

Activity 2 - Visual Storytelling Pt 1

Skill Level - Beginner

To complete this activity you will need;

- A pen or a pencil

Visual storytelling put simply, is the use of imagery to tell a story. Film and photography use this language but other artforms also use it eg. drawing & painting.

The language of film:

Unlike a book it is impossible to describe thoughts and feelings in film. Dialog is one form of communication however other things are also said without the use of words. This is called 'Non-verbal communication' and there are many aspects to it. Body language' is arguably the most easy to understand, however a filmmaker can also use camera shots, props, lighting and set design to tell a story without words.

**CHALLENGE**

Can you think of any other artform that uses Visual Storytelling?

Can you explain the meaning of 'A picture speaks a thousand words'?

Take a look at the image above . . . what do you think the girl is thinking?

Activity 2 - Visual Storytelling Pt 2

What is "Cinematography"?

Cinematography is an art form that focuses on the art of making moving images (film) by bringing several different skills together, including, Composition, Framing, Camera Movement and Lighting.



Scene Composition/Mise-en Scene:

The term "Mise-en Scene" literally translates to "Placing on stage" and just means where things/characters are in relation to each other. We use it when talking about setting/location.



The best way to understand Mise-en Scene is to think about a particular location in a film, let's use a supermarket as an example; how do we know that we're in a supermarket?

CHALLENGE

List some of the objects that would tell you that our scene takes place in a supermarket.

E.g. Cash register/Checkouts:

Think of your own setting for a film and write it here: _____

List some of the objects or things that would tell us where your film is set: _____

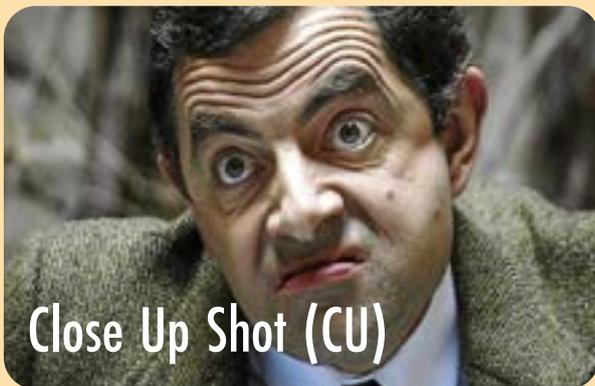
Activity 2 - Visual Storytelling Pt 3

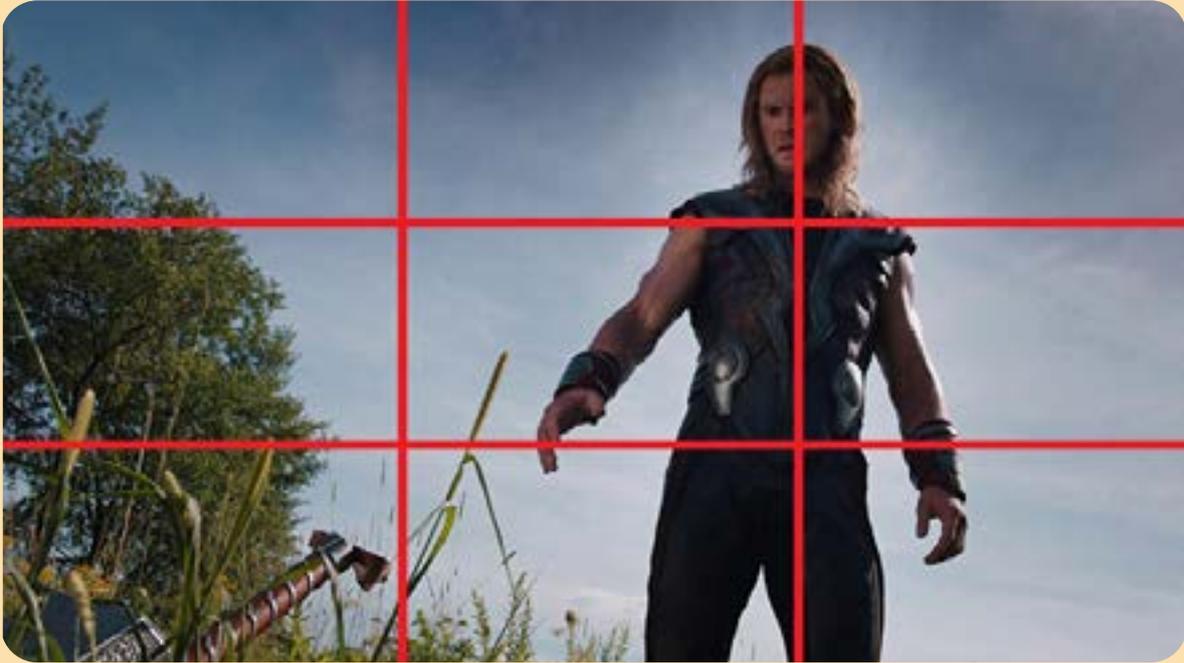
Skill Level - Beginner

What is a camera shot?

A Camera Shot is a filmmaking term used to describe the specific placement of people and objects within a frame. A filmmaker will select each shot type based on what is being said in the script. One example would be to use a close up shot for emotional scenes where the audience needs to see an actors facial expressions and eyes.

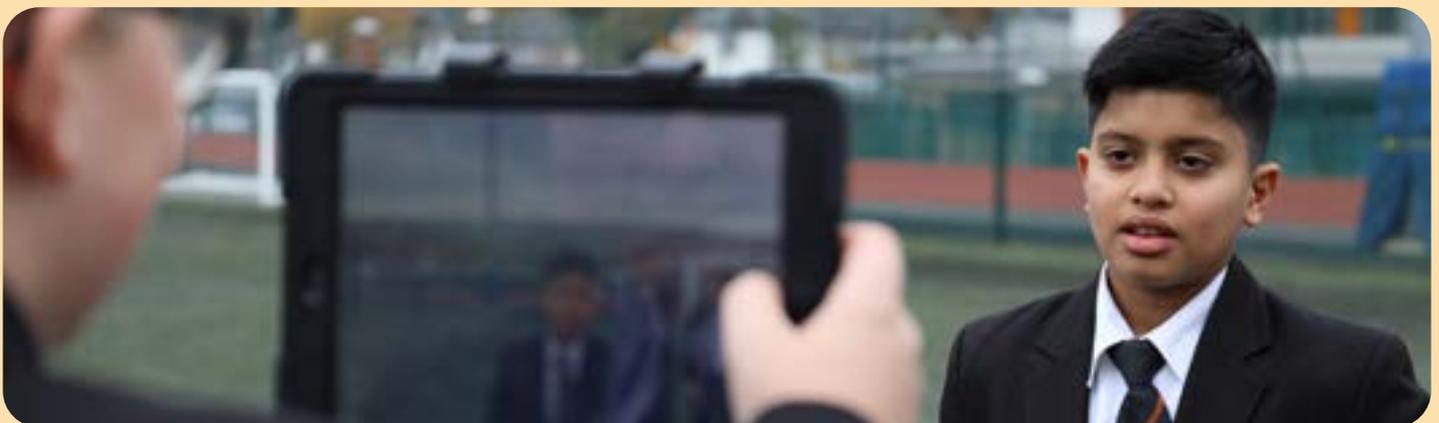
The six most basic shot types used are;



Activity 2 - Visual Storytelling Pt 4**Skill Level - Intermediate****Framing/Shot composition:**

Look at the image, this grid represents "The rule of Thirds" which helps us to produce interesting, engaging and beautiful images whilst also helping tell our story visually.

This works on a psychological level and is often used to make us the viewers feel a certain way about a character. We can make a character look alone, weak or vulnerable by placing them in the middle rectangle ("Centre frame") of a wide shot. This could be important for the story and could help to tell us that this is the lowest point for the character.

**Camera angles:**

When we use the term "Camera angle" we are referring to position of the camera in relation to the subject (the thing or person we want to see).

Activity 2 - Visual Storytelling Pt 4

If the camera is low to the ground, looking up at a character or object it will feel like they are big and powerful (Low angle shot).

If a camera is up high looking down at a person or object, they would look small and weak (High angle shot).



**Basic
Camera
Techniques**

We can also move the camera to help tell our story. If you stand still on one spot, hold your camera in front of you and turn on the spot from left to right or right to left, this is called a pan or a panning shot. This can be used to follow someone as they move from one place to another.

Stand in one spot and hold your camera in front of your face looking upwards, slowly begin to bring the camera down back to eye level and then down towards the floor. This is called a tilt or a tilting shot and is useful when you want to reveal something to the audience or to help start a new scene.

Why might it be useful to be able to direct where the audience/viewer is looking?

CHALLENGE

Using the Storyboard template on the following page, come up with a short story idea which can be told in 6 shots. Use at least 4 of the different shot types we looked at earlier to tell your story. Keep in mind what each shot size could be used to tell the audience about your story, character(s) or location. Remember to frame characters and objects in your shots.

6 Box Storyboard Template

Film Title:



Action: _____

Dialog: _____



Action: _____

Dialog: _____



Action: _____

Dialog: _____



Action: _____

Dialog: _____



Action: _____

Dialog: _____



Action: _____

Dialog: _____