

SHOT - Cinematic Technique

Questions

These questions are meant to help you think about the cinematic technique of a film:

- What happens? How is it shown?
- How does the use of the camera influence our experience of the film?
- When something happens, ask yourself “how is this shown? and why?”
- What does it add to our understanding of the plot that different techniques are used in a particular way?
- Do you see many close ups? What might this indicate?
- Whose point of view is it? Whose story is it?
- How is the editing? Fast or slow?

Speak

Under the heading of “cinematic technique” or shot you look at how the pictures are created. This includes noting **camera angles** and **movement** as well as **colours** and **sounds**. You also consider **editing**. You can say that you look at **how things are shown in the picture**.

The choice of cinematic technique is not casual. Directors have reasons for using a particular film technique. For example, using a **close up** when a character is frightened may create suspense. A film tells its story through both visual means and through the characters’ actions and dialogue.

In visual storytelling, the use of the camera is key. Our interpretation of a character depends on the **camera angle** we see him or her from. An evil dictator is perhaps filmed from a low angle, while a humble beggar is filmed from a high angle.

The editing can be fast paced or slow. High tempo action scenes are dynamic, the audience need to consider many things and take in a lot of information. Slow editing on the other hand, may allow a story to gradually unfold or subtle nuances to appear.

The focus of film analysis in English is to interpret the meaning of the film by analyzing how cinematic techniques are used. You do not need to know how these techniques are done technically. Pay attention to how the cinematic techniques influence your understanding when you watch a movie, a scene or a still.

The terms

Framing, Point of View, Focus, Editing, Transitions, Angles, Camera Movement, Colour and Sound are all relevant to this area of analysis.

Go to the playlist about “Shot” if you want to learn more.

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