Cinematic Devices

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| **PROXEMICS***The spatial relationships among characters within the mise-en-scène; the apparent distance the camera to the subject.*Mise-en-scène: All the things that are “put in the scene”: the setting, décor, lighting, costumes, performance, etc. Narrative films often manipulate the elements of mise-en-scène, such as décor, costuming, and acting to intensify or undermine the ostensible significance of a particular scene.  |
| **Cinematic Device** | **Definition** | **Meaningful example from film**(briefly describe scene) | **What does this reveal?**(Character, mood, setting, etc.) |
| **Long Shot** | A shot in which the background dominates; figures are often included to give a sense of scale and space. Long shots can be used as establishing shots – shots that orient the audience to location and surroundings. |  |  |
| **Medium Shot** | A figure is framed from the waist up.\* Medium Close-Up: figure framed from the chest up.\* Medium Long Shot: figure framed from knees up. |  |  |
| **Close-Up** | A detailed shot usually showing just the head or significant object. It is used largely to isolate a character from the setting/other characters so that the audience will pay attention only to that character.  |  |  |
| **Extreme Close-up** | A shot that singles out a portion of the body or isolates a small detail. It is often used for symbolic purposes to reinforce the significance of an object, or to intensify an emotion.  |  |  |

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| **ANGLES***The camera’s angle of view relative to the subject.* |
| **Cinematic Device** | **Definition** | **Meaningful example from film**(briefly describe scene) | **What does this reveal?**(Character, mood, setting, etc.) |
| **High Angle** | A shot in which the camera literally and figuratively looks down on the subject. It can be used to make the subject seem small or insignificant. |  |  |
| **Crane/Aerial Shot** | A type of high angle shot that can be either stationary or moving. It is positioned higher up and often at a steeper angle than a basic high angle shot, and acts more like a bird’s-eye-view.  |  |  |
| **Low Angle** | A shot in which the camera literally and figuratively looks up to the subject. This angle is often used to give the subject a dominating or powerful presence. The audience or camera perspective is made to feel submissive or small.  |  |  |
| **Flat Angle** | A shot in which the camera is at eye level and on the same plane as the subject. This angle is usually the most predominant angle used in a film.  |  |  |

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| **LIGHTING***The use of varying level so flight and/or shadow to influence viewer perception of setting and mood.* |
| **Cinematic Device** | **Definition** | **Meaningful example from film**(briefly describe scene) | **What does this reveal?**(Character, mood, setting, etc.) |
| **High Key Lighting** | Bright illumination with few obvious shadows. High key lighting is usually low contrast and is associated with light mood, cheer or celebration. It is often tinted with warm colours such as orange and yellow (sunshine colours).  |  |  |
| **Low Key Lighting** | The use of diffused shadows and atmospheric pools of light. Usually there is a strong contrast between light and dark areas of the shot. Low key lighting is usually used in scenes that are frightening, suspenseful, or gloomy; it is often tinted with cool colours such as blue and purple.  |  |  |
| **Backlighting** | Backlighting is the illumination of a figure from behind. The result of backlighting is usually a figure in silhouette. Backlighting can be used in both bright and dim scenes, depending on the intended effect.  |  |  |
| **Over-Exposure** | Low contrast lighting where the frame is flooded with an excessive amount of light, often to the point of being washed out. It can be used in dream sequences or in point of view shots where a character emerges from a dark area into a bright place.  |  |  |

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| **OTHER SHOTS***Special filming or editing techniques* |
| **Cinematic Device** | **Definition** | **Meaningful example from film**(briefly describe scene) | **What does this reveal?**(Character, mood, setting, etc.) |
| **Panning** | The horizontal movement of the camera side to side to follow the action in a scene. Panning is often used to establish setting for the audience, but it can also be used as part of a point of view shot to indicate a character scanning an area for something/someone. |  |  |
| **Tilt/ Boom** | \*Tilt: The vertical movement of the camera up and down from a fixed base. \*Boom: The vertical movement of the camera up and down through space.Vertical movement can be used to establish setting by showing the height of something, and it can also build character by showing the height of someone. |  |  |
| **Montage** | Related shots spliced together to create relatively quick changes of action that suggest time passing or that describe unified events. The shots in a montage are often “held together” by an audio track that plays across the duration of the montage.  |  |  |