



2008 Shorts online Student film festival Panel feedback

In 2008 student film entries competed for prizes in the following six categories:

Best student film K-2

Highly commended 3-6

Best student film 3-6

Best original screenplay

Best student film 7-10

Best animation

The judging panel included six people representing the perspectives of students, teachers, experts in the fields of journalism and film making and members of the Priority Schools Programs and Equity Coordination Unit, State Office.

The panel was impressed by the high quality of the entries and agreed there was a need to recognise the creative cineliteracy efforts of school teams. The panel identified 'favourites' as an additional way of recognising student cineliteracy achievements.

In 2008 the panel has provided additional comments on film entries to support school communities to continue their cineliteracy focus as a strategy to improve student engagement in learning and literacy outcomes.

Panel comments on the 2008 Shorts online student film festival entries

	Winners	Panel favourites			
Best student film Years K-2	Green sprinkles <i>Albury North Public School</i>	Tracey 'meats' Franklin <i>Narrandera Public School</i>	Monster time <i>Campbelltown East Public School</i>	Ebanezer goes back in time <i>Hume Public School</i>	Meany witch <i>Campbelltown East Public School</i>
Best student film Years 3-6	Ben's Revenge Part one <i>Campbellfield Public School</i>	Portal's library <i>Athelstane Public School</i>	Bully buddies <i>Kempsey West Public School</i>	Lizzy Dizzy <i>Mingoola Public School</i>	Two front teeth <i>Mingoola Public School</i>
Best student film General Years 7-10	Witches' cauldron Sarah <i>Redfern High School</i>	Assembly of the dead James <i>Meehan High School</i>	Storm <i>Wollumbin High School</i>	The hairdresser <i>Wollumbin High School</i>	Snowgirl <i>Wollumbin High School</i>
Highly commended Years 3-6	You are not alone <i>Marrickville Public School</i>	Glenlyon Dam <i>Mingoola Public School</i>	Indiana Bones <i>Hume Public School</i>		
Best animation 2008	Tracey 'meats' Franklin <i>Narrandera Public School</i>	Storm <i>Wollumbin High School</i>	Payback <i>Wollumbin High School</i>	Bullies at wildlife school <i>Albury North Public School</i>	Monster time <i>Campbelltown East Public School</i>
Best original screenplay 2008	Portal's library <i>Athelstane Public School</i>	Tracey 'meats' Franklin <i>Narrandera Public School</i>	Two front teeth <i>Mingoola Public School</i>	Ebanezer goes back in time <i>Hume Public School</i>	Bully buddies <i>Kempsey West Public School</i>

Best student film Years K-2

Green sprinkles - *Albury North Public School*

This film entry follows the protagonist who hates green sprinkles on bread and then finally learns to love them. This was an interesting film poem. The use of the hand, the box, the fox, the tree and the dancing girls were both innovative and very entertaining. The production team created some terrific sets and locations including the car, the boat and the theatre. Costuming was also excellent, particularly the sailors' outfits. The panel commented on the enthusiastic performance from all the actors and the effective coordination of sound, action and camera coverage.

Tracey 'meats' Franklin - Narrandera Public School

The panel really enjoyed this animation which included a variety of scenes in a range of locations, including the butcher shop. The students used layered pixilation creatively in this animation to demonstrate the clock moving. The script writing effectively established and developed the love story between Tracey and the butcher. The audio mix of the different voices and the background atmosphere was clever. The use of the over the shoulder shot in one of the scenes was very innovative. The building of tension was well demonstrated as Tracey prepared for her restaurant opening. This K-2 entry demonstrated sophistication in scriptwriting, animation, audio mixing and character development.

Monster time - Campbelltown East Public School

The panel really enjoyed the monster narrative, particularly the use of sets, including the house and the street. There was excellent use of the voiceover with a very original script. This animation used still photography effectively. The coordination of the sound and visual effects and use of the set, props, lighting and plasticine manipulation was very interesting. The choice of shots and camera techniques were appropriate for the telling of the narrative.

Ebanezer goes back in time - Hume Public School

The panel really enjoyed this short film, particularly the innovative use of close up shots of the feet walking through the play equipment. This technique helped the audience identify with and understand the bird character. Time was skillfully manipulated through the use of the monochrome techniques in the flashback sequence. The panel commented on the excellent script narrative and choice of shots, shot sizes, and the production group's ability to tell the narrative in time sequences and dissolves. In future projects more time could be spent on developing the ending so the audience is clear about the conclusion of the narrative. All the actors appeared very committed and there was a real sense of the characters in their locations.

Meany witch - Campbelltown East Public School

Meany witch made excellent use of close up shots to depict the characters. There was a good choice of shot sizes to tell the narrative. The use of the photo backdrop was very effective. Perhaps in future projects more time could be spent on the clarity of the story and exploring text to extend the narrative. The panel commented on the effectiveness of the Beeman who gets all of the bees to sting the witch and scare her away.

Best student film Years 3-6

Ben's Revenge Part one - Campbellfield Public School

The panel commented upon the strength of the scriptwriting in this narrative. The panel felt a strong sense of empathy for Ben and his rejection by the other students at school. There was an excellent choice of shots including the use of close up shots, high angle and low angle shots. The content and the language were used appropriately in creating a convincing narrative. The panel felt this was a very original and compelling script with effective use of the guitar musical underscoring. All the actors played their characters very well. The panel recognised the strong performance delivered by the young actor playing Ben.

Portal's library - Athelstane Public School

The panel commented on the strong scriptwriting of this narrative which suggested that books were being replaced by computers. Tension was created in an interesting way through the use of parallel time as the two girls enter the portal to discover and communicate through the computer and then return back to their original location. This was an interesting application of the three-act writing structure, with effective time dissolves and visual effects. Set, props, lighting and costume were used very effectively. The panel encourages the production team to use a higher resolution for clearer picture quality in future projects. In addition, more close-up shots of the characters would assist the audience to sense what each character is thinking and feeling. The panel enjoyed the performance from each of the actors in their new world.

Bully buddies - Kempsey West Public School

The panel commented upon the interesting dialogue and scriptwriting in this narrative. All members of the panel were engaged by the bully girl's behaviour and her relationship with the boy. There was strong use of the various sets in the kitchen, the office and the playground along with good use of props, costume and lighting. Lighting in the interior scenes was used very effectively. The camera control and audio capture were very effective. The content and the language were appropriate for the narrative. The panel commented on the strong performance of each of the actors. In a future film project the team might like to explore the use of close ups of each of the characters to help the audience gain a stronger sense of what the characters are thinking and feeling.

Lizzy Dizzy - Mingoola Public School

The panel really enjoyed this animated film, which contained a strong narrative and an up beat ending. This film used voiceover from the Lizzy character as she farewelled her Sydney home and friends before travelling to Mingoola and winning a horse riding event. This short film is to be commended in its use of a range of sets and props (including dolls, horses, a four wheel drive and a horse float) to assist in telling the story. The panel appreciated the character arc inside this

narrative revealing a personal account of moving from the city to the country.

Two front teeth - *Mingoola Public School*

The panel enjoyed this re-enactment of running, crashing and losing two front teeth. The production team chose to use still images, combined with voiceover shots of the action. The narrative was very clear to the panel with an excellent selection of still shots to tell the story.

Best student film Years 7-10

Witches' cauldron - *Sarah Redfern High School*

The panel really enjoyed this narrative of four women led by the witch Hecate in their creation of spells to fix on a male character who is never fully revealed. The panel particularly commented on the tension that was established and the strong sense of character. The vocal delivery and editing were excellent. Props were used with great dramatic effect to convey the evil potion making. The choices of shot sizes, camera movement including smooth camera tracking was both sophisticated and effective. There was some discussion among the panel members about the originality of the script, which was taken from Shakespeare's Macbeth. The panel finally decided that this was a very original screen script adaptation of Shakespeare's text. It is suggested, that in future, it might be interesting to explore an original screen script concept.

Assembly of the dead - *James Meehan High School*

The panel really enjoyed this narrative of two girls entering a haunted hall and then exiting as zombies. The panel commented on the tension and the strong sense of character established through the dialogue and the action. There was excellent use of music and dialogue in the editing. Sets, costumes and make up were used to interesting effect. There were some excellent choices of shot sizes particularly in the dialogue sequence between the four girls. There was a strong sense of the three act narrative structure. Perhaps in a future project the production team might consider closer attention to the lighting levels. The panel enjoyed the screen production techniques and commented on the commitment and enthusiasm of the production team.

Storm - *Wollumbin High School*

The panel found this animation, where a tornado destroys the houses and trees in its path, very interesting. This animation raised existential and environmental questions. The music and effects were well recorded and edited. The use of the foot was interesting and reminiscent of Monty Python images.

The Hairdresser - Wollumbin High School

The panel really enjoyed this very funny animation of four characters visiting a hairdresser and their unhappy or unsatisfying experiences. Before and after shots of the faces and audio edits were used to create a very comic effect. The use of the footsteps and 'psycho' music and the medium close up shots that the production team chose were skillfully done. Perhaps the production team could have chosen a stronger three act resolution and explored more screen time to tell the narrative.

Snowgirl - Wollumbin High School

The panel appreciated this animation of the main character's boyfriend being taken by a glacier or snowdrift. The panel commented on the excellent use of music and of the emotional contact the audience established with the girl. In future projects it would be useful for the production team to explore and develop the narrative through the use of longer screen time.

Highly commended Years 3-6

You are not alone - Marrickville Public School

The panel really enjoyed this surreal treatment using animation. They were particularly impressed with the use of diverse languages through subtitles and the unexpected shot of snow in Sydney. The narrative was unusual and allowed for a free interpretation. In a future film the team is encouraged to explore different narrative styles and techniques. The panel really appreciated the commitment and enthusiasm of the production team in creating this very interesting screen experience.

Glenlyon Dam - Mingoola Public School

This was an excellent documentary - engaging and well detailed as it recounted the construction of the local dam. The panel was fascinated by the family story behind the dam construction which involved both the daughter and granddaughter of one of the builders of the dam. This informative documentary presented both the positive and negative experiences of the dam's construction. There was good use of voiceover and music. The panel was impressed by the extensive research that was involved in producing this documentary.

Indiana Bones and the Gorilla Bride - Hume Public School

The panel appreciated this narrative of a hero's journey, where Indiana saves the princess from the gorilla. There was interesting use of costumes, including the gorilla, the zombies, a princess and snake. The panel commented on the film's sense of fun, the quality of the acting and the production team's enthusiasm. A further edit would help to enhance the tension the narrative attempted to create.

Panel comments on other film entries

Ben's Revenge Part Two - Campbellfield Public School

Part two of the Ben's revenge sequence was great fun, particularly the jelly eating scene. The use of fast forward and slow motion techniques in the eating sequences was effective. Tension was established in the narrative with skilful use of group shots and single shots. It would have been interesting for both parts one and part two to be edited into one film entry to meet the time requirements. However, the panel really appreciated the efforts and commitment of the production team in exploring a range of film techniques in the telling of both narratives.

Celery - Albury North Public School

The panel enjoyed this animation which involved assembling different vegetables to create figures. The music and props were clear and bright with an interesting use of the wide shot of the assembling of the character. The panel felt that it was a very clever approach but perhaps a little too fast. The production team may want to consider playing out each body part attachment more slowly as it assembles onto the complete character.

A new pet - Albury North Public School

The panel appreciated this film about a trip to Melbourne Zoo to find a new pet using shots of animals, including a giraffe, a zebra, a kangaroo, and emu. The production team used still images of animals and rolling text to convey the story. In the future the production team might like to explore using a wider range of shots.

Bullies at wildlife school - Albury North Public School

The panel really appreciated this narrative using pixilation techniques about a lizard who wants to be friends with a spider, a beetle and other insects. The production team developed an anti-bullying theme in a very convincing way with the lizard eating lots of food and exercising, and eventually becoming bigger than the three bullies. The audience was challenged to consider whether the lizard would become a friend or the next bully? There was good use of voiceover, music and varying shot sizes as well as effective use of the set. In future film productions more attention could be paid to the varying sound levels.

Tiddalik the frog - Gunnedah Public School

The panel enjoyed this filmic poem where the frog drinks all the water and various animals try to make him laugh. This film presented some interesting voiceover using chorus work, plus the use of close shots of the characters. Whilst there was a little too much zooming and panning at times, the panel appreciated the

enthusiasm in the telling of this story.

Disaster at the beach - Campbelltown East Public School

The panel appreciated this film narrative with its important message about environmental damage through a focus on human waste and the impact on sea life. The panel appreciated the interesting approach to the claymation film techniques and responded to the energetic and enthusiastic concept, development, pre-production and production values in the screen project. Perhaps in future film projects the team might like to explore a clearer narrative structure, use of closer shots of the characters and action, and colour consistent claymation characters to assist the storytelling.

Holiday went wrong - Campbelltown East Public School

This was another interesting film narrative. Once again, some of these suggestions for improved production technique mentioned above apply to this film. The panel was a little confused with the locations and the mixed plasticine people. This affected the panel's understanding of the narrative a little but the team is encouraged to keep refining their cineliteracy skills.

Going, going, gone - Campbelltown East Public School

The panel really enjoyed this animation which explored deforestation. The car driving sequence was very impressive as well as the effect of the cut down trees. In the future the production team might like to focus on tighter control of the camera to ensure clarity in the focus of the shots. The panel appreciated the commitment and enthusiasm evident in this project. The production team might like to explore more screen time to tell the narrative.

Drink drive - Drake Public School

The panel appreciated the interesting approach to the 'stick figure' technique in the production of this animation about the dangers of drink driving. This was an introduction to animated frame methods. There were some good drawings and pixilation used in this animation. In future film projects the production team might like to explore a more detailed narrative structure and the use of closer shots of characters and action. Longer screen time would allow the team to explore narrative in greater detail.

Drugs - Drake Public School

Once again the panel enjoyed the stick figure treatment of this narrative with superimposed text on a green background. In the future the production team might like to explore the narrative in more detail.

Olympics - Canley Vale Public School

The panel appreciated this series of still drawings of basketball, weightlifting, diving, hurdles and other sports in an informative and bright presentation. The production team used a simple set as a background with human figures that were occasionally a little distorted. The panel appreciated the enthusiasm of the production team in creating this animation. Voiceover and music were used very effectively. In the future the production team might like to explore a more detailed sense of narrative with a three act structure of beginning, middle and end.

Couch potato Day - Kempsey Public School

The panel appreciated this live recording of the group shot talking to camera and the decisions they were making. There was some interesting group work in the use of wide shot with live audio. The voiceover mixing with live sound was a little problematic as well as the occasionally uneven camera movement. In a future project the team might like to explore using closer shots of the characters so the audience can gain a stronger sense of the thoughts and feelings of the characters.

History of Mingoola - Mingoola Public School

The panel really appreciated this documentary of the school from 1957 to 2007. This was an interesting treatment of stills with music in digital storytelling. In the future the production team might like to explore moving pictures inside the film narrative rather than sequences of still pictures. The panel really enjoyed the clear narrative structure of this documentary and the excellent use of voiceover.

e-Learning at Mingoola - Mingoola Public School

The panel thought this was an interesting documentary of three students learning in the computer lab. The film showed a range of different types of technology in use at Mingoola Public School including the interactive whiteboard, video conferencing, digital cameras and video cameras. Some interesting music was composed for this film along with the effective use of voiceover. In future productions it is suggested that more attention could be spent strengthening camera operation. It was clear that using technology made learning fun aspect for students

Purple people eater - Newling Public School

The panel enjoyed this narrative which incorporated a children's song with guitar, still pictures and drawings. Occasionally, it was difficult to hear the lyrics. The panel really enjoyed the students having fun and the use of costume to tell the narrative.

She's apples - Plattsburg Public School

The panel really appreciated this documentary exploring healthy eating and physical activity, which involved the use of voiceover accompanying moving still pictures. Some interesting writing was used here. In future film projects the production team might like to explore more controlled camera operation and less dependency on the repeated transitions of the frame widening out. The panel really enjoyed the commitment and enthusiasm from the production team.

Bad hair - Wollumbin Public School

The panel really appreciated this animation of three girls performing in a band during a rainstorm which results in their hair being completely messed up. This animation involved some layering of action, including the girls' movements on stage, the stage lights and the movement of the foreground audience. Musical effects were a strong feature of this entry. In future the production team might like to explore more screen time to tell their narrative.

Destination - Wollumbin Public School

The panel enjoyed this animation of a car travelling through space and the animation of the fish, the camel eating and a black hole. The panel commented on the sense of journey and the use of the three act structure of beginning, middle and end. This animation left the panel wondering about the purpose of the black hole.

Gabbo - Wollumbin Public School

The panel enjoyed this superhero story and the defeat of the two tribes that Gabbo meets. In future film projects the production team might like to explore more narrative information for the audience. The production team is encouraged to keep refining their cineliteracy skills.

Hoons - Wollumbin Public School

The panel enjoyed this car chase animation. This production team used a good sense of pace and some very interesting audio editing. In future projects the team might like to explore more time in the screen narrative.

Payback - Wollumbin Public School

The panel appreciated this animation involving five sports cars that compete with a monster truck which eventually devours all the cars. A stronger focus on the three act narrative structure would see the story line more strongly developed so that the audience has a clearer sense of why the truck is competing with the sports cars.

Roadside hopper - *Wollumbin Public School*

The panel appreciated this animation involving a car journeying along the road picking up six pieces of junk. There was some effective audio editing here. This was an interesting animation with a good sense of narrative structure including a strong conclusion.

Sunburn - *Wollumbin Public School*

This animation had a very strong message about global warming with strong references to the stars, the city, clouds, the sun which loses its sunglasses and the city burning. There was good use of music and skilful choice of shot sizes to tell the narrative. The production team is encouraged to explore more screen time to tell their screen narrative.

Show the birds - *Gunnedah Public School*

The panel enjoyed the film narrative containing stills of blackbirds and a boy. There was good use of the exterior park set and an interesting voiceover. Perhaps the voiceover was a little fast and it would be interesting to use a range of shots in addition to the aiming and zooming shots. The panel considered this an interesting effort in this medium.

How the kangaroo got its tail - *Gunnedah Public School*

The panel appreciated this entry which was mostly shot in a wide angle frame with some panning and zooming camera effects. In a future project the production team might like to focus more attention on the audio recording and treatment. The panel commented on the enthusiasm and concentration of the performers and the production team.

The emu cannot fly - *Gunnedah Public School*

The panel enjoyed this stills treatment of an Aboriginal myth. In future projects the production team might like to explore using moving film camera shots and a larger range of close up shots of the characters and action. The panel appreciated the commitment and enthusiasm of all the production team.

No, no little turtles - *Plattsburgh Public School*

The panel enjoyed this film treatment of a poem, involving a raccoon, a crocodile, an owl and the mother turtle, using text titles superimposed over the film images. There were some really interesting costumes. The voice recording was live and sometimes occasionally off-microphone. However, the panel appreciated the commitment and enthusiasm of the production team.

Chomp Burger Plop - Canley Vale Public School

The panel enjoyed this film treatment of a classroom anatomy lesson. There were some effective shot selections made in the telling of the story during a lunch break, with food entering the mouth and then an analysis of all the internal organs using diagrams. Music was used to add comedy and pace to the narrative.

Invasion of Outback - Hume Public School

The panel enjoyed this sci-fi film treatment of aliens on earth. There was some interesting dialogue used to develop this narrative. There was a strong sense of 'another world', particularly in the use of the kitchen. Strong features included the use of dialogue and music in the editing. A stronger focus on pre-production and storyboarding would add to the narrative and ensure a stronger ending.