



Prize Winner

Multimedia

Year 7-8

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Multimedia Written Report – Why Do Onions Make You Cry?

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Report:

As an aspiring cook, I believe that adding onion to a dish gives it a delicious flavour – which is why I add it to most of my meals. One day, I was chopping up the onions (and feeling the familiar sting in my eyes) when I started to wonder, ‘Why Do Onions Make You Cry?’

When I started to gather information, I was overwhelmed with the number of websites I found – many containing words about chemistry that I didn’t understand. Soon enough, I was falling through a rabbit hole of data, straying dangerously from my actual question.

To overcome this problem, I decided to watch some videos around the topic, knowing that graphics usually help me understand things. I also consulted my dad, who knows a lot more about chemistry than I do. With this basis of knowledge, I reread some articles and condensed them into dot points. I limited my searches to a few keywords and asked my dad about complex concepts, visualising the chemical reactions as I went.

The next issue I faced was writing the script. I became victim to writer’s block, as I wanted it to be perfect on the first try.

To overcome this, I wrote down a basic storyline and came back the next few days to add to the skeleton I had built up. Slowly the script began to form: the phrases, jokes and scientific content finally piecing together.

Once I had filmed and animated each part of my script, (using a book stack to create a make-shift tripod for my iPad), I realised that the pieces where I was talking straight to the camera looked boring.

To make it interesting, I added sound effects and varied the focus points. I layered it with different graphics and filters but made sure not to distract the audience from the scientific content.

By the time I had done all this, I had realised that my finished video exceeded the limit by 20 seconds. I felt annoyed that I put in so much hard work and needed to delete so much of it. I knew that trimming out pauses would make my video harder to follow, so instead I refilmed sections where I was speaking too slowly and omitted unnecessary phrases. Despite my earlier feelings, I now understand that all scientists need to adopt a flexible mindset - they remodel their projects constantly, designing multiple prototypes and testing them all.

Overall, I learnt a lot about the biochemistry of an onion and the many chemical reactions that take place. I thoroughly enjoyed the entire process – understanding the content, creating a script, filming the video and starring in it!

Words: 443

Acknowledgment: My Dad helped me understand some of the chemical theories behind my video.

Software Used: iMovie

Camera App for the iPad

Clips

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