General Tips

- Arrive at the location early so you have time to set it up.
- Frame subject so they are turned ¾ towards camera. Avoid straight on and profile shots.
- Place subject in a setting related to the topic of the video.
- Check the background for distractions, like reflective surfaces, inappropriate items, or clutter.
- Have tails at either end of your clips.
- Make sure all equipment is working, batteries are charged, and you have a spare power source.
- Take your planning materials: Don't forget to take your shot list, cast and crew contact list, and anything else you prepared for your shoot.
- Shoot more than you think is necessary: If you're not sure you got it right, try another take.

Audio

- Record a test before starting final recording.
- (Advanced audio editing) Record ambient sound: At the end of any scene, record 30 seconds of ambient sound in case you need to remove from final take.
- Watch playback before everyone leaves: Don't be afraid to start over if you made a mistake!
- If using a microphone:
  - Someone on your crew should always be monitoring the audio.
  - Place the microphone as close to the subject's mouth as possible without it being seen.
  - Check your levels: The optimal point for your microphone levels is just below the red.

Framing the shot

- Well-framed shots are essential to basic filming. Arrange your subject based on the rule of thirds.
- Most shots of a person are medium close-up shots and show just the head and shoulders.
- You should consider the subject's:
  - head room – space between top of head and frame
  - looking room – space between subject and edge of frame they're facing, have more in front
  - walking room – same as looking room, but for full body shot
Lighting

Position: Lights positioned 45 degrees off to one side of your subject and angled slightly down at your subject will produce the most dynamic footage. When shooting outside, avoid positioning subjects with their back facing the sun. You want the light to be falling on their face.

Reflect: When you only have one light source, try reflecting the light back onto your subject to lighten up any shadows on their face.

Diffuse: In general, diffused light is more flattering for your subjects than high-contrast light. You can diffuse light by using a softbox or an umbrella.

Choose roles – you don’t have to go it alone

Main character______________________________ Shot set-up lead____________________________
Secondary character________________________ Lighting lead ______________________________
Videographer______________________________ Editing lead______________________________
Other_____________________________________ Other_____________________________________