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3.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Unit is to introduce you to the simple facts about editing for multimedia content. Multimedia is used immensely for children as it provides a unique way and platform to learn facts and concepts. The emphasis of this Unit would be to introduce you to the various concepts used in multimedia, i.e. animation, sound, story boarding and text. After reading this Unit you will be able to:

- understand what is meant by multimedia;
- distinguish how it differs from the printed text;
- follow the different aspects of multimedia, storyboard, video, images, sound etc;
- comprehend how to balance out between the various components of multimedia, both audio and video; and
- become equipped with the standards needed for the publishing industry.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Multimedia is one such information content that uses multiple forms of sensory learning. It involves both the auditory as well as the visual component of understanding. This is in great contrast to the written text that solely uses print, art and graphics. It is a correct amalgamation of text, video (that includes images and
animation) and audio (sound and music). Computers and other electronic devices such as TV, use multimedia content and they become the very important mediums through which the interaction between the viewer and the content takes place. The live multimedia allows for interaction between performer and performance and is used widely in theatre. One has to understand its definition which we will discuss in the next section.

3.2 WHAT IS MULTIMEDIA?

Technology is an effective tool that ensures greater learning. Multimedia is a unique form that uses multiple contexts. Unlike the written text, multimedia allows for interactive learning. This uses text, graphics, video, animation and sound to convey story lines and other learning concepts. Learning, thus, becomes richer and more meaningful. Interactive games are one example of multimedia. However, all multimedia does not ensure interaction like animation. It can be just entertaining and fun-filled. This is used while using fiction as the main content. According to Wikipedia, “the term multimedia refers to an electronically delivered combination of media including video, still images, audio, text in such a way that can be accessed interactively.” It greatly differs from books and it allows for greater productivity and interaction.

Check your progress 1

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.

1) Define multimedia.


3.2.1 Uses of multimedia

Multimedia is used in multiple situations. Before we analyze how to edit them we must understand its uses. Given below are the uses of multimedia.

- It is used in creative industries such as fine art, music, theatre and journalism.
- It is used for commerce and is used as a powerful tool in sales and advertisements. The attention of the viewer is really attracted through this medium.
- Interactive video games often use this interaction.
- This also assists education. Learning becomes more fun when multimedia interaction is used.
- Military and aeronautics make use of multimedia for educating and training of their personnel.
- Scientific research often uses this technology. Medical profession in particular makes ample use of this medium.
Animation is another very important aspect of multimedia. Animation is the art of capturing a series of individual movements whether on film or digital form. According to *The Complete Animation Course*, "It can be achieved using images drawn on cell, paper or any other medium; with clay figures or paper puppets or using computer generated images."

The editor should have certain basic skills while editing multimedia packages. These are:

- Knowledge of computers. Both Macintosh and Windows have many software that help in creating tools for the multimedia;
- Knowledge about photography;
- Should know skills about how best to depict a story with compelling characters having enough action maintaining children’s interest and suspense from beginning to end, maintaining decency in the content; and
- Should be capable of mixing artistic and instructional value to the content.

It should also be added that the editor should keep the audience and the target group in mind. Given below are some of the basic principles for understanding the audiences by the editor.

- How much do the children know already about the material to be presented in the multimedia? This especially holds true when the content is educational. What has been already written in the print media should be kept in mind.
- Motivation for the children should be kept in mind. The question, "what's in it for them?" should be asked constantly.
- What are the age groups and the educational levels of the children?
- What will be the medium through which the content will be displayed? Is it in a form of a film, video or on computers?

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<td>2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.</td>
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<td>2) Discuss three points that the editor has to keep in mind while editing multimedia.</td>
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3.3 WHY MULTIMEDIA FOR CHILDREN

Multimedia is immensely helpful for the growth of a child as the young minds are greatly stimulated and informed. Given below are some of the major reasons why multimedia can be used for children instead of books by an editor.

- Multimedia allows far greater interaction than the printed medium.
Basic Editorial Competencies

- It motivates them for learning.
- It enhances creativity and imagination.
- It is more ingenious and helps the children to grow in a better manner.
- It allows far greater expression and it adds greater value than mere printed page and visuals.
- It provides multi sensory inputs and immediate gratification.
- It provides far greater enrichment of content.
- It is entertaining.
- The Internet is a storehouse of knowledge. It provides rich information.
- It provides far greater control by the user.
- It helps in global communication and information.
- Online tools are very powerful sources of content.
- It creates situations for greater understanding.
- Programs of the multimedia are much more specific in content as the visuals add clarity and reinforce the message better.

The editor has to take advantage of these positivities of multimedia while editing the multimedia packages for children.

### 3.4 CHARACTER BUILDING, DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

The multimedia content often makes use of fiction. Editing for fiction varies from that of educational tools. The editor has to pay special attention to the content and especially the characters. This becomes particularly interesting in animation. Visualization is the basic tool for characterization. In animation, a lot of emphasis has to be paid to character development, as one has to bring to life inanimate objects. The editor should keep certain points in mind:

- The characters have to be believable.
- The select character has to play some central role. The editor should make sure that the various characters are playing specific roles.
- The protagonist (the hero) and the antagonist (villain) have to be properly set. The editor should make sure that the author has given them certain personalities.
- In animation, the characters might be there only for a couple of minutes. The editor should make sure that he knows the entire details of their actions, why they were there and why they are reacting in a particular manner. This makes the story more believable. This he can do by observing the reality. He can watch people in trains, restaurants and buses.
- Research is also a key word. If the multimedia is based on the geography of China then the editor should have some background research on it. The editor should try and get as much knowledge as he can gather. The Internet can give the great amount of information needed.
- For animation, the story has to follow a certain structure. It has a beginning, middle and end. The editor has to make sure that the plot is gripping and the ending is proper and substantial enough.
• The editor should make sure that the author’s or the illustrator’s vision is not tampered with.

• The personality must have enough physical attributes like a fat, overweight dog, thin heavily moustached man etc.

• The editor should make sure that cultural sensitivity is being maintained.

• One should also have an entire gamut of expression for the characters.

• The editor should make sure that the movements are fluid and dynamic.

The editor should make sure that enough research is available to him for the content to flow and develop. He/she should be in constant touch with the content developers. Sometimes site visits also are helpful, for example, if the multimedia is on Delhi’s historical monuments it might help for the editor to have seen them visually and in person. However, it can be understood that it might not be possible for the editor to make a visit to all the sites. The editor is required to fill in the gaps that might have been ignored or over sighted. This can be prevented by adequate research. Good scripts are usually developed from the research. It becomes necessary for the editor to be well versed with the aspects of scriptwriting. The next section will discuss that in detail.

**Check your progress 3**

**Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.

3) Why is research important?

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**3.5 SCREENPLAY**

The basic tool for any animation or a multimedia presentation is its screenplay or script. A screenplay or script is the blueprint or the basic story plan, authored by a writer for a film or television program. Screenplays can be original or adaptations from existing works based on texts. The basic scripting process involves a deep knowledge of the subject, the complexity of the content (animation, or interactive multimedia) and the budget involved in its production. It should be understood that one page of the script is roughly equal to one minute. The editor should make sure that the written word roughly corresponds to the time needed for the animation or visuals of the multimedia. It is the job of the editor of the multimedia, to gather content, organize it logically, refine the information and visualize it to make it interesting to the eye. Given below are some points that one can bear in his mind while editing the script.

• The editor should make sure that the screenplay avoids lengthy descriptions.

• Some norms should be followed.
The settings should be given well. For example,

EXT (EXTERIOR) IN FRONT OF AN OFFICE- MORNING

Stage directions should be well illuminated.

‘Ram slowly enters the office building and tries to open the door but sees it locked.’

Characters names should appear in capital letters. The speech will follow in the next line. For example

RAM (SHAKING HIS HEAD)

“I did not realize that the office would be shut today.”

- For multimedia packages where there are no dialogues, we still will require a script that has all the description of the scene changes, the stage and the camera directions.

- The editor should make sure that enough differences exist between the action and the dialogue and that it properly follows difference in the two conventions.

- There should be no emotionally long and descriptive passages. The emphasis should be laid on the action. The editor should ensure that the actions describe the emotional content. For example one can show a cat weeping instead of the description of the image, it can be of a cat crying and filling up buckets with its tears.

- Screenplays should follow conventions and rules. The font should be 12 point Courier.

- The screen directions and descriptions of location should be designed to occupy less vertical space than dialogue. Various technical directions, such as settings and camera indication should be set apart from the text with capital letters and/or indentation.

- The editor should also read speculative scripts by the author. These are called spec scripts, which are written to show the talent of the writer.

- The editor should suggest rewrites of the script. The writer, therefore, is usually expected to come up with a detailed prescription for how the script can be improved by the editor, and then execute this in a timely fashion. During the process of choosing a writer to rewrite a script the editor may ask several writers for their ‘take’ and choose the one who appears to be the best.

- A step outline that describes the script may be given to the editor.

- The editor should suggest drafts and redrafts, if necessary.

- The editor should also have a copy of the shooting script. In this the director adds the camera angles and the directions.

- Some screenplays require a voice over, or could be an interview or having news show concept. The screenplay will differ in the given concepts.

- An interactive multimedia will also contain certain basic design elements such as title page, acknowledgements, log in, content, objectives etc. The editor should become familiar with it.

- Children love informal speech, so the editor should make sure that the speech is lively, informal and entertaining.
The editor should read the script aloud. Saying it loudly will prevent mistakes happening. It will become more clear and effective.

Case study: Here is an example of a screenplay.

EXT: IN FRONT OF AN OFFICE- MORNING

Ram slowly enters the office building and tries to open the door but sees it locked.

RAM (SHAKING HIS HEAD)

I did not realize that the office would be shut today.

Ram realizes his mistake and spots the watchman.

RAM (CALLING OUT FOR THE WATCHMAN)

Hey you come here, why is the door shut?

WATCHMAN (LAUGHING)

Because today is Sunday, sir!

Usually a rough draft of the script is developed along with the appropriate visuals and is given to the editor. The editor should give approval on the final draft and then only the final script is written. The editor should make sure that the final script must have all the directional elements, transitions and effects written in it, along with all the audio effects and music cues. The editor should also ensure that once the final script and the storyboard are approved, only then the shooting script is developed.

The shooting script breaks down the script into major production elements of location, scenes and major camera movements. The editor has also to understand that often the scripts change while shooting and often rewriting it becomes necessary.

The script needs to be understood visually for the multimedia. This involves the production of a storyboard. The details are being discussed in the next section.

3.6 STORYBOARD

Multimedia is a visual based medium. Therefore, storyboards become one of the major tools for its production. The editor should be quite familiar with this tool so that he can successfully manage the content of the multimedia. This can be defined as “A storyboard being a sequence of simply drawn pictures that visually represent the content.” Often in multimedia the storyboard becomes the script. It helps in several directions as; it allows the producer to share his visual choices with his client, it allows editors to edit the program for overall visual and aural continuity and it allows directors to direct the content more effectively. Storyboards also help in determining the camera positions, lighting requirements and staging. They serve as visual guides during production for camera moves, lighting and directing the talent.

Some people feel that the script should be written first and then visualize it, while others feel it is better to visualize and then write the script. You can follow any one method, as long as it is the video that creates strong impact. The editor has to follow some elementary tips to keep the storyboard flowing:

- The editor should make sure that the script is strong in visual content. It will make the story flow better.
Basic Editorial Competencies

- The editor should then jot down all his visual ideas and also make rough simple sketches to share with the content developers.
- The editor should determine exactly what has to be seen to tell the story more effectively.
- The editor should also make sure that words that support, enhance or clarify the visual image should also be written down.
- The editor should always place himself in the position of the viewer and keep in mind the content to be viewed by children.
- The information should be logical and flow in the correct manner. It should be carefully organized.
- The editor should make sure that the visuals are lively and entertaining.
- All the transition points should be smooth.
- The content should be written down with an emphasis on the visual image.
- The editor should prevent the wordy content.
- The words familiar to the child should be used.
- The images should be dominant as to maintain high focal interest.
- Colours enhance the emotional communication. The editor should be aware of it. Colours should clarify, highlight and focus the information.
- The background should be clear and simple and devoid of cluttering of images.
- Too many details should be avoided as this will cause confusion, and the child will waste his time deciphering it. Often the children bring prior knowledge to the content, so one should know children well enough.

Storyboarding should not be taken lightly. This goes much beyond the selection of still images and it also involves the selection of color, moving images, lighting, staging and camera movements etc. An effective storyboard will combine all the visual elements together and will successfully communicate with the audiences. Storyboards also need to keep in mind the backdrop that is going to be displayed in the visuals. The next section will discuss this in detail.

Check your progress 4

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.

4) Why are storyboards important?

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3.7 BACKGROUND

The editor should also take special care about the sets and background of the animation of the multimedia. He has to ensure:

- Enough detail is paid to the background.
- It does not impair the movements of the characters.
- The editor should pay attention to what is being projected on the design.
- The background should be realistic. For example, if the scene is set in a classroom, then there should be believable items like a blackboard, chairs, chalk, paper, pens etc.
- The editor should be familiar with collage work. This helps in putting bits and things together and creating a colourful mosaic.
- The details should look perfect.
- The background should be created in such a way that the eye is drawn to the main action. This can be done by having bright contrasting colours.
- Children love bright colors, so the editor should ensure their use.

3.8 TEXT IN MULTIMEDIA

Type and text written in the multimedia are often overlooked. Yet if it is done well, it becomes memorable. The editor should pay attention to the written text by paying attention to the following points:

- There should be marked contrast between the background and the written text.
- It can be written in various interesting manners that can captivate the attention of the viewer.
- The editor should be aware of the various types of fonts that are available in the market.
- The editor should make sure that too many fonts are not used as it might create a sense of clutter and chaos.
- The type size should not be too small or too big.
- Careful selection of the text should be made so that the message is carried across.
- The editor should make sure that the text is legible.

3.9 SOUND

Sound adds depth and reality. It is an important aesthetic element that shapes and enhances content. Watching a multimedia without any sound will not be interesting enough. The editor should watch out for some basic points. Those may be:

- The editor should make sure that the sound is within the context of the script.
- One should look at copyright issues when using sound.
- The music should be according to the tempo of the multimedia.
Basic Editorial Competencies

- The music has to be in synchronization to the film.
- The action and the emotion must be kept in mind.
- The sound should be realistic and interesting to the program.
- The editor should make sure that the voice of the main speaker is separate from the natural background noise.
- It should add to the overall rhythm and pace of the content and should add emotion to the mood and message.
- The background noise must be carefully controlled and monitored. One should be aware that sound effects can either make or break the content.
- The editor should be aware of the various kinds of music available and help in its selection.
- There should be enough music in the beginning to set the mood and at the end to draw attention to the conclusion.
- One should not overdo the sound effects.
- Music should help in excitement of the picture.

Check your progress 5

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers given at the end of the Unit.
5) Discuss any three points that the editor should keep while choosing the music.

3.10 GRAPHICS IN MULTIMEDIA

Multimedia content especially those using educational contents generally use graphics. This can help the children to visualize the abstract, illustrate the invisible and demonstrate the complex. This helps to create a visual style that is different from others. Colour scheme, typeface, logo design and all the other elements can provide additional information.

The editor needs to know about certain elementary approaches:

- All visual designs are created through the use of point, line, polygon, shade, colour, texture and typography.
- All the graphics must be created in relation to the space around it. The editor has to be aware of spaces.
- Lines often add stability or excitement when broken. The editor can suggest the use of lines where needed.
Shapes such as circles and triangles create a feeling of completeness. Use them when required.

Shading often gives you the illusion of light. The editor should make sure that this is visually appealing.

Colors should be used sensitively and should reflect the mood of the content.

Patterns reveal more visual information and children respond well to them.

Symbols often convey much more visual information and should be used when required.

Graphics can be 2D or 3D. The three dimensional objects are highly entertaining to children. The editor should make sure that they are used, if possible.

The editor can bring type styles, art layouts and productions of other graphic designs that will enhance the message of the content. He should be in constant touch with the content editors.

The editor should make sure that the graphics are also supplemented along with the workbooks and other supplementary materials.

The editor should keep a list of available graphics so that it becomes easier for him to use when needed.

If the multimedia involves logos, then the editor should have colour examples with him. This will make his job easier.

Logos can be strictly copyrighted. The editor should be aware of this.

Graphics should be simple and clear.

There should be a complete balance between content and space.

The graphics should be organized along the lines of the eye movement, top to bottom, left to right. Avoid placing new information on the lower left side.

In educational multimedia, the editor should make sure that the text uses labels, highlights and illustrations to assist students. This will help in focusing on important points as well as selectively processing the text.

Graphics can also be added to summarize information.

The editor should make sure that the illustrations are as real as possible. They should be recognizable to the child.

Written content can be organized with consistent headings and subheadings. The editor can suggest them where needed.

Colours should have contrasts and should be used to highlight information.

The graphics should be consistent to the supportive materials, if provided for.

There should be one major area of focus. Avoid cluttering.

The editor should make sure that the graphic design has balance.

Type, styles and colors should be consistent.

The editor should ensure that harmony is maintained.

There should be enough creative variety.
3.11 INTERACTIVE GAMES

Multimedia involves interactive games as well. Nowadays games are no longer simple but highly complex. The editor should look out for certain points in interactive games:

- Characters should be well designed.
- The levels of difficulty of age groups must be kept in mind and hence, the background, sets, music all will vary accordingly.
- There should be plenty of movement given to characters to make the experience worthwhile.
- The action sequences should be considered.
- This animation should have much more details. Each movement has to be carefully thought out.

3.12 LET US SUM UP

The editor has the job of putting everything together from music, video, voice over text. This job is not that simple and has to be done painstakingly; only then the end product will make the experience worthwhile. One has to generally make sure that everything goes smoothly and well. It is a hard job to synchronize everything together but the end product is always motivating enough. The editor should also look at the packaging completely. He should also be aware of copyright issues and laws pertaining to it. The experience can be quite rewarding if the final word is enjoyed by the children. In this Unit we have learnt about multimedia packages- what are these packages; why are they needed in children’s literature; what role do various elements like research, storyboard, text, background, sound effects etc. play in making multimedia packages more interesting and interactive with children.

3.13 ACTIVITIES

1. Read some of the ancient legends and mythologies from your local region. Answer the following questions: What is the underlying theme present in the legend? Describe at least four main characters from the legend. Who is the hero and who is the villain?

2. Compare your legend from a popular film that you might have seen.

3. Watch any one of your favorite cartoons on the cartoon channel. Make a list of things that captured your imagination.

4. How did the story work in your cartoon? Did it convey the mood of the story and the feelings of the characters?

5. Go to your local library and research on the history of your place. Identify at least five pictures that go well with your area chosen.

6. Convert any story into a simple script.

7. Storyboard any simple story that you might have read. You can use simple stick drawings.

8. Collect at least six photographs that show expressions of happiness and sadness each.
9. Make a list of all the different kinds of props and background material required for your story.

10. Make a collage of different pictures.

3.14 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check your progress 1

1) Multimedia is an interactive tool that allows for the interaction of multiple contexts. It has the use of audio, video and written word. It is an electronically delivered combination of media that allows for greater interaction between the reader and the text/medium.

Check your progress 2

2) The editor should keep in mind:

The editor should make sure that the media is both instructional as well as entertaining. Vulgarity and violence should be avoided. The viewers should maintain a sense of disbelief.

Check your progress 3

3) Research is one of the basic tools of multimedia and this helps the content to be rich, informative and flow in the correct manner. This also helps to fill up any gaps that might occur in the medium.

Check your progress 4

4) Story board is the basic blueprint of the animation and it helps in the selection of color, movement, staging and sound. It combines both the visual and the audio elements well together.

Check your progress 5

5) The music should be according to the text of the multimedia. The music should not be overdone. It should add to the excitement of the video.

3.15 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS


