

TEXT FORMAT TIPS

Best Uses

Story medium: Reflection, opinion piece, poetry, fiction tale, anecdote, citizen journalism... Anything with grappling narratives, insightful info or lyrical style!

Story content: descriptions, captions, quotes, dialogue and (trans)scripts.

Field-Based Content Collection (cted)

Things to note:

- Date, location and time of activities
- 'Five senses' description of surroundings: what you see, what you hear, what you smell, what you touch, what you taste.
- Facial expressions, body language and displays of emotion.
- Interesting quotes or details that stand out.
- Names of organisations, website links, personal titles etc.
- Post-interview: thoughts on how it went and what to improve for the following interview.

Field-Based Content Collection

Equipment: notebook/notepad or paper, and pen/pencil. Alternatively, can use the notes or docs app on a smartphone or table.

Methods: personal observations, interviews/conversations, focus groups.
>suggested: for interviews, take with you a device with audio recording capabilities!

Post-Production Checks

- Editing & proofreading is essential.
 - Check grammar, spelling and punctuation.
 - Break up/avoid long sentences.
 - Ensure similar paragraph length throughout a text.
 - *Free tools:* Grammarly (free; web & mobile), in-built spell-checkers in Google Docs & Microsoft Word.
- For interview/conversation write-ups:
 - Remove blunders/awkward stops/natural repetitions in answers.
 - Be careful with punctuation. Ensure it is consistent with the language used.
 - *For the English language: Dialogue Rules: How to Punctuate Dialogue Like a Pro*



AUDIO* FORMAT TIPS

Best Uses

Story medium: spoken-word poem, podcast episode, folktale, song, short films... Anything with lively sounds, captivating voices or emotive narration!

Story content: captions, dialogue, scenic sounds, instruments.

Content Recording (cted)

Things to capture:

- Date, location and time of activities.
- Ambient sound of a scenic location/setting.
- Dialogue/interviews Q&A.
- Performance of a song/poem/instrument.

Keep in mind:

- For voices: record at least 3 silent seconds before the start and 3 silent seconds after finishing. Get close to the person, away from distracting sounds.
 - For back-forth interviews, switch mic between interviewer and interviewee throughout!
- Go over the recording to ensure everything can be heard clearly. Re-record if audio is not clear.



Content Recording

Equipment: smartphone, tablet or audio recorder for in-person recording. Zoom, Skype or other conference-call platforms for remote or computer recording.

>suggested: use a clip-on or dynamic USB microphone (field-based), or a large diaphragm cardioid microphone (desk), for better sound.

Methods: interviews/conversations, live performances, voice-overs, song recording.

Post-Production Checks

- Checking audio quality is essential.
 - Ensure there is consistent volume, speed and pitch.
 - Voices should be audible, and unwanted noises/breaks should be muted, cut-out or limited as much as possible.
- WAV and FLAC are preferred file formats, as no data/quality is lost during compression.
- Where possible, add a **transcription or captions** for voices and dialogue. If using automated transcription, manually correct it.
 - *Free tools:* Otter (audio), Descript (video and audio), Voicella (video & audio), Instagram Stories (video). In some phones, the in-built recording app generates transcriptions.

**For video stories, all the tips on this slide apply, together with the "Visual Format Tips" slide!*



VISUAL* FORMAT TIPS

Best Uses

Story medium: photography, documentary, film, animation, illustration, paintings, theatre play, dance... Anything with exciting visuals, powerful images or engaging movement!

Story content: photos, illustrations, videos.

Shooting Content (cted)

- **Settings:** capture raw, unedited shots without filters or auto-editing. Select the highest resolution & pixels possible, turn on auto-exposure & auto-focus.
- **Frame mode:** capture in horizontal/landscape mode, leaving space between the subject/target of the shot and the frame's borders.
- **Zoom/range:** Capture a combination of close-ups, mid-distance and farther away/zoomed-out shots.
- **Levelling:** keep the device straight; either use the grid setting on your device or select a static background object in the shot as a reference.
- **Stability:** To avoid shaking, use a tripod/gimbal or stand still with your arms tucked into your sides.
- **Lighting:** natural lighting is best; avoid shots of the subject with a bright light behind them (except for creative reasons), and avoid overexposed settings.

Shooting Content

Equipment: a smartphone, tablet or computer.

- *Tools: tripod, selfie stick, gimbal stabiliser.*

>suggested: a DSLR or film/polaroid camera for creative photography; a video camera for HQ filming.

Methods: community mapping/exploration, live events & performances, interviews/conversations, photography, on-location filming, digital illustration apps (e.g. Inkscape (free), Adobe Illustrator).

Post-Production Checks

- Save digital files as **high resolution** as possible and, if possible, with lossless compression formats.
- If able, **do soft editing**, mainly playing around with sharpness, cropping, contrast, exposure, highlights, shadows, saturation and warmth settings. You can use filters & pre-sets creatively too. You should add captions* for videos.
 - *Free apps: Adobe Photoshop/Lightroom (mobile), Canva, Video.Guru (mobile).*
- For physical paintings and illustrations, and polaroid/developed film, turn them into digital files with a scanner machine or a mobile app.
 - *Free apps: Adobe Capture, Adobe Scan, Google Drive App. Polaroid Photo Scanner.*

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