

13 Steps for Creating a Student News Package

By: [Digital Media in the Classroom](#)



Each month as a class, my students and I watch our monthly television show [Ladue View](#), to critique what we did well, and what we need to improve upon.

After watching a recent show, we decided that once again there were some easily correctable, missed steps, that our students failed to prepare for, during their video productions.

One of my star students, Samantha, took the liberty to jot down these notes based upon my spontaneous lecture of what we cannot afford to forget when preparing for our video shoot, going out on the shoot, and for editing the video. As it turns out, this list proved quite helpful from that point on for our class.

Video Checklist for Student News Shows

1. Start your video with [NAT Sound](#) and [BROLL](#). Therefore, look for great NAT Sound and BROLL opportunities on the shoot.
2. Get wide, medium and tight of every single shot, at least 10 seconds from each distance. ([Tips for better shooting](#))
3. Make subjects stand at least one foot from the backdrop. It looks way more interesting. ([Depth of field](#))
4. [Establishing shot](#). Get one. Don't assume viewers know where you are or what you're talking about.
5. Make sure ANYONE you interview, is also included in at least a few shots of your BROLL footage.
6. Light goes behind the camera; don't leave your subjects in the dark. Check out these tips on [3-point lighting techniques](#):
7. Look nice on camera. Dress Professional.
8. Always shoot with editing in mind. Look for the action shots, the reaction shots, and interesting activities/people.

- Motion = Emotion!
- Don't shoot inanimate objects and use as your BRoll. BORING!
- Action – Reaction

9. Test your equipment **BEFORE** you leave for the shoot.

- Camera
- Battery (bring 2)
- Tripod
- Tape/SD card
- Microphone
- Headphones

10. Check your AUDIO levels on the camera and the mic if needed.

11. Basic editing techniques

- Edit at LEAST 3 different shots of BRoll together in a series
- Don't put 2 of the same CAM angles back to back (MS-MS or WS-WS or CU-CU)
 - 3-5 seconds long for each shot.
 - Show a sequence – WS-MS-CU, or MS-CU-WS, or CU-WS-MS
- - WS = wide shot
- - MS = medium shot
- - CU = close up (tight shot)

12. Begin recording any interview with, "Say your name and spell it." This is a great way to test your audio levels, while recording the correct spelling of their name. And then spell their name correctly on the lower thirds in post-production.

13. And remember, if there is a technical problem, it is probably YOU! The camera is not broken. The microphone and tripod DO work. 99% of all technical problems are user related. Know how to troubleshoot your equipment!

There are many more tricks, tips and suggestions, but with these ideas in mind, I believe you can create a fun, polished news package video, while offering a tremendous learning experience for your students. Good luck!

What quick tips from your classroom projects can you contribute? Share in the comments section!

Do you allow students to create videos in your class? If not, why not? Do you need support to incorporate video in the classroom? I can help with that. Follow me on Twitter [@dgoble2001](#) or email me at dgoble2001@yahoo.com.

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