



Key Concepts Guide

FILM STUDIES

Cinematography: Camerawork

Angle

Low Angle	High Angle	Canted/Dutch Angle
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Depth of Field

Deep Focus	Shallow Focus
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Camera Movement

Crane	Tracking	Dolly
Handheld		Steadicam

Shot Distance

Long Shot	Mid Shot	Close-up
	Two Shot	

Key Questions

How does cinematography reinforce/reflect wider narrative themes?

How does it impact the representation of characters?

How is it impacted/affected by other key elements?

How does cinematography impact the film-maker?

How does cinematography impact the film in which it was made?

How Does Cinematography Impact By The Cost?

Cinematography: Lighting

Type of lighting

Naturalistic	Expressive
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Levels of lighting

Low-key	High-key
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Focus of lighting

Hard Lighting	Soft Lighting
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Colours

Colour Filters

Key Questions

How does the lighting impact on the emotional tone of the film? Does it affect the emotional thrust of the film?

Does the lighting reflect any character's state of mind?

Does the lighting emphasise shadows?

Does the lighting differ throughout sequences?

Is the lighting conventional in terms of the genre?

Mise en Scene and Performance

Mise-en-Scene

Props	Costume & Make-up	Setting
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Key Questions

Does the mise-en-scene help to convey the genre of the film?

Does the mise-en-scene present a familiar or an unfamiliar world? Does it provide escapism or something real?

Does any part of the mise-en-scene help to propel the narrative forward?

What does the mise-en-scene tell us about the characters?

Does the setting provide barriers or freedoms for the characters?

What do any props tell us about the characters?

Composition

Open & Closed	Symmetry	Off-Screen Space
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Key Questions

Does the composition of the film lack symmetry?

Do characters respond to objects/people/events that are happening off-screen?

Acting Style/Performance

Voice Quality	Body Language	Pose
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Key Questions

What is significant in terms of the delivery of dialogue in terms of tone, fluency or volume?

What emotions are communicated by actor's body language? What is their body language towards other characters?

Are poses assertive or timid? Masculine or feminine?

Editing

Styles of Editing

Continuity Editing	Expressive Editing
Match-on-Action	Jump Cutting
Eyeline Matches	Juxtaposition
Shot-Reverse-Shot	Montage

Continuity Editing Key Questions	Expressive Editing Key Questions
How is editing used to help shape the world in which the film takes place? Do film events take place in the same time? Are they portrayed in a condensed time? Is time stretched through slow motion or quick cuts? Is editing used to align us with a particular character (link to screen time)? Does extensive continuity editing create a sense of realism? Does it create passive spectatorship?	Are there evident editing juxtapositions (scale and/or colour/lighting)? Are juxtapositions used to suggest conflict or change?

Tempo

Slow-paced	Fast-paced
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Key Questions

How does the editing tempo contribute to the emotional tone of the film?

Is slow editing used to create a form of active audience spectatorship?

Sound

Types of Sound

Diegetic	Non-diegetic
Dialogue	Film Music and Scores
Ambient Sound	Voice-over Narration
On-screen Sound/Off-screen Sound	

Sound Mixing

Key Questions

Are some characters given more volume in their dialogue?

How do the sounds give us a sense of the emotional direction of the scene?

What is the impact of any moments of silence or when the sound is dampened?

Are certain sounds being pushed to the foreground of the mix and for what purpose?

Representation: Gender, Age & Ethnicity

Stereotypes	Countertypes
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Empathy	Sympathy
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Key Questions

Can any of the characters be described as stereotypical?

In what ways does the physical appearance and/or behaviours of the character help to construct an exaggerated or negative representation of that social group?

Are any of the characters character countertypes?

Does the film construct a problematic representation of the real world as a result of absent social groups? Does it construct a world view that is largely white or male-oriented?

Are we being aligned to masculine viewpoints of women (Mulvey's male gaze)?

Are the representations of women showing them as passive or objectified?

Are male presences encoded as stronger than females?

Narrative

Traditional Narrative Structures

Equilibrium (Three-Act Structure)	Character Archetypes	Binary Oppositions	Genre-based narratives
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Key Questions

Does the film use linear storytelling?

Does it promote active or passive spectatorship?

Are audiences encouraged to adopt the viewpoint of a single character?

What or who injects narrative disequilibrium in the film?

Does the use of Proppian archetypes provide familiarity for the audience? Do they uphold any ideologies?

Which oppositional character or idea triumphs in the film and with what ideological effect?

Does the film conform to any genre's narrative traits?

Contexts

Social/Political Contexts	Cultural Contexts	Institutional Contexts
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Key Questions

Did what was happening in society, including technologies, impact on any aspects of the film?

Were there any political restrictions to what was depicted in the film?

What cultural influences are evident in the film?

Is there any evidence of the director or the production company having any impact on the style of the film?

Has the budget had an evident impact on film-making choices?

How have the contexts impacted on the narrative?

How have the contexts impacted on the film's aesthetic?

