



## Lesson 3

### Take Action - Making Films

# Documentaries Have a Focus and an Angle

## Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the focus and angle in a documentary
- Consider possible focuses and angles for their own films

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### Overview/Purpose:

Students build on their understanding of documentaries by considering the difference between a focus and an angle.

### Guiding Questions:

- What is the difference between a film's focus and angle?
- How do a focus and an angle strengthen a documentary?

### Recommended Time:

90 minutes

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### Common Core State Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9](#)

### Materials:

[The Promise - a film from Danbury High School Students](#)

### Technology Required:

1. Computer with Internet access
2. Projection equipment

### Lesson Design:

- Explain to students that documentaries have a topic, a focus, and an angle. The topic is the subject of the documentary, and the focus narrows down the topic to be more specific. The angle is like the film's argument or thesis statement. It is something you can state in one sentence, and is supported by the rest of the film.
- Show students the film "[The Promise](#)", explaining that it was created by students in Danbury High School



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in Danbury, Connecticut.

- As they view the film, students should try to identify the topic, focus, and angle of the film.
- After viewing the film, students turn and talk to a partner to discuss what they think.
- The class reconvenes to share/discuss the topic, focus, and angle of the film.
- Explain to students that the more specific their focus and angle is, the stronger their documentaries will be.
- Film groups work together to discuss possible topics, focuses and angles for their films.