



# How do war documentaries shape our view of conflict?

01 What's the difference between a war movie and a war documentary?

War Movie

War Documentary

02 Read "Sticking to Your Guns" and write an explanation of the title.

03 Read the text again and complete the sentences about war documentaries past and present.

War documentaries of the past:

1. were made by \_\_\_\_\_ filmmakers.
2. used to \_\_\_\_\_ citizens.
3. used \_\_\_\_\_ to stir up emotions.

War documentaries now:

1. are filmed on high tech \_\_\_\_\_.
2. are shown on \_\_\_\_\_.
3. are created by \_\_\_\_\_.



## Sticking to Your Guns

Historically and today, video (first **cinematic** war **documentaries** and now a range of videos presented through social media) has been used to demonstrate the horrors of war to civilians. Not only has video been used, but even when the objective is to present the **truth**, it's used a combination of fact and emotion to move the audience to action, leading us to the question: Is video ever the whole truth?

Filmmakers created footage during World War II that informed the public, showed the war's violence, pain, and suffering, and united the citizens in the cause. Authentic images are edited and **framed** to create the film's story. Then, music and narration shape the final product. So, is it reality or one person's version of it?

Today's war filmmakers are living war soldiers and civilians. Their cameras and crew are phones, and their films are **livestreams** and TikToks. No sooner will an explosion or attack happen than you'll find various posts documenting it. So, are these films more 'real' than professionally filmed documentaries? No, because they also present a perspective and a narrative. They are influenced by the desire to create a **viral** video that attracts a large and diverse audience. War documentaries and live feeds alert us to the tragedy of war. Still, as with all media, we must ask ourselves what decisions the filmmaker made, because films depicting war can influence how we feel and what we believe.



04 Work with a classmate. Follow the instructions.

1. Go online and find a scene from a war documentary.
2. Watch it to identify the narrative the filmmaker is creating.
3. Identify the emotions the scene triggers.
4. Present your scene and analysis to another pair.

**05 Match to create sentences.**

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|--|---|
| 1. Not only do modern war documentaries present facts,                         | a. how their framing choices influence public opinion.                          |
| 2. Seldom have filmmakers been so aware of                                     | b. were carefully framed to support a specific national narrative.              |
| 3. Only by analyzing camera angles and editing                                 | c. but they also shape emotions through selective framing.                      |
| 4. Little did viewers know that the powerful scenes in early war documentaries | d. can we understand how deeply framing affects the viewer's perception of war. |



**07 Work with a classmate. Create a news story about a war. Use inversions from Exercises 5 and 6.**

**06 Create sentences using the inversions as sentence prompts. Write two more on your own.**

1. So powerful were the images that ...  


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2. No sooner had he taken the picture that ....  


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3. Not only was she living in a war zone, she ...  


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4. Only by recording the..., could they...  


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5. \_\_\_\_\_  


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6. \_\_\_\_\_  


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**08 With a group, discuss the following questions. Then, share your answers with the class.**

- › If your country were at war, how would you try to bring the world's attention to the problem?
- › Create a plan and present it to the class.