

# Building a Scene

## using the 5-shots +1 formula

Footage in camera due at beginning of next class

**Building a storytelling scene with video exercise:** the focus of this project is...

1. Hands on experience with the **video equipment**
2. Practice using the **5-shot +1** formula to film storytelling **sequences**
3. Practice using **camera angles** that engage the viewer
4. Practice **composing** shots that are effective visuals
5. Understand **shots** as the basic building component of video
6. Hands on experience using Premier to **edit** videos
7. Learn how to **export** edited videos for viewing online or on a computer

**SHOTS => SEQUENCES => SCENES => STORY**

A sequence focuses on one person or a particular action. A scene takes place in one location and is built from a series of sequences. For this assignment you are going to do the 5-shot formula twice in the same place, with the same person, but have them doing two different things.

1. As a team, decide on the topic of your shoot and write out:
  - a. The location
  - b. The subject (one person)
  - c. The first action
  - d. The second action
2. Using the video camera and tripod take at least 12 shots demonstrating you understand how to use the 5-shot rule to build a scene. **Each shot should be composed using the rule of thirds or should fill the screen. Each SHOT should be 10-20 seconds long.**

### **ACTION 1:**

1. A close-up (CU) on the hands of a subject – showing WHAT is happening
2. A close-up (CU) on the face – WHO is doing it
3. A medium shot showing the hands and face together
4. An over-the-shoulder shot (OTS) – linking together the previous three concepts and shows the viewer what the subject is seeing
5. A creative shot to help tell the story, something unusual that provides story specific context (very low or very high angle, reflection, framing, etc)
- +1. An extreme wide shot – WHERE is everything happening? **This shot is wide enough to show the location of Action 1 & 2 and helps tie them together.**

### **ACTION 2:**

6. A close-up (CU) on the hands of a subject – showing WHAT is happening
7. A close-up (CU) on the face – WHO is doing it
8. A medium shot showing the hands and face together
9. An over-the-shoulder shot (OTS) – linking together the previous three concepts and shows the viewer what the subject is seeing
10. A creative shot to help tell the story, something unusual that provides story specific context (very low or very high angle, reflection, framing, etc)
- +1. An extreme wide shot – WHERE is everything happening? **This shot is wide enough to show the location of Action 1 & 2 and helps tie them together.**

3. Bring the video camera to the next class with the +12 shots from the exercise. We will be learning how to import and edit the footage.

# Getting great shots

## 1. Composition counts!

- Use the rule of thirds or fill the screen
- Leave space for subjects to look into
- Don't chop off the neck

## 2. Attention to the details!

- Check the lighting: Look at how the subject and background are lit. Too dark? Too light? Move the camera or the subject until they are well lit and easy to see. The camera will adjust automatically to different types and amounts of light, but it cannot handle extreme contrasts.
- Backgrounds: Watch your background. Is it helping tell the story or is it distracting?
- Focus: Make sure your subject is in focus. The camera will focus automatically, but make sure it is focused on the right thing or hasn't been set to manual focus.
- Check your audio: Make sure you are getting good audio and with the correct settings for your scene.

## 3. Keep it steady!

- Use the tripod and keep the camera still (and well composed!)
- Don't use the zoom while filming (use the zoom or move the camera between shots)
- Be very deliberate and careful if using handheld for specific shots, brace yourself or the camera when possible

## 4. Hold the shot!

- Use the 10 and 20 second rules and hold the shot (without moving) much longer than you think you will need.
- For a subject that is moving hold the shot at least 20 seconds without moving the camera. This give the camera time to steady, you have 'handles' for editing and transitions, and you can select the best part of the action.
- If a subject is not moving at all or if you need to get many shots quickly because you have no control over the action, then 10 seconds is the MINIMUM for a shot.
- Count to yourself after hitting record, or watch the counter on the camera. 20 seconds will feel like a very long time!

## 5. Work as a team!

- Make sure everyone has a chance to experience the entire process.
- Use the check lists to help make sure you are getting each of the different types of shots (+12), as well as make such each shot is a GREAT shot.
- Have fun! Video can be very stressful – but it can also be very rewarding and fun. You can't always control everything, but you can control the attitude of yourself and your team, and that is what will enable to you have fun, adapt, and get the best footage.
- Be professional: no one wants to work with or hire someone who whines, doesn't help, shows up late, is grumpy, or otherwise no fun to be around. Don't be that person.