his success is the exception and an integral part of his comedic style. Polished anchors and reporters speak clearly, slowly and with significant inflection in their voice.

Team Interaction (40 points)

The two anchor team members should look and act just like that: A TEAM. Interaction should be spontaneous, natural, and frequent. Practicing together as often as possible couldn't help but improve this interaction. Good anchor teams draw their viewers in almost as if they (the viewers) are listening in on and participating in a conversation among friends.



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 7: Reporting and Interviewing

Entries in this category showcase 10 clips taken from reports and interviews broadcast on the school's daily news show. Five minutes is the maximum for any one clip. The purpose of this category is to promote high standards of professional journalism, since on-location reporting is much more effective than talking studio heads are. At least five clips should feature reporters on camera themselves although those reporters can be a variety of people.

Script Smoothness & Preparation (25 points)

A well-written script is invaluable in both films and television programs. Even though the visuals will tell the story more powerfully than words ever will, most of the time those visuals are based on the script, which should be written in an organized, informative, and, where possible, entertaining manner. Attention-getting lead-ins, effective transitions to and from segments and interviewees, and an appropriate conclusion are all elements of a good script. Reporters should never, however, follow a script so meticulously that they sound like programmed robots devoid of any spontaneity and not responsive to what their interviewees are saying. Winging it from scratch while reporting on location might promote spontaneity but ideal reporting combines spontaneity with preparation. Researching a topic thoroughly so a reporter knows the best questions to ask will impress interview subjects and viewers. Television is often accused of being a shallow medium, an accusation solidified by reporters who ask only superficial questions. Anticipating the complexities of a subject and thinking about the kinds of things viewers want to know about that subject will help in the production of a polished, informative report.

Natural Sound & B-Roll (25 points)

It is amazing, really, how powerful even the simplest sound or most complicated soundtrack can affect our emotions. Think about that "shark under water" low rumble made famous in *Jaws*, for instance. A video showing a frantic basketball rally that includes the natural sounds of a gymnasium crowd whipped into a frenzy has a dramatically different effect on viewers' emotions than showing the same edited clips with no natural sound. Natural sounds can imaginatively whisk viewers to a remote location far more effectively than just their eyes can. Radio tells but television *shows*. The *talking head syndrome*, which features reporters or their interview subjects standing (or sitting) and talking for long stretches at a time with nothing else to look at, is anathema to all reporters because viewers will tune them out in droves. Reporters themselves, camera operators, and field producers all need to pay very close attention to scripts and interview content to make sure they have sufficient b-roll to cover at least 80 percent of the talking in most situations.

Voice Inflection and Clarity (25 points)

If eye contact is number one, then voice inflection and clarity are a close second. Although movie and television actor Ben Stein has made a handsome living speaking in a monotone as a spokesman for Visine and as a teacher in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, his success is the exception and an integral part of his comedic style. Polished anchors and reporters speak clearly, slowly and with significant inflection in their voice.

Importance and Variety of Topics (25 points)

Reporters should move beyond simple, superficial topics and questions and delve into issues of importance within the school, community, nation and world. Likewise, a variety of reporting topics is more likely to hold viewers' attention.



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 8: Documentary

Videos entered in this category may explore important social issues within the Polk County Schools, the communities served by our schools, or our state, nation or world. Documentaries may also profile influential people or showcase the success of individuals or groups. They may follow traditional documentary style, which focuses on in-depth reporting, or the dramatic re-enactment style, which uses a short film to make a point about an important subject. Documentaries are limited to 10 minutes. Judging criteria are as follows:

Importance of Topic (25 points)

Although Polk Video Awards rules allow for a wide range of possible documentary topics, the eighteenth-year history of our competition has seen those projects which focus on influential people or serious issues enjoy the most success. A well-told story about someone who has made a significant difference in the lives of others clearly appeals to many hearts, while our diverse judges are more likely to be impressed by an issue-oriented documentary which focuses on a topic of concern to many people.

Clarity and Organization (25 points)

Ten minutes is a long time in video and the longer the project, the greater the chance that it will ramble or lose focus. Clarity is often achieved by keeping a topic simple. For example, the FBI would be far too broad a topic, while the hiring practices for special agents of that organization would be much more manageable. Documentary filmmakers also usually following a specific organizational method like chronological, categorical, spatial, cause and effect, etc. Using graphics and appropriate transitions can also signal viewers that your documentary is well organized.

Comprehensiveness (25 points)

Although our competition limits documentaries to 10 minutes, subjects should be treated thoroughly, which reiterates the necessity for narrowing a broad topic down to a manageable focused one. In-depth research is required to achieve comprehensiveness, although much of what is filmed may actually be left on the cutting room floor. Accomplished documentary editors have honed their powers of selectivity and know that all interviews, quotes, and b-roll clips are not equal, nor required to be included in the final edited version.

Technical Merit (25 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and volume
- B. Tripod-steady but often creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient leadroom, noseroom, and headroom
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
- D. Editing smoothness
- E. Graphics



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Judging Rubric for Category 9: Academics Promotional Video

Videos entered in this category should promote academics. Reading entries may focus on individual authors, books or book series, fiction or non-fiction, or on reading literacy in general. Math entries could focus on influential mathematicians, specific branches of mathematics, the use of math in everyday life, or mathematical literacy in general. Science entries could focus on influential scientists, careers in science, or the use of science in everyday living. Social studies entries could promote awareness of events, issues or people in history or politics. Schools may promote any academic area but may not use this category to promote clubs, sports, or extracurricular activities that do not have a direct connection with academics. Judging will be based on the motivational power of the video to get people to improve their current use of reading, math, science, social studies, etc (50%), on Creativity (25%), and on Technical merit (25%). The minimum runtime is 30-seconds and a maximum runtime of 60-seconds. Judging criteria are as follows:

Motivational Power (50 points)

The more viewers are moved to positive action, the higher this score should be, but beware that people are motivated by many different factors. For some, improving math skills may translate into higher marks in school, while others are motivated by the potential for the long-term success math proficiency may bring. Some read to gain information while others enjoy the pleasure of curling up with a good book. Like math skills, science proficiency may mean success in school science classes, while for others science proficiency may lead to careers in physics, chemistry, or biology, or even the ability to fix things around the house. In short, some of us are motivated by the chance for immediate benefits, while others are satisfied by long-term advantages, just as some people seek to improve their overall quality of life while others desire more tangible benefits like the chance to make more money.

Creativity (25 points)

The academics promotional video should be creative in its approach. Much like any other video, simply stating facts and using graphics will hold a viewer's attention for only so long and have limited potential to motivate in a multimedia-rich culture like ours. Videos should feature unique ways of promoting academics through a combination of creative camera work and editing, enthusiastic acting, and music or sound effects, and possibly humor.

Technical Merit (25 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and consistent volume (avoid using the mic on the camera except to capture desired ambient (background) noise)
- B. Tripod-steady but creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient leadroom, noseroom, and headroom
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes. Avoid filming subjects in front of doors, windows and bright skies, but also avoid the brick wall prison-look.
- D. Editing smoothness (avoid jump cuts)
- E. Graphics (watch both size and legibility)



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 10: Short Film

Videos entered in this category showcase a short film of no longer than 10 minutes duration. Such films may be totally original or may be spoofs or satires of known television shows or movies, what the film industry calls homage. Judging criteria are as follows:

Script & Continuity (25 points)

Filmmaking is storytelling and a well-written script is invaluable in telling your story. Even though visuals will tell the story more powerfully than words ever will, most of the time those visuals, as well as the acting taking place within them, are based on the script. Filmgoers who want to know what happens next or care about any of the film's characters are drawn into movies by the script, which needs to have plausible story lines, solid continuity, and realistic dialogue.

Acting (25 points)

Hollywood has known for years about the drawing attraction of its stars. Filmgoers like a good story for sure, but people will turn out by the millions to see a picture that stars Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts even if they don't know what the picture is about. Schools should choose the actors in their short films carefully because not everyone can perform naturally and believably in front of a camera. When we see good acting, we think for those two hours in the theater that Jamie Fox doesn't act like Ray Charles but actually is Ray Charles.

Entertainment Value (25 points)

There is no universal agreement on just what entertains people because we all bring different tastes and experiences to the theater. Nevertheless, your movie will not be successful if it does not entertain a majority of the people who see it because entertainment is the name of the game, at least in this category and in this contest. Movies entertain in a myriad of ways, sometimes with great story lines, sometimes with passionate romances, sometimes with edge-of-your-seat suspense, sometimes with fantastical imaginary worlds, sometimes with dazzling special effects, and sometimes with some combination of the above or some other hook. The bottom line, however, is that a good movie should entertain more than just the friends and family members of those who made it.

Technical Merit (25 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and volume,
- B. Tripod-steady but often creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient lead room, nose room, and headroom
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
- D. Editing smoothness
- E. Special effects