Pitch

**Researched**

-You need to be able to provide some general facts about your story during the pitch. Do you know what kind of coverage is out there? Is there video? Are there multiple perspectives?

**Fresh**

-The first word of your pitch should never be “yesterday”. Keywords: forward thinking. Make sure there is an ongoing conversation about the story you want to write about. The story may have broken a few hours/days ago, but tell me why it’s important NOW.

Visual appeal

**Length of AOC’s**

-Your AOC’s should be clear and consice. If you do need to add more facts or context by making the AOC’s longer, provide cover video, a cube of headlines, or pictures to make the story visually appealing

**Length of elements**

-GFX’s should almost NEVER be longer than 2-3 lines long in size 10, Arial font (use.... to get to the meat)

-SWV’s should almost NEVER be longer than 15-18 seconds (use flashes to get to the meat) Using too much video could land us in violation of Fair Use laws.

**Variety of elements**

-You should never pitch a story without video (very few exceptions). If you must use several GFX, mix it up with headline cube spins, VO, or pictures. Visual appeal is about more than just using video, it’s about using a variety of elements to keep an appropriate pace.

Formatting

**Headline and Summary**

-You must have a headline, summary, and a link to your image before script review. Make sure the headline is short enough to fit onto the front page of Newsy.com without a “to-be-continued…). The summary must be one sentence (or two short sentences) so it will fit in the summary box in Admin.

**Image link**

Image must not be AP, Reuters, or other wire service

**Source links**

Every source must have a link. The links must work. If you got the video from Snapstream or Shadow, please provide a link to the source’s home page. Example: [cnn.com](http://cnn.com/)

**Soundbites**

Must be accurately transcribed. You must include who is talking. If it’s a reporter for a local affiliate, we don’t really care what his/her name is because not very many know him/her; however, if the source is a cable news correspondent or an official, analyst, or expert…we do care. This provides context. Here are some examples of who to super:

Local news reporter for KCRA

REPORTER (KCRA): “Multiple sources, the real story. For real.”

Candy Crowley reporting for CNN

CANDY CROWLEY (CNN): “Multiple sources, the real story. For real.”

Government official

HILLARY CLINTON (U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE): ‘Multiple sources, the real story. For real.”

Lawmakers

SEN. JOHN KERRY (D-MA): “Multiple sources, the real story. For real.”

Experts/Analysts

DONNA BRAZILE (DEMOCRATIC STRATEGIST): “Multiple sources, the real story. For real.”

Grammar/Style

**Spell check**

-Always spell check before review. Make sure to check all the names and sources in your story as well. People often have odd ways of spelling their names.

**Pronouncers**

-If you think the average person might not know how to pronounce a person or source’s name in your story, provide an accurate pronouncer. Example: (Moo-uh-mar Guh-dah-fee)

**Grammar**

-Even if your story isn’t perfect, it should still make sense when someone reads through it. READ IT OUT LOUD. Make sure your subjects and verbs agree, that you don’t have any misplaced modifiers, etc. Broadcast style is a pretty loose, playful style- but your story can’t be written in fragmented English.

Content

**Set-up**

-Your first AOC and source are critical. Do they set up the story properly? I should know what the story is about in the first 15 seconds of watching it.

**Element choice**

-Did you find and use sources that provide smart perspectives? Did you find other sources besides the usual suspects: CNN, Fox News, etc? For example, if you’re writing a world story, you need global perspective.

**Flow**

-Read your story. Read it out loud. Read it again. Does it make sense? Do you provide enough context so that the average viewer could understand what’s going on?

**Balance**

-There are two (or more) sides to every story. Did you cover this story fairly? Did you include multiple points of view or highlight conflicting information?

Publishing

(Not doing these things or doing them incorrectly will result in a loss of points from the grade you receive during review)

**Server**

-Did you correctly load your elements onto the server? Do this after someone has reviewed your script

**Admin**

- Your story must be correctly loaded into Admin. Bold what needs to be bolded. Double space. Add the right images to the right placeholders. Make sure your links work. Hyperlink thoughtfully.

Extra

Second script

Timeline

Full edit

This semester, 65% of your grade will be determined by the 32 scripts you will write during your Newsy shifts (4 per week for 8 weeks). The other 35% of your grade will come from using the other tools you learn in the class: efficiency writing and Final Cut editing. You need to complete 8 “second scripts”, 6 “timelines”, and 4 “full edits” in order to earn full credit for this part of your grade. If you do more than the minimum number required, you will earn bonus points that will factor into your final grade.