Task

Step 1:
We know it's obvious, but make sure your microphone is turned on. With in-built microphones, you might have to check the audio settings of your camera to make sure it is. You would usually find audio settings in your camera’s menu.

Step 2:
Proximity test

- Get one or two people to act out some lines for you from your script (from last lesson). Make sure the microphone is directed at your actors.

- Go outside and film your actors with your microphone and capture lines of dialogue. Record them close (within 3 metres), a medium distance (3-10 metres) and then far away (10+ metres).

- Playback with some headphones and listen to what you’ve recorded. Where were the actor’s lines most clearly heard? Note this in your workbooks.

- What affects did background noise or wind have on the audio you recorded? Note this in your workbooks.

- Head inside to a room and conduct a similar test. Record the lines with your actors close to the camera, a medium distance and then a long distance away. Make sure the microphone is directed at your actors.

- Playback with some headphones and listen to what you’ve recorded. Where were the actor’s lines most clearly heard? Note this in your workbooks.

- Did you film in a controlled space where there was no one else inside or an uncontrolled one where there were people and noise you had no control over? Describe the effect of the space you used on the sound you recorded. Note this in your workbooks.
• Was there an issue with echoes with the audio recorded? Note this in your workbooks.

• Was the audio from your characters loud and crackly in any of the shots? Note this in your workbooks.

Step 3:
Directing the microphone

• Film your actors with your microphone as they read some lines. Start with the microphone facing your actors, then move it to a 45-degree angle from them and keep recording for 10 seconds.

• Then move the microphone so it’s facing at a 90-degree angle away from them.

• If you’re using an in-built microphone or one mounted on your camera, this will involve you moving the camera away entirely. Don’t worry, you’re just testing.

• Playback and listen to what you’ve recorded. What affects did moving the microphone away from your actor’s have? Note this in your workbooks.

• Was the audio good at times, even when not pointed directly at the source of the sound you want? Note this in your workbooks.

• Could you hear any unwanted noises, such as the camera or tripod moving, or people’s grips on microphone or microphone stand? Note this in your workbooks.

Step 4:
Reflection

Based on the activities above, what problems might you run into when recording sound for your film with the microphone you have, and how might you overcome them?