

**A LEVEL**

*Delivery Guide*

# ***FILM STUDIES***

**H410**

For first teaching in 2017

## **Component 1: Section A Film Form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990**

Version 1

# A LEVEL FILM STUDIES

This guide outlines approaches and ideas, including learner activities for the Section A of Component 1: Film Form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990.

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:









- **Content:** A clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
- **Thinking Conceptually:** Expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
- **Thinking Contextually:** A range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

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## What are the micro-elements of film form?


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# What are the micro-elements of film form?

This delivery guide is intended to help you understand the micro-elements of film form. These are introduced in Component 01, Section A: Film Form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990.

The micro-elements of film form are identified as:

- cinematography (including lighting)
- mise-en-scène
- editing
- sound
- performance.

An understanding of how the micro-elements of film form work to generate meaning and response for the spectator and how they contribute to the aesthetic dimension of film will help underpin other areas within the specification. The study of this section of the specification provides learners with a contrasting approach to section B of the Film History component where learners study the development of film through the context of experimental and historical European film movements.

To support the delivery of the micro-elements of film form to learners there is some brief exemplification of certain key areas within this.

## Cinematography (including lighting)

This refers to the 'shot'. Filmmakers control the cinematographic qualities of a shot, including, how the shot is framed, how long the shot is held for and what it looks like in terms of colour.

How a filmmaker has chosen to frame a particular shot or scene is a key part of cinematography as Bordwell and Thomson state in *Film Art*:

*'In any image, the frame is not simply a neutral border; it imposes a certain vantage point onto the material within the image. In cinema the frame is important because it actively defines the image for us.'*

This control that the filmmaker has over what we as a spectator can see is a key element of how we understand and make sense of film and relates directly to both the film's narrative development and the conveying of the film's messages and values.

An example of this is the opening sequence of *The Conversation* (Coppola 1974), which uses a **zoom in** to include and then exclude surrounding space – as a spectator we are unsure as to what and whom our focus should be on until we eventually focus in on the protagonist Harry Caul.

Another aspect of cinematography is how **lighting, including three point lighting**, conveys character, atmosphere and messages and values. The importance of lighting can be seen in *Double Indemnity* (Wilder 1944) and its use of chiaroscuro lighting (extreme low key and high contrast lighting) to create distinct areas of light and darkness within the film and provides psychological insight into character for the spectator.

Technological developments have allowed filmmakers to use cinematography in differing ways and to take advantage of improvements in lens quality and postproduction techniques. This is not to say that cinematography in the earlier films is of a lesser quality – rather that cinematographers had to be incredibly creative with how they used the technology that they had access to, in order to create engaging images for the audience.

## Mise-en-scène

This refers to what is in the scene and it includes setting, costume, make-up and how characters are positioned within the scene.

How a filmmaker chooses to use the principal components of mise-en-scène (setting, props, costume and make-up) can generate multiple connotations and suggest a range of possible interpretations.

An interesting use of mise-en-scène would be *All that Heaven Allows* (Sirk 1955) where there is a clear juxtaposition between Carrie and Ron both in terms of costume and also in the settings used to define themselves and their friends. From Carrie wearing a red dress to the country club and Ron dressing in muted colours both of which associate them with specific aspects of their character.

## Editing

At its most basic editing is the placing of one shot next to another usually as a 'cut' however this does not cover the complexity or importance of editing which also covers the graphic relationship, the rhythmic relationship, the spatial and temporal relationships which are present in the majority of narrative filmmaking. How the shot-to-shot relationships of continuity editing can be used to create meaning and generate response for the spectator.

Often the role of editing will appear hidden to the spectator but will help to generate meaning and response, an example of this would be in *West Side Story* (Wise and Robbins 1961) where editing can be seen as an extension of the choreography and music. Here cuts are used to help underline and punctuate and become part of the musical expression in the same way as the score and the dancing. There is a clear sense of a rhythmic relationship between the editing and the other micro-elements.

### Sound

Film sound is often considered both as a whole and broken down into its constituent parts. This includes:

- **diegetic sound** – sound that the characters within the film world can hear and react to
- **non-diegetic sound** – sound that is added afterwards and should generate a response within the audience.

It will also include contrapuntal and parallel sound:

- **contrapuntal sound** is sound which contrasts with the mood, image and even genre of the sequence
- **parallel sound** fits the spectators expectations for the sequence in terms of mood, image and genre.

Sound is also linked to specific characters and can be used effectively in narrative development. In Film Art Bordwell and Thomson use an example from *Stagecoach* (Ford 1939) to illustrate how diegetic offscreen sound can make a film's narration less restricted.

The stagecoach is trying to outrun a group of Indians and their ammunition is running out and just as all appears lost a cavalry troop arrives. In this case the use of offscreen sound restricts the film's narration however as a character's dialogue line informs the spectator that the bugle sound is the cavalry the narration becomes far less restricted. This helps to illustrate how sound can be used effectively in narrative development.

### Performance

This relates directly to the performance of the cast and how meanings and responses are generated through their individual and collective performance.

It considers the staging of a scene, how the cast are positioned within a set up as well as the type of performance being given. This would include the use of acting approaches such as method acting or improvisation (for example, *Raging Bull*).

### Aesthetics

This focuses on the significance of aesthetics within film and the role that the micro-elements have in creating aesthetic effects in specific film sequences. In this context the most straightforward way to think about aesthetics in film is to consider the interaction between a film's subject and its style and how this can create and generate a response for a spectator.

On the surface *All that Heaven Allows* (Sirk 1955) presents a simple narrative but it is actually much more complex at an aesthetic level, where it is both highly stylised and has a complex structure. A key theme within the film is the subversive social critique of suburban American attitudes and prejudices yet this is initially superficially disguised by the use of stylistic elements such as the opening shot of Stoningham, which locates the spectator in affluent small town America. However as the film progresses, Sirk uses micro-elements to highlight Cary's oppressed and isolated state. This is represented visually through the use of reflective surfaces and mirrors. It is this use of mise-en-scène and cinematography as well as other uses of micro-elements throughout the film which work to create a clear sense of style and provide an aesthetic dimension to the film.

### Film poetics

This refers to film as a complete, constructed artefact and is an overarching term used to describe the above, for example, how filmmakers, through processes of choice, selection and exclusion create meaning and effect in their films.

## How the micro-elements of film form have developed over time from the silent era to the 1990s

The micro-elements of film form are identified as cinematography (including lighting), mise-en-scène, editing, sound and performance. The understanding of how the micro-elements of film form work to generate meaning and response for the spectator and how they contribute to the aesthetic dimension of film will help underpin other areas within the specification.

To support the delivery of this element of the specification there is some brief exemplification of how the micro-elements developed over time from the silent era to the 1990s, including brief identification of what have been the key developments in cinematography, sound, mise-en-scène, editing and performance in US studio films.

### Cinematography (including lighting)

Key developments within cinematography began around 1908 when methods of framing action started to alter. The framing prior to this point had tended to be a full frame shot of a person so that their whole figure was visible, from 1908 onwards filmmakers began to try and convey the psychology of the characters and this resulted in the camera framing the subject slightly closer than previously. Also around this time filmmakers started to frame action using either high or low angle shots and as tripods became equipped with heads that moved it was also possible to experiment with pans (moving the camera from side to side) and tilts (moving the camera up and down). This allowed the action to remain centred which would have served to help the spectator have a clearer understanding of what was happening within the scene.

A key shift in cinematography occurred during the 1920s as previously films had a hard edged sharp focus look to them however during the 1920s filmmakers began to experiment with softening the image. Filmmakers did this through a combination of using gauzy fabrics or filters in front of the lenses as well as the development of lenses that could keep the foreground action in focus whilst the background was less obvious, effectively they had begun to experiment with depth of field and focal lengths as the technology allowed. This technique allows the filmmaker to direct the spectator to focus on the main action taking place within the frame rather than have the whole frame in focus.

Arguably the most significant development in cinematography that occurred in the period 1930-1960 was colour filmmaking; whilst films in the silent era had often been tinted after they had been shot, it wasn't until the mid 1930s that Technicolor became more commonly used in films. The use of Technicolor was more common in films which required a sense of spectacle or had a fantastical element, both *Singin' in the Rain* (Kelly & Donen) and *All that Heaven Allow* (Sirk 1955) benefit from the rich colour spectrum offered by Technicolor.

Deep focus shots were also popular during this period and are used greatly in *Citizen Kane* (Welles 1941) where the Cinematographer Gregg Toland experimented extensively with the technique. During the majority of this period there was no significant change to the Hollywood approach to filmmaking as narrative action and character remained key, with the developments in colour, deep focus and sound enhancing the overall style of filmmaking.

In contrast the period 1961-1990 had a range of technical and stylistic developments as a result of both advancing technology and the increased influence of European and World cinema on younger American directors such as Spielberg, Scorsese and Coppola.

### Mise-en-scène

Key developments in terms of mise-en-scène are closely linked to those of cinematography and sound. During the silent era camera technology was limited to where filmmakers could physically shoot which in turn had a knock on effect regarding sets and locations. Also shooting on black and white film stock meant that colourful costumes would be wasted and monochrome costume would be easier to show up on screen and provide contrast. This is not to say that it prevented adventurous or innovative filmmaking taking place as the set films made during this period illustrate. *Birth of a Nation* has large scale set pieces whilst *The Wind* was shot entirely on location in the Mojave Desert.

With the advent of synchronous sound, films needed to have more control over the shooting environment and deal with large cumbersome recording equipment – they therefore became more set bound which in turn led to large scale soundstages being used. This resulted in sets being built and used for the majority of films as it added an element of control. During this period set design and lighting continued to play a central role in the creation of meaning and development of character. *Double Indemnity*, shot in high contrast black and white, exemplifies mise-en-scène through its use of lighting, location and costume to create key parts of its atmosphere and develop character as well as define a stylistic approach. However a key development during the period 1930-1960 was the use of colour film which again shifted how mise-en-scène could be used. This is particularly evident in costume design and the use of colour to help enhance mood and character. *Singin' in the Rain* covers the coming of sound in Hollywood and provides a snapshot of how films were shot as well as being a particularly rich text in terms of how mise-en-scène can be used, particularly as the film is shot in colour and has large set piece dance routines which are sound stage based. Both *Vertigo* and *All that Heaven Allows* use colour and costume in very significant ways which add to the development of character, something that would have been much harder pre colour.

The next shift would be away from sets toward shooting in 'real locations' and smaller spaces which again was facilitated by advances on the technical side with cameras and sound recording equipment becoming much more portable. This ability to use real locations can be seen in the opening sequence of *The Conversation* where Harry Caul is walking around a square listening into a conversation; as a spectator we are now placed centrally in the location and it adds a sense of realism to the film. The ability to use real locations opens up the creative choices a filmmaker has and this can add to the overall film, for example in *E.T.* the vast sprawling suburb is a key element of the film alongside Elliott's house which represents both a recognisable American household and also a place bordering on collapse due to the absent father. Location plays a similar role in *Do the Right Thing* with the streets of Brooklyn providing a key element of the story and very real sense of place. *West Side Story* also filmed on location in New York marking a shift from the studio set *Singin' in the Rain* and adding a sense of realism to the film.

Overall whilst the technical aspect of building sets and designing costume has not fundamentally altered over the periods covered, other technical developments have allowed filmmakers and other creative crew involved in filmmaking to explore what is possible and to use the advancements to enrich the spectators' experience of film either through filming on location, the use of colour or continuing to construct sets to help generate meaning and response.

### Editing

The majority of early cinema was a single shot held for a set amount of time with action taking place within the frame. The point at which this is considered to have changed is with *The Life of an American Fireman* (Porter 1903) which consisted of a nine shot story about a rescue from a burning building. What makes this film key to the development of editing is that it cut between location and contrasted between what was happening in one location with what was happening in another. This was made possible by the physical cutting of film stock and sticking it next to another piece, hence the term 'cut'. What has altered over time is the equipment used to edit films – from the cement splicer in the early days of film and up to the 1960s – to the introduction of the tape splicer which prevented frames being lost and allowed for parts to be re-edited in a much more straightforward manner. The biggest shift has been the move to digital non-linear editing software which has mainly occurred post 2000. What has not changed is the role of a film editor; they are still responsible for assembling the film into a cohesive and compelling story. Given the relative lack of technological development in editing what is interesting is how central editing is to the creation of meaning. For example, the cut in *2001: A Space Odyssey* between the bone and the space station makes a powerful connection between our past and the future as well as being a cut to move between time and space. The relationship between sound and editing can also be seen to be vital as *The Conversation* makes use of both to build suspense and provide an insight into the mental state of Harry Caul. These brief examples have occurred as editors have pushed what is creatively possible rather than having cutting edge computers to edit on. This is especially true of the set films which are not affected by the advent of digital editing.

### Sound

As with cinematography the technological advances in sound provided a mode shift in filmmaking moving away from a silent era to the musical as a genre and finally onto complex soundscapes in films such as *The Conversation*. These technological developments in sound have also impacted upon spectator experience as in early cinema the film will have been accompanied by live music played alongside the film to the multi channel stereo experience a spectator will now have at the cinema.

In terms of development, *The Jazz Singer* (Crosland 1927) is the first feature length film with a synchronized music score, speech and lip synched singing and is often cited as the release that helped to signal the end of the silent film era. From this point an increasing number of films begun to use synch sound and by 1932, multi track recording had advanced to a point where music, voices and sound effects could be mixed onto a single track. In many ways this development of multi track recording is as important as the development of unidirectional microphones as it allowed films to use non-diegetic music to underpin both the action and dialogue. The initial aim of this was for the music to serve the narrative without drawing attention to itself.

The development of sound recording introduced new genres such as the musical which became increasingly popular and were not technologically possible in the pre sound era. As mentioned earlier, *Singin' in the Rain* provides an enjoyable insight into the development of sound in Hollywood as well as being an example of the musical genre.

The developments in multi track recording can be seen in *The Conversation* that plays around with sound and challenges the spectator to constantly question what they think they have heard and what it may mean. It should be noted that, as the technology has improved and allowed sound to be used in more sophisticated ways, so too has the spectators' understanding become more sophisticated; a film's use of sound is central to the spectator making meaning.

**Performance**

Unlike the other micro-elements, the human element of performance has not undergone any major technological developments. However, as the other elements have developed over time, so has the role of performance. An actor's performance consists of visual elements, appearance, gestures, facial expressions and position in the shot as well as sound elements, voice and voice effects.

As previously mentioned, film cameras used to be extremely bulky and very static often shooting whole sequences in wide shots thus requiring a certain type of performance from the actor. As cameras have become more portable, it has been possible to have a wider range of shot types within a scene thus making an actor's ability to perform in a range of ways more important. There is often considered to have been a shift from a much more stylised approach to a more realistic one in terms of performance however spectator expectations have also shifted over time; a spectator watching *Citizen Kane* now may find the performance of Orson Welles over the top when compared to the more 'realistic' performances in *Do the Right Thing* but at the time this would have fitted with spectator expectations.



## Approaches to teaching the content

### General approaches

One of the most productive ways to approach the delivery of the micro-elements of film form is for learners to carry out a range of small practical tasks; this will allow them to experience the process of making meaning using the various micro-elements of film form. Rather than focus on covering all of the micro-elements in one task it is better to break to them into tasks focused on the individual elements.

Other approaches include the close analysis of short sequences from set films. Learners could focus on individual micro-elements and then feedback to a larger group. This could feedback into a wider class discussion.

Regardless of approach learners should have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their readings of the texts so that misconceptions can be identified.

### Common misconceptions or difficulties learners may have

Common misconceptions are likely to arise where learners are unsure of the correct technical terms to use and what these terms relate too.

The micro-elements which the learners often have difficulty with tend to be Sound and Editing. With sound it is confusing diegetic and non-diegetic sound which can cause problems and has knock on consequences when analysing sequences.

With editing learners often just identify the transition being used as opposed to considering how and why shots are juxtaposed next to each other and how this generates meaning for the spectator.

Learners rarely discuss pace and tone when analysing editing and need to be more aware about how a particular moment or scene plays out on screen and consider what the impact of editing is meant to be.

Learners also need to consider how the spectator has been manipulated into responding in a certain way via editing.

### Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set learners up for topics later in the course

This element of the specification can act as the building blocks for other content which will be covered over the two years. An understanding of the micro-elements and how they generate meaning for the spectator is key to learners being able to make sense of film as a text.

For the majority of learners their exposure to film is likely to be primarily based on US Hollywood films. For this reason the films in this section provide an opportunity to explore how conventions and techniques have been established over a period of time. They also draw upon and have influenced other films within the specification and this is an area that can and arguably should be discussed. Billy Wilder, Douglas Sirk and Alfred Hitchcock were all European filmmakers within the US studio system and brought with them a set of wider influences to bear on the films that they directed. This is also the case with the films of the silent era stars such as Chaplin, Murnau and Sjöström who all came from Europe as well.

It is the intertextual nature of film and filmmaking that should be explored and discussed alongside these films as opposed to considering them to exist in a vacuum like state.

The set films for this section are:

Silent Era	1930–1960	1961–1990
<i>Birth of a Nation</i> (1915). Directed by D.W. Griffith. USA	<i>Citizen Kane</i> (1941). Directed by Orson Welles. USA	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (1968). Directed by Stanley Kubrick. USA
<i>The Gold Rush</i> (1925). Directed by Charles Chaplin. USA	<i>Singin' in the Rain</i> (1952). Directed by Gene Kelly/Stanley Donen. USA	<i>Raging Bull</i> (1980). Directed by Martin Scorsese. USA
<i>The Mark of Zorro</i> (1920). Directed by Fred Niblo and Theodore Reed. USA	<i>Stagecoach</i> (1939). Directed by John Ford. USA	<i>E.T.</i> (1982). Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA
<i>The General</i> (1926). Directed by Clyde Bruckman/Buster Keaton. USA	<i>Vertigo</i> (1958). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA	<i>Do the Right Thing!</i> (1989). Directed by Spike Lee. USA
<i>Sunrise</i> (1927). Directed by FW Murnau. USA	<i>Double Indemnity</i> (1944). Directed by Billy Wilder. USA	<i>The Conversation</i> (1974). Directed by Frances Ford Coppola. USA
<i>The Wind</i> (1928). Directed by Victor Sjöström. USA	<i>All that Heaven Allows</i> (1955). Directed by Douglas Sirk. USA	<i>West Side Story</i> (1961). Directed by Jerome Robbins–Robert Wise. USA



**Approaches to teaching the content**

The following activities are based on the premise that learners will be introduced to the micro-elements of film at the start of a teaching course in order to develop a conceptual understanding of film language and how the micro-elements can generate meaning and response for the spectator.

Understanding of the micro-elements of film aim should create a foundation from which an analytical approach can be taken when considering a variety of key issues. However, the activities could be useful or adapted when considering the NEA element of the specification and be used to help build and develop a range of practical skills.

Primarily the activities aim to develop skills both in terms of the analytical skills needed to deconstruct and analyse film as a text and the practical skills needed to produce high quality practical work. Alongside the traditional analysis and note-taking in preparation for essay writing, the activities should be used to encourage deeper consideration of how and why certain decisions are made during the filmmaking process. Through simulating a range of small filmmaking activities, learners will be able to appreciate the care and deliberate nature of filmmaking and how the micro-elements can generate multiple connotations and suggest a range of interpretations. This will enable a greater understanding of how and why a filmmaker may have made the choices they did and allow learners to justify explanations in essays.



## Film History activities

### Micro-elements of film form

The following sets of activities are focused on learners developing a comprehensive understanding of the micro-elements of film form. The activities all have a practical element in order to develop skills for the NEA as well as allowing learners to put theory into practice to reinforce their understanding. In some cases the activity may be best spread over more than one session depending on the session length and equipment available.

#### Learner Activity 1

##### Cinematography

In order to develop learners' understanding of cinematography they should seek to recreate a short sequence shot for shot. Ideally the sequence should be easy to recreate e.g. have a maximum of two characters and use a variety of shot types.

1. Screen chosen sequence e.g. the final shoot out sequence of *Fistful of Dollars* (Leone 1964), learners' storyboard sequence. The sequence will need to be paused to allow learners to draw the figures. It is important that the storyboarded images are not stick people, the shapes fill the frame and the frames are the correct orientation, e.g. landscape.
2. In groups learners go and shoot the sequence based upon their storyboard. (It is possible to edit in camera if needed.)
3. Learners edit footage into a coherent sequence and add quick sound effects and music.
4. Finished sequences reviewed and critiqued.  
What shot types were used and why?  
What impact did the learners think they would have on the spectator?

The final review of the footage is important as it is likely that learners will make mistakes which they can reflect on. Have they varied shot distance enough? Have they understood the 180 degree rule or have they broken the line? Even technical issues can be considered, for example, could they operate a camera or have they used a tripod – to improve skills and avoid similar mistakes in future.

#### Learner Activity 2

##### Sound

In this activity learners are required to record the missing sounds from a short sequence (1-2 minutes). The aim should be for learners to record both dialogue and also some foley sounds for the sequence. An ideal sequence would be a conversation between two people, in many cases a suitable sequence could be selected from one of the set films but this is not essential.

1. Screen chosen sequence. Have a discussion about what sounds can be heard in the sequence, for example, where do they come from? How are they made? Why are they important? If needed it may be worth screening a short film about foley sound (<https://vimeo.com/170948796>)
2. Learners are to create the missing dialogue and sounds from the chosen sequence. Provide groups of learners with a copy of the screenplay. Allow them time to annotate it with other sounds that can be heard.
3. Learners go off to record the missing dialogue and extra sounds. This can be done using mics or even phones with voice memo ability.
4. Learners import their sound recordings and synch them to a copy of the sequence without sound. This can be done in a range of editing packages.
5. Finished sequences are reviewed and critiqued. What sounds were used and why? How important is sound in the creation of meaning for the spectator?

As with the cinematography activity the key is the reflection and review at the end. What have learners actually learnt from the process? Where they away of the different ways sound was used in films to create meaning?

**Learner Activity 3****Editing**

In this activity learners construct a sequence from a set of rushes. It is possible to create a set of rushes from an existing film sequence for example the opening sequence of *The Conversation* could be cut up into different groups of footage, the rushes could include interior shots, exterior main protagonist shots, exterior couple shots. It is important that learners have not seen the actual sequence as the aim is to get them to try and create a cohesive sequence of their own.

It is beneficial to pair the learners up so that they can discuss ideas.

1. Learners are given an editing project containing sets of rushes and tasked with watching the clips and then creating a sequence from them. They should be told that there is no correct way to assemble the clips but that they need to be able to justify their decisions.
2. Learners view clips and discuss with a partner and begin to construct a sequence. For a worthwhile sequence to be created it may need the majority of a session to be constructed.
3. The finished sequences are viewed and explained. What decisions did they make and why? What impact were they hoping to have on the spectator? How did they try and do this?
4. Screen actual sequence. What similarities exist? Does the actual sequence make sense? What differences are there? Have characters been represented in the same way? Does ordering shots in a different way generate different meanings?

Again the key part of this exercise is the reflection at the end and the comparison with the actual sequence. Have characters been portrayed as something else? For example has the protagonist been seen as the antagonist? Why has this happened? As learners have not seen the actual sequence they have to rely on *mise-en-scène* and cinematography to make their judgments about characters and this can help link these areas together.

**Learner Activity 4****Mise-en-scène**

In this activity learners generate their own still image focusing on the importance of *mise-en-scène*. A useful reference point may be the work of Cindy Sherman and her project *Untitled Film Stills* ([https://www.amazon.co.uk/Cindy-Sherman-Complete-Untitled-Stills/dp/0870705075/ref=pd\\_sim\\_14\\_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=VVWB148X2A5SWOBGMRS](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Cindy-Sherman-Complete-Untitled-Stills/dp/0870705075/ref=pd_sim_14_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=VVWB148X2A5SWOBGMRS))

To help provide structure it can be useful for learners to be assigned a set genre to work in and given other guidelines.

1. Learners plan the task (but are potentially provided with a genre by the teacher, including character type and setting). Time allowed for developing ideas and considering the props needed to create the still image. Thought should also go into the framing of the shot and how this would fit with the chosen genre.
2. Learners produce the still image. This can be completed outside of a session.
3. Learners present the still image and justify how they have used *mise-en-scène* to create meaning. Discussion based around different stills produced. Is *mise-en-scène* important to generating meaning in film? How does it do this? What information does it provide the spectator?

As with the other practical activities it is the reflection at the end that will help to provide a context for the learner though the process of production will force them to consider why they are creating the image in a particular way.

**Learner Activity 5****Nine key frames (close textual analysis)**

The ability to closely analyse short sequences in detail and to identify how the micro-elements of film form are being used to generate meaning is very important. It is possible to analyse sequences as a whole class and to discuss how meaning is generated and what the sequence means. Another approach that is useful for helping to reinforce understanding is for learners to analyse a short sequence from a set film and to produce an analysis along with nine key frames from the sequence.

1. Learners either select or are given a short sequence to watch (2-3 mins). They make notes on each of the micro-element areas. They will need to watch the sequence more than once. You may want to select a variety of sequences from across the film so that finished work can be shared.
2. Having watched the sequence a number of times and having made basic notes they now select nine key frames from within the sequence and either screen grab or draw them. If drawing they need to make sure they are detailed. (An example worksheet – **Learner Resource 1** [<http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/417710-film-form-in-us-cinema-from-the-silent-era-to-1990-delivery-guide-learner-resource.doc>] is provided if needed).
3. Once the nine key frames have been selected then learners need to add in their analysis. Completed analyses can be shared between learners.

This activity provides a useful way of making sure a number of different sequences from a set film can be covered as well as providing a visual reference for the analysis.

**Learner Activity 6****From Script to Screen**

This activity can be used prior to the screening of a set film and allows learners to consider how they would choose to shoot a particular sequence and how they would choose to position the spectator.

1. Select a sequence from a set film. Find the screenplay (e.g. <http://www.imsdb.com>) and provide learners with the extract for the chosen sequence. It may be useful to choose the opening.
2. Learners read the screenplay extract and annotate it with notes about how they would choose to shoot it.
3. Learners produce a storyboard which demonstrates how they would shoot the sequence. They need to include information about all of the micro-elements and how these would be used.
4. The completed storyboards are shared and discussed. Learners justify creative decisions.
5. Actual sequence is screened. What similarities or differences exist between them?

**Learner Activity 7****Video essay (comparative analysis)**

This activity provides an opportunity to develop comparative analysis between different set films. Learners can work in pairs to produce a video essay comparing two set films. Examples of video essays can be found here <https://vimeo.com/groups/audiovisualcy>

1. Provide learners with digital copies of the films or sets of sequences from the films.
2. Set a question that you want them to answer, this can be a past exam paper or one similar to it.
3. Allow them to plan their answer; what are the key points that they want to make? What sequences from the films do they think support their points? This will allow their response to be checked first.
4. Learners to create a visual essay. If using text they should just make key points and find a clip to help support this. If they are confident and the software allows them they may choose to have clips from the different films play as a split screen.
5. Finished video essays played and reviewed by their peers.

This approach should help learners to make comparisons between the set films and begin to highlight similarities and differences that exist between them. It is possible to use three films but it will be more straightforward with two.





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