**Photo Shooting Tips for Yearbook Journalism**

***Being At the Right Place at the Right Time***

* **Be ready, be quick** – carry a camera around, know how to use and adjust it
* **Be bold** - you still need to be polite, but you’ll miss the best shots if you’re not a little bit aggressive
* **Move in close** – we’re interested in people’s expressions
* **Take several shots**, especially of a group, person or event that might be hard to get again. Vary the angle, exposure etc.
* **Watch for special moments** – action, expression, emotion, tension etc.

***Technical and Artistic Details***

* **Steady the camera**, especially indoors – use a tripod, wall, or railing, and a steady hand. Most shots you shoot in the halls are unprintable (fuzzy) if you don’t think about steadiness and lighting.
* **Compose thoughtfully** (composing means setting up the elements in your photo, by changing your shooting position and angle, and possibly rearranging objects/people in the foreground, middle and background):
	+ **Subject should be dominant**
	+ Background should be pleasing, not distracting (neutral, darker, not sharply in focus, not busy). Try shooting from above to use the ground as a background, or up into the sky – but beware of backlighting!
	+ **Lines and other elements should lead the eye** to the subject
	+ Use the [**Rule of Thirds**](http://www.aurorahigh.ca/jmartin/Yearbook/Photography/RuleOf3rds.htm) and **Framing** (when possible)
	+ **Think about balance** e.g. 2 objects on either side of the image; small dark areas are balanced by larger light areas; look for complementary colours; shapes, lines or other elements repeated, maybe symmetrically
* **Light:**
	+ **Beware of backlighting** (silhouette) – Learn how to adjust exposure or use fill-in (forced) flash
	+ Strong sunlight is sometimes good for bright colours, but often not flattering to faces. **Cloudy days with soft light are much better!**
	+ Outside, **keep the sun behind or beside you**, but watch for squinting and harsh shadows. Avoid mid-day with full sun if you can.
	+ The hour around sunset/sunrise is magic for natural lighting
	+ **Fluorescent lighting (like in our classroom) gives nasty colour tone**. If that’s the only source, learn to set your white balance, and adjust “colour cast” in Photoshop (more on that later)...
* **Flash**
	+ **Natural light is generally nicer**, so try for illumination from a window or go outdoors (but not at mid-day!)
	+ But… **a flash is often needed indoors,** and to **“fill in” the light on the outdoor subjects**
	+ Using a flash in low (indoor) light gives you a clearer, less grainy image, more suitable for printing
	+ Flash is usually in Auto mode, so the camera decides if it’s needed. On most cameras there’s a button with a lightning bolt to change the flash mode.
	+ If you definitely DON’T want a flash (e.g. you have a way to steady the camera and want to use natural light), press the button until a “no flash” symbol appears – e.g. a lightning bolt with a line through it. This is called ***suppressing* the flash**.
	+ If you definitely DO want a flash, press until a lightning bolt appears. This is called ***forcing* the flash**. Use it when you’re shooting into strong backlight e.g. subject indoors in front of bright windows **(“fill-in flash”)**, or outdoors on a bright day with harsh shadows to fill in the facial lighting
	+ **A camera flash only illuminates about 4 or 5 metres**. It’s USELESS in shots like across the gym, from the middle of the caf to the stage (in fact anywhere but right in front of or on the stage) and at sports stadiums (except for lighting up the head of the person in front of you). Suppress it to save batteries.
	+ Watch for glaring reflections off glass, glasses, faces that are too close
	+ Try using **red-eye reduction**, or remove it in Photoshop
* **Settings**
	+ If you’re a novice, use the **Auto mode**, BUT, as soon as you can, learn at least the basic settings in the **Program (“P”) mode** as well as other modes such as **“Sports”** and **“Portrait” mode**.
	+ Change the **Image Size to at least 3 megapixels**, or 5 or more if you want to fill most of a page
	+ **Exposure Compensation** overrides the light meter, useful to darken or lighten the image e.g. to compensate for strong backlight. Ask me!
	+ **White Balance** – if you’re not in Auto mode, you must learn to change this e.g. to Fluorescent
	+ **ISO** – learn to make your camera more sensitive in low light
	+ **Tv (on the dial) Shutter Speed** – controlling this lets you freeze fast action, or get cool motion blur
	+ **(Av) Aperture** – the size of the opening through the lens. A narrow aperture (high F-stop) puts everything in focus, whereas a wide aperture gives you shallow depth of field, meaning you can focus only on your subject and blur the background and foreground

**Practice taking LOTS of photos using these tips.**

Download and save only the really good ones to appropriate folders into the Yearbook icon into (for now) the “member’s folder under your user name.

Or save your pictures in well-named folders (e.g. Sports) and change the filenames to something meaningful or something you will remember (but leave the .jpeg extension alone).