



**INTERVIEW TEACHING UNIT  
2017**



## **CIVIC LIFE – INTERVIEWS LESSON PLANS**

**EACH OF THESE LESSON PLANS MAY BE USED AS ONE CLASS PERIOD OR BROKEN UP OVER SEVERAL CLASS PERIODS AT THE TEACHER’S DISCRETION. SOME OF THE CLASS ACTIVITIES COULD BE ASSIGNED AS HOMEWORK. HOMEWORK AND ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE DIVIDED AMONG FILM GROUP MEMBERS BASED ON FINAL CHOSEN ROLES AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THOSE ROLES.**

**INTERVIEWING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE CIVIC LIFE PROJECT EXPERIENCE. INTERVIEWING CAN BE QUITE CHALLENGING FOR STUDENTS, BUT IS HIGHLY REWARDING WHEN SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED.**

- 1 PREPARING FOR EXPERT INTERVIEW – WRITING QUESTIONS**
- 2 CHOOSING LOCATION AND SETTING UP EQUIPMENT**
- 3 INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES**
- 4 CONDUCTING PRACTICE INTERVIEWS**
- 5 B-ROLL SHOOT AND ROLE ASSIGNMENTS**
- 6 CONDUCTING THE EXPERT INTERVIEW**
- 7 TRANSCRIBING, SCREENING, AND MAKING INTERVIEW SELECTS**



## 1 – PREPARING FOR EXPERT INTERVIEW – WRITING QUESTIONS

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### OVERVIEW

Students prepare for their first interview.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Write effective interview questions based on research.
- Learn how questions influence responses.
- Evaluate and select honest, open-ended questions.

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 1	Activity	Resources/Materials
Class	1) Unit introduction and follow-up discussion	Screen <a href="#">Passion and Punishment</a>
Class/Crew	2) Present and discuss research on interviewee and related information	Refer to School Curriculum on Research Reliability; Guiding Questions
Class	3) <i>Preparing Interview Questions</i>	<a href="#">“Preparing Interview Questions”</a>
Independent	4) <i>Interview Questions Activity</i>	<a href="#">“Interview Questions Activity”</a>
Crew/ Class	5) Discuss and select best questions, report to whole class	

## HOMEWORK

Watch/take notes:

[Video - Placing Subject](#)

[Video – Picking the Right Location](#)

[Video – Picking the Background](#)

[Video - Framing](#)

[Video - White Balance](#)

[Video - Focus](#)

[Video – Mike Placement](#)

[Video – Lavalier Mike](#)

[Video - Lighting](#)

## ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES

### 1) Unit overview: [Interview Online Workshop](#) (pw: civiclife)

### 2) Discussion of student research

- Students will access their research in their shared Moodle journals, share what they learned with team members, and defend the reliability of their information.

### 3) Preparing interview questions

- Briefly transition into this lesson segment by discussing how research informs question development. “How does your research inform the development of questions?”
- Transition to independent activity: writing questions. In preparing the questions, it is essential that the students approach the task with an open and honest methodology for conducting the interview. The goal is for students to understand that they might not share their interviewee’s point of view, but need to discover factors that have influenced his/her opinions. Students should respect how two people can come to different conclusions.
- Preparing Interview Questions Activity
- Instruct each student to develop a minimum of five possible questions for their first interviewee.
- Student records and evaluates his/her questions.

### 5) Discussion and selection of questions

- Each student shares the three best questions with the team.
- The team selects the best questions to use for the interview and submits them on the interactive form for teacher to review.
- The class discusses the chosen questions.



## 2 – CHOOSING LOCATION AND SETTING UP EQUIPMENT

### LESSON OUTLINE

Students continue preparing for their interview by choosing the location and learning the technical elements of setting up, including lighting, camera, and how to position the interviewee.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Learn how to choose the interview location.
- Learn camera, sound, and lighting set-up.

### EQUIPMENT

Camera and Tripod  
Microphone  
Lighting Equipment

### ACTIVITIES

Interview 2	Activity	Resources/Materials
Whole class	1. Discuss homework (location and camera set-up and filming techniques).	<a href="#">Video - Placing Subject</a> <a href="#">Video – Picking The Right Location</a> <a href="#">Video – Picking the Background</a> <a href="#">Video - Framing</a> <a href="#">Video - White Balance</a> <a href="#">Video - Focus</a> <a href="#">Video – Mike Placement</a> <a href="#">Video – Lavalier Mike</a> <a href="#">Video - Lighting</a>
Team	2. Crews choose a spot to set up a practice interview.	
Whole class	3. Crews explain location choice.	
Whole class	4. Volunteers set up equipment.	

## HOMEWORK

Review as needed:

[Video - Placing Subject](#)

[Video – Picking The Right Location](#)

[Video – Picking the Background](#)

[Video - Framing](#)

[Video - White Balance](#)

[Video - Focus](#)

[Video – Mike Placement](#)

[Video – Lavalier Mike](#)

[Video - Lighting](#)

## ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES

- 1) Review with students what they learned from the video tutorials.
- 2) The crews choose a volunteer interviewee and a location at which to set up a practice interview. **Guiding questions:**
  - Why is this a good location?
  - Is there a space available to place the interviewee with some space behind him or her?
  - Are there possible lighting problems (e.g., too much sunlight, area too dark)? How are you prepared to implement solutions?
  - What is the potential for background noise?
- 3) Crews explain location choice to the whole class using guiding questions. The group spokesman shares the chosen subject(s), location, rationale, and strategies, referring to guiding questions.
- 4) Student volunteers demonstrate how to set up for a shoot, using standard 3-point lighting and the
- 5) Give others an opportunity to practice.



### 3 – INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

#### LESSON OUTLINE

Students continue preparation for a formal interview by studying interview techniques, including how to write questions.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Study interview techniques.
- Write honest, open-ended questions.
- Conduct practice interviews.

#### EQUIPMENT

Camera and Tripod  
Microphone  
Lighting Equipment

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 3	ACTIVITIES	Resources/Materials
Whole class	1) Review interview tips and techniques	<a href="#">Interview Tips</a> <a href="#">Interview Questions</a> <a href="#">Interview Guidelines</a>
Individual	2) Write a script of what to say to the interviewee before asking the “hard questions.”	
Whole Class	3) Set up and conduct a mock interview, then follow up with evaluation questions.	

## NOTES

### Homework:

- Write questions on 5x7 index card.
- Producer: Begin working on Shoot Day schedule.

### ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES

- 1) The questions, location, sound, and lighting are all important, but the skill of the interviewer is also an essential ingredient in the interview success recipe.
- 2) Each student writes a script of what to say to the interviewee before asking the “hard questions.” Ask students to write questions on 5x7 index cards.
- 3) Set up and conduct a mock interview in class, then follow up with evaluation questions.
  - Ask for a volunteer crew to model location and camera set-up
  - Follow-up discussion questions:
    - What worked well?
    - What strategies were less effective?
    - How could the interviewer improve his/her techniques?



## 4 – CONDUCTING PRACTICE INTERVIEWS

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### OVERVIEW

Students conduct practice interviews in the school to rehearse camera set-up, recording techniques, and effective interview strategies.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Successfully set up camera, lighting, and sound for the practice interview.
- Successfully record using the correct framing techniques.
- Interviewer uses recommended protocol to ask questions, listen, and ask follow-up questions.

#### EQUIPMENT

Camera and Tripod  
Microphone  
Lighting Equipment

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 4	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES/MATERIALS
Crew	1) Crew selects a few practice questions, assigns roles for practice interview, goes to nearby location. Set up camera, sound, and lighting per their crew roles.	<a href="#">Crew Roles and Crew List</a>
Crew	2) Practice conducting interviews.	Interviewer's prepared script (completed in class and condensed for homework)
Class	3) Give feedback on practice interviews.	<a href="#">Practice Interview Evaluation Questions</a>

#### HOMEWORK

Research professional documentary interviews.

## **ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES**

- 1) Crews prepare for practice interview at nearby location (likely at the school).
  - Crews select a few questions.
  - Choose crew roles (who will interview, operate camera, etc.).
- 2) Conduct practice interview. Crews change location if there are unsolvable sound problems.
- 3) Crews return to class and evaluate practice interview.

**CONSIDER ADDITIONAL PRACTICE INTERVIEWS AS NEEDED.**



## 5 – B-ROLL SHOOT AND ROLE ASSIGNMENTS

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### OVERVIEW

Crews prepare for the B-roll shoot and assign roles for the filming of the expert interview.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Learn the function of B-roll.
- Prepare for the B-roll shoot.
- Learn the roles and responsibilities of the members of a film crew.
- Determine crew role assignments according to interest and recommended skill.

#### EQUIPMENT

Camera and Tripod  
Microphone  
Lighting Equipment

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 5	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES/MATERIALS
Class	1) Prepare for the B-roll shoot by viewing video clips and following script.	3 Brush video clips (links below)
Crew	2) Discuss and plan tentative B-roll material.	
Class	3) Review Crew Roles and Responsibilities.	<a href="#"><u>Crew Roles and Responsibilities</u></a>
Crew	4) Crews choose roles.	

#### HOMEWORK

Producer/teacher assigns homework tasks in preparation for Shoot Day.

Producer completes [Shoot Day Schedule \(sample\)](#), emails it to the team, teacher, and interviewees, and posts it on the Moodle site.

## **ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES**

Watch the three Brush interview video clips (see below). B-roll is visual material/footage used over interviews or narration. Portions of the B-roll shoot can be filmed before and/or after the interview. Students will understand the purpose of B-roll and how to shoot it best by viewing the three versions of the Brush interview clips.

Students follow each time with hard copy of edited script. Discuss briefly the purpose of B-roll material. Brainstorm B-roll ideas for Shoot Day. Mention that B-roll material can be shot before, during, and after the interview.

- 1) Crews briefly discuss B-roll shoot and the producer takes notes as needed to plan Shoot Day.
- 2) Role assignments will be challenging because some crew members will need to assume multiple roles.
- 3) Crews meet to choose roles and complete Crew List. They should refer to Crew Roles and Responsibilities for reference.

### ***B-Roll used Over an Interview***

*The highlighted text below shows how the interview was edited. Students follow the script while you screen the three videos below and see how B-roll is used to cover audio edits. Make hard copies accessible to each student for reference.*

BRUSH: Okay. What happened was that Dean was a... He had been in college at Hartwick College in New York state. And he took some time off to earn some money. And so, one of the jobs that he got, the last job that he got was delivering pizzas for Domino's Pizza in Bridgeport. And so he got the job on Monday. He started work on Tuesday. He turned 21 on Thursday. And he was shot to death in a robbery-holdup on Saturday. And so the, this was about 8:30 at night. And three minority boys got in... Asked him for a ride. And being a good boy he, Dean was happy to give them a ride. They wanted to go to the high school, to the dance. And so while they... When, when they got into the car, the boys instructed Dean to go to a lonely part of the city and there they held him up. He had \$35 dollars. And they... He, he may have reached for the gun and they started shooting. And they... And he started running. He opened the door and ran out of the car. And they shot him three times, into his body, which were not life-threatening. But the fourth bullet went through his brain and lodged in his brain. And so, so he was dead on the spot. The ambulance was called when neighbors, neighbors heard the gunshots and the ambulance was called and Dean was dead on the scene, but he was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital.



Unedited Clip



Edited Audio



Final Sequence



## 6 – CONDUCTING THE EXPERT INTERVIEW

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### OVERVIEW

Students will conduct their first formal interview.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Complete all required preparations before departure of the crew (or arrival of the interviewee).
- Choose an effective location and set up and use equipment properly.
- Communicate with participants on location with good etiquette.
- Observe professional codes of behavior.
- Interview the expert effectively, using the recommended questioning techniques.
- Function as a coordinated team, with all crew members carrying out assigned roles effectively.

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 6	Activity	Resources/Materials
Whole class	1) Review Shoot Day Checklist and Interview Guidelines.	<a href="#">Shoot Day Checklist</a> <a href="#">Shoot Day Schedule</a>
Team	2) Crews travel to location.	
Team	3) Set up for interview.	
Team	4) Conduct interview (30-minute maximum).	Interviewer Script, notes, and questions
Team	5) Shoot B-roll on location.	
Team	6) Wrap-up.	

## EQUIPMENT

Camera and Tripod  
Microphone  
Lighting Equipment

## HOMEWORK

**Editor:** Transfer footage to the editing computer.

**Editor:** Send audio for transcription.

**Producer:** File Appearance Release and any notes taken during the interview in the Production Book.

**Producer:** Send thank you note(s) on behalf of the team (see sample).

**Other team members:** Transcribe the interview if not sent out for transcription.

## ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES/COMMENTARY

- 1) Review the Shoot Day Checklist and make last-minute preparations.
  - It is critical for students to understand that they are expected to behave as professionals when they are on location. Their focus should be on the task at hand: there should not be any side conversations, checking cell phones, etc. Students must be aware that their interviewee is generously granting them time, and that they should be respectful and grateful.
  - Before leaving, watch **Video - Arriving on Location**. Discuss any lighting/sound problems you anticipate and possible solutions.
  - Review the tutorials as needed before going on location so that students are as independent as possible for site preparation and filming.
- 2) Travel to the location (not applicable if interview takes place at school). **DO NOT FORGET Interviewer Script, notes, and questions.**
- 3) Set up the interview.
- 4) The crew conducts the interview, which should be no longer than 30 minutes. The following comments are also in student resources, but are worth repeating, since the interviews are central to the CLP project.
  - **One student should take notes** during the interview to ensure that all questions have been answered clearly, and that follow-up questions have been asked when applicable. This student should record unscripted questions, and can request additional clarifications or follow-up questions.
  - The interviewer should get the essence of what the crew was looking for, especially **any important facts** that lend credibility to the interview.
  - When interviewing someone who has first-hand experience with the chosen story/topic, **seek to elicit personal stories** and feelings.
  - **Ask the subject** if there are any particular questions they **would like to be asked, or if there is anything they want to add.**

- **Back-cut questions** may be shot at the end of a video interview. Make sure the back-cut questions are asked with *the same wording* as in the interview—even varying the wording slightly can make the edit unworkable. It is a good idea to make notes of any unscripted questions as the interview progresses so that you can remember them in the back-cuts.
- **Listen.** A common mistake is thinking about the next question while the subject is answering the previous one, to the point that the interviewer misses important information. This can lead to all sorts of embarrassing outcomes.
- The interviewers should listen to the answers and avoid being “glued” to their paper and pre-written questions.

5) To wrap up, obtain signed releases, address information for thank you notes (physical and email), and the names of anyone who should be mentioned in the credits.

All crew members should warmly thank the interviewee and anyone else present for their valuable time and contribution to the project. They should also be careful to remove all equipment, making sure nothing is left behind.



## 7 – TRANSCRIBING, SCREENING, EVALUATING AND MAKING INTERVIEW SELECTS

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### OVERVIEW

Students will learn how to make selects of raw interview dialogue.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Learn the art of selecting interview bites to create a documentary.
- Increase media literacy by understanding the neuroscience related to media.
- Evaluate the content and technical quality of interviews.

#### ACTIVITIES

Interview 7	Activity	Resources/Materials
Class	Screen examples of unedited film with final versions and compare. Discuss what was selected and why.	Watch excerpts of Brush and Everett Interviews unedited while following on transcript.
Class	Teacher works through an example with class, making selects using one crew's interview footage.	Video of Interview and Transcript
Crew	Each crew screens part of interviews and makes selects, marking chosen sentences/paragraphs on transcripts.	Video of Interview and Transcript
Crew	Discuss interview content and quality using guiding questions. Crew submits one evaluation.	<a href="#">Interview Rubrics</a>
Class	Crews share interview evaluations with class.	

#### HOMEWORK

Finish making selects. The crew works together to assign portions of the remaining interview as needed.

### ADDITIONAL TEACHER NOTES/COMMENTARY

- 1) The online workshop recording explains how raw interview footage is edited to create a compelling interview. Neuroscience informs how dialogue is chosen and rearranged. This lesson will effectively increase media literacy.
- 2) Screen the unedited and edited interviews below. Display the questions. Allow students a few minutes to respond on their own, and then discuss with the whole class.

*In preparation for this session, watch one of these uncut interviews and follow the transcript, showing the quotes/sound bites that were selected in the final cut.*

*What do you see as the most powerful moments in these interviews?*

*Why do you think the selected quotes were chosen?*

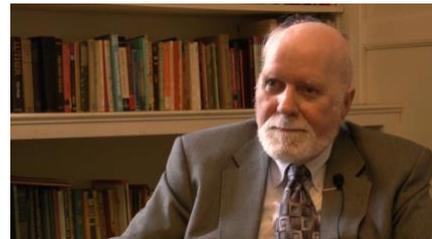
*What can you tell about the quality of the storytelling in these interviews?*



Stuart Brush Interview  
Video YouTube (click on picture)



Stuart Brush Interview-Selects Transcript



Walter Everett Interview  
Video YouTube (click on picture)



Walter Everett Interview-Selects Transcripts

(Please note that the final film transcripts provided are the result of fine editing. At this stage, the students should select full sentences/passages.)

- 3) With the class, make selects of a portion of one crew's video as an example. Discuss why some dialogue is kept and some is deleted. Continue until crews are ready to work on their own.

- 4) Crews now make selects using their own video, marking transcripts.
- 5) Evaluate the content and technical quality of the interviews.

### **Content**

Did your crew get what you wanted and/or expected?

Which questions and follow-up questions elicited the most useful/interesting questions?

Which questions fell flat?

What were the interviewee's arguments (viewpoints)? Analyze how these arguments/positions were supported.

Did the interviewee present evidence to support more than one perspective?

Did the interviewee provide a balanced view of the question?

What are these arguments based on?

What worked and what will you do differently next time?

### **Technical quality**

Were the images correctly framed?

Was the interviewee correctly lit?

What was the quality of the sound?

### **Conclusion**

Did you get what you expected? What interview do you need next?