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The following explanations are based on Movie Maker 2. Please note that other versions may vary in regards to interface style and/or certain functionality. However the video editing principles remain the same. The Helpful Links section of this Guide contains links to websites that should help you understand Movie Maker, irrespective of the version or operating system you are working within.

■ Introduction to Movie Maker

Microsoft Movie Maker is a video editing program that enables you to create your own movie or slideshow.

It allows you to import media files; such as video, audio and still images. You can then edit your footage, add text, transitions and even a voiceover to create your very own media story.

Movie Maker contains many features that allow you to arrange and edit your media to achieve the look and sound you want. Movie Maker is fun and easy to use, so don't be scared to play around and experiment.

This guide will first show you what Movie Maker looks like. Then we will show you how to create your own digital story.

■ Movie Maker – the interface

The interface is the first thing you will see when opening Movie Maker. It will look like Figure 1 below.
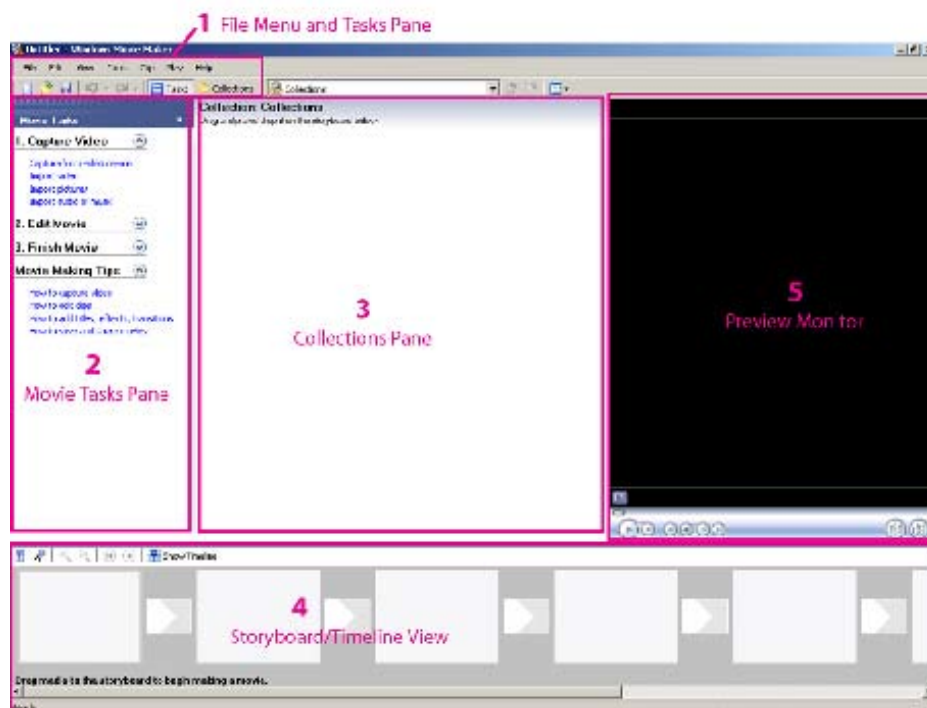
Figure 1: The Movie Maker Interface (1: file menu & task pane; 2: movie tasks pane; 3: collections pane; 4: storyline/timeline view; 5: preview monitor)

The interface is split into five main sections:

1. The File Menu and Tool Bar

This part of the MovieMaker interface looks very similar to many other software applications, showing functions such as **File**, **View** and **Edit**. It also has functions specific to Movie Maker, such as **Tools**, **Clip** and **Play** – which we will look at later. The **Tool Bar** area contains shortcut buttons such as **Save** and **Undo**. It also displays **Collection** and **Tasks** buttons, which control the visibility of that particular section.

2. The Movie Tasks pane

This section is very helpful as it displays how to create a movie – step by step. This pane should be visible by default; although if you can't see it, select the blue **Task** button in the **File Menu** area.

3. The Collections pane

As the name suggests, this is a collection area that displays the media files (or **clips**) you are working with (once you have imported them). In Figure 1 the Collections pane is empty. Once we have imported our media files, it will look similar to Figure 2.

The Collections pane also displays the **Video Effects** and **Video Transitions** that you can use when creating your movie. View these effects by clicking on the drop down menu in the File Menu area (circled in Figure 2).
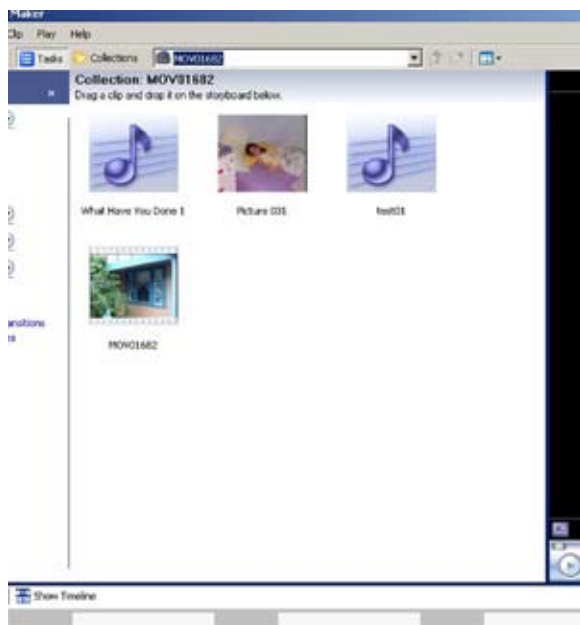

Figure 2 : Collections Pane

4. The Storyboard/Timeline

It is within this area that you assemble your movie project. Movie Maker provides two viewing areas for this - the **Storyboard** and the **Timeline** view. You can switch between views during the course of your project without it affecting your project (Select Show Timeline or Show Storyboard).

"So what's the difference between the **Storyboard** and the **Timeline**?"

Within the Storyboard view (Figure 3) you click-drag clips to arrange them. You can't arrange or record audio files (including narrations) in Storyboard view, so if you select the Narration button the view will automatically change to the Timeline.

Figure 3: Storyboard view

Essentially the Timeline view (Figure 4) gives you more editing control. You can adjust a clip's length; add narration, music, sound effects or title overlays.

Clips are added to the storyboard or a specific 'track' on the timeline (see Fig. 4) by click-dragging them from the Collections Pane. We will show you how to do this shortly.

Figure 4: Timeline view

5. The Preview Monitor

It is within this area that you preview your movie in progress. Using the playback buttons (circled in Figure 5) you can navigate through an individual clip or an entire movie project.

Rolling your mouse pointer over a button will display a fly out description of that button's function. Similar to a DVD player, you will see functions such as **Play**, **Pause**, and **Previous Frame**. You will also find the button (on the right) that allows you to split a clip into two.
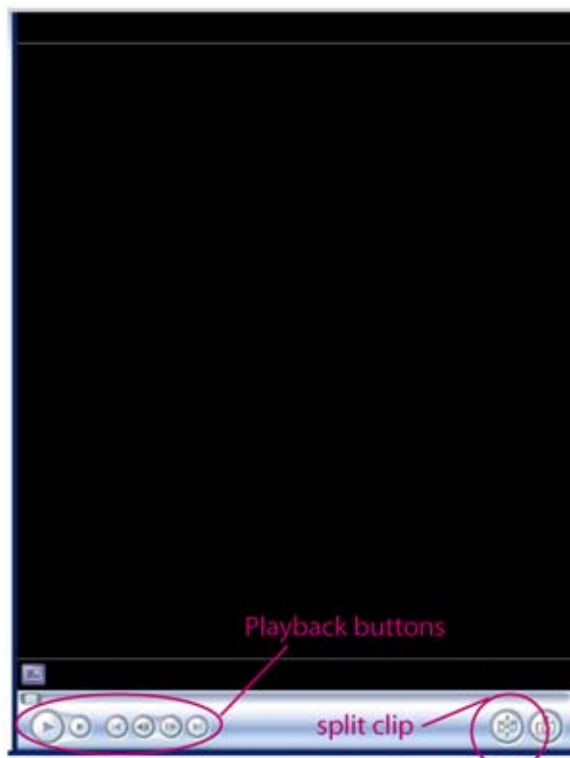

Figure 5: The Preview Monitor

It is within these five areas that you will create your movie. By following the steps displayed within the Movie Task pane you should have little problem arranging and editing your movie project.

How to create a movie in Movie Maker – in theory

To break down the task at hand let's look at it like this:

To arrange or edit your digital assets (i.e.: video, pictures, audio) into a story you first need to Import them into Movie Maker. This is done via the **Movie Tasks** pane.

Once imported you will see your collection of media files (Movie Maker calls them **clips**) within the **Collections** pane.

To arrange your clips in the order that you want them to play, you either:

Click-drag your desired clip from the **Collections** pane into a blank white square within the **Storyboard** view, or

Click-drag your desired clip from the **Collections** pane into the appropriate layer within the **Timeline** View. You can also edit your clips within this view.

And finally, use the **Monitor** to preview your movie in progress or to edit the length of a clip.

That's the basic process of creating a movie in Movie Maker – HOWEVER there are steps that need to be taken to ensure that your movie making experience is a success. These steps include remembering to SAVE YOUR PROJECT! There's nothing worse than arranging a potential masterpiece only to have your computer crash right at the last second. Trust me – that can happen.

File Management

Video editing is a demanding task for everyday computers. The editing process is both RAM and CPU intensive. Editing even the most simple of video clips requires your system to make billions of calculations. The process of editing is made easier and faster when the 'Assets' and 'Project' files are stored on the more robust hard-drive.

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When you start editing your own project you will need to create these folders. Name them something like *'yourname_MovieMakerAssets'* and *'yourname_MovieMakerProject'*.

Version Control

Version Control is best explained in the following scenario: Imagine that you have spent time working on your Movie project. You haven't finished it but want to keep the file so you save it as *yourname_MovieMaker01*.

The next time you open the file you want to make changes that you aren't sure will work. You may want to experiment – but at the same time you don't want to risk losing any work you have done previously. The best thing to do in this situation is, when re-opening your project, re-name your file **(File> Save As)** as *yourname_MovieMaker02*.

Now you have 2 files. One named *yourname_MovieMaker01* and one named *yourname_MovieMaker02*. Then if you made any changes to *yourname_MovieMaker02* that you are not happy with – you can always start anew with *yourname_MovieMaker01*.

what next?

For many, the best way to learn is to **do**.

At this point, you may choose to get stuck into your own personal Digital Story. You can browse the links at the end of this document for on-line resources and video tutorials on how to use Movie Maker.

Or, to help you more fully understand the process of creating movies in Movie Maker, you may also undertake the following exercise. It will probably take you a few hours but you'll have a really good handle on it all by the end!

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How to create a movie in Movie Maker – an exercise

When first saving a movie in Movie Maker, the program creates what is known as a **Movie Maker project file** (known as a .MSWMM file). A project file is a file that links all of the digital assets together (video clips, soundtracks, images, and narration files). The Movie Maker project file knows where each digital file is on your computer. It also monitors where they are on the movie timeline and what effects and transitions they may have. For efficient movie editing, it is wise practise to have all digital files, including the Movie Maker project file, saved into one folder.

You can find all the assets required for this exercise in the digital story workshop section of the Rainbow Family Tree website. Create a new folder on your hard drive. Name it something like *'tutorial_assets'* then download the files from the link on the website.

What we'll be creating

We will be creating a short film that utilises the basic functions within Movie Maker. To see what your finished exercise will look like, locate your computer's Media Player (preferably Windows Media Player) and open the file titled *finished_sample_exercise.avi* (*finished_sample_exercise.avi* is within the tutorial assets folder that's been downloaded to your hard drive). You will be creating your own version of this film.

Establishing Movie Settings

Before we start recreating this movie in Movie Maker, we must first ensure that certain settings are established. This is to make sure that the physical size and quality of the end movie is correct for our target audience. To do this:

1. Within Movie Maker select **Tools > Options** from within the Menu Bar. In the resulting dialogue window select the **Advanced** tab (Figure 6).
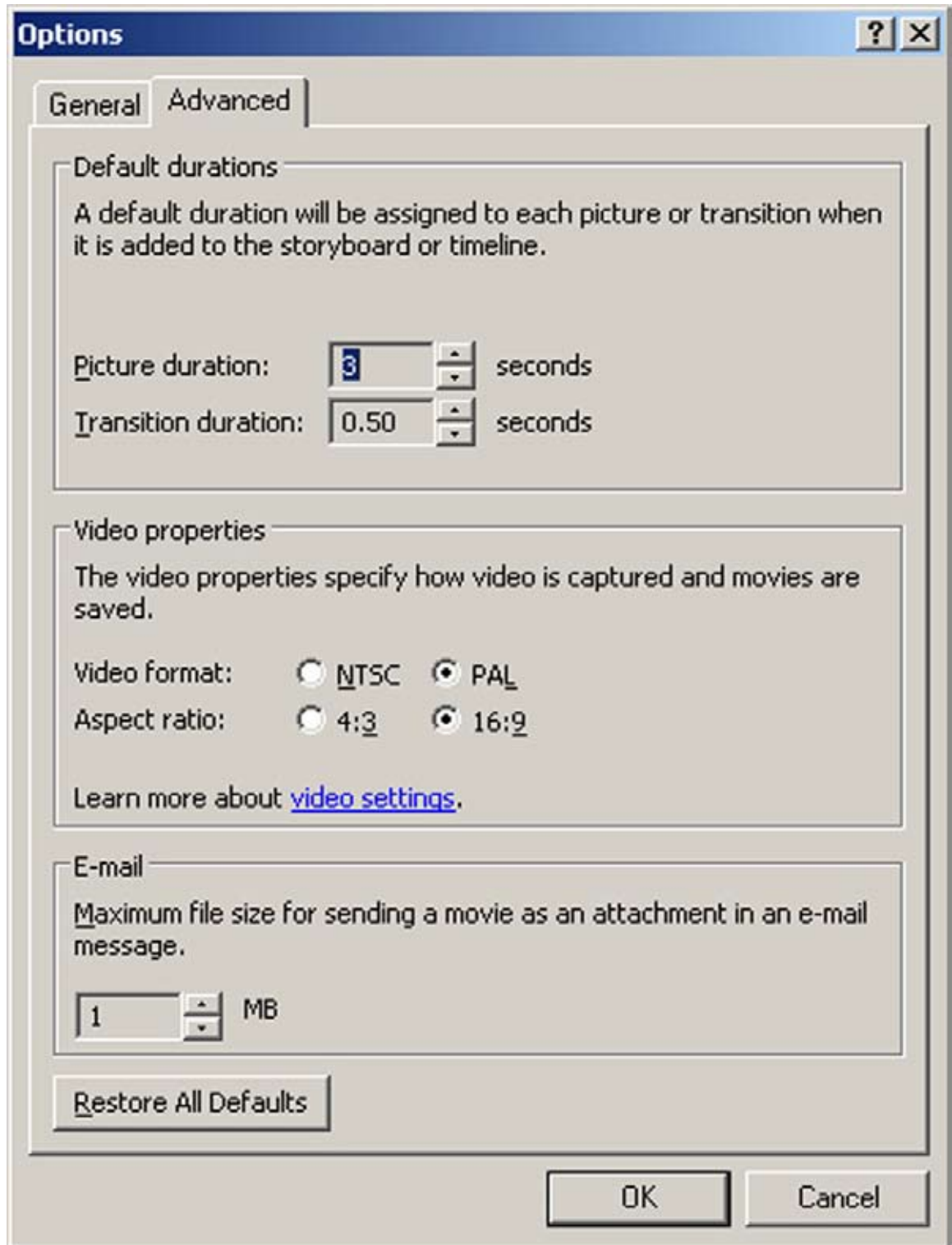
Figure 6

The top section concerns the duration of any images and transitions that you drag into the timeline from the Collections Pane. These can be adjusted within the timeline if desired, but it's good protocol to have an initial set time for both. I have set mine to 3 seconds for images and .5 seconds for transitions.

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The area we really need to focus on, however, is the **Video Properties**. The settings here affect how our movie is to be saved and how any video is to be captured.

2. Set the Video format to PAL and the Aspect Ratio to 16:9. Click **OK**.

Importing your digital assets

Ok, let the games begin.

1. Open Movie Maker. From the **File Menu** select **Tools > New Collection Folder**. A new folder will appear within the smaller Collections Panel (on the left hand side of the screen). Name this folder **editing_example** (Figure 7).
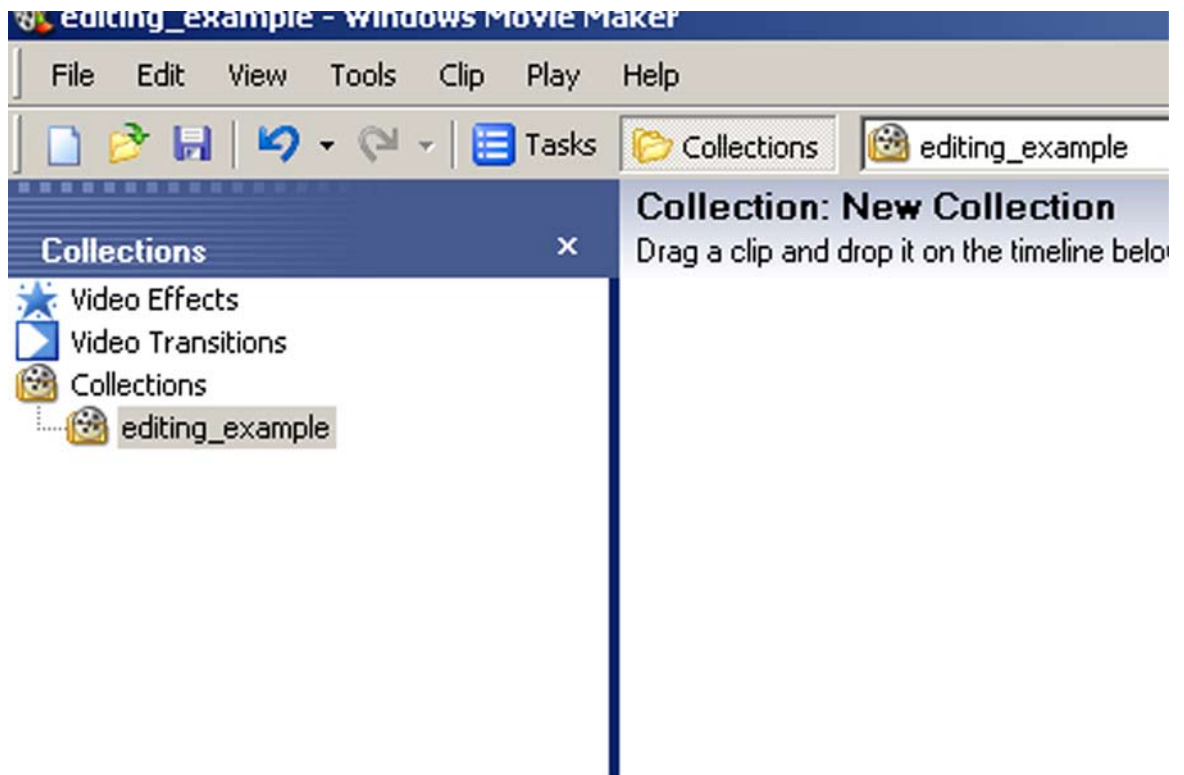

Figure 7

2. Select **File > Import Into Collections**. Select all the files in the **Tutorial assets** folder on your hard drive (Click-drag across the files to select all). Click **Import**.

IMPORTANT: When creating your own digital story remember that Movie Maker only imports certain file formats.

3. Now is a good time to save your Project File to an appropriate place on your hard-drive – preferably near your Tutorial assets folder. **(File > Save As)**. I have named mine **editing_example**.

When all files have been imported you should see them in the larger **Collections Pane** in the middle of the screen. Movie Maker places the only video file I have included (explosion.avi) in its own Collections folder.

Movie Maker allows you to record your own narration. However, this program only has one audio track which means you can't have any background music behind the narration. If you want to have background music or effects behind a narration track, then you will have to record your narration within a sound-editing program – such as Audacity - to consolidate the narration and any additional music/effects into one audio file. This is explained within the audacity notes. However, for the sake of this exercise I have recorded a narration track within Movie Maker.

IMPORTANT: Before recording narration you must ensure that your computer's recording settings are correct and that you have a microphone correctly connected.

Setting up your computer to record

1. Double-click the **Volume Control**. You access this via the taskbar. This will display a Control Panel.

2. Within that Control Panel click **Options > Properties > Recording**. Ensure that the Microphone is ticked.

3. Plug your microphone into the computer's microphone socket.
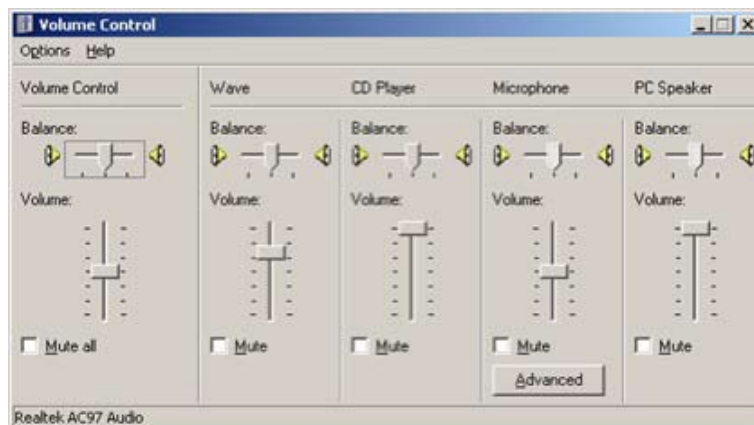
Recording narration

1. Firstly make sure that the **Timeline View** is visible. If it's not, select **View > Timeline**.

2. Click on the **Narrate Timeline** button (microphone icon) within the **Timeline View**. The Narrate Timeline area should reveal itself at the top of the window (Figure 8).
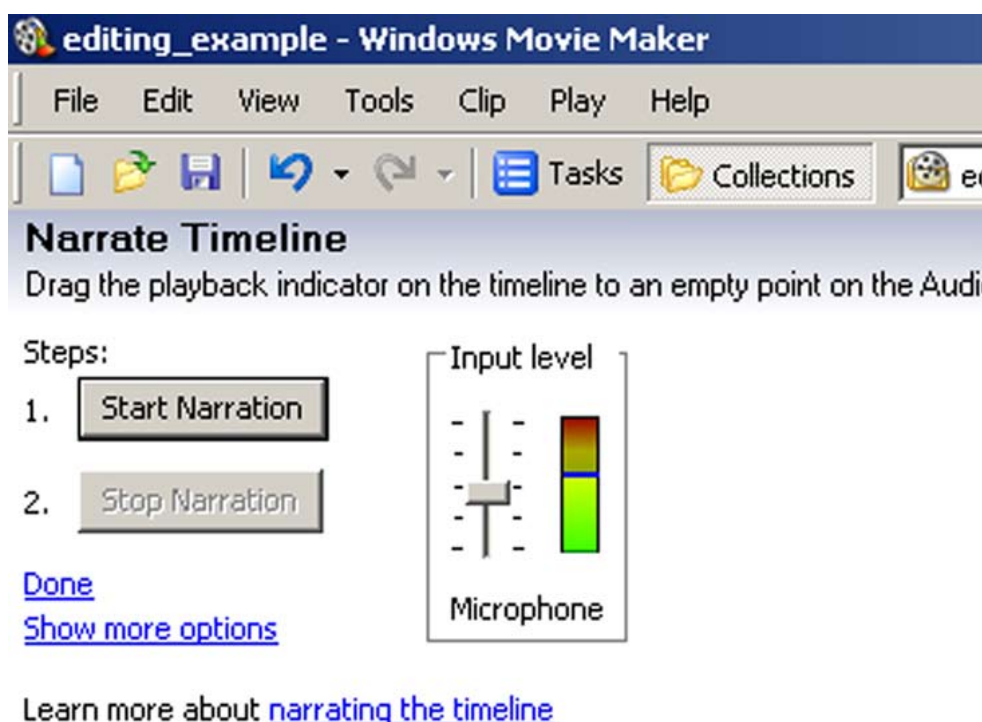

Figure 8

The narration content I have used is: **"We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same."**   We have to thank the dear Anne Frank for these wise words.

3. Before you begin recording have a practice reading this quote into the microphone. As you do so, you should notice the **Input levels** rising up and down as you speak. For good quality recording (without distortion) try to keep the blue line at a three-quarter level – if you see too much red than you risk having a distorted narration track. Obviously it will also make a big difference if you choose a quiet space in which to record. Turn off telephones, TV's and noisy fridges.

When you are ready:

4. Select the **Start Narration** button and 'talk'. When you have finished select **Stop Narration**. A dialogue window will automatically pop up (Figure 9). This is where you save your recording. If you are happy with the recording select **Save** (Movie Maker automatically names and saves your file to the Collections Folder). If not, select **Cancel**. Repeat the process and try again.
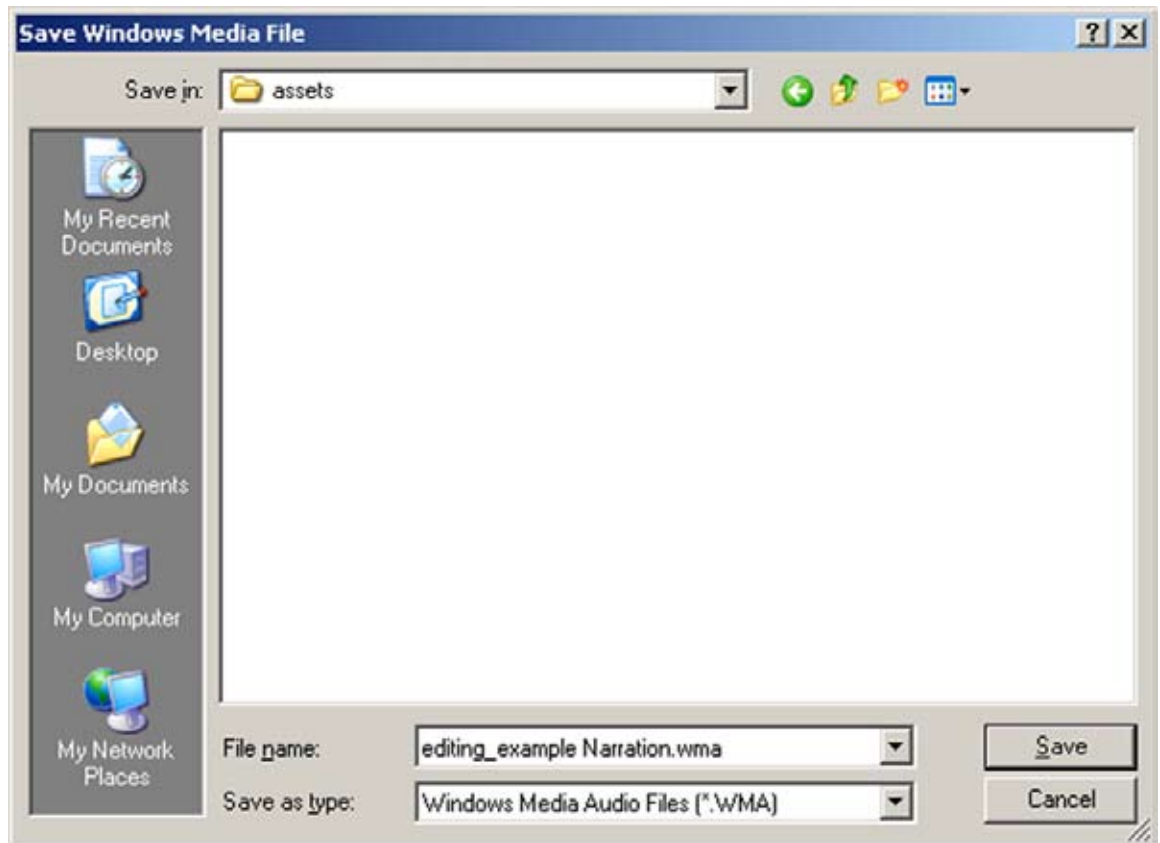

Figure 9

5. Once you have finished with the narration select the **Collections** button just beneath the **File Menu** bar. That should reinstate the **Collections Pane**. Within that Pane you will find the Narration file you have just created.

Bringing your assets into the Timeline

1. First make sure that the **Timeline View** and **Collections Pane** are both open. The first image (or asset) to bring in is the **blue_sky** clip. To do this:

2. Locate the **blue_sky** clip within the **Collections Pane**. Click-drag it into the Video track within the **Timeline View** - this is the topmost track (Figure 10). It should automatically position itself at the beginning of the track.

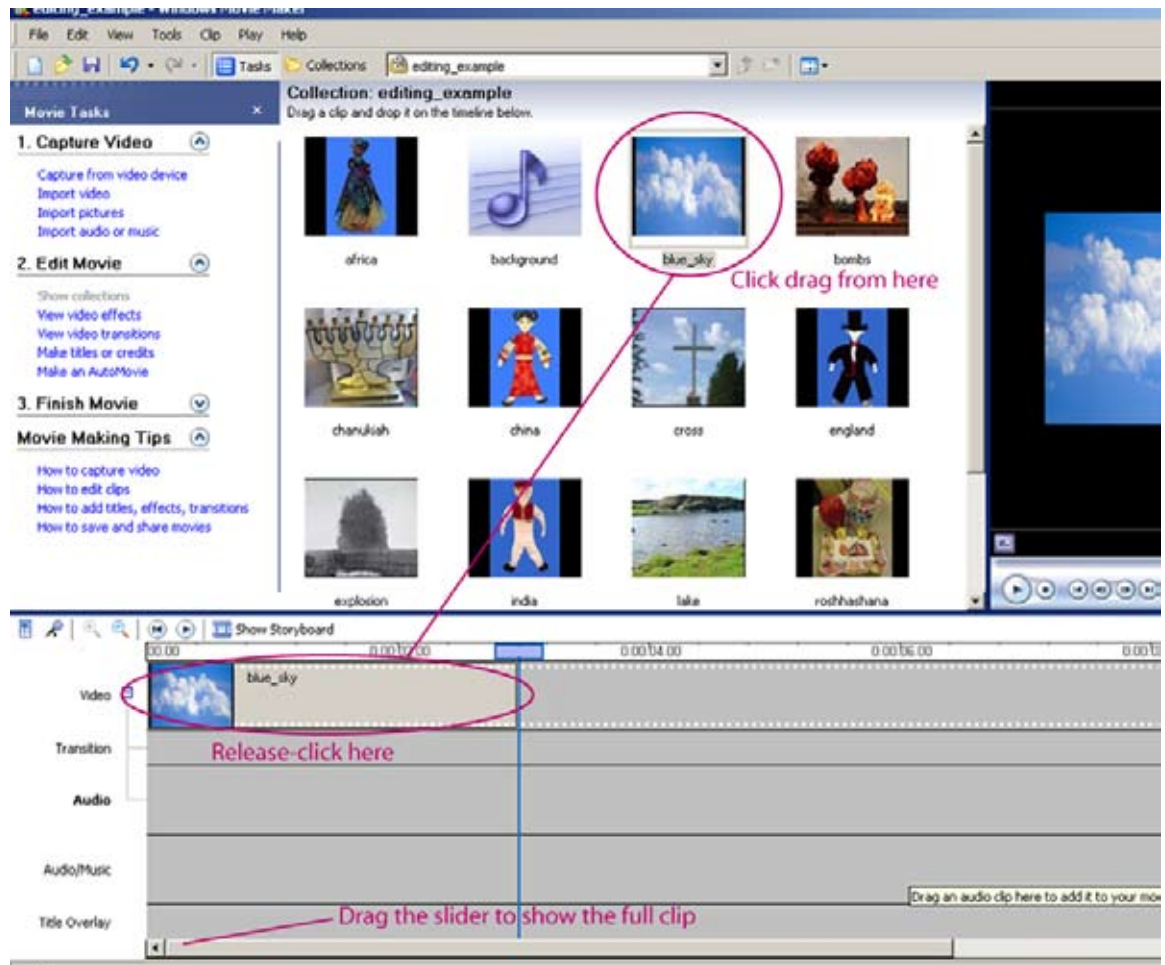Use the keyboard shortcut **Control + S** to save your file.

Figure 10

3. You may notice that the **blue_sky** clip looks quite small on the timeline. To increase its size click the **Zoom** button. Use the slider at the bottom of the window to bring the clip back into view (Figure 10). The clip should also be visible with the **Preview Monitor**.

4. Click-drag the following clips into the **Video** track, behind the **blue_sky** clip:

    a.   Africa

    b.   China

    c.   England

    d.   India

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5. Repeat the same process with the newly created Narration file, but drag it to the **Audio/Music** track (Figure 11).
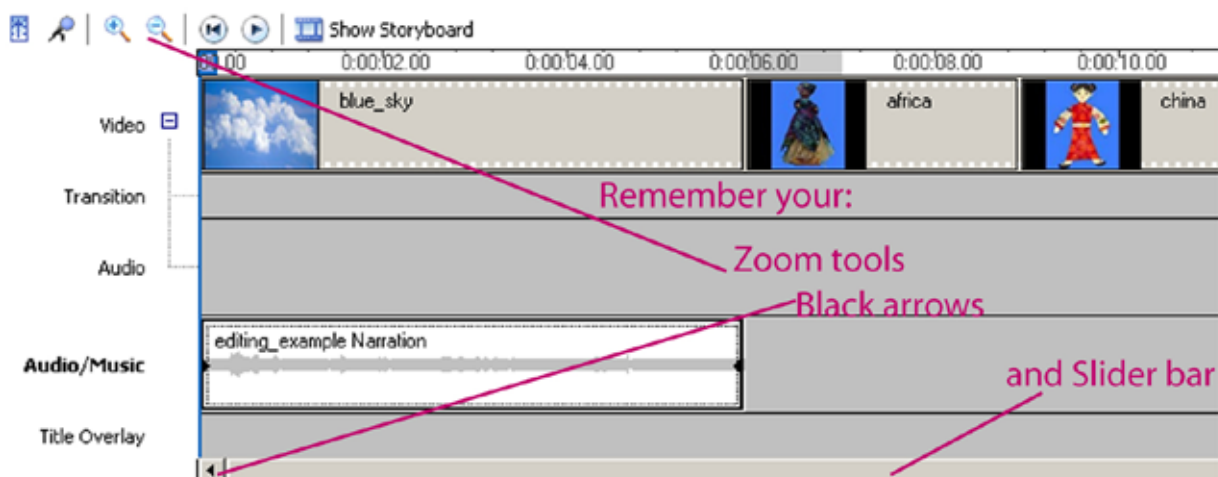

Figure 11

Trimming a Clip

Now let's check how the Narration sounds. Press **Play** within the **Timeline View**. If you feel there is too much silence either before or after the talking begins, you can adjust (or **Trim**) the length of the clip. To do this:

1. Firstly zoom in on the Narration audio track. You should be able to see where the audio 'wave line' increases. Higher waves indicate sound. A flatter wave indicates silence (Figure 12).
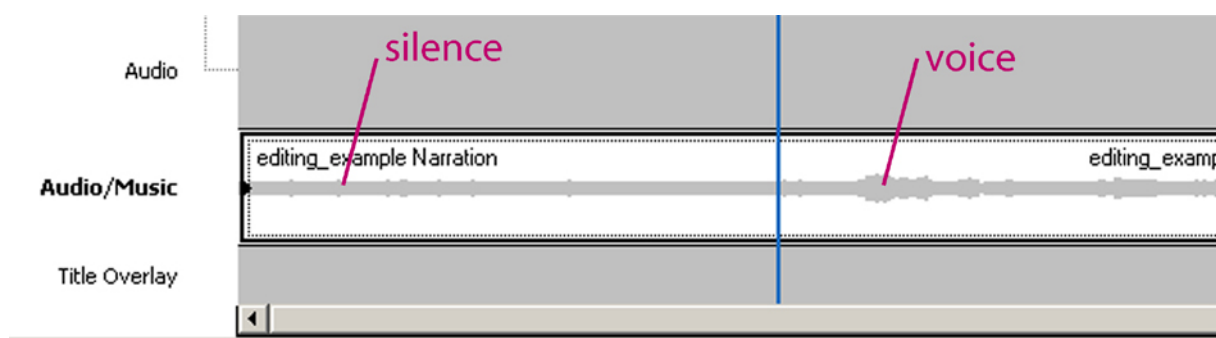

Figure 12

2. Double-click within the Narration audio track. It should appear white with 2 small arrows inside. Roll your cursor across the right edge of the track to reveal a red doubled sided arrow. The doubled sided arrow indicates that you can now adjust the clip's length.

3. Click-drag at either end of the clip to reduce the clip's length and remove any unwanted silence/noise. If you remove any from the beginning of the clip, remember to click-drag the Narration to re-position it at the start of the track.

Adding Special Effects

4. Click-drag the edges of the **blue_sky** clip so it matches the length of the narration track. Now let's add a special effect to the **blue_sky** track. To do this:

5. From the drop-down window near the **Menu Bar** area select **Video Effects** (Figure 13). The **Video Effects Panel** will now be seen.
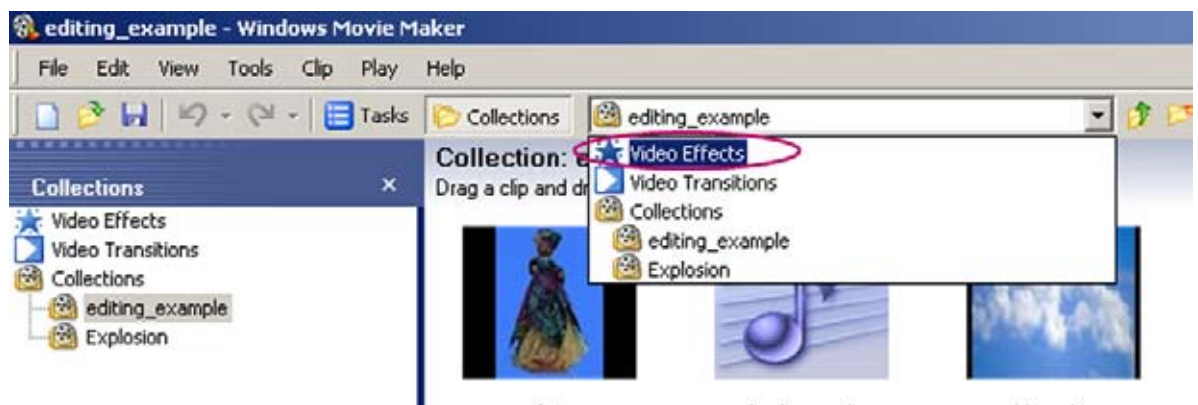

Figure 13

6. Scroll through to locate the **Hues, Cycles Entire Colour Spectrum** effect. Click-drag that effect onto the **blue_sky** track. If successful you should see a blue star appear within the track.

7. If you have mistakenly added the wrong effect, don't worry. Simply right-click on the **blue_sky** track to reveal a flyout menu, and select **Video Effects** from the flyout menu.

8. Within the next dialogue window select the unwanted effect from the right-hand window then click **Remove**.

9. Scroll through the effects within the left-hand window, select the correct effect then click **Add**. Click **OK** to complete the task.

10. Play your track so far and don't forget to…. SAVE YOUR FILE!

Before we continue, please remember that you don't need to re-create this exercise exactly. It's the features and principles of Movie Maker that we are focusing on.

OK, now let's add the soundtrack.

Adding a Soundtrack

1. From the Collections Panel click-drag down the clip titled **background** to the Audio/Music track. Position it next to the Narration track. Play your file so far.

When you listen to the **background** track you may notice a point where a new sound appears. It sounds like 'ye-a-ye-a'. I have constructed my digital story around the soundtrack. This means that when there is a change in the soundtrack, there is a change in the imagery. You may choose to do this in your own digital story.

If you decide to do this, I suggest that you create your soundtrack first, preferably within a sound-editing program such as Audacity. Then you can match the 'rhythm' of your images with the soundtrack. You can also choose the opposite, but for the sake of this exercise we will show you how music and imagery can blend.

If you remember back to the sample exercise, you will know that the **sky_blue** track plays through the narration into the beginning of the soundtrack, where the 'ye-a-ye-a' sound begins. We want to end the **sky_blue** track and start the next file (Africa) at the 'ye-a-ye-a' point. To do this:

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2. Play the project from the start. When you hear the 'ye-a-ye-a' click **Stop** (or Space-bar). This is at approximately 14 seconds and 16 frames.

3. Roll your cursor within the **sky_blue** track. A small flyout window will display the current length of the clip. We need to click-drag the clip so that it's 14 seconds and 16 frames long. **Play** and **Save** the project so far.

4. Using the same principle we now need to adjust the length of the remaining clips: Africa, China, England and India. Each of these clips needs to be approximately 2 seconds and 24 frames.

5. Repeat the process of dragging and adjusting the lengths of the following clips, within the Video Track:

Title	Approximate Length
Cross	2:42
Chanukiah	2:42
Roshhashana	2:42
War	4:48
Blast	4:58
Bombs	3:00

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Let's now add some transitions.

Adding Transitions

1. From the drop-down window near the **Menu Ba**r area select **Video Transitions**.

2. Scroll through to locate the **Fade** transition. Click-drag that effect onto the **Transitions** track, between all of the clips within the Video track (Figure 14)
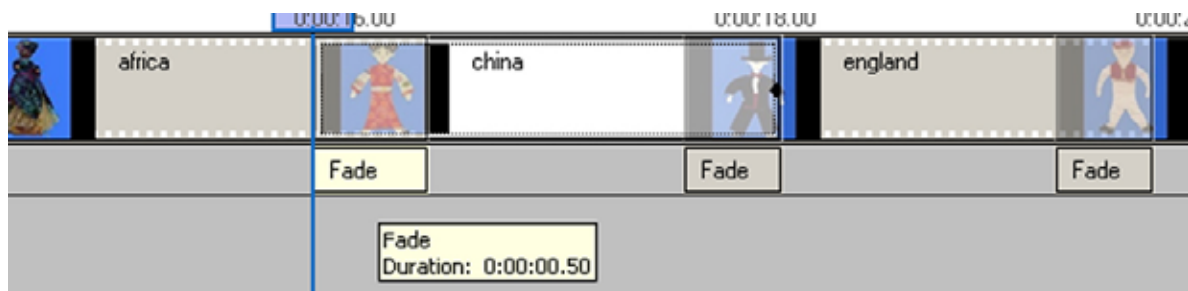

Figure 14

3. Play the movie so far. You will notice that the transitions occur around the time of the music change. Once again, don't stress if it's not exact. That comes with practise!

4. **SAVE** YOUR PROJECT.

Splitting Clips

Movie Maker allows you to split your video clips in half. This is to remove any unwanted film that would otherwise just add to your movie's file size. Splitting clips can be done either through the preview monitor or on the timeline.

1. Drag in the clip **explosion.avi** to the end of the Video Track so that it follows the **Bombs** clip. Remember that Movie Maker may have placed the .avi in its own Collections Folder.

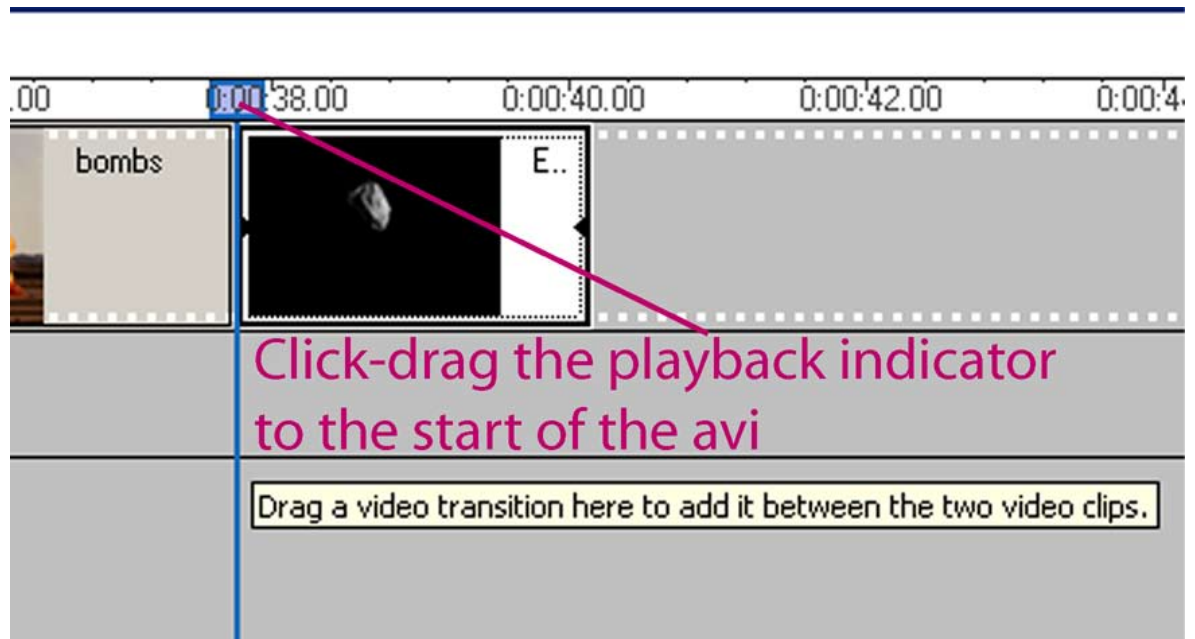2. Position the playback indicator at the start of the **explosion** clip (Figure 15).

Figure 15

3. Within the **Preview Monitor** press **Play** to watch the clip.

We want to keep the actual explosion. We want to remove what looks like a comet or meteor hitting it. To do this:

4. Once again, bring the playback indicator to the start of the **explosion** clip. Within the **Preview Monitor** select the **Next Frame** button. This will 'nudge' the clip's playback so you see the action 'frame by frame'.

5. We want to stop 'nudging' at the point just before the explosion occurs (Figure 16).
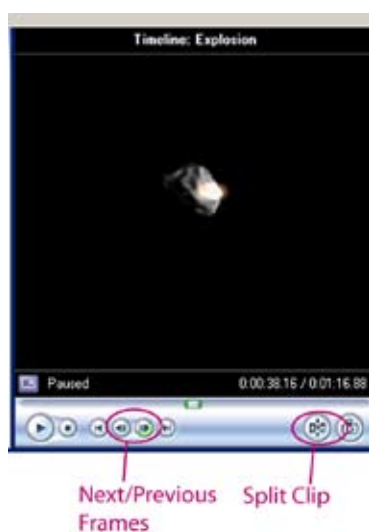

Figure 16

6.   Once at the point just before the explosion occurs, select the **Split Clip** button. You will see the clip split into 2 sections within the Timeline. Select the left hand clip and click the **Delete** key to remove it.

7.   Place a **Fade** transition between the **Bombs** and **Explosion** clip. I also added a **Sepia Tone** Video Effect to both the **Bombs** and **Blast** clips.

Now it's time to add some text.

Adding Title Overlays

The content I have used for the **Title Overlays** is the following quote by Robert Alan:

"The human family is very diverse, with many different beliefs and cultures and ways of life. Many conflicts in our world are caused when people are intolerant of the ways that others see the world. Learning tolerance is an important cornerstone to creating a better world."

I have broken it apart and created 4 separate overlays. Let's see how it's done.

1. Firstly drag the **Playback Indicator** to the start of the background audio clip.

2. Within the **File Menu** area select **Tools > Titles and Credits**. You will now see options regarding where you want your text to be positioned. Select **Add Title on the selected clip in the timeline.**

3. Into the top section of the resulting dialogue window **Copy** and **Paste** the following text, **The human family is very diverse** (Figure 17).
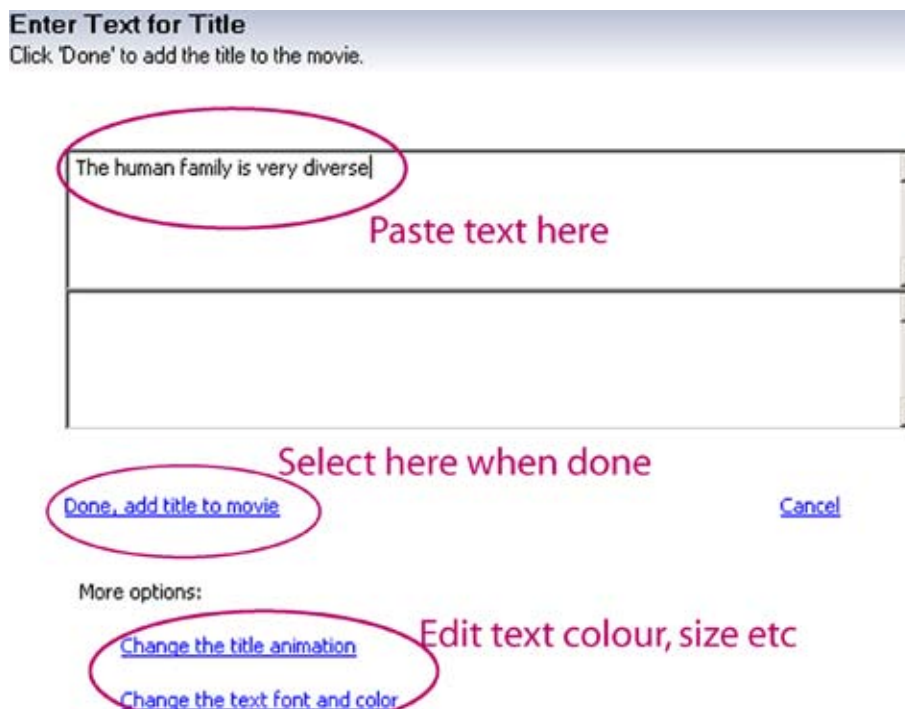
Figure 17

4. Use the functions within this dialogue window to adjust the size, style and colour of the text. Then select **Done, add title to movie**. The new title clip will position itself within the **Title Overlay** track, directly beneath the **background** audio track.

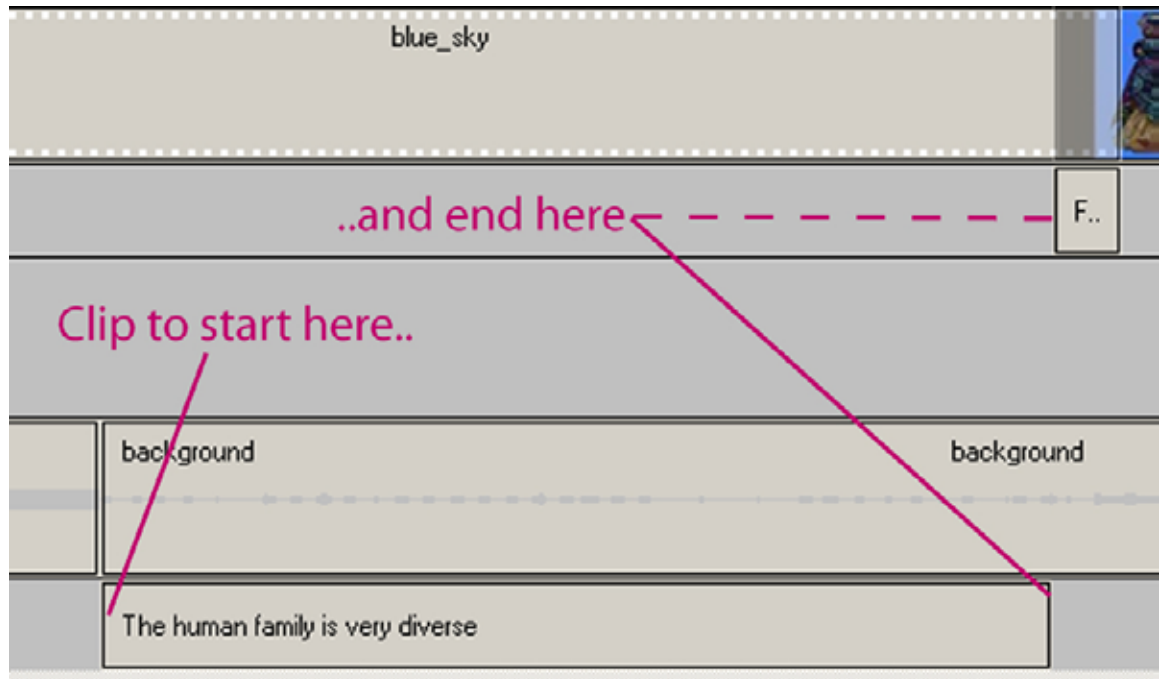5. Adjust the clip's length to the point where the Africa clip begins (Figure 18).

Figure 18

6. A title clip can be edited by double-clicking on it within the Timeline.

7. Now position the Playback Indicator at the start of the **cross** clip. Create a second title overlay with the text: **with many different beliefs and cultures and ways of life.**

The duration of this clip should extend to the end of the **roshhashana** clip.

8. The third overlay clip should extend from the start of the **war** clip to the end of the **bombs** clip. Paste the following text: **Many conflicts in our world are caused when people are intolerant of the ways that others see the world.**

The fourth title is not an overlay but will sit on the Video Track itself.

9. Position the Playback Indicator at the end of the explosion clip. **Select Tools > Titles and Credits**. This time select **Add Title after the selected clip in the timeline.**

10. Paste the text: **Learning tolerance is an important cornerstone to creating a better world.**

11. Still within the dialogue window, select the **Change the title animation** link. The next window will display a range of animated effects you can use.

12. Scroll down and select **Fade, In and Out**.

13. Now select the **Change text font and colour** link. Change the background colour to black. Select **Done**.

14. Extend the length of this text clip to approximately 7 seconds, long enough for people to read the text. Finally we are at the credits stage.

Adding Credits

1. As with the last clip, position the Playback Indicator at the end of the Video track.

2. Select **Tools > Titles and Credits**. This time select **Add credits at the end of the movie**. The resulting dialogue window will look slightly different but the principle is the same.

3. Insert the text into each table cell. I have just placed ad hoc text. Feel free to add you own (Figure 19).

4. You can also adjust the animation style of the credits **Change the title animation** link. I have used the default setting.

5. Set the duration of the credit's clip to approximately 10 seconds. Now drag the length of the **background** clip to finish at the same time as the credits.

6. Now right-click on the **background** clip and select **Fade Out** from the flyout menu.

7. Play the project…and don't forget to SAVE!

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Exporting your movie

The last step is exporting (or saving) your movie. This is so it can be viewed on your own programs outside of Movie Maker, such as your Media Player. To export your film:

1. Within the **File Menu** area select **File > Save Movie File**.

2. In the resulting dialogue window select the first option – **My Computer**. Select **Next**.

3. Now name your movie and set its saving destination. Select **Next**.

The next window is extremely important to get right. This is where we will set the quality of our film.

4. Check the **Other Settings** button. Within the adjacent drop-down menu select **DVI – PAL** (Figure 19). Select **Next**.
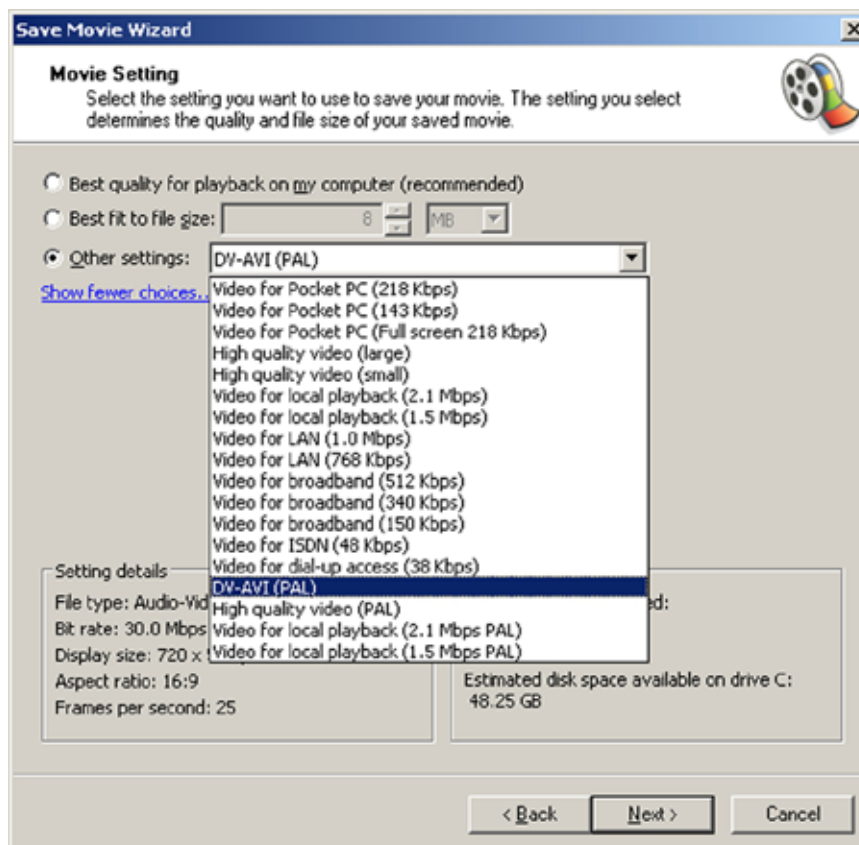
Figure 19

Movie Maker should now begin saving/exporting your movie.

5. When complete select **Finish**. You can now view your AVI movie within your computer's media player.

Sharing your movie

You can screen your finished product on your computer (as an avi file) for friends and family.

You can also burn your movie to DVD using customized software. Check out some of the MovieMaker links at the end of the manual for detailed instructions on this process.

You can upload your finished movie to the Rainbow Family Tree website so that a whole community of storytellers can enjoy your tale. This is a relatively straightforward process and you'll find instructions on the site itself.

Finally . . .

Congratulations! If you've gotten to this point you're probably feeling a mixture of pride, elation and exhaustion. And remember – this is just the beginning… you've made one short film… it may seem like a drop in the ocean… but if only one person is moved and inspired by your story you have made a contribution to making the world a happier place to live in as a GLBTQI person! When you think about it like that its great motivation to share your story wide and far… Invite friends and family to view your story on the website… and encourage them to share it with their friends and acquaintances too!

Helpful Links

Movie Maker Tutorials

http://www.saskschools.ca/resources/techref/moviemaker/movie.html

http://www.windowsmoviemakers.net/

http://www.mightycoach.com/articles/mm2/index.html

Video Tutorials

http://etc.usf.edu/te_win/movies/windowsmm.html

Training and Support Services About Movie Maker

http://www.papajohn.org/

MOVIE MAKER HELP GUIDE

incite
S T O R I E S