

## Year 9 – Scheme 1/6 - Introduction to Media Studies – Focus on Film

### Composite Knowledge: How do film makers communicate meaning?

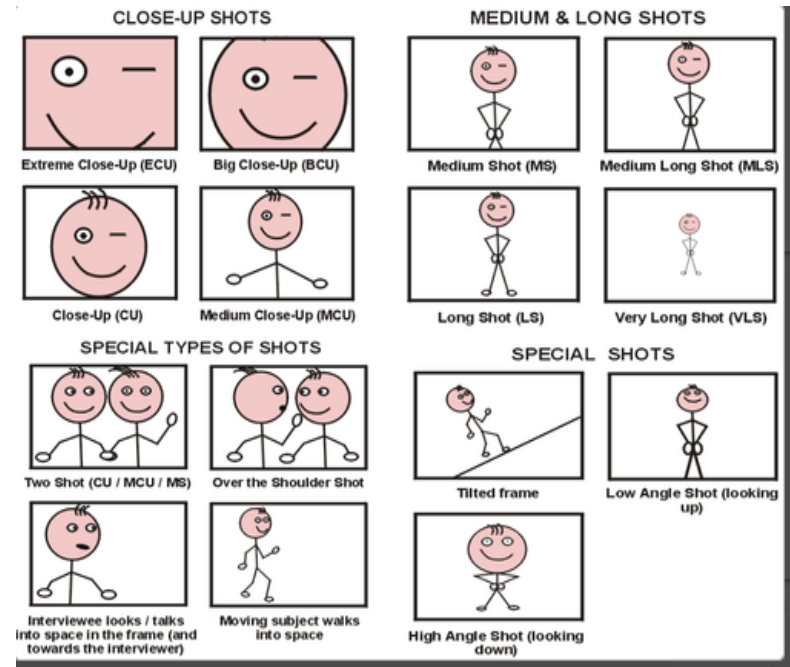
Students will learn how to identify genres of film through their conventions, narrative structures and character types. They will learn how film makers make deliberate decisions to construct meaning through sound, editing and camera angles.

#### Propp's Character Theory

Vladimir Propp studied fairy tales and established that there were 7 main character types in most stories.

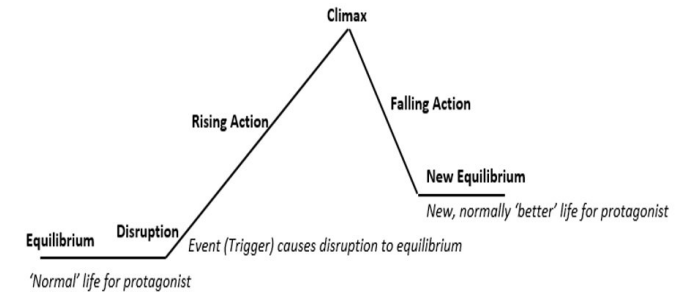
<b>The Hero</b>	The main character with whom the audience will associate most strongly. Often the protagonist
<b>The Helper</b>	Can be a mentor character but normally supports the hero in the narrative and to help show off the hero's character traits (so Dr Watson helps Sherlock Holmes look clever). Sometimes used for 'comic relief' or to fight for the hero.
<b>The Villain</b>	The antagonist contrasts with the hero and is normally a barrier preventing the hero from reaching his goal (or wants the same goal). Sometimes completely opposite to the hero or very similar to them but morally bad. Sometimes acts as a 'tempter' to try and make the hero become bad.
<b>The False Hero</b>	A type of villain who seems heroic and is sometimes mistaken for the hero. Might try to take credit for the hero's success or to marry the princess/claim the prize instead.
<b>The Donor</b>	A character that gives the hero something important or special (magic weapon, map, knowledge). Sometimes a god or wise person, sometimes just a 'gatekeeper' who gives access to knowledge/a place. Sometimes a mentor and 'the helper', 'dispatcher' or other Propp character type.
<b>The Dispatcher</b>	The character who sends the hero on the mission. Can be combined with another Propp character type ('Princess' Father', 'False Hero', 'Villain', 'Helper' etc)
<b>The Princess</b>	Normally 'the prize' for the hero. Sometimes needs to be rescued/saved or is the actual reward for completing a different mission (sometimes a marriage). Sometimes an important character in the narrative. Sometimes wanted by 'The False Hero' or 'Villain'
<b>The Princess' Father</b>	Sometimes acts as 'The Dispatcher' to send characters to rescue 'The Princess'. Sometimes holds 'The Princess' as a prize for characters. Sometimes jealous of 'The Hero' and fooled by 'The False Hero'

#### Camera Angles and Shots



#### Todorov's Theory of Narrative

He discovered that narratives moved forward in a chronological order with one action following after another. In other words, they have a clear beginning, middle and end. Todorov posited that all narratives contain equilibrium, disequilibrium, recognition, resolution, and new equilibrium. This is recognisable in Hollywood films as they follow a similar structure



#### Sound in Film

Sound in a movie includes music, dialogue, sound effects, ambient noise, and/or background noise and soundtracks. Some sort of sound is always used to enhance the movie experience.



#### Editing in Film

Editing describes the relationship between shots and the process by which they are combined. It is essential to the creation of narrative space and to the establishment of narrative time.

# Glossary for Introduction to film

Media terms	Definition
<b>Media language</b>	how the media through their forms, codes and conventions communicate meanings
<b>Conventions</b>	What the audience expects to see in a particular media text, for example the conventions of science fiction films may include: aliens, scientists, other worlds, gadgets, representations of good and evil. Useful headings to discuss conventions are: characters, setting, iconography, narrative, technical codes and representation
<b>Iconography</b>	The props, costumes, objects and backgrounds associated with a particular genre; for example, in a police series you would expect to see, uniforms, blue flashing lights, scene of crime tape and police radios.
<b>Star Appeal</b>	<b>The way in which products attract and interest an audience.</b> e.g. through the use of famous or popular actors
<b>Audience appeal</b>	The way in which products attract and interest an audience e.g. through the use of stars, familiar genre conventions etc.
<b>Intertextuality</b>	Where one media text makes reference to aspects of another text within it. For example, referencing a scene from a film in a television advertisement. Audiences enjoy recognising intertextual references
<b>Codes</b>	The familiar tools used by media texts to communicate ideas through technical, visual and audio techniques
<b>Genre</b>	Media texts can be grouped into genres that all share similar conventions. Science fiction is a genre, as are teenage magazines, etc.
<b>Mise en Scene</b>	In analysis of moving image products, how the combination of images in the frame creates meaning; how individual shots in a film or photograph have been composed.

Editing	Definition
<b>Editing</b>	Editing describes the relationship between shots and the process by which they are combined. It is essential to the creation of narrative space and to the establishment of narrative time.
<b>Cinematography</b>	Camera shots and camera angles
<b>Cross-cutting</b>	A technique used to establish action happening at the same time in two different locations. The action will cut back and forth between the two locations
<b>Continuity editing</b>	The system of cutting used in most mainstream films, used to establish the illusion of continuous action and keep the audience's attention on the action
<b>Shot-reverse-shot</b>	A technique where the action cuts back and forth between two (or more) shots. Usually used to show conversation.
<b>Dissolve</b>	The gradual transition between one image and another
<b>Fast paced editing</b>	When scenes are edited together using lots of shots cut together quickly. Has the effect that the action is happening quickly and can build tension
<b>Non-continuity editing</b>	Use of editing to draw attention to the film making process to reveal that the film is "constructed" not "natural"
<b>Montage</b>	a rapid succession of images in a motion picture to illustrate an association of ideas.

Sound	Definition
<b>Diegetic</b>	Real sound' sound within the frame and from the visible source
<b>Non-Diegetic</b>	'Non-real' sound outside of the frame for the benefit of the audience (sound effects/music etc)
<b>Sound effects</b>	Sound used to add to the narrative e.g. to create tension
<b>Sound Motifs</b>	Sound and music that is associated with a character/setting
<b>Sound Bridge</b>	When the sound from one scene can be heard in the next scene
<b>Contrapuntal Sound</b>	When the mood/tone/meaning of sounds seems to be opposite to what we can see (similar to juxtaposition when very different images or ideas are put next to each other)

Context	
<b>Social Cultural Context</b>	how the product reflects the society and culture in which it was made how the product reflects the society and culture in which it was made through aspects of its production, distribution, marketing, regulation, circulation and audience consumption
<b>Historical context</b>	how the product reflects the time in which it was made how the product reflects the time in which it was made through aspects of its production
<b>Political Context</b>	how the product reflects the political contexts in which it was made how the product reflects the political contexts in which it was made through aspects of its ownership and political viewpoint, production, distribution, marketing, regulation, circulation and audience consumption.