

# BASICS OF EDITING

MC 4324: VISUAL STORYTELLING

## OVERVIEW

Here are some basics that may help you in editing. These are true 80% of the time, however your project may require a different approach.

- Two stages of editing
  1. The stage of assembling the shots into a rough cut
  2. The stage in which the editor fine-tunes or paces the rough cut into a final cut.
- The goal is an edited piece that is continuous and dramatically effective. Begins with the individual shot. Is it a still image or a moving image? Is the foreground or the background in focus? How close is the character to the frame? Is the character positioned in the center or of to one side? What about the light and color of the image and the organization of objects or people relative to the main character?
- NEVER OPEN OR CLOSE A PIECE WITH A TALKING HEAD. However, you may use the audio from a talking head as a voice-over on b roll.
- BE SURE YOUR AUDIO “MARRIES UP” WITH YOUR B ROLL
- AVOID “RUN ON” A ROLL. Give your piece room to breathe.
- EVERY STORY HAS A BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND END. The beginning sets up the story. The end resolves the story. Everything else goes in the middle.
- PUT YOUR B ROLL AND A ROLL IN SEPARATE FOLDERS ON YOUR BROWSER
- OPEN YOUR EDIT WITH YOUR STRONGEST VIDEO
- USE TEXT “LOWER THIRDS” TO EXPLAIN THE STORY SIMPLY WHERE NECESSARY. THIS CAN BE USEFUL IN THE OPENING ESPECIALLY.
- HAVE A PLAN
- EDIT FOR NARRATIVE CLARITY
- EDIT FOR DRAMATIC EMPHASIS
- THE SECOND SHOT MUST HAVE SOME RELATIONSHIP TO THE FIRST SHOT TO SUPPORT THE ILLUSION OF CONTINUITY
- MATCH ACTION IN THE EDIT

- PRESERVE SCREEN DIRECTION IN THE EDIT