

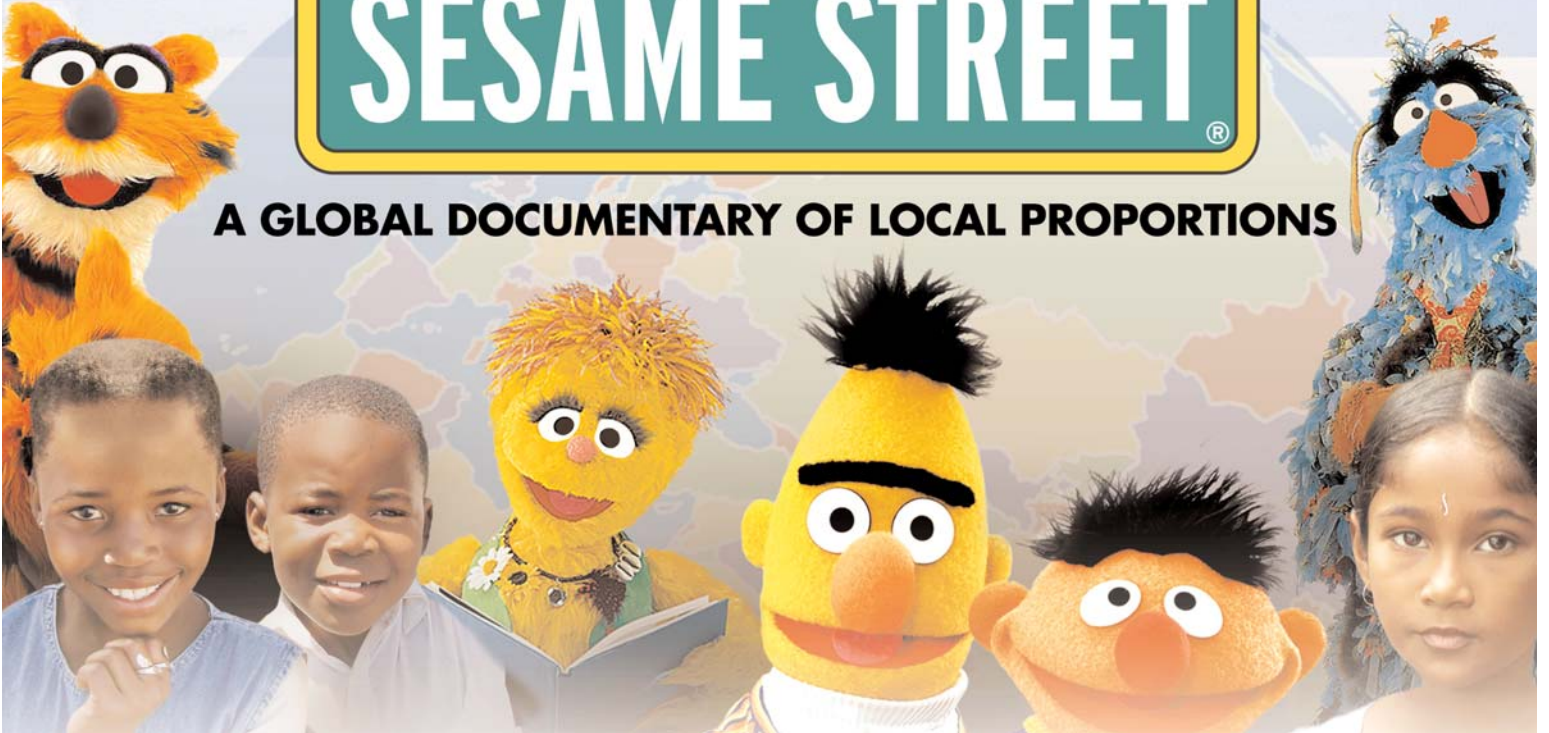
SCREENING EVENT & FACILITATORS GUIDE

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO

123

SESAME STREET®

A GLOBAL DOCUMENTARY OF LOCAL PROPORTIONS



A FILM BY

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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SESAME STREET reminds us that social change can come from the most unlikely sources, including a team of Muppets. We follow three producers from the Sesame Street Workshop to Bangladesh, Kosovo and South Africa where they localize the world's most-watched children's television program with indigenous songs, puppets and curricula.



[i]NDEPENDENT LENS 

TOPICS AND ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE WORLD ACCORDING TO *SESAME STREET*

As you plan your screening, you might consider finding speakers, panelists, or discussion leaders who have expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Bangladesh
- children and the media
- conflict resolution / mediation
- cultural studies
- diversity
- education
- global studies
- HIV/AIDS
- Kosovo (Albanian and Serbian perspectives)
- language / translation
- media studies
- multicultural education
- puppeteering
- South Africa
- Television

AS YOU PLAN YOUR EVENT

A screening of *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SESAME STREET* can be used to spark interest in any of the topics listed above, as well as to inspire individual and community action. Using the checklist below will help ensure a high-quality/high-impact event.

Set realistic goals.

Will you host a single screening or use the film to spur ongoing efforts? Are there relevant community partners with whom you should team to sponsor your event? Will you steer a discussion panel towards a specific topic or let the audience pursue whatever issues it chooses? Being clear about your goals will make it much easier to structure the event, target publicity, and evaluate results.

Structure your event to match your event to your goals.

Is your goal to share information beyond what is included in the film? Are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges; small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)



Arrange to involve all stakeholders.

It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. Do you need an outside facilitator, translator, or sign language interpreter? If you expect audience members to plan action that affects people other than those present, decide how will you give voice to those not in the room.

Choose an accessible venue.

Is the room comfortable? Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? Can you provide clear signage? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory? Does the physical configuration of the room allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have? Can everyone easily see the screen and hear the film?

Leave time for the audience to help plan for action.

It is important that people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic -- even when the discussion may have been difficult. Allow enough time to plan next steps and facilitate networking. Ask attendees to sign-in at the door so people can share contact information. Let participants know exactly how that information will (and won't) be shared.

FACILITATING A DISCUSSION OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO *SESAME STREET*

People who feel safe, encouraged, respected and challenged are likely to share openly and thoughtfully. As a facilitator you can encourage that kind of participation. Here's how:

Prepare yourself

Identify your own hot-button issues. View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time as you facilitate a discussion.

Be knowledgeable. You don't need to be an issue expert to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. Prior to your event, take time to check the Background Information and Suggested Resources in the film guide handout.

Be clear about your role. A facilitator's role is to remain neutral, keep the discussion on track and moving forward, and manage how information is exchanged. Your personal views should not be shared or imposed on the dialogue.

Know who might be present. It isn't possible to know exactly who will attend a public screening, but if you consider what kinds of groups are present in your community, you may be able to anticipate potential issues in advance. Keep in mind that your audience's demographics - age, race, religion, geographic region and socioeconomic class - will influence the discussion. Take care to prevent assumptions that members of a particular group share the same point of view.

Prepare the group

Establish ground rules around language and time limits. Prior to starting a discussion or Q&A with a panel, remind the audience of basic ground rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include no yelling or use of slurs, asking people to speak in the first person ("I think...") rather than generalizing for others ("Everyone knows that..."), and keeping comments within a stated time period. If a speaker breaks a ground rule, gently interrupt, remind them of the rule, and ask them to rephrase.

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Be clear about how people will take turns and indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion.

Explain the difference between dialogue and debate. In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand each other and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening to each other actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue.

Encourage active listening. Ask the group to think of the event as a listening, as well as discussing event. Encourage participants to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal "active listening," where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then re-phrase to see if they have heard correctly.

Protect yourself and group members. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly so that you are not asking them to reveal things that could place them in legal or physical danger. Let the audience and invited speakers know whether or not press will be present. If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath.

Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of their own experience. Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. So everyone in the audience may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. Inviting speakers to identify the evidence on which they base their opinion can help people to understand one another's perspectives.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SESAME STREET WILL AIR NATIONALLY ON THE EMMY AWARD-WINNING PBS SERIES *INDEPENDENT LENS* ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2006 AT 9:00 PM. CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SESAME STREET was produced by Participant Productions, LLC. The Emmy award-winning series *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts.

ITVS COMMUNITY is the national community engagement program of the Independent Television Service. ITVS Community works to leverage the unique and timely content of Emmy Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens* to build stronger connections among leading organizations, local communities, and public television stations around key social issues and create more opportunities for civic engagement and positive social change. To find out more about ITVS COMMUNITY, visit www.itvs.org/outreach.

