

Once you've completed your proposal and gotten feedback on it, you are ready to begin the drafting process by creating a storyboard or mock-up of your project. We'll help you to do that in the next chapter.

write/design assignment

Project Proposal

Write a proposal for your project that provides the basic information listed in the section above. Once your proposal is complete, get feedback from your instructor, classmates, stakeholders, and/or intended audience members. Use these responses to make refinements to your plan and to revise your ideas where necessary.

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Writer/Designer: A Guide to
Making Multimodal Projects

Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's,
2014.

Project

You've written a proposal and gotten feedback on your project idea from your instructor, classmates, and other stakeholders. You're ready to start drafting your multimodal project! But what will the drafting process actually look like? We're going to describe two different strategies for different kinds of projects: mock-ups and storyboards. These drafting strategies will help you create your road map to a great multimodal project.

A **mock-up** is a rough layout of a screen or page. It is most commonly used for drafting Web sites, but it can also be used for drafting any type of still composition that is primarily visual, such as a poster, an album cover, a brochure, or an instruction set.

A **storyboard** is a sequence of drawings, much like a comic book or visual outline, that represents the movement, spatial arrangement, and soundtracks of objects or characters in shots, screens, or scenes. Storyboards work best for projects that include a timeline, such as videos, audio pieces, or animations.

Mock-Ups

Essentially, a mock-up is an outline of a visual project. A good mock-up should include the proposed layout, colors, images, fonts, and recurring elements such as headers. Though mock-ups may include the actual textual content, often they do not. The idea is to create a kind of road map that shows where everything will eventually go, not to actually create the finished product. Web authors often compose mock-ups by hand, on paper, or in some type of screen-based software such as Photoshop. You can also create mock-ups using word processors, spreadsheets, or slideshow software. It's not so much how you create the mock-up that's important as it is *what* the mock-up illustrates.

Figure 6.1 shows a professional Web design mock-up for The Kitchen Sync, a boutique kitchen supply store located in Wenatchee, Washington. The clients (the owners of the store) wanted a Web site that would help advertise their store by providing a professional

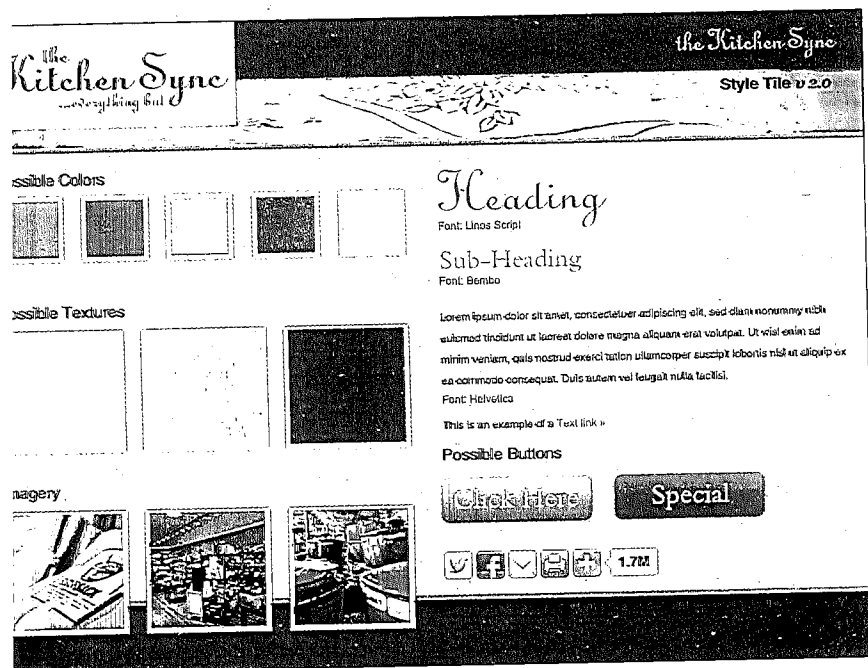


Figure 6.1 A Mock-Up Design for The Kitchen Sync

Web site mock-up shows how the basic features of the proposed site will look and offers different color options.

boutique feel while also showcasing the different products the store had to offer. The main goal was to get people to visit the store itself. While the clients had some ideas about what they wanted the site to look like, the Web designer wanted to show them a rough layout with a few different color and image options. Notice that on the left-hand side of this mock-up you see possible colors, textures, and images. On the right-hand side you see possible headings and buttons.

Mock-ups will also let you know where you might need to make adjustments *before* you put lots of time and effort into building your project. As writer/designers, we often find that our first ideas about how to arrange elements need tweaking, and they sometimes don't work at all. By first sketching out really rough layouts and then revising and making changes, we ultimately save ourselves time and create more successful designs.

The mock-up of a veterinary hospital Web site in Figure 6.2 shows where the main content on each page of this site will be (where the picture and caption are now) as well as how the navigation will work within the drop-down menus at top and along the left-hand side.

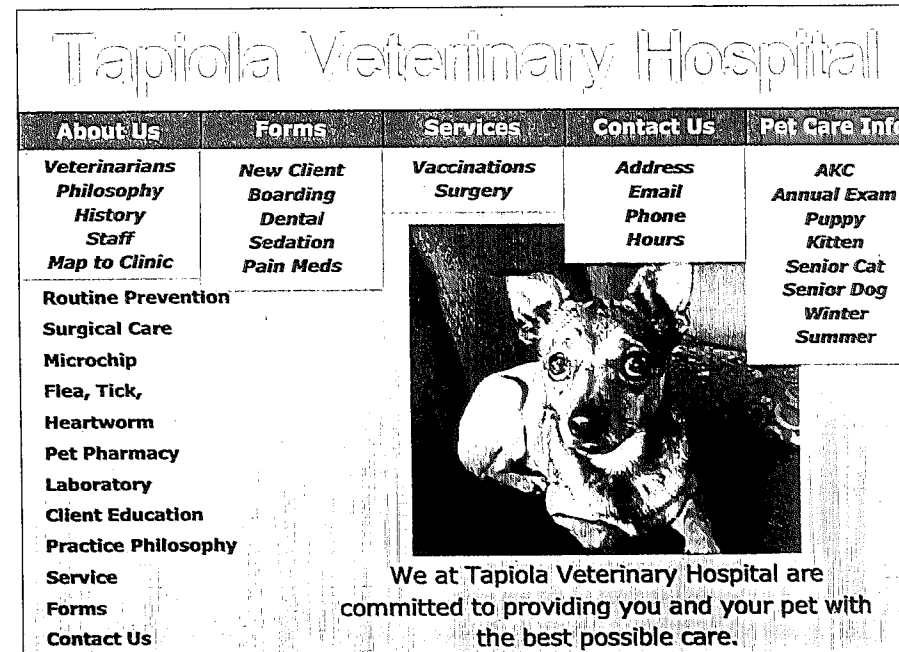


Figure 6.2 Tapiola Veterinary Hospital Web Site Mock-Up

Mock-Up Guidelines

Here are some questions to consider as you design a mock-up:

- Is the proposed layout evident? Is it consistent across all possible iterations (pages) of the text? If the layout needs to change to indicate different sections or areas of a text, are those variations indicated in separate or supplementary mock-ups?
- Is the color scheme clearly indicated? Is it appropriate for the rhetorical situation and for readability?
- If images are used, is their relative placement on the page or screen mock-up purposeful and consistent across all versions?
- Are example fonts provided, and if so, do they adequately reflect the rhetorical needs of the text (e.g., did you use display type for headlines and body type for larger amounts of written content)?
- Are the navigational elements shown or indicated? Are they clear for users? Are they consistent across all iterations?

Taking into consideration the rhetorical situation for The Kitchen Sync mock-up in Figure 6.1, use the Mock-Up Guidelines to determine whether that mock-up is effective. Then compare it to the actual Kitchen Sync Web site at <http://thekitchensync.com>. Did the stakeholders make the same choices you would have made?

Storyboards

Unlike a mock-up, which represents a static text, a storyboard represents a text that moves through time, such as a video or an animation. Like mock-ups, storyboards may include rough visuals, but they use visuals to show the sequence of the text, as well as written descriptions of the actions or sound effects that need to take place at each moment. Storyboards can be incredibly complex but a simple storyboard consisting only of stick figures and a few arrows to show directionality can also be surprisingly effective. As with mock-ups, the important thing is not how artistic the storyboards are but that they indicate what elements (images, audio) and actions (movement, lighting, camera angle, etc.) need to occur at which point.

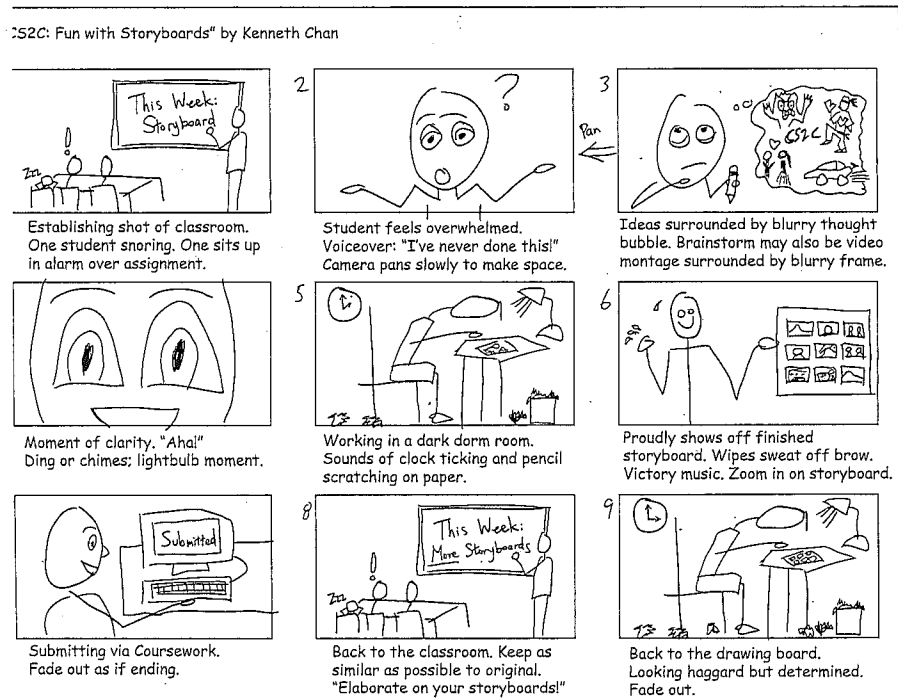


Figure 6.3 A Storyboard about Making Storyboards

The goal of an effective storyboard, no matter its level of complexity, is to capture as much information as possible and help you decide what shots you'll need to film, what audio you'll need to record, or what images you'll need to capture *before* the filming, recording, or animating begins. Similar to a mock-up, a storyboard can also help you get feedback on your basic design so that you can adjust it if it isn't working for your audience.

When creating your storyboard, you'll want to think about including notes on the following elements:

- Setting
- Movement by characters or objects
- Script/dialogue
- Soundtrack or sound effects
- Shooting angle

Of course, depending on the genre of your project, you may want to make notes on other elements as well.

For instance, Courteney was creating a three-minute video-based analysis on effective action films and had 64 panels in her storyboard. Figure 6.4 is a small segment of Courteney's entire storyboard. You can see that you don't need to be an amazing artist to compose an effective storyboard; you just need to include enough detail so that your audience or instructor can figure out what you intend to do and give you feedback on it, and so that you have an outline to work with once you do start capturing your content.

Storyboard Guidelines

Here are some questions to consider as you design a storyboard:

- Is the initial setting or context clearly evident? How is each setting or segment change represented auditorially, visually, spatially, or linguistically—via intertitles, transitions, or other means?
- Is each character/interview/subject matter differentiated in some way (if it's necessary to do so)?
- Are important character or object movements indicated? (For example, if it's important that a character is seen rolling his or her eyes, have you used arrows around the eyeballs or something else to indicate that movement? Or if a car is supposed to exit the right side of the frame, how have you shown that?)

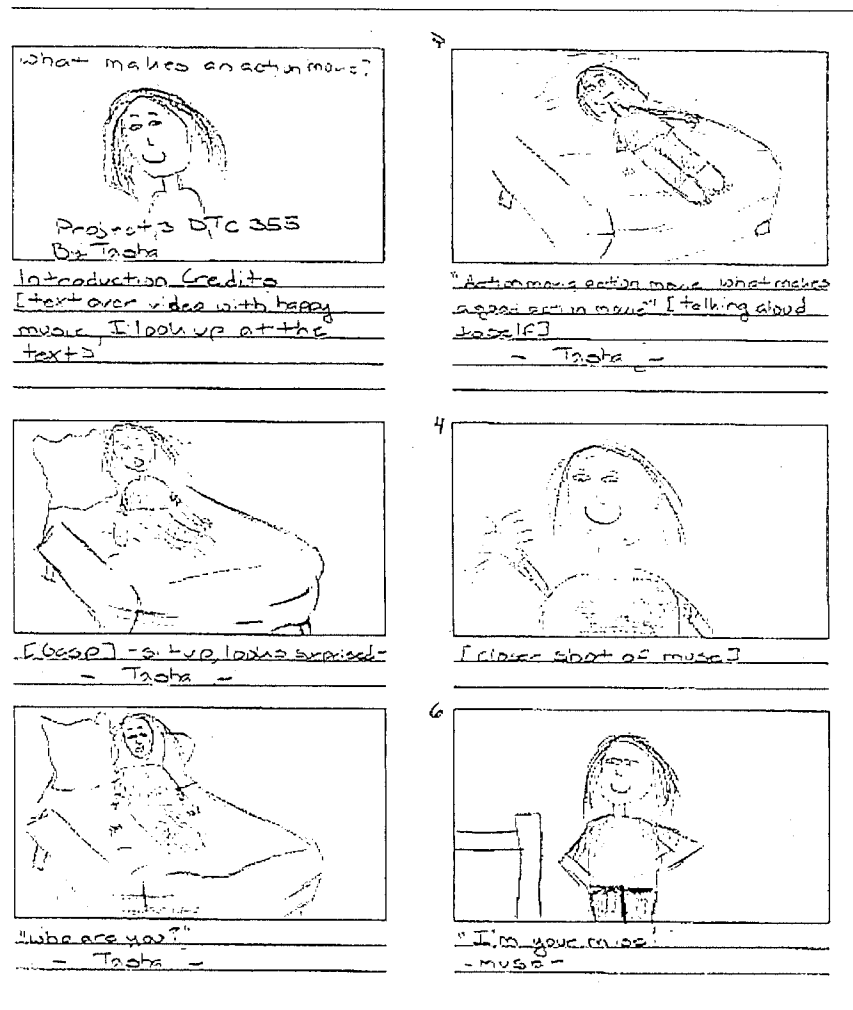


Figure 6.4 The First Six Panels of Courtney's Storyboard

panels show her introduction of the topic (Panel 1), the beginning of her narrative-based is (Panels 2–3, in Courtney's bedroom), and the main characters in the analysis (Panels Courtney and her "muse").

- Are snippets of major dialogue included underneath the storyboard visuals? If not, what are the key ideas that need to be expressed in each scene or segment?
- Are sound effects or musical scores noted (usually under the dialogue or scene)? Do you indicate what these audio elements will be and how long or loud they will be?

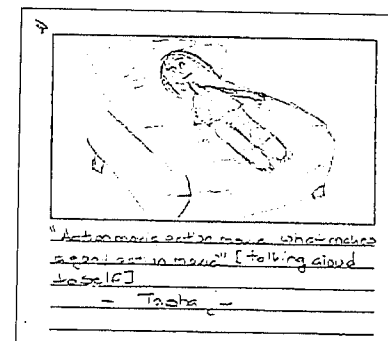


Figure 6.5 Courtney's Drawing of Herself in Bed (Panel 2 of 64)



Figure 6.6 Courtney's Video of That Scene

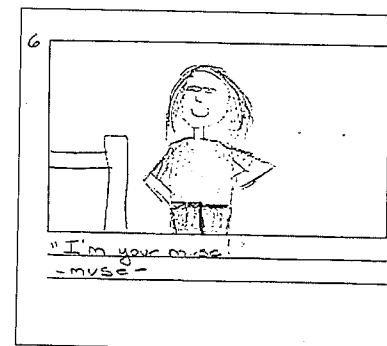


Figure 6.7 Courtney's Drawn Introduction of Her "Muse" (Panel 6 of 64)

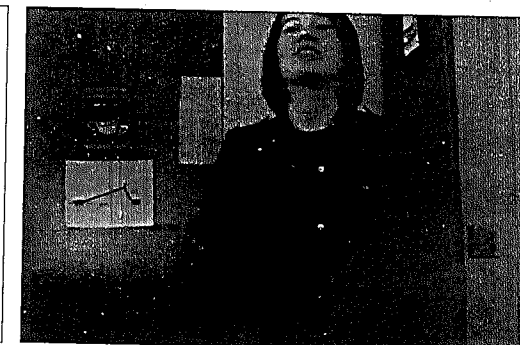


Figure 6.8 Courtney's Muse as She Appears the Video

write/design assignment

Drafting Your Mock-Up or Storyboard

Are you creating a static, visually based project that would need a mock-up? Or are you creating a temporally based project such as a video, an audio project, or an animation that would be better served by a storyboard? Decide which method will work best for your text and begin drafting! Refer back to your genre conventions checklist and your conceptualizing documents/drawings from Chapter 3 to make sure you have included all major design features (or have purposefully *not* included them). Also keep in mind the guidelines for mock-ups and storyboards from earlier in this chapter, and make sure you've included everything you need for planning your project and for helping others understand what you are going to compose.

The Feedback Loop

After you've completed your mock-up or storyboard, you'll want to use it to get feedback on your project. Feedback can happen throughout the process and often results in multiple revisions. This process is rarely linear and is often referred to as a loop. That is, you share your project, receive feedback, make revisions and move forward, and then receive more feedback, continuing on until you and/or the stakeholders (ideally both!) are satisfied. You can also participate in others' feedback loops: your fellow students or colleagues may ask you to give feedback on their early work.

Finding out what your audience sees at this stage will forecast whether your design draft will successfully match what they want, need, and expect from the finished project. If your current plan isn't working, the feedback you receive should help you make changes to the draft and re-present it until the draft is on the right track for its rhetorical situation. You don't want to start composing the project itself if you're not sure it will suit the rhetorical situation. It's *much* easier to change a mock-up or storyboard than to change a finished multimodal project, so take advantage of your feedback loop.

When you give feedback on someone else's design concept, you will want to consider a range of questions, such

as those we listed in the Mock-Ups and Storyboards sections of this chapter, so as to ensure that the writer/designer's design choices are suitable for the rhetorical situation.

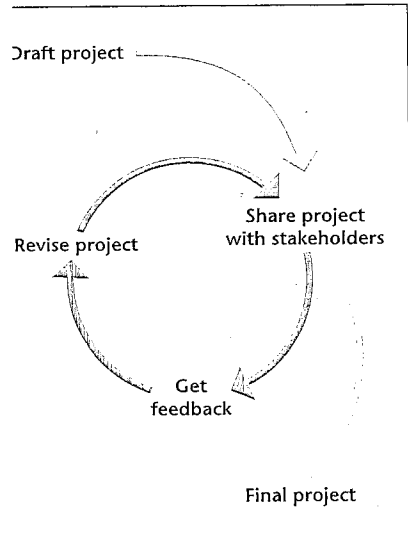


Figure 6.9 The Feedback Loop

CASE STUDY

Using the Feedback Loop

A graduate student in fine arts digital media was asked to design a cover for *Ink Magazine*, a literary magazine that describes itself as “fostering access to emerging and experimental poetry and prose, publishing the brightest and most promising writers for the most adventurous reader.” The designer contemplated the rhetorical situation. The **purpose** of this text was to serve as an eye-catching

cover for an edgy literary magazine, so that the magazine would stand out among the other literary journals (**genre**) displayed on a bookfair table or store bookshelf (**context**). *Pank* also uses the cover image as a digital advertisement for the issue itself, which is another **context** the designer had to consider. For example, the editors of *Pank* change the magazine's Facebook icon to the issue cover for the run of that issue, and they promote the issue by posting the cover image in their Facebook followers' feeds. The cover needed to be simple so that it would stand out at a range of sizes and in a variety of media, yet it also needed to meet the needs of the intended **audience**: those who enjoy literary magazines and think of themselves as being on the cutting edge of literary arts.

The editor of the journal provided the designer with two possible photographs, both taken by artist Elena Duff, along with some information about the journal itself. The designer carefully considered this information and then designed four mock-ups (see Figs. 6.10–6.13).



Figure 6.10 Pank Mock-Up #1



Figure 6.11 Pank Mock-Up #2



Figure 6.12 Pank Mock-Up #3

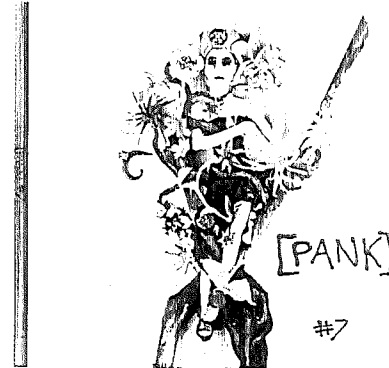


Figure 6.13 Pank Mock-Up #4

After sharing the mock-ups with the editorial board (the stakeholders), the editor sent this email to the designer:

Word back from all the editors is overwhelmingly positive, but with a strong preference for the second of the two girl/hair designs. While we like the playfulness of the other two designs, they feel a bit too disorganized/graffiti-like for our intended aesthetic. The hair designs feel a bit more serious while still keeping an edgy sensibility. The second of the two feels the most polished to us, and we like that it helps to emphasize the journal name itself. I'm wondering if I can see 2 or 3 variations on the theme, leaving the image(s) as is, but playing with the typography a bit? We'll choose a final design from this next round.

While most of the designs didn't make the cut, the designer was now able to focus on mock-up #2 (Fig. 6.11) and offered the editor a range of different typefaces for that design. The stakeholders eventually decided on the cover shown in Figure 6.14. As this example illustrates, designing a mock-up usually involves creating several options and playing around with design combinations to get a sense of what might work best for your text's rhetorical situation. Your first design choice is most often not the best or only way to get your multimodal point across.



Figure 6.14 Final Pank Cover

write/design assignment

Getting Feedback

Present your mock-up or storyboard to your instructor or other stakeholders for feedback. Presentation may be formal (presenting to a client) or informal (conferencing with a tutor or workshoping with classmates), depending on your writing situation. Research the requirements for your presentation situation and prepare accordingly. (This may be your pitch in Chapter 3.)

Be able to say why you've made the design choices you have—for example, you might explain that you chose the color scheme and navigation system for your Web site mock-up to match the interests of the site's intended audience, or that the nontraditional sequence of scenes in your storyboard is crucial to your text's purpose.

Refer to the checklists in the Mock-Ups and Storyboards sections to determine the areas you might want your reviewers to focus on, and provide reviewers with your genre checklists (appropriate) as they review your documents. If your stakeholders or colleagues offer feedback, assess that feedback for its usefulness in relation to your project's rhetorical situation, and revise your mock-up or storyboard accordingly.

Making Sure You Have What You Need

After you create your final storyboard or mock-up, you'll want to go back to your list of assets and sources and make sure it contains everything you'll need.

Assets

The following questions can help you plan for gathering and editing your assets, which you will do as part of the final Write/Design assignment for this chapter.

- Which assets do you need to spend time creating or editing in order to prepare them for your project? For example, you may need to capture video clips, crop sound files, or visually manipulate images.
- What hardware (cameras, sound recording equipment, markers, paper) and software (sound editing software, photo manipulation software, etc.) do you need access to in order to turn your mock-up or storyboard into a reality?
- How much time will it take to get these assets ready for your project? As with any project, especially ones utilizing digital

technology, remember that you will almost certainly need some extra time to troubleshoot.

For instance, Courteney went back to her assets list and created the chart below to make sure she'd covered everything. In the "Needs" column she listed all the assets and other materials she needed for her project; in the "Solutions" column she figured out how to get them. Working from this chart, she made sure her room was clean, asked her actor friends for help in advance, and made sure the camera's battery was charged well before she set out to film anything.

Courteney's Assets Chart

Needs	Solutions
Bedroom setting	Use my bedroom when roommate is in class
Narrator (actress)	Me
Muse (actress)	Sarah, my friend in the theater department
Release form for actress	Get a sample copy from instructor; print out before filming with Sarah
Additional research on genre features of action movies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • which movies I want to use • how I will find/get them • credible sources to cite (either linguistic or multimodal) to support my analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I own <i>The Dark Knight</i>, <i>Inception</i>, <i>Star Wars</i>, and <i>The Matrix</i> • I want to get copies (Netflix?) of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> trilogy and <i>Terminator 2</i> • I will create an annotated bibliography of five print and multimodal sources (per my teacher's assignment requirements)
Video camera	Check this out from the school library (what are its hours?)
Video editing program for PC	I can't use the Mac lab at school because I work during open hours, so I'll use my laptop, which has Movie Maker on it

Timeline

Collecting assets sometimes takes longer than an author has planned for in his or her proposal timeline, whether because equipment or actors become unavailable or because deadlines for other projects and meetings interrupt the author's work. It's not unusual to have to repeatedly revisit a project timeline to make adjustments for different obstacles and constraints. Before collecting assets, authors should ask themselves these questions:

- Is this timeline still manageable? Think backwards from the project's due date and include any major milestones (internal,

personally imposed deadlines or external, instructor- or client-based deadlines) that you need to meet.

- Are there any logistics you need to keep in mind as you proceed, such as computer lab hours or instructional technology check-out limits?

HOW WE MADE SNOW FALL

A Q&A with the New York Times team

The New York Times' astonishing Snow Fall: The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek, launched in the final days of 2012, capped a year of extraordinary work in interactive journalism, both at the Times and in newsrooms around the world. In the six days after Snow Fall's launch on December 20th, 2012, it had received more than 3.5 million page views and 2.9 million visitors, nearly a third of whom were new visitors to the Times website.

January 1, 2013

By Steve Duenes, Erin Kissane, Andrew Kueneman, Jacky Myrin, Graham Roberts, Catherine Spangler

25 Comments



Figure 6.15 Timelines for Complex Collaborations

Professionals collaborated for more than a year to make the *New York Times*' "Snow Fall" multimedia project happen. Read their process reflection at bedfordstmartins.com/writerdesigner

write/design assignment

Gathering Your Assets

Revisit your source list from Chapter 4 and your proposal (with your timeline) from Chapter 4 to make a list of everything you'll need to compose your project: assets, tools, people to help you, etc. Use Courteney's two-column approach, listing what you need in one column and where and how you'll get it in the other. Remember to follow the categorizing and file-naming guidelines from Chapter 5.

Your Project

Now that you have all of your assets gathered, it's time to make a rough cut of your multimodal project. A **rough cut** is one step beyond your mock-up or storyboard of your project: it's not your final draft, but you'll have your assets placed approximately where you need them in something resembling the program or technology you'll use to create your final project. Sometimes a rough cut is referred to as a prototype. Which term you use depends on what medium you're working in: *rough cut* tends to be used with timeline-based projects such as videos or audio texts, while *prototype* is more often used with code-based projects such as Web sites and software programs. In either case, this is a stage at which you can stop, step back from your project, and see whether it's all making enough sense for you to proceed as planned. That scene seemed like a good idea in your storyboard, but does it work on video? If not, your rough cut will let you know in time for you to figure out what, where, and how you need to revise so that the text *does* accomplish its purpose once everything is edited together cleanly.

Figure 7.1 Rough Cut of a Frog Sculpture

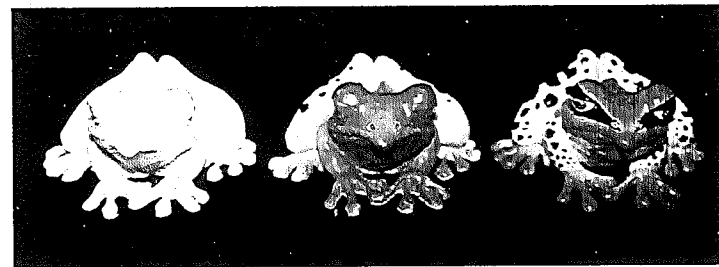
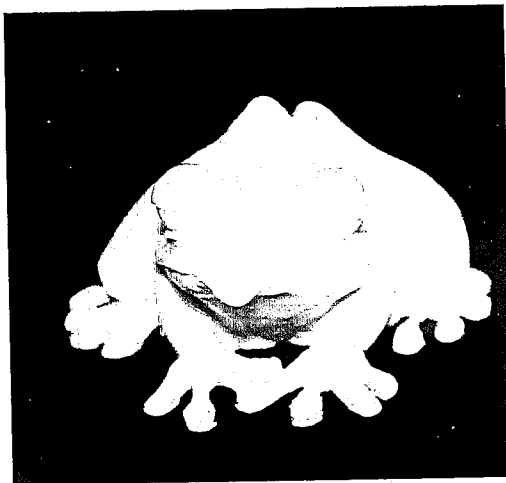


Figure 7.2 The Stages of Drafting, Frog-Style

Planning Your Rough Cut

Rough cuts are usually missing significant elements such as background soundtracks (with audio projects), transitions and intertitles (video projects), navigation (Web sites), permanent graphics (posters), and so on. In addition, rough cuts shouldn't include tightly edited assets, because feedback on your rough cut might indicate that you need to revise your project in a different direction. If you've cut your video down to a ten-second clip and then reviewers tell you they'd like to see a little more of it, you're out of luck. You want to have enough content left in your assets to be able to add different shots or material to your revised project if your reviewers suggest such changes. The following two lists include some examples of the *roughness* we mean when we talk about rough cuts.

Static Projects (Posters, Flyers, Brochures, Statues, etc.)

- The layout (spacing, alignment, number of columns, placement of headings, etc.) has been roughly determined. A draft of the written text or dummy copy has been placed on the document.
- Visual elements (photos, illustrations, logos, etc.) have been edited for size and placed on the document.
- Fonts, text sizes, and color schemes have been selected to provide a consistent look to the document.
- The project is available in a document/page layout program (e.g., Word, InDesign, Publisher, etc.) or in printed form (to test color) but not necessarily in the final output format (e.g., a PDF file).



3 A Sample Rough Cut

cut of a video Cheryl is making has all the static photos and animated screen captures placed in the video project timeline (see the upper left-hand corner). The sources used in the lower right-hand corner. Cheryl still has to add titles, a voice-over, and transitions between the visuals, but this version of the video is appropriate for a rough cut review, and others can watch in the preview window (in the upper right-hand corner).

Interactive/Animated Projects (Videos, Audio Projects, Web Sites, Presentations, Performances, etc.)

- All major pages, slides, screens or scripts, and/or blocking and settings have been found or created.
- Found or original multimedia assets have been edited for purpose and length:
 - graphics are cropped, compressed, and placed;
 - audio and video assets have been edited into smaller two- or three-minute (or two- or three-second) segments, cut down from those twenty-minute blah-blah-blahs of unnecessary footage you captured in order to get *just the right shot*;
 - ripped digital videos have been downloaded, and irrelevant portions have been edited out.
- Navigation/organization is in place but may not be linked yet

yet implemented it; with audio/video, you have rough edits in a timeline-based editing program).

- The draft is available for rough cut feedback in an editing program, off-line, or in an off-site workshop location.

Are you working on a type of project that isn't listed above? If so, what kind of project is it, and what elements of the project would be useful to include in a rough cut? In what program or technology will your rough cut be viewed?

Process!

write/design assignment

Rough Cut Feedback

Create a rough cut of your project. Have a colleague (not someone from your group) look at it to make sure nothing sticks out as odd, out of place, inaudible, nonsensical, etc. Remember, this is just a rough version of your project. The roughly edited assets should tell enough of the story or argument for your feedback loop to catch what (if anything) doesn't belong and what still may need to be added.

Moving from Rough Cut to Rough Draft

The difference between a rough cut and a **rough draft** is that in a rough draft all the assets should be finely edited and in place so that the project will work without any intervention by the author. That is, while your rough cut didn't have to work—it was a prototype of what you *hoped* would work—your rough draft should be usable in the technology and the medium that you will eventually distribute your project in.

How do you know whether your project works? Start by testing it yourself to see how easily an audience will be able to navigate and make sense of your text. You can gather useful information on how functional your project is and fix errors before the project goes to your audience. This is like proofreading an essay: the paper draft is done and you think it's ready to be turned in, but you know your teacher will catch

Usability Testing by Any Other Name

Throughout this book, we've referred to the feedback loop as a method for checking your work with your stakeholders. But you may be familiar with other names for this process, such as *workshopping* or *usability testing*. Workshops are usually considered a process that happens within a writing class and are a valuable part of the writing, design, and revision process. But since this book focuses on real-world projects, our feedback loop is more analogous to usability testing, which is a term you'd hear in technical writing and other professional circles. Usability testing asks real users—those people who are the target audience of your project—to perform certain tasks with your materials and report on their experiences. Since we suspect that users of this book are somewhere between the writing classroom and the professional world (if not in both!), we use *feedback loop* as a nice compromise. But really these terms all mean the same thing.

some places where you are missing transitions or have misspellings; so you print out the paper and read it through to try to catch those issues before turning it in. Preparing and testing the rough draft of your multimodal project has the same purpose. Here are some things to check for as you move your project from a rough cut to a rough draft.

- All written content has been finalized, edited, and proofread.
- All visual and aural elements (photos, illustrations, logos, videos, audio clips, etc.) have been edited in the appropriate software to their exact lengths or sizes and converted to the correct formats and resolutions, and they have been placed in their exact locations within the project.
- Fonts, text sizes, and color schemes have been implemented consistently throughout the document.
- Styles (when appropriate) have been used, and style guides have been followed.
- Animations (title screens, visual transitions, object movement, etc.) have been edited, synced for appropriate duration on-screen, and placed in their final locations in the project.
- Color photocopies of all visual elements have been printed at the quality needed.
- Soundtracks or other whole-project media elements have been edited for appropriate volume, added to the timeline, and synced to the individual scenes or navigation.
- Navigation or movement within the project (e.g., prezi path, slideshow autoplay, Web menu, performance blocking, etc.) has been created and finalized.
- Nothing is broken (e.g., images are in place, links work, videos don't stall, programs don't crash, etc.).
- The project has been exported from its editing program (e.g., Word, InDesign, Publisher, Movie Maker, iMovie, Audacity, Dreamweaver, KompoZer, etc.) into the final output format (e.g., converted to a PDF, MOV, or MP3 file; moved onto a Web server; etc.).

Preparing for Rough Draft Feedback

A useful review provides feedback on an author's in-progress (but hopefully nearly completed) work. When stakeholders provide feedback they often intuitively understand the rhetorical situation and

Interactive/Animated Projects (Video, Audio, Website, Presentation, Performance, etc.)

- All major pages/slides/screens or scripts/blocking and settings found or created
- Found or original multimedia assets have been edited for purpose and length
 - o graphics are cropped, compressed, and placed
 - o audio and video have been cut into smaller several-minute (or second) chunks, not those 20-minute blah-blah-blahs of unnecessary footage you captured in order to get the right shot.
 - o ripped digital videos have been downloaded and irrelevant portions have been edited out.
- Navigation/organization is in place but may not be linked yet (e.g., with a Prezi, you might have the path in mind but not implemented yet; with audio/video, you have rough edits in a timeline-based editing program)
- Draft is available for rough cut feedback in editing program, offline (viewable through any web browser), or in offsite workshop locations.

Process!

What kind of project are you working on that isn't listed

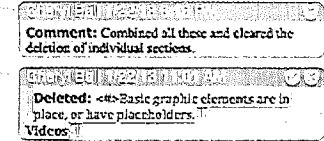


Figure 7.4 A Rough Draft in Microsoft Word

We had plenty of rough drafts for this book—more than twenty, in fact. Each time that we made revisions (using our editors as our feedback loop), we used the Track Changes feature in Word (as shown in this example). Once our editors approved the revisions, we cleared them out (by accepting them) and continued revising *other* sections that still needed work.

genre expectations of a text. Sometimes, however, reviewers don't know how to evaluate a project because they are not familiar with the particular situation or genre or because they are used to working on other kinds of projects. You can help a reader understand whether your project hits (or doesn't hit) the mark by providing them with a summary of the project's rhetorical situation; your summary should address some of the following questions:

- Who is the **intended audience** for this piece, and what rhetorical moves does the designer make to appeal to these readers/listeners/viewers/users? What suggestions do you have for further strengthening this approach or for better attending to the target audience?
- How well is the **purpose** of the project conveyed through its organization/navigation? Is there a coherent

How Will Readers Interact with Your Project?

As an author, you should be able to accommodate your readers interacting with whatever delivery method they might encounter your text through, as you prepare for them to give you feedback. Will they view your text on-screen? If so, what kind of screen will they view it on—computer, mobile handheld, tablet? Where will they view it? In the library, in their home office, in a classroom, on a train? Will they view it over a wireless or an Ethernet connection? Having them document this information for you will also help you troubleshoot any viewing issues.

message for the audience to follow? Do the authors offer some kind of commentary (the “so what” of the argument or story)? What suggestions do you have for adding or deleting content for the sake of clarity?

- How credible do you find the **sources** used for the project’s argument? Were there any sources you found problematic? If so, which ones and why, and what would you suggest be used in their place? Were there sources missing that you’d suggest for the project?
- Are the **design choices** (emphasis, contrast, organization, alignment, and proximity) used in this project appropriate? If some seemed inappropriate in relation to the rhetorical situation, what suggestions would you make for revising?
- Do the **mode and media** choices contribute to the overall purpose and meaning conveyed by the project? Are there any you would add or delete, and if so, why?
- Does the project match expected **genre conventions**? If not, does it break those conventions in productive ways that serve the text’s rhetorical situation?

Prepare a summary to provide to your reviewers, making sure that you address the questions above. Consider whether the summary should be delivered as a presentation, in writing, or in some other medium.

Providing Feedback as a Stakeholder

While you may be eager to hear commentary about your own project, providing feedback to your colleagues can be equally valuable in terms of helping you think about different and successful approaches to multimodal projects. As a reviewer of someone else’s work, you have three main tasks:

1. to **read the text** from the perspective of a particular audience/rhetorical situation for which that text is intended (the summary of rhetorical situation and genre conventions is intended to assist readers with understanding this perspective),
2. to **evaluate** whether the text is successful at meeting the criteria/expectations required by that rhetorical situation, and
3. to **provide constructive feedback** to the author based on the text’s (in)effectiveness.

Reading the Text

When reviewing a text, you should begin by familiarizing yourself with the rhetorical situation and genre expectations of the project. A summary or checklist like the one we recommended you create in the Process! activity on page 112 can be useful if you are unfamiliar with the genre, intended audience, or other elements of the rhetorical situation.

You may need time to figure out how the text works and why it works the way it does, and to discover whether there are elements of what the author has designed that you like (or don’t like). Being an active reviewer—trying to figure out what the author’s reasoning was for a particular design choice or rhetorical decision—will aid you in providing constructive feedback. In other words, don’t just assume an author did it wrong. (Remember our lolcat from the opening chapter?)

Evaluating the Text

As you read, take notes on how and why you respond to the piece. This is where the summary of the rhetorical situation and genre conventions created by the author will serve as a touchstone for evaluating the project. As a reader, do you feel that the project meets your needs and expectations? Does it miss anywhere? For each question or comment that you pose to the author, you should be able to include discussion of “why” and “how” in your review.

Providing Constructive Feedback

In preparing your review from your reading notes, you should identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, summarizing your thoughts about how well the piece meets the rhetorical situation. Discuss how the piece meets (or doesn’t meet) the project criteria, and provide formal and constructive feedback, including revision suggestions whenever possible. In many cases, rough draft reviews (rather than rough cut reviews) are written up and provided to the authors so that they can refer back to the review comments throughout the revision process. Here are some tips for writing a useful review:

- Use the beginning of the review to summarize the project’s purpose back to the author, which helps the author see whether you understood the piece in the way that he or she intended or in a different way.
- Be generous in your reading, and be helpful and productive in explaining what’s not working in the piece and how you think

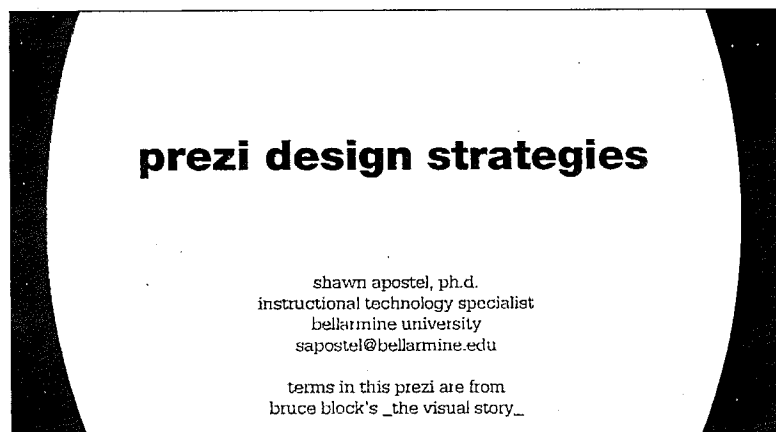


Figure 7.5 Feedback on a Presentation

Cheryl watched this prezi by Shawn Apostel and recorded audio of herself giving him feedback. Visit bedfordstmartins.com/writerdesigner to watch the prezi, listen to the recording, and analyze Cheryl's feedback.

the author should revise the project. Use a tone that will help the author take in your advice rather than just be offended by it. Help the author recognize what is working so that he or she can build on those positive aspects in revising.

- The review should usually address revision suggestions in a hierarchical way, moving from the biggest issues to the smallest issues. Small issues are sometimes left out of the review if big-picture issues overwhelm the project. For example, it may not be important that a project has some grammatical errors if it's not hitting the mark as far as its overall purpose.
- Alternately, a review might be structured as a reader-response—that is, it might follow the reader's chronological progression through the text. But summaries at the beginning and end of the review are still helpful in contextualizing the reviewer's minute-by-minute commentary.
- Always explain why and how a project is or isn't working well, and make sure that your revision suggestions are clear, even if your revision ideas are more like suggestions than must-dos.

write/design assignment

Rough Draft Feedback

Ask your client, classmates, or instructor to review your multimodal project, and offer your services as a reviewer in turn. Before you begin, ask yourself (or your client) what the rhetorical situation of their project is.

- Where does the review take place?
- As the author, am I expected to be present during the review?
 - If so, what are the presentation expectations? Is it formal or informal? What is the expected attire?
 - If not, how will I provide reviewers with my draft?
- What technologies are available for them to review my project? For me to review their project?
- What's the timeline for reviewing? Will the review of each other's work take place at the same time? Do we each have a few days to review the work? What's the deadline?
- In what medium are the reviews to be conducted? If multimedia reviews are acceptable, the author able to view reviews that are made in proprietary programs?

Using Feedback to Revise

Now that you have received feedback on your rough draft from your instructor, classmates, and/or stakeholders, it's time to evaluate the suggestions and make plans for revision. Try to consider *why* reviewers responded in the way that they did and whether there are changes you can make so that you get the kind of reaction you were intending. For instance, in the example we discussed in Chapter 6 (see pp. 100–102) the *Pank Magazine* cover designer had to revise some of his original design choices, based on stakeholder feedback, to achieve the rhetorical goals for his project. Remember, the reviewers had said this about the draft shown in Figure 7.6:

The hair designs feel a bit more serious while still keeping an edgy sensibility. The second of the two feels the most polished to us, and we like that it helps to emphasize the journal name itself. I'm wondering if I can see 2 or 3 variations on the theme, leaving the image(s) as is, but playing with the typography a bit?

As the designer revised his mock-up to emphasize the name of the magazine, he aligned the image on the right and framed the logo *[Pank]* in the doll's hair. In his final cover, shown in Figure 7.7, *[Pank]* is also emphasized through the contrast between the heavy



Figure 7.6 *Pank Magazine Cover Draft*

The stakeholders wanted the designer to work from this draft of the *Pank* cover.

black font and the beige background. He also aligned the issue number in the curl of the bracket itself (draw an imaginary line from the top of the *n* in *no.* up to the logo and you'll see how the issue number is positioned). This helped to create proximity between the journal's name and the issue number, thus establishing a unified appearance so that the audience might more easily apprehend what they are looking at. The designer also worked to keep the cover edgy through the use of this photograph. The image creates an ethereal, eye-catching effect, and the fact that the doll seems to be reaching for the title of the magazine makes it even more appealing (and truthfully, a little creepy!).

Creating a Revision Plan

After reviewing all of the feedback you've gotten, you should assess which revisions are important given your project goals, noting that sometimes reviewers have bad days, or they don't understand your



Figure 7.7 *Final Pank Cover, after Revisions Based on Editorial Feedback*

rhetorical situation (because they aren't the intended audience). But don't let yourself be fooled into thinking that you are always right and that your project doesn't need any revisions. If a majority of your reviewers indicated that your font choice will give your audience the willies or that the tone of your script is condescending, they are probably right. In addition, if a majority of your reviewers didn't mention a particular problem, but one reviewer made a *really good argument* for revising and backed it up with evidence from your text and your rhetorical situation summary, it's likely that the suggestion is a good one, and you'll need to consider addressing it as well. Here are some questions to help you determine which revisions you need to make:

- What were the strengths of my draft that I should be sure to keep?
- What design choices were problematic, and how can I revise these?

- What rhetorical choices seemed out of place in my draft, and how can I better attend to my audience, purpose, context, and genre?
- What multimodal elements can I add or revise to strengthen the rhetorical effect and credibility of my project?
- What are the most important changes I need to consider as I revise?
- Given the time and technology constraints of this project, what can I reasonably revise before the next due date? What else would need revision that I don't have time to complete but *should* complete, given enough time and resources?

write/design assignment

Revising Your Project

Pay close attention to the feedback you've received and the revision plan you've created, and use your rough cut into your final project. Your task is to make recommended changes and add the finishing touches on your project so that it accomplishes all of your rhetorical goals. You will want to ensure that all of the multimodal elements you've included are purposeful and support the credibility of your project and that your audience can understand and navigate the text as you intend. Then test your project by using it in a venue as close to its final publication or presentation location as possible. Tweak and revise as necessary, until you're satisfied the text does its rhetorical work and/or you're out of time.

Putting Your Project to Work

As you work toward revising and finalizing your project, this chapter will give you some additional considerations to make sure all of your hard work pays off. You want to be sure that your final product functions effectively for its context and audience. You'll need to think about how to distribute your project—whether in print, online, or on some kind of portable media format (DVD, USB drive, etc.)—and how to ensure that clients or future users of your project can understand your rhetorical and design decisions if they plan to continue developing your materials. Throughout this chapter, we offer tips for making your project **sustainable**, so that it will endure through changes in technology and (lack of) human interaction, particularly after you have delivered your project to its stakeholders and are no longer responsible for maintaining it.



Figure 8.1 Planning for Down the Road

It's good practice to plan for the future of your multimodal project well before the project is due.