

Project 3

News stories

Timing: 7 to 11 hours

Project overview

In the process of creating a basic news story, students learn about specific news editing techniques and the journalistic code of ethics. Students work in teams to select a subject, conduct an interview, and report a story. Students learn to incorporate video elements in news stories, such as interview sound bites, reporter stand-up, b-roll footage, natural sound, supers, and reporter narration.

Student product: News story video

Note: Portions of the News stories project align to the Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam are referenced with the following format: ^{1.1}

Project objectives

At the completion of the project, students will have developed the following skills:

Project management skills

- Planning and managing projects with multiple steps
- Identifying audience, purpose, and goals
- Researching and selecting a news story focus
- Developing a shot list
- Developing a script
- Selecting and using appropriate applications

Design skills

- Creating an original work
- Identifying general principles for video shooting techniques
- Learning video shooting techniques:
 - Shooting a sequence
 - Leaning in and out
 - Lighting for interviews
 - Setting up for interviews
 - Shooting b-roll footage
- Strengthening a project with supers

Research and communication skills

- Evaluating and analyzing news stories
- Writing in active voice
- Writing interview questions
- Planning strategies to guide inquiry
- Understanding and applying the journalistic code of ethics
- Conducting interviews
- Using voiceovers

Technical skills

General skills

- Shooting techniques for interviews and news stories
- Understanding and selecting microphone types
- Using effective narration techniques

Adobe Premiere Pro

- Using Program Monitor and Trim panels
- Creating J- and L-cuts
- Adding multiple types of audio
- Using the Mixer to record a narration
- Use the Titler to create supers

- Exporting to web-ready video

Project materials

- Adobe Premiere Pro CS6 installed on all machines
- Guide: Video shooting tips
- Guide: Selecting and connecting microphones
- Guide: Story creation tips
- Guide: Script-to-screen video production workflow
- Guide: Writing tips
- Worksheet: Shot list
- Worksheet: Student project proposal
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to record a narration in the Audio Mixer
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to adjust audio and apply crossfades
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to create TV news-style J- and L-cuts
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to use the Trim Monitor
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to edit in the Program Monitor
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: Understanding the Titler
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to build text and objects in the Titler
- Guide: Peer review
- Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to use the Adobe Media Encoder

Background preparation resources

- [Technical and content information](#)
- [Key terms](#)
- [ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students](#)
- [Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives](#)

Project steps

Planning a news story

(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

1. Discuss the goals of this project:
 - Plan, shoot, and create a news story.
 - Use advanced editing techniques.
 - Conduct and film interviews.
 - Shoot and edit b-roll footage.
 - Record and incorporate narration.
2. Show students news clips and help them identify and analyze how the following impact the story and its intended audience:^{1,1, 1,2, 2,3}
 - Shot selection
 - Transitions
 - Story types

- Narration
- Lighting

Note: You might gather some news clips prior to this activity.

3. As students view the news clips, discuss the journalistic code of ethics and the following concepts:
 - *Truth:* Journalists should be honest in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.
 - *Accountability:* Journalists are accountable to their audience and colleagues.
 - *Fairness:* Journalists should present the news impartially and fairly, clearly representing various perspectives in a story.
 - *Harm and safety:* Journalists should treat sources, subjects, and colleagues with respect. They should assess any potential risk to themselves, sources, subjects, or colleagues in getting a story

Note: Review the websites in the *Background resources section* on the journalistic code of ethics for more information.

4. Assign the class to small groups and provide students with guidelines for the final videos, such as:
 - The video must include 10–20 shots.
 - It must include a sequence of at least five shots.
 - They must submit a shot list.
 - They must submit a script for a short reporter stand-up segment.
 - They must submit a project proposal.
 - The video should be 1–2 minutes in length
 - The video must include b-roll footage (back-up footage that usually does not contain narration and is often used as a cut in the a-roll footage to enhance a story).
 - The video must incorporate supers.
 - They must use news-style editing techniques.
 - The video must properly use copyright citation and fair use guidelines where applicable.
 - The video must apply the journalistic code of ethics.
5. Reintroduce video shooting tips from Project 2.^{2.2, 2.3} Discuss the following concepts and tips to help students plan the production of their news stories:
 - Don't cross the plane.
 - Lean in and out.
 - Use at least two lights for an interview.
 - Use a tripod for an interview.
 - Shoot cut-aways for an interview.
 - Shoot extra interview footage.
 - Save the full interview.
 - Shoot b-roll footage.
 - Set up lighting.
 - Capture audio.

- Write in the active voice.

Guide: Video shooting tips ^{2.2, 2.3}

Guide: Selecting and connecting microphones

Guide: Story creation tips ^{2.1}

Note: Adobe CS6 Production Premium contains new tools to more efficiently manage the script-to-screen video production workflow. Based on your equipment capabilities, consider how you can integrate Adobe Prelude to log and ingest footage, add metadata, and create rough cuts to speed up the production, post-production, and publishing workflow.

Guide: Script-to-screen video production workflow^{1.4}

Developing content for a news story

(Suggested time: 200–250 minutes)

6. Instruct each group to select a story to report on (for instance, the effects of a school policy, the success of a sports team, a profile of a teacher or student, or a popular school trend) and plan the following elements:^{1.4, 2.1, 2.3}
 - People to interview
 - Shot list
 - Project proposal
 - B-roll footage
 - Draft script for reporter stand-up (when the reporter stands in front of the camera holding a microphone and speaks)

Note: If it is difficult for students to find primary interview subjects encourage them to interview teachers or students to give an opinion about the news story topic.

Guide: Writing tips ^{2.1}

7. Instruct each group to complete the project proposal and shot list and hand them in for approval.

Worksheet: Shot list ^{1.4}

Worksheet: Student project proposal ^{1.4}

8. Allow groups time to research the news story topic and acquire any needed permission for filming on school grounds, filming minors, and so on.^{1.3}
9. Allow students time to research content for their news stories. As they research content, ask them to evaluate the validity, currency, and bias of the content they are including, specifically when they find the information on the web. Some items for them to consider include:
 - Content bias
 - Can you tell why the site was created? Is an organization associated with the site, and if so, what type of organization?
 - Is it clear which portions of the site’s content are fact and which are opinion?
 - Is bias apparent in the information presented? Is there a hidden purpose?

- Content currency
 - When was the information first placed on the page?
 - When was it last revised?
 - Are there any other indications that this information is current? What is the quality of the related links?
- Content source
 - Who is responsible for this site?
 - What qualifications or expertise does the author have to write about the topic on this site?
 - Is there a way to verify the legitimacy of the author, such as an e-mail address, phone number, or mailing address?
 - Who sponsors this site? Has the site been reviewed or won any awards?
 - Are any other sources cited on this site?
 - What is the domain extension of the site? What does this extension tell you about the site?
- Content corroboration
 - What other sites have information on this topic?
 - Is the information the same?
 - Are these other sources valid?

10. Allow groups time to identify and write interview questions to use in the reporter stand-up script and write a draft script. Ask students to review and revise the interview questions and scripts and hand them in for instructor approval.

11. Discuss preparations for filming, such as planning the types and locations of camera(s), lighting, and microphones prior to filming.^{1,4}

12. After students receive script approval, ask each group to finalize their reporter stand-up script and explain that they can alter the script according to what happens at the actual event.

Note: Ask students to practice interviews with each other to be at ease when they interview on camera.

13. To prepare for working with natural sound, recording the reporter stand-up, and combining the two types of sounds, use the “I do, we do, you do” method to demonstrate how to use the live recording feature in Adobe Premiere Pro.^{2,4}

Note: Encourage students to use the live recording feature as they practice interviewing, so they can troubleshoot problems before the actual interview.

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to record a narration in the Audio Mixer^{4,4}

14. Instruct each group to film their interviews, b-roll footage, and reporter stand-up according to their shot list.

Building a news story

(Suggested time: 150–200 minutes)

15. Explain that J- and L-cuts are effective editing techniques used frequently in TV news and feature films to ease the transition from one clip to another. Before creating J- and L-cuts, students will need to learn how to work with keyframes and adjust volume settings on audio clips. Using the “I do, we do, you do” method, demonstrate how to work with keyframes, adjust audio, add audio transitions (such as Constant Gain, Constant Power, and Exponential Fade transitions), and create news-style editing in Adobe Premiere Pro.

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to adjust audio and apply crossfades ^{4.4}

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to create TV news-style J- and L-cuts ^{4.4}

16. Explain that the Trim Monitor and Program Monitor for editing in Adobe Premiere Pro are great for doing precise and efficient editing work. Using the “I do, we do, you do” method, demonstrate how to use the Trim Monitor to create ripple and rolling edits and how to use the Program Monitor to edit a range of video frames.

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to use the Trim Monitor ^{4.3}

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to edit in the Program Monitor ^{4.2, 4.3}

17. Allow each group time to edit their news story. Explain that they should use the skills they have learned in this and previous projects (for instance, incorporating natural sound bites, using transitions, or using b-roll footage from Project 2).

Note: Remind students of the discussion from Project 2 on the ethical responsibility of a video editor.

18. Discuss how supers can strengthen a project and act as an alternative to voiceover narration. Some examples include:

- Instead of using a voiceover to say “Sue Smith, vice president of manufacturing for Acme Industries,” put that information in a super at the bottom of the screen.
- Instead of narrating a collection of statistics, use bulleted points that pop onscreen with each new item.

19. Using the “I do, we do, you do” method, demonstrate how to create supers by using a template.

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: Understanding the Titler ^{3.2}

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to use the Titler to build text and objects ^{4.5}

20. Pair student groups and have them review each other’s videos, providing comments on how well the video meets the project proposal.

Guide: Peer review

21. Have each group implement suggestions to improve their news stories.

22. Discuss the importance of serving video over the web (for instance, access to a wide audience, low cost, and so on). Discuss the importance of file size and bandwidth issues when delivering video over the web.^{5.1} Some topics to discuss include:

- *Bandwidth*: How high- and low-bandwidth Internet users will experience video and how to create options for both users.
- *Optimizing for web*: Managing image size and frame rate to make the video accessible to a variety of end users.
- *Codec*: Compression and decompression of video to be delivered over the Internet.

23. Review standard file formats for serving video over the web and on mobile devices. Some topics to include are:

- Adobe Flash video (.FLV/.F4V) is ready to play on any PC with a Flash-enabled browser. It is the most flexible and widely used video option.
- HTML5 video (.MP4/.OGV/.WEBM) uses a variety of formats to make sure that video can be viewed from within the browser without a plug-in. Note that the certain video formats are not currently supported by all Internet browsers and that the final standard HTML5 video formats are yet to be determined.
- QuickTime is a video and audio file format developed by Apple that must be viewed in a QuickTime player on computer platforms.

24. Using the “I do, we do, you do” method, demonstrate how to save news stories, export them to play on the web, and save this export process as a batch process.

Adobe Premiere Pro guide: How to use the Adobe Media Encoder ^{5.2}

Presenting a news story

(Suggested time: 50–100 minutes)

25. Have each group present their news stories to the class and explain the video techniques they employed, how they applied the journalistic code of ethics, what they learned in doing this project, and what they would like to learn next to further their skill set.^{2.6}

Extension activities

You can extend the project in the following ways:

- *Newscast*: Have the class create an entire newscast with several news reports (sports, politics, weather) and roles (anchor, reporter, weatherperson, and so on). If possible, broadcast the newscast on the school’s televisions.
- *Journalistic code of ethics*: Ask students to research the journalistic code of ethics and then analyze various newscasts from different channels to critique how well they seem to adhere to these ethics.
- *Pod cast*: Take the audio portion of the final news story and turn it into a pod cast that can be streamed or downloaded from a website.

Assessment

- [Project rubric](#)

Background preparation resources

- Review the student step-by-step guides referenced in this project.
- For more advanced video production resources, including sample projects with multimedia assets and video tutorials, visit the Video Production Resource Center: www.adobe.com/go/hedvideoresources
- To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, visit the Digital Video CS6 show on Adobe TV: <http://tv.adobe.com/show/digital-video-cs6/>
- For more teaching and learning resources on news stories, video production, and other topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edexchange.adobe.com>
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Adobe Premiere Pro, see Adobe Premiere Pro Help.
- You might supplement this project with the following video production books:
 - Aronson, I. (2006). *DV Filmmaking from Start to Finish*. Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media, Inc.
 - Millerson, G. (2008). *Video Production Handbook, Fourth Edition*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press.
 - Bliss, E.; Hoyt, J. (1994). *Writing News for Broadcast 3rd ed.*. N.Y., N.Y.: Columbia University Press.
 - Block, Jr., M.; Durso, J. (2010). *Writing News for TV & Radio: The New Way to Learn Broadcast Newswriting*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
 - Tuggle, C.A.; Carr, F.; Huffman, S. (2006). *Broadcast News Handbook: Writing, Reporting, Producing in a Converging Media World, 3rd ed.* N.Y., N.Y.: McGraw-Hill

Journalistic code of ethics

- You might want to review the journalistic code of ethics from the following sources:
 - Society of Professional Journalists: www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp
 - Business Week: www.businessweek.com/ethics.htm
 - The New York Times: www.nytimes.com/company-properties-times-coe.html
 - Radio Television Digital News Association: www.rtnda.org/pages/media_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php

Scriptwriting

- Sample scripts from newscasts to use with students: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/6180944.stm.
- Advice for writing for broadcast: www.cybercollege.com/typ006.htm.
- Broadcast style writing tips as well as mechanics of style and grammar: www.jprof.com/broadcasting/bestyletips.html.

Audio clips

- Soundzabound.com provides cutting-edge, copyright-safe audio for podcasts, videos and all forms of media. To learn more about obtaining a Soundzabound license of your own, please visit www.soundzabound.com.

Key terms

- b-roll footage
- codec
- Flash video
- J- and L-cuts
- journalistic code of ethics
- media encoder
- mpeg
- news style editing
- Quick Time
- supers

ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

ISTE NETS*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
- d. contribute to project teams to produce original work and solve problems.

3. Research and Information Retrieval

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.

4. Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate technology tools. Students:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

5. Digital Citizenship

Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
- b. exhibit positive attitudes toward technology uses that support collaboration, learning, and productivity.

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations.

Students:

- a. understand and use technology systems.
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively.

Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing video.
- 1.2 Identify video content that is relevant to the project purpose and appropriate for the target audience.
- 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of standard copyright rules (related terms, obtaining permission, and citing copyrighted material).
- 1.4 Demonstrate knowledge of the production planning and management process.
- 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to organize and plan a video sequence.
- 2.2 Identify general principles for video shooting.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of visual techniques for enhancing video content.
- 2.4 Demonstrate knowledge of using audio to enhance video content.
- 2.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.
- 3.2 Identify the functions of Adobe Premiere Pro interface elements.
- 4.2 Organize and manage video clips in a sequence.
- 4.3 Trim clips.
- 4.4 Manage sound in a video sequence.
- 4.5 Manage superimposed text and shapes in a video sequence.
- 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of export options for video.
- 5.2 Demonstrate knowledge of how to export video from Adobe Premiere Pro.

Assessment

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Shot list	Absent or incomplete.	Provides a shot list with documentation of any new shots taken in the moment of filming.	Provides a complete shot list with documentation and explanation of any new shots taken in the moment of filming.
Draft script	Absent or incomplete.	Draft script is directly related to the topic and footage. Script includes commentary and questions in the reporter stand-up. Students have thoughtfully reviewed and revised scripts prior to submitting for approval.	Draft script is well written, clear, and concise and directly relates to the topic and footage. The topic has been researched, and thoughtful commentary and questions are included in the reporter stand-up. Students have thoughtfully reviewed and revised scripts prior to submitting for approval.
Project proposal	Absent or incomplete.	Project proposal identifies purpose, audience, genre, elements, equipment needed, locations, distribution format, crew, and schedule of deliverables.	Project proposal clearly details purpose, audience, genre, elements, equipment needed, locations, distribution format, crew, and schedule of deliverables.
News story – content	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	News story is 1–2 minutes in length and covers a relevant news story. The news story incorporates interviews, a reporter-stand up, and supers. The news story adheres to the journalistic code of ethics.	News story is 1–2 minutes in length and covers a relevant and compelling news story. The news story incorporates interviews from multiple perspectives. The reporter stand-up comes across as well-written, clear, and concise. Supers effectively and succinctly convey information. The news story adheres to journalistic code of ethics.
New story – editing	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	News story includes b-roll footage and news-style editing. The audio includes multiple audio tracks edited together.	News story is well edited and seamlessly incorporates b-roll footage and news-style editing. The audio includes multiple audio tracks that are efficiently and seamlessly edited together to give the audience a sense of the news scene.

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Team work	Absent or incomplete.	Teams collaborate and interact with peers, experts, or others to create a news story. Teams create, plan, and manage a project proposal that guides the video production process. Student teams investigate and gain any needed permission to use school grounds and film and interview students (for example, student release forms).	Teams clearly and efficiently collaborate and interact with peers, experts, or others to record an action event. Teams create, plan, and efficiently manage a project proposal that guides the video production process. Student teams investigate and gain any needed permission to film on school grounds and to film and interview participants (for example, student release forms).
Peer review	Absent or incomplete.	Students actively participate in peer review session and contribute suggestions for improvements.	Students actively participate in peer review session and clearly identify discrepancies between project goals and the resulting news story. Students articulate possible solutions to better align news story with the intended goals.
Presentation	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	Presentation details the video techniques employed, how they applied the journalistic code of ethics to create the news story, what they learned in doing this project, and what they would like to learn next to further their skill set.	Presentation clearly explains the video techniques employed and why they chose to use them. Presentation clearly and effectively explains how they applied the journalistic code of ethics, providing specific examples. Presentation reflects on what they learned in doing this project and explains what they would like to learn next to further their skill set.