

Filmmaking Techniques lesson plan



National Curriculum: KS 2, 3 & 4 Art, KS 3 & 4 Media Studies

Are you interested in making your own film?

This lesson plan looks at ways to improve your understanding of the filmmaking process and your awareness of the different styles and techniques. It aims to develop your filmmaking knowledge and gives opportunity to practice skills.<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/lesson.php?id=54>

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/lesson.php?id=60>

Learning Objectives

Through using this lesson plan students should:

- Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- Learn about a crucial phase of World War II.
- Devise, conduct and analyse a questionnaire to investigate how well-known the Battle for the Atlantic is compared to the 'Battle of Britain'.
- Develop theories about why the Battle for the Atlantic is not better-known.
- Collect original research data and analyse the results drawing their own conclusions.

Overview

A brief introduction to the work of American sculptor David Smith and the key characteristics of This lesson plan will help:

- to develop an understanding of film production stages.
- to improve understanding of storyboarding and planning.
- to develop knowledge of camera angles and types of camera shots.
- to highlight the structure of a film.
- to develop skills which can be adapted and put into practice as part of a film project.
- as part of an investigation into the work of director Alfred Hitchcock.

Background - Alfred Hitchcock



Alfred Hitchcock was a film director and producer. He is known for some of cinema's most famous psychological thrillers including Psycho, Rear Window, Vertigo and The Birds. His use of camera techniques, quirky angles and ability to have the audience on the edge of their seat earned him the nickname of the 'Master of Suspense'.

Hitchcock's Reel



Hitchcock's Reel (1996) is a sculpture by John Edwards. It is located in Shoreditch Park in London.

It was placed there because Alfred Hitchcock made some of his earlier films at Gainsborough Studios which was located nearby.

Production Stages



Production can be broken down into five stages:

1 - Development

2 - Production

3 - Pre-production

4 - Post-production

5 - Distribution

Activities

Here is a selection of jobs involved in film production, can you work out which of the production stages they fit into?

- Storyboarding**
- Filming**
- Script writing**
- Ideas**
- Sharing**
- Editing**
- Planning**

Which filmmaking role would you choose and why?

Structure Your Film



Your film has three acts - a beginning, a middle and an end. Your beginning sets the scene and introduces your story and characters - think about where the film is set. Give plenty of detail about your characters.

The middle is where everything changes. During this part of the film, the life of the protagonist (main character) is changed forever. The protagonist is faced with some sort of challenge which forces them to go on a personal journey. And finally .. the end. This is where your story reaches its conclusion.

Film made by a school



In this short film a group of young people from London created a film celebrating the work of Alfred Hitchcock focussed around the Hitchcock's reel sculpture. Check out their film.

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/artist.php?id=168>

Consider or discuss the camera angles that have been used. Camera angles and shot types can enhance a scene. How can you use a camera angle to make a subject feel powerful or powerless?

Audio



Soundtracks are a very important part of a film. A funny or uplifting soundtrack has a different feel to something that creates a feeling of dread. Think about the soundtrack used in the Hitchcock's Reel. How would you describe it? How does it make you feel? How do you think it was made? Now play the film again this time playing a different piece of music alongside this film and see how it changes the feel of the clip.

Camera angles and types of shot

As you have seen the choice of camera angle and type of shot is important. You can make your film visually interesting for the viewer if you use the right shot or angle. Have a look at our Basic shot sheet which lists the types of shots used in films and video.

Then pick a short scene from a favourite film and pay attention to the camera angles used. Identify the shots and think about how they affect the scene.

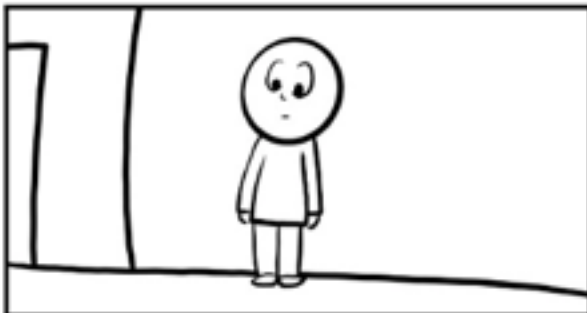
Basic Camera Shot Types

In filmmaking and television production there are several types of shots, framing and composition. The exact terminology can vary but the basic principles remain the same. Camera shots will usually be described in relation to the subject or focal point of the shot. Use some of these shots when creating your storyboards. Think about how your camera shots can add to the action or the atmosphere in a film.



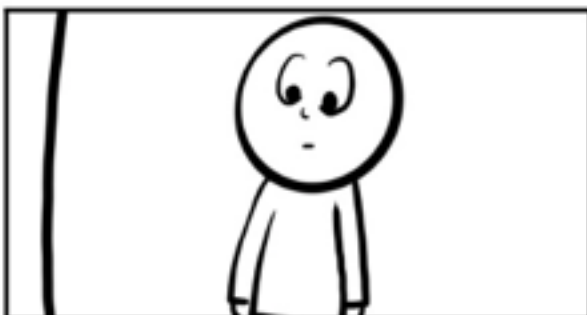
Establishing Shot

A wide view which introduces the viewer to the location. Sometimes known as an Extreme Wide Shot.



Wide Shot

The subject or character takes up the whole frame. This shot can also be referred to as a **Long Shot**.



Medium/Mid Shot

A closer view of the character or subject, can usually be from the waste or knees up. It's sometimes called the 3/4 Shot.



Close Up Shot

Part of the character or subject fills the frame and becomes the focus of the shot.



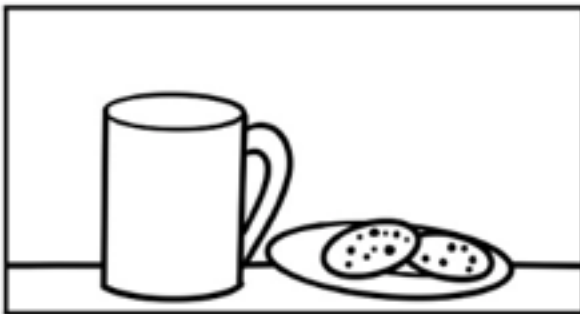
Extreme Close Up Shot

An **Extreme Close Up** gets close in on a character. It can give a heightened sense of drama or emotion.



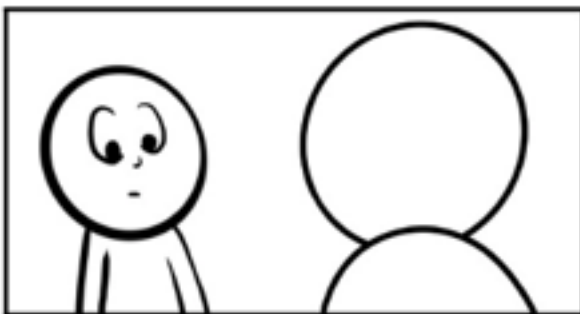
Cut In

A **Cut In** shows a detail of some other part of the character or subject. This type of shot is often used in documentaries or interviews.



Cut Away

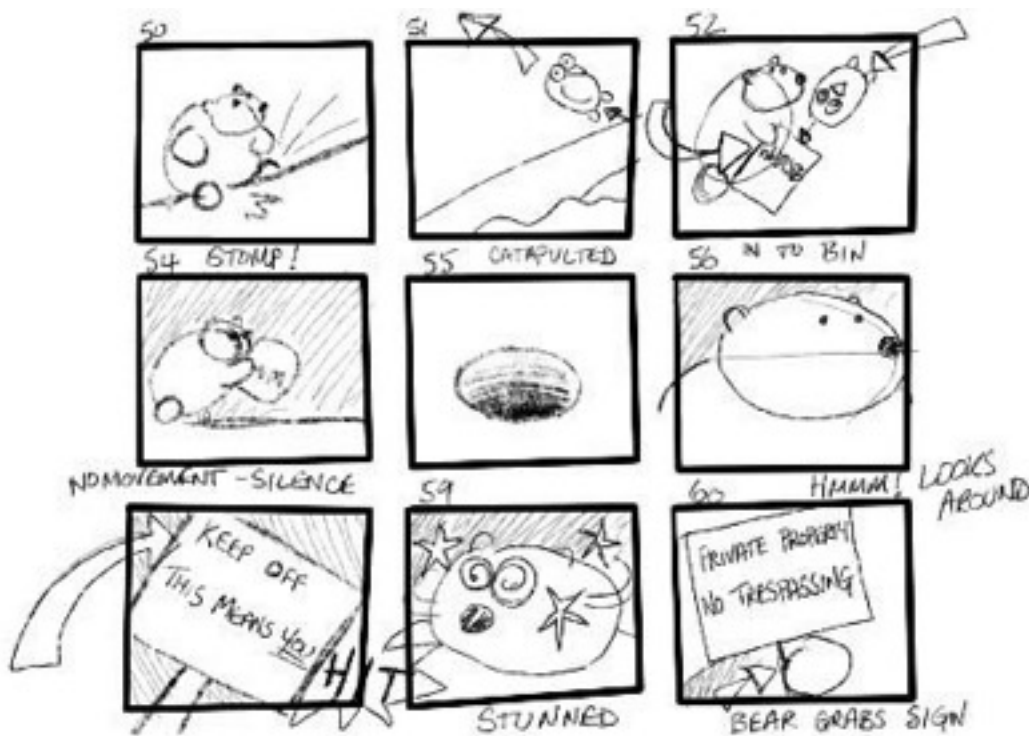
A **Cut Away** shows something other than the subject. In an interview, it might be something that the subject is talking about.



Over the Shoulder Shot

This type of shot is usually taken over the shoulder of another character. Often combined with a

Storyboards



Storyboards are an important stage in your filmmaking. They help you to plan your film, visualise scenes, get an idea of how the story will look and flow, and help you to spot any problems that might crop up. Alongside the visuals, you might also include notes on camera directions, sound effects, and script. Now storyboard your own short film in the style of the Hitchcock's Reel film about an object of your choosing. Here is a basic template to get you started.

Storyboard template

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Development Activity

With the information gathered so far, through exploring the work of Alfred Hitchcock, looking at camera angles and techniques, considering the impact of soundtracks, and the various stages of filmmaking, students can develop their own film ideas.

Students should begin by identifying production roles based on areas of interests.

They can work in groups of four or five.

Film is versatile and students could explore any curriculum topic of interest. Areas such as History and Geography would be ideal areas for KS2 groups to begin.

Students can also explore genre in film and consider how film directors use camera angles and shots, soundtrack and cinematography to create impact.