

Preliminary Task Evaluation

The preliminary Task was to create a music video. I teamed up with two other people (James and Dan) in my Media Studies group and we made this video. We wanted to have some experience of creating a music video and wanted to practice each part of it, the filming, acting and editing. We were only given a sheet of paper with the song lyrics on. We did very little planning and this impacted our performance on the day of the shoot and when it came to the edit. Without any written plan, shot list, story board, or any real ideas of what we were going to do, we attempted to create music video. Although there was no real plan, there was a mutual idea for a light hearted, informal performance video, full of happiness and colour. We decided to over-saturate the video's colours in editing to make it look as happy and positive as possible. We used a variety of shot types, using different angles and movements.

The technology that we used to film was a mobile phone. Although the camera quality was good, we could not use tripods, sliders, stabilisers or other equipment to improve the shot smoothness and variety. The handheld look is sometimes okay in a video, as it adds some personality and brings the video closer to the viewer. Since we filmed the whole video this way, the refreshing, homemade look very quickly became what looked like a compromise. We now know that we are going to use 'proper' cameras which are designed for video, my Sony mirrorless camera and Dan's Nikon DSLR. We all took turns to film, so at least we could get used to changing shot angle, framing and pressing the record button.

With no story boards or written ideas, on the day of filming we were running around like headless chickens. We did not help ourselves, as we would later find out, by filming everything out of order and not saying at the beginning of each shot, what part of the song we were recording. What would have been useful for the editing later on, would be a clapper board or someone saying where in the song in minutes at the beginning of each shot. This was a good experience, because if we did not do this preliminary task, we may have made these mistakes while filming the graded music video. We used several eye-line shots, low and high angle, wide and close for variety, to maintain interest and to keep up with the pace and rhythm of the music. We used tracking shots, with the actors looking directly into the camera. The moving nature of these shots allowed us to match the walking rhythm with the tempo of the music. We felt looking into the camera was another effective method to create a successful music video.

I was the self-proclaimed editor in this task, as it is the career path that I want to take after college and I have a good amount of experience. I edited the raw, bleak-looking camera-phone footage in my preferred programme: Adobe Premiere Pro. The post-production process was long and tedious. I felt very much at home with the software. However, I had never made a music video before. Since we filmed everything not in order and there were no guides, such as a clapperboard or speech at the beginning. Or even a list of file names with notes explaining whether the shot was what we wanted to use, or if it was the correct part of the song to come next. Overall, it made the assembly of the rough cut a very tiring process, much longer and more frustrating than it needed to be. When it came to adding the soundtrack, I felt comfortable with lining up waveforms, and using trial and error. I was able to mostly correct mistakes such as the actors singing too quickly, and becoming out of time for ninety percent of the clip. The colour correction part of the editing process was the most successful for me. This is because it was the only part of the entire production process where I felt that I could make this video better than what we shot. To explain, I was able to transform dull footage into colourful, vibrant shots. Sadly I was unable to fix the shaky camera (I attempted to fix both tracking walking shots) with software, because they were just too shaky. The overall edit was more of a compromise, make a video with the footage we have, rather than have create a video

Ben Macvean

where there is a supporting link between the filming and the edit.

What we have learned from this process is that we need to plan. We should've had a story board, a shot list, or any kind of written list where we could go to as a guide whilst filming and during assembly in editing. We need to link each shot with a note, saying where in the song it goes, if we are using it, etc. Whether it be written on a clapper board, spoken at the beginning of the shot, planned with a shot list, or even written with the file number on some paper. Another major mistake was using a restrictive camera-phone. We could not get the same results that we could have obtained with even a camera with a tripod mount. We learned that we need to film steadier, hold the camera more firmly, possibly practice shots multiple times in order to get the best result possible. We could have benefitted from a secondary camera, for a different angle of the same subject, to make the video look more professional. Yet another major mistake, in hindsight, was that we needed to have the music playing louder while filming, to ensure that everyone is in time with the music. This could be done by bringing a portable speaker with us on location. Although a little out of time walking can be fixed seamlessly in the edit, only after this experience, we have realised the vitality of having everyone in sync with each other and the music. It makes a video a music video. I am certain that we will use some sort of colour grading in the graded video, since that is a very transformative process, it adds the mood to the video.

In conclusion, this task was a very eye-opening experience. It has made us aware that we need to take planning seriously. The group that I am in work very well together. Especially after this task, since it was a good bonding experience. As we will be in the same group when the time comes to make the graded video, this is something I am personally very proud of. I think that we will be able to be more honest with each other about each other's ideas and therefore create the best video and digipack possible. Overall, I am happy that we could get a video out of this process, but I would not mind if we did not manage to get that far. This is because as a group, we learned so much, mostly through mistakes mentioned throughout this document. After having created this video, we have got the building blocks for I feel very confident that as a group, we have the necessary starting knowledge to create a powerful music video.