

WRIT 350 Writing for Digital Media

Unit 3 Assignment Sheet

Overview

For the final unit this semester, you will develop a vlog and YouTube channel consisting of three videos that reflect common genres on YouTube. On average, you will create one video per week. Each vlog will be due before class on Tuesday (see calendar below). To turn in your videos, you will need to upload your vlog to YouTube and share the link to the video with me via the corresponding assignment in Blackboard. You may keep your videos unlisted if you choose to—which is why I need you to submit individual links to each video throughout the assignment.

The genres that we will be working with are:

1. Channel Trailer/Introduction
[What is a channel trailer?](#)
2. Day-in-the-Life
No one calls these “a day in the life;” I’m looking for a regular ole vlog.
[Here’s one example from Tyler Oakley.](#)
3. List
[Every Top 10 Video Ever](#)

Each week we will examine the features of these genres by addressing examples. I will also provide resources related to shooting and editing your videos. Because I am asking you to vlog from the very beginning of the assignment (before we’ve had all the tutorials), I expect that your vlogs will improve over the course of the project: you will probably begin with little editing, and over the course of the three videos, become savvier about planning and executing your vlogs. We will discuss the technical expectations for each vlog in class prior to each due date.

Following YouTubers

To guide your work, I ask you to follow two YouTube creators, watch their videos, and take notes about their work. You should be strategic about the type of content you view from these creators. I highly recommend that you watch videos that correspond to the types of videos that we are creating each week. For example, we are discussing channel trailers first. Therefore, I’d recommend that you find channel trailers from each of your creators and write notes about them as examples of the genre. In looking at channel trailers critically, you might consider the following questions in your blog post for week 10:

- What is in a channel trailer?
- How does it start out?
- How does it conclude?
- Who is the audience?
- What tone does the creator employ?

While addressing these genres in class and on your blogs, keep in mind that all the genres we discuss are new(ish). They are open to interpretation, so viewing a number of examples might help you consider what you want to do in your vlog. At the end of this assignment sheet I included a list of creators. You may choose folks from the list or examine videos by creators that you already follow.

Grading Criteria

Vlogs

Each video is worth 10% of your grade for the course, and each video is graded on a 25-point scale (see below). Your YouTube Channel with thumbnails, While I have assigned readings that we will discuss in class for weeks 10 and 11, there are no reading response blogs for this project. Y'all have enough to do with your analyses and creating your videos. I will use the final 5% of your grade for general participation, so be sure to show up and having things to comment on in the class.

Each video must be uploaded to YouTube, and submitted to Blackboard on time. The easiest way to kill your grade is to not submit a video on time. Don't worry if it isn't perfect. Check out Lilly Singh or Tyler Oakley's early videos: just get creating! As the assignment progresses, my expectations for the quality of your videos will increase. However, I understand that've we've lost time that we would have devoted to this assignment, so I will be reasonable with those expectations. We will discuss these expectations in class prior to a video's due date. Because we are working in a few different genres, I cannot provide you with a specific road map of what a successful video looks like that applies equally in all genres. However, I can offer some general grading parameters for your videos.

1. Each vlog should range from approximately three to seven minutes, depending on the contents and audience expectations of each genre.
2. I should be able to tell that you planned out the vlog because each video has a beginning, middle, and end. I suggest making notes and using the outline structure provided as an appendix to this assignment sheet in order to plan your video.
3. I should also see evidence that you framed your video, which means that you gave attention the location, lighting, and sound.
4. I should see evidence that you practiced your vlog and didn't simply record it in one take. This includes editing the vlog after recording it.
5. Your vlog should have a particular audience in mind and be engaging for that audience.

For each vlog you will receive feedback on a rubric that looks like the table below along with brief notes about how to improve your work in your next video.

Criteria	4-5	2-3	0-1
Length	Appropriate to Genre	Maybe a bit short or overly long	Loses sight of goal or too short to say much
Content	Well planned beginning, middle, and end	Meanders a bit	Confusing
Framing	Excellent lighting and sound	Obvious attention to lighting and sound	Little attention to lighting and sound
Editing	Well edited	Imprecise editing	Little or no editing
Attention to Audience	Clear sense of who the audience is and what they care about	Attends to audience but veers off course at times	No sense that anyone would watch the video

YouTube Channel

As your final assignment for the course, you need to submit your YouTube channel. To do so, you will submit the link to the corresponding assignment on Blackboard. If you choose to keep your videos unlisted rather than public, then you also need to include a link to each video so that I can evaluate the thumbnail, description, etc. Use the rubric below to prep your channel prior to submission. Your Channel itself is worth 5% of your grade for the course.

Grading Criteria

Here are the criteria I will use to grade your YouTube Channel:

Title

Your channel's title reflects your vlog's theme. It's interesting and/or catchy.

Channel Trailer

Your channel includes a revised trailer with an appropriate greeting message or description for potential subscribers. This description should include key words that someone searching for particular content might use. Don't forget to set this up for both "returning subscribers" and "new visitors."

Channel Art & Icon

You include well-designed channel art and an icon that reflect your vlog's theme.

About

Your about page includes a channel description as well as an email address and links to other sites (e.g., a social media account, your blog, your personal or professional website, etc.).

Thumbnails

Each video includes a well-designed thumbnail rather than a YouTube generated thumbnail.

Video Descriptions & Tags

Each video includes an interesting and accurate description as well as tags that will help the video to be found through search engines.

Grading Rubric

Here are the criteria in rubric form:

Criteria	Comments	Points
Title		/4
Channel Trailer		/4
Channel Art & Icon		/4
About		/5
Thumbnails		/4
Video Descriptions & Tags		/4
Total		/25

Calendar

Date	Main Topics This Week	Homework
Week 10: March 22 & 24	Finishing Off Unit 2; Unit 3 Intro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Streampunks1.pdf. • Watch and analyze channel trailers by 2 creators; post to blog
Week 11: March 29 & 31	Digging into YouTube Genres & Scripting Videos	Read Streampunks2.pdf
Week 12: April 5 & 7	Filming & Editing Video	Watch and analyze day-in-the life style vlogs from 2 creators; post to blog, and share link to Blackboard.
Week 13: April 12 & 14	Workshopping Videos	Submit channel trailer to Blackboard by April 14 at 2:30 pm
Week 14: April 19 & 21	Setting Up YouTube Channels: Uploading Videos & Adding All the Fixin's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit day-in-the life vlog to Blackboard by April 21 at 2:30 pm • Watch and analyze list vlogs from 2 creators; post to blog, and share link on Blackboard.
Week 15: April 26 & 28	Course Wrap Up: Course Reflection & Polishing Your Blog	Submit list vlog to Blackboard by April 28 by 2:30 pm
Finals: May 4	No formal meetings; you made it. It was a tough semester! Celebrate!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit YouTube channel by May 4 at 11:59 pm • Submit final reflection blog post and revised blog by May 4 at 11:59 pm

Resources

Vlogs & Writing Processes

In Week 11, we will address planning and scripting vlogs. We will look at a few examples for planning videos, and check out videos that work from scripts as well as videos that work from outlines or thumbnails to consider what the process of creating content for YouTube looks like. These activities are integral to considering how you will execute your videos.

Editing Process

Because of the time and technology constraints this semester, I am placing somewhat less emphasis on the idea that you will get to know video-editing software well. That said, I want to see some editing in your videos, particularly as we move further into the project. (In other words, it's fine if your first video has minimal editing, but I would like to see some refinement in your videos as we move along.)

Because you won't have campus resources like Studio 1 and the Idea Lab on campus or the campus labs in your major department and because video editing software can be expensive, I recommend that you check out Adobe Spark. You can use Spark on your phone or online. Here's a link: <https://spark.adobe.com/make/video-editor/>. The page provides accessible instructions for how to edit clips, include music and photos, etc.

You are also welcome to use any software you own and/or are familiar with. I wouldn't worry much about editing in your first video.

If you struggle with editing or have zero experience and are intimidated by the prospect, please let me know. I can implement a synchronous, online, and optional tutorial for folks who want a tutorial working with Spark.

YouTubers List

You'll note that some of the homework assignments ask you to analyze vlogs for the types of videos that you will create. Below you'll find a list of individual creators and production companies. This list is not comprehensive. It is simply a list I put together to help you get started. That said, the list is very US-centric and very personal vlog-centric. For class you'll need to follow and analyze two channels to help guide your work. I also encourage you to follow a variety of creators, particularly those whose identities are different from your own or whose subject matter you may not be emotionally attached to. That space between their subject matter and your interests might provide you with a critical distance from which you can analyze their communication strategies and practices.

I've organized the list based on categories that broadly reflect the channel's content. However, most creators don't work in one genre. For example, you will likely find haul or unboxing videos on a *Health and Wellness channel* or political rants on a *Beauty* vlog.

Beauty

- Jaclyn Hill <https://www.youtube.com/user/Jaclynhill1>
4.7 million subscribers
- Manny Mua <https://www.youtube.com/user/MannyMua733>
4 million subscribers
- Nikki Tutorials <https://www.youtube.com/user/NikkieTutorials>
8.5 million subscribers
- Ingrid Nilsen <https://www.youtube.com/user/missglamorazzi>
3.9 million subscribers
- Michelle Phan <https://www.youtube.com/user/MichellePhan>
8.9 million subscribers
- Jeffree Star <https://www.youtube.com/user/jeffreestar>
5.8 million subscribers
- Patrick Starr <https://www.youtube.com/user/theepatrickstarr>
3.3 million subscribers

Educational

- The Vlog Brothers <https://www.youtube.com/user/vlogbrothers>
3 million subscribers
Informational/Instructional videos among many other things
- Smarter Every Day <https://www.youtube.com/user/destinws2>

5.3 million subscribers
Applied science
Vsauce <https://www.youtube.com/user/Vsauce/videos>
12.8 million subscribers
Answers weird, existential questions

Entertainment

Willam Belli <https://www.youtube.com/user/noextrai>
820 thousand subscribers
Drag stuff, song parodies, and YouTube culture
Todrick Hall <https://www.youtube.com/user/todrickhall>
2.8 million subscribers
Music, Disney/pop culture satire
Jenna Marbles <https://www.youtube.com/user/JennaMarbles>
17.8 million subscribers
Weird but funny skits, tutorials, and stunts
Miranda Sings <https://www.youtube.com/user/mirandasings08>
8.4 million subscribers
Funny songs

Food

EmmyMadeinJapan <https://www.youtube.com/user/emmymadeinjapan>
900 thousand subscribers
Food experiments fusing Asian cultures and western foods
Epic Meal Time <https://www.youtube.com/user/EpicMealTime>
6.9 million subscribers
Weird food experiments
Hannah Hart <https://www.youtube.com/user/MyHarto>
2.5 million subscribers
Known for the series *My Drunk Kitchen*
Laura in the Kitchen <https://www.youtube.com/user/LauraVitalessKitchen>
2.9 million subscribers
Lots and lots of recipes
Sorted Food <https://www.youtube.com/user/sortedfood/videos>
1.7 million subscribers
Foodie videos that deal with consuming food and not making it

Gaming

Captain Sparklez <https://www.youtube.com/user/CaptainSparklez>
10 million subscribers
Machinima, playthroughs, etc
iHasCupquake <https://www.youtube.com/user/iHasCupquake>
6 million subscribers
Play throughs and personal vlogs
LDShadowLady <https://www.youtube.com/user/Ldshadowlady>
3.6 million subscribers
Mostly Minecraft focused, she started with Call of Duty playthroughs
Vanoss Gaming <https://www.youtube.com/user/VanossGaming>
22 million subscribers
Machinima, playthroughs, etc

Health & Wellness

- Blogilates <https://www.youtube.com/user/blogilates>
3.9 million subscribers
Pilates tutorials
- Clean & Delicious (Dani Spies) <https://www.youtube.com/user/danispies>
540 thousand subscribers
Nutrition & healthy lifestyle videos
- The Domestic Geek <https://www.youtube.com/user/thedomesticgeek1>
1.2 million subscribers
Nutrition & healthy lifestyle videos
- Laci Green <https://www.youtube.com/user/lacigreen>
1.5 million subscribers
Sex and gender ed
- Mind Over Munch <https://www.youtube.com/user/MindOverMunch>
590 thousand subscribers
Nutrition & healthy lifestyle videos
- Yoga with Adriene <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>
2.9 million subscribers
Yoga tutorials

Lifestyle (aka not easily categorized)

- Alex Bertie <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheRealJazzBertie/>
308 thousand subscribers
- Kat Blaque <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxFWzKZa74SyAqpJyVIG5Ew>
132 thousand subscribers
- Shane Dawson <https://www.youtube.com/user/shane/videos>
11.6 million subscribers
- Connor Franta <https://www.youtube.com/user/ConnorFranta>
5.6 million subscribers
- Gigi Gorgeous <https://www.youtube.com/user/GregoryGORGEOUS>
2.7 million subscribers
- Joey Graceffa <https://www.youtube.com/user/JoeyGraceffa>
8.5 million subscribers
- Ryan Higa <https://www.youtube.com/user/nigahiga>
20.4 million subscribers
- HolaSoyGerman (German Garmendia) <https://www.youtube.com/user/HolaSoyGerman>
30 million subscribers
- Miles Jai <https://www.youtube.com/user/MilesJaiProductions>
640 thousand subscribers
- Kingsley (King Russell) <https://www.youtube.com/user/ItsKingsleyBitch>
2.9 million subscribers
- Liza Koshy <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxSz6JVYmzVhtkraHWZC7HQ>
13 million subscribers
- Bethany Mota <https://www.youtube.com/user/Macbarbie07>
10 million subscribers
- Casey Niestat <https://www.youtube.com/user/caseyneistat>
8.6 million subscribers
- Franchesca Leigh Ramsey <https://www.youtube.com/user/chescaleigh>
248 thousand subscribers
- Lilly Singh <https://www.youtube.com/user/ISuperwomanII>
13 million subscribers

SWooZie (Adande Thorn) <https://www.youtube.com/user/swoozie06>
5.3 million subscribers
Tyler Oakley <https://www.youtube.com/user/tyleroakley>
7.8 million subscribers

Production Companies

AwesomenessTV <https://www.youtube.com/user/AwesomenessTV>
5.9 million subscribers
Described as the new Nickelodeon

Buzzfeed <https://www.youtube.com/user/BuzzFeedVideo>
14 million subscribers
Culture stuffs

College Humor <https://www.youtube.com/user/collegehumor>
12 million subscribers
Comedy videos

Feminist Frequency <https://www.youtube.com/user/feministfrequency>
227 thousand subscribers
Feminism and social justice

Funny or Die <https://www.youtube.com/user/FunnyorDie>
2 million subscribers
Comedy videos

Issa Rae Productions <https://www.youtube.com/user/actingrl112>
320 thousand subscribers
Comedy web series, music videos, etc.

Picnicly <https://www.youtube.com/user/Picnicly>
420 thousand subscribers
Travel food, health, etc. Based in Thailand

RocketJump <https://www.youtube.com/user/freddiew>
7.9 million subscribers
Web series

Rooster Teeth <https://www.youtube.com/user/RoosterTeeth>
9 million subscribers
Gaming/pop culture

Smosh <https://www.youtube.com/user/smosh>
22 million subscribers
Comedy/internet culture

Soul Pancake <https://www.youtube.com/user/soulpancake>
2.4 million subscribers
Hosts a number of web series including *Kid President* and *Doing Good Business*

Vice <https://www.youtube.com/user/vice>
8 million subscribers
News/current events

Vox <https://www.youtube.com/user/voxdotcom>
3.4 million subscribers
News/current events

WoW Presents <https://www.youtube.com/user/WOWPresents/>
867 thousand subscribers
Drag & LGBTQ-Focused Entertainment