Code & Conventions

CONTENTS

FROM THE STUDY DESIGN

Media Codes

Technical, written and symbolic tools used to construct or suggest meaning in media forms and products. Media codes include the use of camera, acting, setting, mise en scene, editing, lighting, sound, special effects, typography, colour, visual composition, text and graphics.

Media Conventions

Rules or generally accepted ways of constructing form and informing meaning in media products including story principles, form and structure, generic structures, character and story arcs, cause and effect, point of view, the structuring of time, elements of page layout, paper stock for print, titles and credits sequences, hyperlinking and mounting and framing of images.

Code & Conventions of Moving Image

Visual elements
Costume, camera angle and or position, framing, lighting, location, setting, visual composition

Audio elements
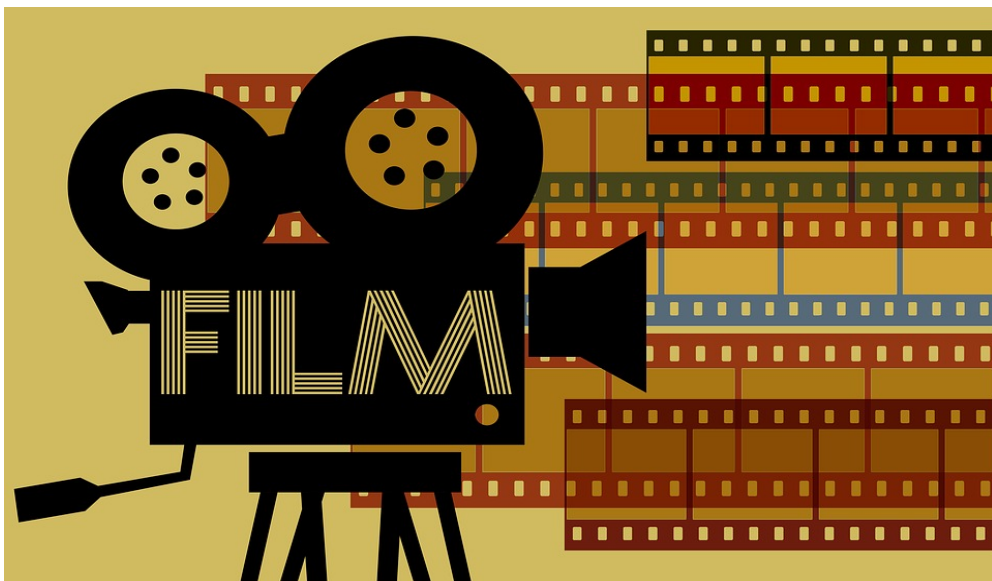Music, sound effects, dialogue, jingles, catch phrases

Technical elements
Acting, lighting, editing, colour grading

Written elements
Adjectives, headlines, subtitles

Code & Conventions to Print

- **Layout – White space / Negative space**
- **Colour**
- **Images - Size & Position**
- **Text - Typography**
- **Composition & Layout**
- **Paper stock**
- **Framing**
- **Distribution**
- **Readership**

Code Conventions of Advertising

Symbolic Codes

Mise En Scene, props, settings, costumes and colors. These codes help symbolize the meaning of something, for example if you see a very well dressed man in an elite sports car in an exotic location the audience would automatically think that he is successful and link the product with success.

Written Codes

Headlines, captions, speech bubbles, language style

Technical Codes

Camera techniques, framing, depth of field, lighting, exposure, sound and editing. These codes include camera angles, shots, lighting, editing and sound. Camera, position, angles and shots are can be used to show different perspectives. The lighting can be used to create an atmosphere and/or mood. Sound can be used for dialogue, as a voice over to speak about the product is or music also to create mood

Code Conventions of Storytelling

- **Opening Development & Closure**
- **Multiple Storylines**
- **Narrative Possibilities**
- **Character Development**
- **Cause & Effect**
- **Setting**
- **Structuring of Time**
- **Point Of View**

HOW STORYTELLING AFFECTS THE BRAIN

NEURAL COUPLING
A story activates parts in the brain that allows the listener to turn the story in to their own ideas and experience thanks to a process called neural coupling.

MIRRORING
Listeners will not only experience the similar brain activity to each other, but also to the speaker.

DOPAMINE
The brain releases dopamine into the system when it experiences an emotionally-charged event, making it easier to remember and with greater accuracy.

CORTEX ACTIVITY
When processing facts, two areas of the brain are activated (Broca's and Wernicke's area). A well-told story can engage many additional areas, including the motor cortex, sensory cortex and frontal cortex.

MEDIA CODES

Camera

Acting

Setting

Mise En Scene

Editing

Lighting

Sound

Special effects

Typography

Colour

Visual composition

Text and graphics

MEDIA CONVENTIONS

Story principles
Form and structure
Generic structures
Character and Story Arcs
Cause and effect
Point of view
The Structuring of Time
Elements of page layout
Paper stock for print
Titles and Credits Sequences
Hyperlinking and Mounting
Framing of Images

MEDIA CODES

Media codes are the physical elements that the audience experiences, which bring the narrative conventions to the media form.

CAMERA

Camera- Techniques & qualities including shot selection, movement & focus.

The way the camera moves, pans, the angle and the framing helps tell the story. It can provide an insight to the characters and their lives, place importance on or emphasise certain objects, events and actions, help set the mood of a scene and/or provide a point of view.

ANGLE
The angle of the camera is the angle from which the image is viewed. The straight on angle is the most common. The camera angle can have a major impact of how the audience will perceive a character, object or place. The high angle positions the audience looking down and the low angle positions the audience looking up. Low camera angles will often emphasise height or power, making a character look large and domineering. A high angle will often make character or object appear small and vulnerable.

Camera angles can also identify a character's **point of view** (not to be confused with point of view from which the narrative is presented) by taking a position that corresponds to that which we imagine that the character's sight line would occupy. We see what the character would be seeing. This can be very effective in enhancing audience identification with character's experiences.

MOVEMENT
How the camera moves will reveal information the audience. Panning from left to right or vice versa can be used to follow action, an actor's sight line or reveal something of significance to the audience. The speed of the pan can have a dramatic effect, fast (zip pan); to indicate quick paced action while slow can indicate the opposite. **Panning** the camera can also be used for point of view of a character as it can imitate the movement of the spectator's eye as they survey the scene around them. If the camera is mounted on a **crane** the audience is able to zoom in at odd angles to gain a better look at characters, objects or places. They will feel as if they have a bird's eye or intimate view of the action. Also if the camera is on **tracks** or **dolly** it is able to follow the action and further engage the audience by enabling them to move with the characters and the action.

DISTANCE/PLACEMENT
The distance of the camera in the scene will dictate to the audience how involved they will become with the characters or settings. In general the closer the camera is to the subject the more importance and attention that the subject is given. For example in a romantic scene the most logical place for the camera is close to the lovers so that the audience can experience the intimacy of the moment. If it was presented only in a long shot the audience would be distanced and wonder why it was shot in this manner. The height and the distance of the camera from the subject can also have an effect on the meaning of a shot.

SHOT SELECTION
Extreme close-up – can be described as a very tight shot. It is a very dramatic shot that can be used to draw attention to fine detail or places importance to the detail it captures.
Close-up – a close-up is not as tight as an extreme close-up but there is still very little background shown in the shot.
Medium shot – more than one object or subject can be show in a medium shot. Actors are captured from the waist up and this shot is commonly used when there are two actors in the shot.
Medium long shot – in this shot the subject in the foreground is equally balanced with the background.
Long shot – this allows the subject to still be prominent although the background dominates the scene.

HEIGHT
The height of the camera can give the audience a varied perspective. This is not referring to angle, for the angle in this type of shot is usually straight on.

LENS/FOCUS
Alterations in focus can have a signifying effect. Most films use a deep depth of field in which both the foreground and backgrounds are in sharp focus. Hard focus invokes a very real and sharp image while soft focus provides a dreamlike or romantic effect. This could be used for close ups or big close ups to provide a more flattering image of the actor. It will also suggest romance and mystery to the audience.

Establishing | Wide | Medium | Close Up
Medium | Cut Away | High Angle | Low Angle
Extreme Close Up | Two Shot | Worm's Eye View | Bird's Eye View
Over The Shoulder | Reverse Shot | Perspective | Point of View

CAMERA ANGLES

BIRDS EYE / AERIAL | OVERHEAD | HIGH ANGLE
EYE LEVEL | POV | LOW ANGLE | WORMS EYE
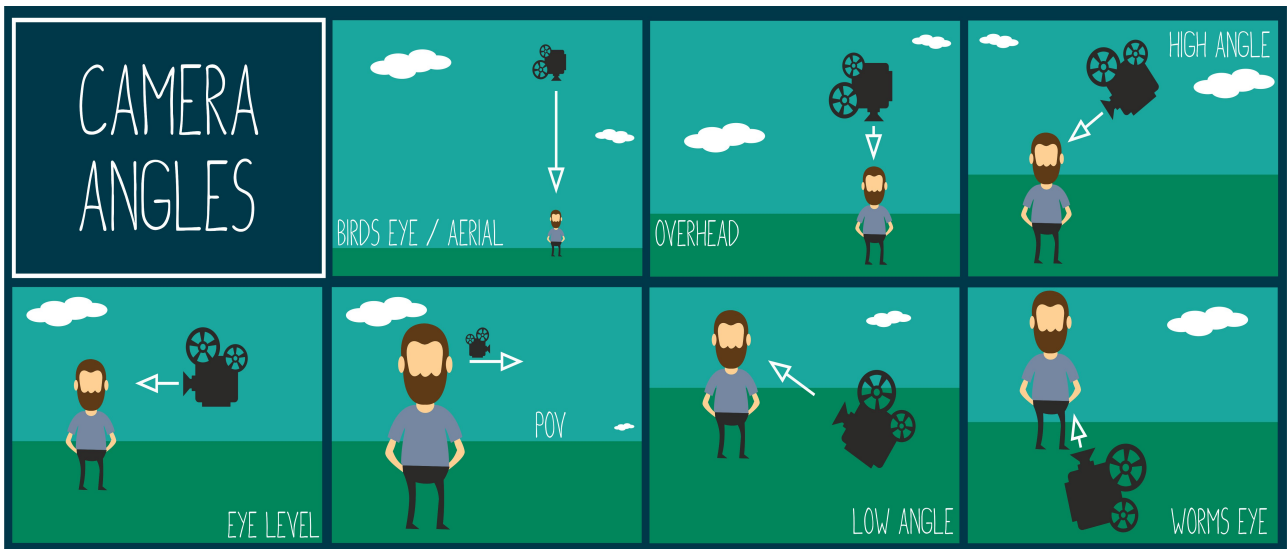
ACTING

Acting is the most obvious production element to observe and analyse when watching a moving image. An actor's **performance** in a film consists of **visual** elements (appearance, gestures, facial expression) and **sound** (voice and effects). The character the actor creates is essential to the narrative of the film.

Acting can be broken up into the following discussion points:
- Body language
- Tone of voice / Accent / Pace of speech
- Facial expression
- Any distinctive common movement by the character
- Stance / Walk / Movement

It is important to note that Character & Acting are two different elements when looking at narrative. The actor or actress is playing a character.

When analysing narrative for media it is crucial you write the Actor or Actress's real name. For example, 'Clint Eastwood' not Dirty Harry.

Films may contain a wide variety of acting **styles**. In a **stylised** film a **realistic** performance would seem out of place in the film's context and vice versa. If the actor looks and behaves in a way that is expected to their character's function in the film then the actor has given a good performance whether or not they have behaved as a real person.

An actor's performance can be analysed by the manner in which they use their voice, body and face. Other factors to consider are the reasons they may have been cast, attributes like physical appearance, acting skill and reputation can all play a role in this. When discussing an actor's performance it is important to make reference to correct acting terminology.

Casting is important in a film. The use of a star can have an influence on audience expectation. Stars are often watched for their own sake rather than for their representation of a scripted character. However there are actors who are stars but their trademark is a strong ability in characterisation. **Previous roles/experience** may also have an influence on why an actor is cast in a film. The **physical appearance** of the actor is also a significant aspect of acting, whether the actor is physically suitable in the role is just as essential as their acting ability. Is their voice, face or body suitable for the role? What is their prior work and does this have an influence on their casting? Are they renowned for playing particular types of characters?

Acting Terms

Style

Acting can be broken into three main styles:

Classical

Naturalistic

Stylised

Contemporary films employ naturalistic acting that is far more subtle and realistic. This style appears natural and doesn't draw attention to itself. This is often referred to as Method acting where actors try to create in themselves the thoughts and emotions of their characters in an effort to develop lifelike performances.

Stylised acting is when an actor deliberately exaggerates their acting style. They are not performing in a way that is natural.

Performance - Use of Voice

- **Volume – loud/soft**
  Loud – Forceful, overbearing, shrill
  Soft - gentle, quiet, faint, muted, low, hushed

- **Speed fast/slow –**
  Slow - lingers on certain words, spoke in a careful/deliberate manner
  Fast **-** spoke in a rushed/manic manner

- **Tone of voice**
  Disturbing, chilling, intimidating, shaky, agitated, shrill, condescending, Calm, unruffled, serene, composed, self-assured, relaxed, refined
  Meek, childish, shy, whiny, emotional
  Collected, self-possessed, cool, calm and collected, self-possessed, relaxed, sympathetic

- **Use of Facial expressions**
  Gentle, eyes, evil eyes, wide eyed, sullen mouth, aggravated expression, grimace, wide smile, pained

- **Use of Gestures/Body language/mannerisms**
  Casual, tense, agitated, anxious, calm, cool, fidgeted, robotic, rigid, straight, slumped, relaxed

SETTING

The time (time period) and place in which the film's story occurs, including all of the other additional factors, including climate (season), landscape, people, social structures and economic factors, customs, moral attitudes, and codes of behaviour.

Setting is a vital part of the story telling within the narrative. It provides answers and understanding to the audience. How a Director reveals the setting is crucial when discussing this story element. For example; Is there a train station on screen revealing the name of the city. Or does the Director choose to shoot the opening scene in a bustling, cold, windy, Manhattan city street in peak hour. Providing evidence to the audience that this film text will be set in New York in Winter.

The media language to include when discussing setting are as follows:
- Time period
- Location
- Climate / Season
- Landscape / City / Country / Sea / Land / Desert
- Culture / People
- Social and Economical status
- Moral attitudes or codes of behaviour

MISE-EN-SCENE

Mise En Scene refers to the composition of everything visually within the physical boundaries of the shot / frame. The way in which figures and elements are moved around within a frame can provide many effects. *Mise-en-scène* also includes the positioning and movement of actors on the set, which is called blocking. Mise En scene can also be described as a look or style of a film (for example gothic), a mood or atmosphere in a whole film or an individual scene (for example a threatening feeling).

Mise en scene refers to the visual elements in a frame including:

Set design

The look and the feel of the set can help establish audience expectations about the film. Set design is the setting of a scene, the objects (props) and the decor. Props are often to use to provide clues to the audience about characters and storylines. Sometimes props reappear from scene to scene reminding the audience of it significance. Sometimes these props can become motifs in the narrative.
Set design can be used to amplify character emotion or the dominant mood of a film, or to establish aspects of the character.

Lighting

The intensity, direction, and quality of lighting have a major effect on the way an image is perceived, including mood, time of day or night, season or atmosphere.

Space & Shot Selection

The representation of space affects the reading of a film. When a character fills a frame the audience can usually be assured that they are a major character central or important to the narrative. Equal space given to two actors within a frame would indicate equal importance in the scene to these characters. Cramming the frame can have a claustrophobic effect

Costume & Make-Up

Costume simply refers to the clothes that characters wear. Using certain colors or designs, costumes in narrative cinema is used to signify characters or to make clear distinctions between characters. Costume often gives important information about characters, including their background, profession, attitudes, personalities, their state of mind or their role in the narrative. For example black or dark clothing often suggest evil (antagonist) while white or light clothing suggests goodness (protagonist). Change in costume can represent an evolution of a character.

EDITING

Editing creates the illusion that a film is unfolding naturally, without the intervention of the film-maker. Good editing is invisible with seamless connecting shots that create the illusion of continuity of time and space. There are numerous editing techniques:

Cut – where one shot is cut to the next. Sudden cuts can produce surprise, horror, and disruption.

Fade - where the image disappears into black and generally represents a brief lapse of time

Dissolve - where a fade coincides with the gradual superimposition of a new image and generally represents a longer lapse of time

Wipe - where one image replaces another proceeded by a divisional line moving across the screen

The fade, dissolve and wipe can be used to indicate the passing or expansion of time. The longer the edit techniques are can indicate more or less time passed.

Shot-reverse shot – is used to represent a conversation. The characters speak to each other appearing on opposite sides of successive frames, each looking in the direction of the other. This is shot over a continuous sound track and edited together.

Graphic match – shots are edited together in relation to how they visually correspond with each other. **Visual relationships** are significant but **visual/aural relationships** in editing are also very important this includes the overlapping sound from one shot to the next with an image depicting the dialogue spoken.

Crosscutting – is cutting back and forth between scenes linking stories or events together or indicating events happening simultaneously.

Timing - can be used to enhance the energy of the action, or to slow it down. Action sequences can take on greater drama if cuts occur within moments of high action. For example if a car is about to crash, the viewer may see several successive and separate views of the same moment. A cut in a moment of relative steadiness can slow down action. A character deep in thought may be shot from several positions in order to expand the moment and instill significance into it.

R**hythm** of editing is important. Many films have a rhythm throughout their duration. The pacing and rhythm of the editing can dramatically affect single scenes. Editing can increase or decrease the pace of the film. **Quick edits** is editing brief shots together before cutting to the next shot while **slow edits** allow shots to continue for a long time before the cut to the next shot.

The filmmaker may choose to construct a steady rhythm by making all the shots approximately the same length. An accelerating rhythm may arise from successively shorter shots; a spasmodic, irregular rhythm may be produced by a combination of shots of widely different lengths.

LIGHTING

Lighting can define the space within a frame, separate foreground from background, create textures, mold and shape, reveal or conceal. Lighting can be **expressive** – setting a mood or a look in a film. An entire film can be lit in an expressive way. Thrillers or Film Noir is often dark and gloomy with **low key** lighting.

Features of lighting:

- Intensity
- Source
- Direction
- Colour

The **colour** of lighting can determine the mood of a scene. Red light can emphasise danger or warmth; blue light can emphasise mystery or coolness.

The **intensity** is how bright the light and how much of it is directed on a specific area, character or object. **Low key** lighting exploits shadows creating a sense of threat or suggests romance, mystery or danger. For example if a face is only partly lit with a shaft of light reflecting from the eye the effect is sinister. **High key** is lighting that is bright and can suggest happiness or be reassuring to audiences that all is well. Low key lighting is usually expressive while high key lighting is realistic.

Lighting can be used to emphasise particular elements, objects characters or actions within a frame. **Framing** with light can draw the audience's attention to one feature while obscuring others.

The **texture** of light refers to how hard or soft the light is. Hard light creates clearly defined shadows and crisp textures and edges. Soft light creates diffused illumination, blurs contours and gentler contrasts between light and shade.

The **direction** of light can have an impact on a scene. For example back lighting from behind an object or character creates a silhouette so the audience can only see the outline of an object or character or under lighting where the light is positioned below the object or character both these can produce an ominous effect.

Three-point lighting

In standard three-point lighting there are three main positions for the lights:

- Key light – the hardest and brightest, focused to one side of subject
- Fill light – softer, more diffuse light that is placed to the other side
- Backlight – placed behind the subject

Day for night

A lighting technique that involves shooting in the daytime to make it look like moon light night.

SOUND

Sound falls into three categories:
Dialogue
Music
Sound effects

Sound is important in a film's narrative; it can provide powerful emotional accompaniment to a film's high points; it enhances realism by reproducing the sounds one would associate with the actions and events depicted visually, draw attention to a particular aspect of a shot, enhances audience expectations of what might occur and sound can be used as a transitional device in editing with dialogue, music or sound effects carrying over from one scene to the next.

In the moving image sound can come from only on of two sources. Either it comes from inside the story or it is happening outside the story:
Diegetic sound – Sound from within the story is called diegetic sound because it happens within the diegesis (the world of the story). This means that the characters and the audience must be able to hear the sound. Usually the audience can see the source of the sound. Diegetic sound comes from the on-screen action that we observe and that the characters participate in.

Nondiegetic sound – does not emanate from the story space. This is sound that is imported to the on-screen action. Non-diegetic sound may contribute to the story or it may build atmosphere or enhance the emotional power of the scene, but its source isn't seen on screen. ***If the characters can't hear it, it is non-diegetic. Voice-overs and narration are non-diegetic sound.***

MUSIC
Music in films is usually non-realistic and the audience rarely sees its source in the frame. It is used to amplify the mood or atmosphere and conveys the emotional significance of a scene. Reference can be made to its:
tempo/beat - how fast or slow the music is
style – classical, rock, jazz
volume – how loud or soft the music is or whether the volume changes. For example when dramatic events occurs the volume of the music may increase.

Adjectives to describe music:
- Gripping
- Riveting
- Thrilling
- Suspenseful
- Mesmerizing
- Spellbinding
- Enchanting

DIALOGUE
Through dialogue important information can be revealed about the storylines and/or characters. Often a significant line of dialogue in the text can convey important information about the narrative. It can provide a prediction of what may occur, help identify themes and assist in establishing or explaining a characters motivations or actions.

Narration
Conventionally the narrator of a film is usually the protagonist also audiences have the tendency to believe that if a character narrates a film then the narrative is from that character's point of view.

SOUND EFFECTS
Sounds are added to improve the realism or impact of a scene or event.

FOLEY
Any kind of natural sound caused by movement or nature, which can be recorded in a studio. Any other sounds of this nature EG; the sound of engine of a car, which can not be recorded in a studio are called sound effects. These are also added to the soundtrack.

SCORE
The musical component of a movie's soundtrack, usually composed specifically for the film by a film **composer**; the background music in a film, usually specially composed for the film; may be orchestral, synthesized, or performed by a small group of musicians; also refers to the act of writing music for a film

Also particular soundtrack has the ability to convey the emotional significance of a scene by helping the audience to identify with the character's emotions. Music can 'feel' for the audience by indicating when a powerful moment is occurring.

Music can be used ironically by deliberately accompanying an image inappropriately. For example a happy, upbeat song contrasted with a violent event to make the violence seem more perverse.
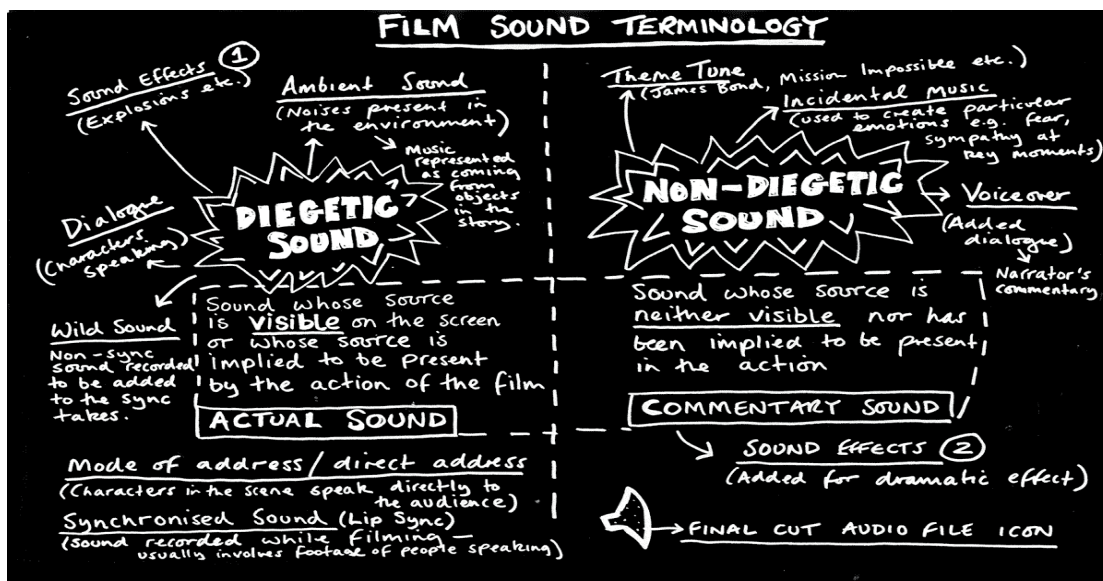
SPECIAL EFFECTS

Special effects (often abbreviated as **SFX**, **SPFX**, or simply **FX**) are illusions or visual tricks used in the film, television, theatre, video game and simulator industries to simulate the imagined events in a story or virtual world.

Special effects are traditionally divided into the categories of **optical effects** and **mechanical effects**. With the emergence of digital film-making a distinction between special effects and visual effects has grown, with the latter referring to digital post-production while "special effects" referring to mechanical and optical effects.

Mechanical effects (also called practical or physical effects) are usually accomplished during the live-action shooting. This includes the use of mechanized props, scenery, scalemodels, animatronics, pyrotechnics and atmospheric effects: creating physical wind, rain, fog, snow, clouds, making a car appear to drive by itself and blowing up a building, etc. Mechanical effects are also often incorporated into set design and makeup. For example, a set may be built with break-away doors or walls to enhance a fight scene, or prosthetic makeup can be used to make an actor look like a non-human creature.

Optical effects (also called photographic effects) are techniques in which images or film frames are created photographically, either "in-camera" using multiple exposure, mattes or the Schüfftan process or in post-production using an optical printer. An optical effect might be used to place actors or sets against a different background.

Since the 1990s, computer-generated imagery (CGI) has come to the forefront of special effects technologies. It gives filmmakers greater control, and allows many effects to be accomplished more safely and convincingly and—as technology improves—at lower costs. As a result, many optical and mechanical effects techniques have been superseded by CGI.
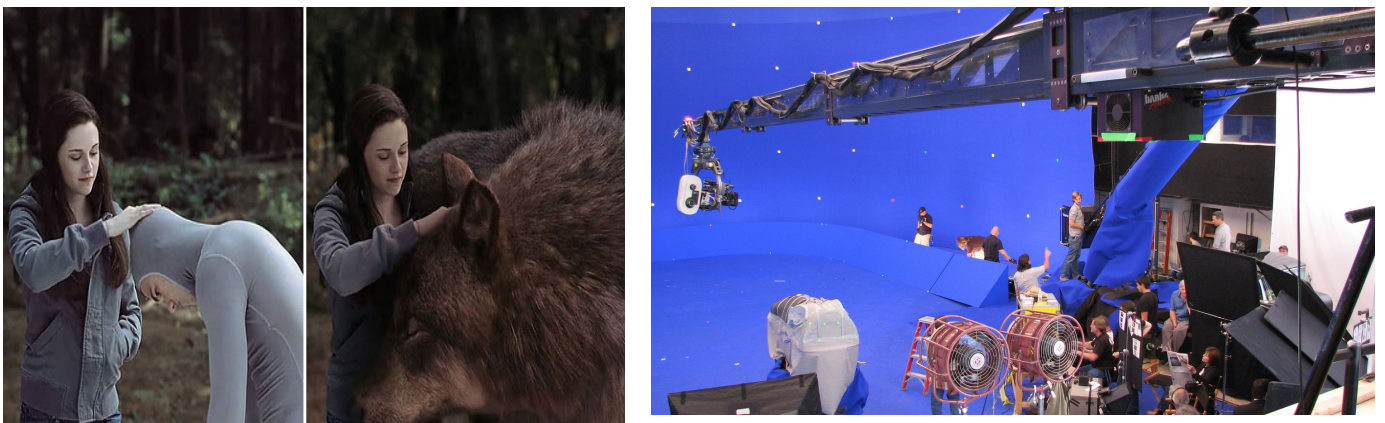
TYPOGRAPHY

An important design convention of print is typographical style. Typefaces communicate a variety of meaning for the audience. Typography organises text and creates meaning. It does this through hierarchy, the use of fonts to emphasise some content over others. Hierarchy helps readers scan a document and understand the relationship between different sections.

The best typography is aesthetically pleasing, invites readers into a publication and encourages them to continue reading while not drawing attention to it-self. (Nelson Media, Jo Flack)

It is important when exploring your concepts and ideas for your media products that you investigate the typography selected by the creator and understand what meaning you are receiving by the choice of typeface.

Print production terms:
Serif: a slight projection or decorative flourish finishing of a letter in certain typefaces.
Sans Serif: Typefaces without serifs.
Copy: The written material that will appear on your print product.
Typesetting: The process of arranging and laying out copy.

The first sans serif typestyle appeared in an 1816 specimen book of the English type founder William Caslon IV. The most obvious characteristic of these styles is, as the name implies, the absence of serifs. In many sans serif typefaces strokes are uniform, with little or no contrast between thick and thin strokes. Stress is almost always vertical. Many sans serif typefaces are geometric in their construction; others combine both organic and geometric qualities **Sans Serif**

During the 1700s, typestyles gradually evolved from the Old Style to Modern. Typefaces from the middle of the eighteenth century, including those by John Baskerville, are called **Transitional** Transitional. The contrast between thick and thin strokes is greater than in Old Style faces. Lowercase serifs are more horizontal, and the stress within the rounded forms shift to a less diagonal axis. Transitional characters are usually wider than Old Style characters.

In 1815, the English type founder Vincent Figgins introduced slab-serif typestyles under the name Antique. At the time, there was a mania for ancient Egyptian artifacts, and other type founders adopted **Egyptian** the name Egyptian for their slab- serif designs. These typestyles have heavy squareor rectangular serifs that are usually unbracketed. The stress of curved strokes is often minimal. In some slab-serif typefaces, all strokes are the same weight.

arm
crotch
counter
bowl
crossbar
shoulder
hairline
Cap Height
X-Height
Meanline
Baseline
serif
spur
stem
stress
terminal
descender

Late in the 1700s, typefaces termed Modern evolved from Transitional styles. These typefaces have extreme contrasts between thick and thin strokes. Thin strokes are reduced to hairlines. The weight stress of rounded character is vertical. Serifs are horizontal hairlines that join the stems at a right angle without bracketing. The uppercase width is regularized: wide letters such as M and W are condensed and other letters, including P and T, are expanded. Modern-style typefaces have a strong geometric quality projected by rigorous horizontal, vertical and circular forms. **Modern**

Old Style Type began with designs of the punch cutter Francesco Griffo, who worked for the famous Venetian scholar printer, Aldus Manutius during the 1490s. Griffo's designs evolved from earlier **Old Style** Italian type designs. His Old Style capitals were influenced by curved Roman capitals; lowercase letters were inspired by fifteenth-century humanistic writing styles, based on the earlier Carolingian minuscule. Old Style letterforms have the weight stress of rounded forms at an angle, as in handwriting. The serifs are bracketed (that is, unified with the stroke by a tapered, curved line). Also, the top serifs on the lowercase letters are at an angle.

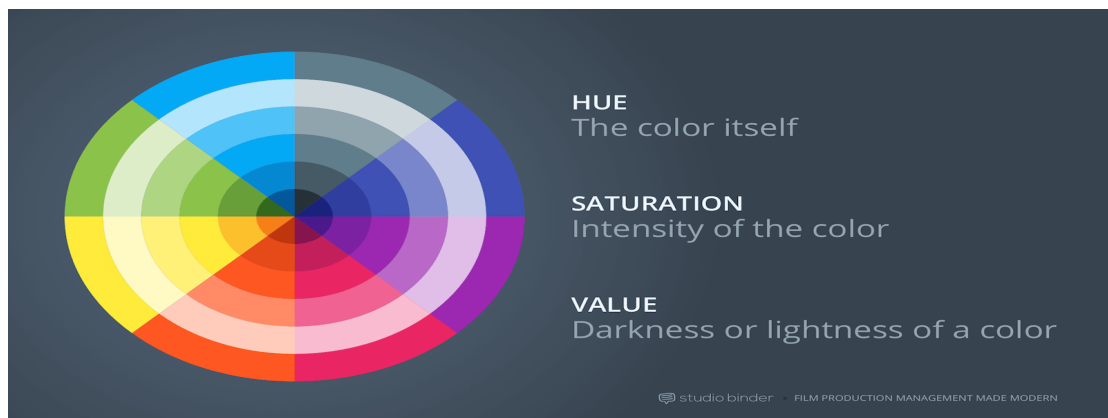Italic letterforms slant to the right. Today, we use them primarily for emphasis and differentiation. When the first italic appeared in the it was used as an independent typestyle. The first italic characters were close-set and condensed; *Italics* therefore, Manutius was able to get more words on each line. Some italic styles are based on handwriting with connected strokes and are called scripts.

COLOUR

Colour has a huge impact psychologically on audience both in print and the moving image. This media code is often referred to as the explicit convention when reading any media publication or watching a media text. Colour is often an element that a creator will rely on to convey ideological meaning for the audience.

Colour grading as an editing technique has a psychological effect on an audience's reading of a narrative. By manipulating colour, the creator suggests a preferred reading of the text. For example; Golden tones of Westerns and Grey wash tones for colder environments and large cities.

In film colour is used to set the tone of the scene before any of the actors have even muttered a word of dialogue. Red denotes passion, power, love and danger. Pink signifies femininity, innocence, and beauty. Yellow is associated with joy, naivety, and insanity. Blue symbolises isolation and calmness.

HUE
The color itself

SATURATION
Intensity of the color

VALUE
Darkness or lightness of a color

studio binder · FILM PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT MADE MODERN

PHYCHOLOGICAL THINKING

EXCITEMENT PASSION

ENERGY ACTIVE

OPTIMISM CHEER

NATURE HEALING

TECHNOLOGY TRUST

CREATIVE INDIVIDUALITY

HAPPINESS ROMANCE

LUXURY SOPHISTICATION

By understanding color psychology you can more effectively reflect the feelings you want to evoke from your website customers.

COLORS BRING
Emotion

BLUE
+ TRANQUILITY, SECURITY, INTEGRITY, PEACE, LOYALTY, TRUST, INTELLIGENCE

− COLDNESS, FEAR, MASCULINITY

TURQUOISE
+ SPIRITUAL, HEALING, PROTECTION, SOPHISTICATED

− ENVY, FEMININITY

GREEN
+ FRESHNESS, ENVIRONMENT, NEW, MONEY, FERTILITY, HEALING, EARTH

− ENVY, JEALOUSY, GUILT

YELLOW
+ BRIGHT, SUNNY, ENERGETIC, WARM, HAPPY, PERKY, JOY, INTELLECT

− IRRESPONSIBLE, UNSTABLE

PURPLE
+ ROYALTY, NOBILITY, SPIRITUALITY, LUXURY, AMBITION, WEALTH

− MYSTERY, MOODINESS

PINK
+ HEALTHY, HAPPY, FEMININE, SWEET, COMPASSION, PLAYFUL

− WEAK, FEMININITY, IMMATURITY

RED
+ LOVE, PASSION, ENERGY, POWER, STRENGTH, HEAT, DESIRE

− ANGER, DANGER, WARNING

ORANGE
+ COURAGE, CONFIDENCE, FRIENDLINESS, SUCCESS

− IGNORANCE, SLUGGISHNESS

BROWN
+ FRIENDLY, EARTH, OUTDOORS, LONGEVITY, CONSERVATIVE

− DOGMATIC, CONSERVATIVE

TAN
+ DEPENDABLE, FLEXIBLE, CRISP, CONSERVATIVE

− DULL, BORING, CONSERVATIVE

GOLD
+ WEALTH, WISDOM, PROSPERITY, VALUABLE, TRADITIONAL

− EGOTISTICAL, SELF-RIGHTEOUS

SILVER
+ GLAMOROUS, HIGH TECH, GRACEFUL, SLEEK

− INDECISIVE, DULL, NON-COMMITTAL

WHITE
+ GOODNESS, INNOCENCE, PURITY, FRESH, EASY, CLEAN

− ISOLATION, PRISTINE, EMPTINESS,

GRAY
+ SECURITY, RELIABILITY, INTELLIGENCE, SOLID

− GLOOMY, SAD, CONSERVATIVE

BLACK
+ PROTECTION, ELEGANCE, DRAMATIC, CLASSY, FORMALITY

− DEATH, EVIL, MYSTERY

CoSchedule

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VISUAL COMPOSITION

Visual composition specifically refers to the placement and relationship of all the elements within the shot. For instance, two characters within the same shot can be shown as being distant in their relationship with each other if there is a large space or object between them.

Alternatively two characters who are in close proximity can be shown to the audience as being in a relationship. Likewise a character can be represented as being powerful or authoritarian if they are sitting at an office desk.

Hierarchy between characters and objects is used to suggest various things. Some artists rely heavily on visual composition to please the audience and ensure they receive the hidden messages they intended.

The term composition means 'putting together' and can apply to any work of art from music to writing to photography that is arranged using conscious thought. In the visual arts, composition is often used interchangeably with various terms such as design, form, visual ordering, or formal structure, depending on the context. In graphic design for press and desktop publishing, composition is commonly referred to as page layout.

TEXT & GRAPHICS

Text and Graphics are essential for representation and narrative understanding. Typefaces are selected to ensure their typography is clean, consistent and easy to read.

We all know that an image is worth a thousand words. Graphics make impact instantly. It is the creators job to ensure that the appropriate images reinforce the appropriate message to the audience.

The masthead, or title of your publication, is probably the most distinctive and important element of your print publications cover. Magazines and Print publications will often experiment with font type, size and weight and space between the letters until they end up with something that is pleasing on the eye.

Things to discuss when referring to text and graphics:
- Styles
- Fonts
- Body Text
- Masthead
- Space
- Visual composition
- Colour
- Hierarchy

MEDIA CONVENTIONS

Narrative conventions are usually implied – that is, they exist in the minds of the audience rather than being explicitly seen in the narrative. They are how audience both constructs and makes sense of the narrative.

STORY PRINCIPLES

While the terms 'story' and 'plot' are often used interchangeably, it is important to consider the differences between them.

- The story includes all the events of the narrative – those made known to the audience, and those inferred but not necessarily revealed.
- The plot comprises only those events in a narrative text that are revealed to the audience, including any added non-diegetic material such as special effects.

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MULTIPLE STORYLINES

Most narratives comprise multiple storylines or story arcs. These storylines may run parallel to, comment on, or intersect with the main storyline. They are designed to add depth and colour to the narrative by complicating the lives of characters, adding to the range of narrative possibilities, illustrating a moral dilemma, providing a false lead, contrasting characters, situations or ideas or to provide relief to a distressing point.

Concurrent storylines - where storylines run parallel to each other
Interrelated or interconnected storylines – where story lines intersect or impact on each other

Events and conflicts in the story also motivate the storyline such as character actions and motivations.

THEMES

A theme is a values statement that motivates or shapes a narrative. Themes will often point to the ideology behind the text.

Creators will often use technical codes to convey the themes throughout the narrative. These codes are employed to reinforce themes within the narrative and help propel the plot. They also help the audience understand and connect with the genre of the text.

MOTIFS: These reoccurring events, sayings, objects, sounds are connected to themes and will be a good discussion point for all media students.

OPENING, DEVELOPMENT, CLOSURE

The opening provides the audience with a basis of things to come; it integrates them into the film. Causes of subsequent events, significant motifs, and important features of the initial plot are all laid out in the opening. The opening sets up a range of possibilities, raising the audience's expectations about what is to come.

Narrative possibilities and expectations are set up in the opening of a film and throughout the narrative; information is revealed and expanded upon. The audience expects a resolution usually at the end of a film so narrative possibilities need to be established in the opening and developed during the duration so that a conclusion can come to fruition at the end. Expectations need to be established so as the story unfolds and events occur the audience has an acceptance of what is occurring on screen and can make sense of them.

Characters, situations and settings are often introduced so the audience understands where, what and whom the narrative is about.

As the film progresses most narrative possibilities are developed and played out and by the time a film reaches its conclusion, very few narrative possibilities remain unresolved. The audience expects that the narrative possibilities and expectations that were established in the opening sequence and expanded on throughout the narrative will be resolved to some extent at the end of the film.

The ending will resolve the influence of cause and effect – the hero wins, the lovers are reunited, the bad guy is punished and everyone lives happily ever after.

Not all films have this sense of finality. Some endings may be ambiguous or open and the audience is left uncertain as to the nature of the final consequences. This is a tactic played out by particular Directors. It could also open up the idea of a sequel.

It is your job as the media student to ensure you discuss all three components of this story element. Where students let themselves down is only analyzing one or two parts to this element. Be mindful that each component has important narrative structures to play out for the audience.

FORM AND STRUCTURE

The structure of the Hollwood three-act narrative structure (Opening, Development & Resolution) is not always fixed. Regardless of how the narrative is teased out, there are some essential elements that ensure the audience can recognize and follow the action.
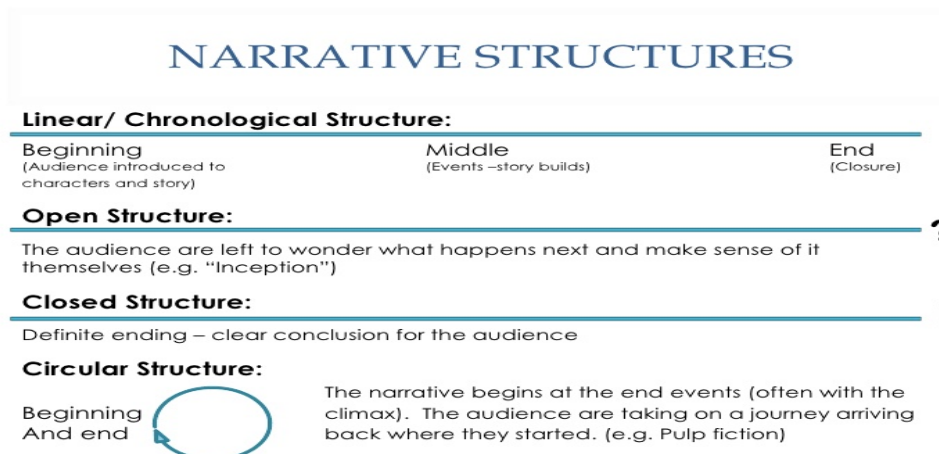
- STEP 1: Establish normal
- STEP 2: Disrupt normal
- STEP 3: Create turning points
- STEP 4: Develop the characters
- STEP 5: Restore normal

Audiences decode tests both logically and emotionally; both interact with each other. One person may laugh, while the other may cry to a particular scene. So regardless of the form and structure of the narrative, the audience can decode the messages vastly different and is sometimes out of the creator's hands.

The most common narrative form is the **linear narrative** in which the narrative runs chronologically. All the events occur in the order in which they happen. For example: Orientation – Complication & Conflict – Resolution.

Another popular structure if the **circular narrative**, where the action begins and ends at the same point or where plot points are repeated.

The structure of **flashback or flash-forward** is another structured technique employed by creators to reveal the narrative to the audience. This is often where the audience are presented with the resolution at the beginning of the text and then have to join the dots as to what unfolds through a sequence of flashbacks or flash-forwards.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

Linear/ Chronological Structure:

Beginning	Middle	End
(Audience introduced to characters and story)	(Events –story builds)	(Closure)

Open Structure:

The audience are left to wonder what happens next and make sense of it themselves (e.g. "Inception") **?**

Closed Structure:

Definite ending – clear conclusion for the audience **!**

Circular Structure:

Beginning And end   The narrative begins at the end events (often with the climax). The audience are taking on a journey arriving back where they started. (e.g. Pulp fiction)

CHARACTER

In narrative, a central character, known as the protagonist, will often drive the action forward. This will create engagement for the audience and help them understand the attitudes and behaviors of the leading characters. The creator will often place the antagonist in the way of the protagonist and prevent them from achieving their goals.

However, how these characters appear and how they are constructed and reveal themselves is essential to keeping the audience engaged in the plot. **There are four aspects to the study of character:**
- **Establishment**
- **Development**
- **Motivation**
- **Relationships**

Creators are well aware that audiences can make their mind up about characters in an instant. Directors select from a rich palette of techniques to establish each character. The opening of any narrative is critical in audiences forming opinions about each character.

Code and conventions such as setting, costume and props provide clues to the establishment of character. Dialogue, music and sound effects may also build understanding. Occasionally we hear a character before we see them. This narration or voice-over can help the audience frame an opinion about the character via tone of voice and what the dialogue says.

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Directors position audiences to relate to characters. The creators will expect the audience to have a pre-existing idea or feeling about each of their characters. This could be a reason as to why the actor/actress is cast for the role.
- How do they behave?
- What do they say?
- How do they appear?
- Why have they been included?
- How do they help propel the story?
- How does their relationship with other characters affect the narrative?
- What type of character are they how do they compare to or compliment the others?

Character development involves the interrelationship between location, story and characters. Character development and resolution are usually based around motivation and or portrayal of relationships between characters. This will often follow how audiences will like, dislike and then like a character as the narrative progresses.

Character & Ideology:

Character motivation is a good indicator of ideology. In mainstream texts, the protagonist is often motivated by the need to restore order and set the social values right, according to the society and its beliefs at the time the text was produced and distributed. Their motivation will often reflect the dominant ideology of the time and society.

Antagonist will often reflect the opposite belief and as a result the audience will seek revenge against the character and want them to be punished for their actions or have the character feel a sense of reflection for their attitudes and behaviors. Unless in the resolution the character has a change of heart and their evil turns to good.

Audiences can often predict character motivation, development and resolution. Creators will do this in family orientated texts. Audiences of this genre want happy endings and feel at peace with the conclusion of the narrative.

Relationships between characters are constructed to develop the narrative, building its sense of realism through dialogue and actions that represent how audiences expect characters to react to the narrative triggers introduced into the text.

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reedsy — 8 Exercises to Help You Nail Your Character

The evolution of Walter White

STORY ARC

The difference between STORY and PLOT:

While the terms story and plot are often used interchangeably, it is important to know the difference.
- The story includes all the events of the narrative – those made known to the audience, and those inferred but not necessarily revealed.
- The plot comprises only those events in a narrative text that are revealed to the audience, including any added non-diegetic material such as special effects.

Parts of a story arc are;

- Exposition
- Conflict
- Rising action
- Climax
- Falling action
- Resolution

Story arc is the term used to describe the introduction, development and resolution of a storyline that spans time throughout a text. The story arc will vary depending on the genre or style of the narrative. For example most romantic narratives will follow the story arc of – Success to Failure to overcome Triumph to Victory.

Try and consider the story arc of your media production and the narrative being conveyed to the audience. Consider how the arc helps the audience engage with the narrative.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows
by J.K. Rowling
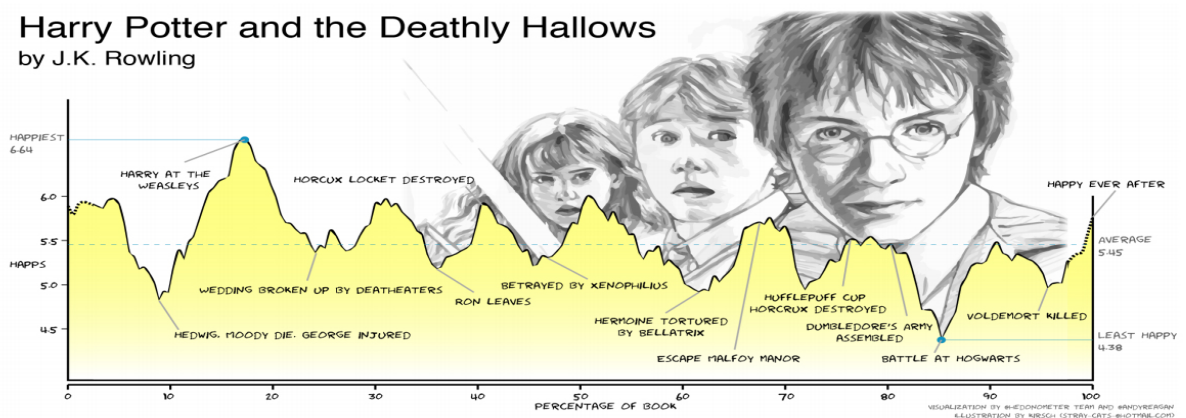
CAUSE & EFFECT

Cause and effect equal change. For every action there is a reaction. Events are motivated because there is a clear reason for the actions of the characters and the events in the film.

The cause effect relationship assists in engaging audiences as they will consider what happened previously in the narrative and then anticipate what effect that moment or event will have later on in the narrative.

Sometimes there are twists in a narrative where events occur without the audience expecting. At times a twist can be used to resolve a narrative or make the audience rethink what has occurred in the film.

CAUSE & EFFECT STORYLINES:
- Human mishap
- Illness and disability
- The search for love
- The achievement of a sporting goal or entertainment goal
- The impact of crime
- Good verses evil
- Coming of age
- The popular verses the misfits

Usually the characters are instrumental in cause and effect. If the characters didn't desire something to be different from the way it is at the start of the film, change wouldn't occur. The narrative is centered around and driven by character choices, decisions and traits. For example if one character had a goal then they need to act in a way to achieve that goal and as a result of this their actions affect other characters in the narrative. Characters can be motivated by, love, greed, revenge, power, wealth, self preservation

In most narratives a counterforce is provided to create conflict so that the protagonist can come up against a character whose goals are opposed to his or hers. As a result the protagonist is usually the one who must seek to change the situation so that they can achieve their ultimate goal, causing the plot to alter.

At the end of most films the causes are resolved with a final effect/s and equilibrium is restored. For example goals are achieved, the fates of the characters are determined, romances are consummated, the mystery is solved, conflicts are resolved the protagonist overcomes any obstacles facing them.

POINT OF VIEW

The term 'point of view' has two meanings; one applies to all narrative, the other is specific to film, TV and photographic narratives:

- The first relates to story and refers to the point of view from which the narrative is presented.
- The second is the production code and refers to a shot that is taken from a character's point of view. The shot is abbreviated to POV.

In most narratives, one character's point of view is privileged over others. More if often revealed to the audience through code and conventions such as narration, flashbacks, POV shots and acting. This character will usually have more on-screen time than the others.

Filmmakers can sometimes, manipulate point of view to add depth to the narrative.

Creators of media product can use point of view to express their opinions and values, constructing the narrative to reflect the ideology. Narratives may demonstrate political or social commentary on the dominant ideology of the time and place in which the media product was made and distributed.

THE STRUCTURING OF TIME

The order, duration and frequency of events are important in the narrative. It can be examined for its expansion and contraction of time. Narratives are often in **linear** (chronological) order as it makes the story easier to follow for the audience. This however is not always the case. Some narratives are **nonlinear** (non-chronological). They may begin at the end, as a flashback or jump around in time. These may also present later events first; only towards the end of the film does the audience discover that certain events came earlier and caused the ones they have already seen.

The structuring of narrative time is made up of a combination of three events:
- **Temporal order:** The order in which the story is screened, which may include chronological order, flashbacks and or flash forwards.
- **Temporal duration:** The manipulation of time from real time, the foreshortening or expansion of time through editing the duration of events on screen.
- **Temporal frequency:** The number of times an event or part of an event is shown to an audience.

There are quite a number of techniques used for representing the passing or manipulation of time.

Compression – the audience sees on the screen the seasons rapidly changing; the calendar may be flicked over to show the passing of days, there may be a fade, dissolve or wipe between scenes. All these things can indicate that time has passed. The film may eliminate days or years of narrative action yet the audience accepts condensation of the time into the length of the film.

Ellipsis – a long series of events is cut down to a few significant shots. For example a character may have to train for an event over a month rather than show every training session a few examples are show to represent the month's training.

Freeze frame – a still image appears on screen and a voice-over tells us significant time has passed

Slow motion - time can be stretched (lengthened) giving emphasis to a scene or event.

Fast motion – the pace can be increased to pick up the speed of a scene or event

Flashbacks and flash-forwards – the film-maker can make the audience travel in time, either to the past or future. This doesn't confuse the audience because they mentally rearrange the events into order to which they would have logically occurred. Flashbacks are often shown in black and white footage.

Repeats – some shots are repeatedly shown to create coherence. The audience can experience several times exciting bits again shown from different camera viewpoints.

Parallel actions – the audience is able to experience what is going on in different places at different times.

ELEMENTS OF PAGE LAYOUT

Page layout is a design element of print that is highly considered before any media print production is created and distributed. It is part of the pre-production phase.
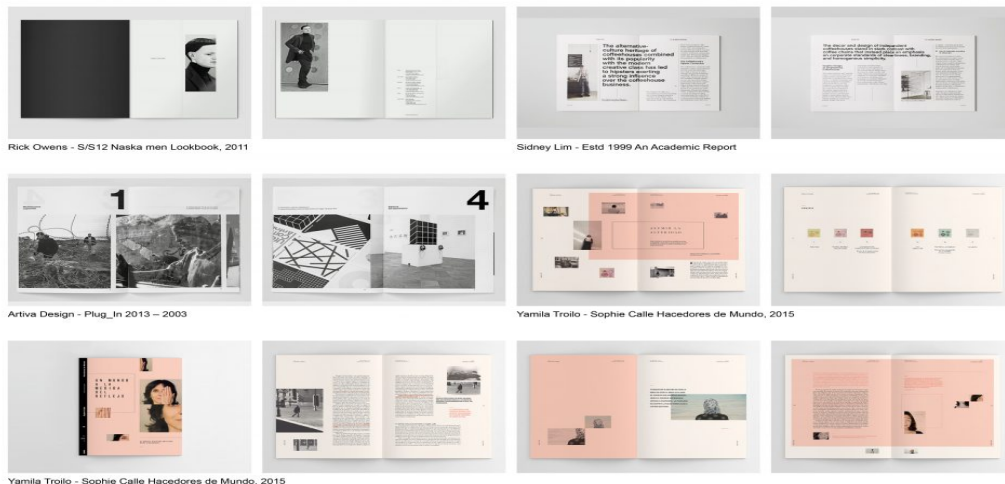
You wouldn't consider any page layout decisions without understanding what your audience expects to see on the page. Thinking about the conventions that will make the layout easy to interpret and to ensure your message is decoded the way you intended.

Page Layout Considerations:
- Space
- Hierarchy
- Images & Size
- Colour
- The use of White space / Negative space
- How much text and where the text resides
- Headlines and size of font
- Audience expectations
- Where the eye tracks across the page

HIERARCHY
When consideration is given to page layout the crucial elements that media producers consider is hierarchy. The size of the elements on a printed page often indicates their importance to readers. The heading and photographs associated with the newspaper article are often the largest and most dominant feature of the design, followed by subheadings, body text and captions. Increasing the size or limiting the size of the image or text will reveal the greater prominence to the audience. This all seems obvious to the reader / audience but there are people in the Media industry who's job it is to consider this important page layout convention.

Rick Owens - S/S12 Naska men Lookbook, 2011

Sidney Lim - Estd 1999 An Academic Report

Artiva Design - Plug_In 2013 – 2003

Yamila Troilo - Sophie Calle Hacedores de Mundo, 2015

Yamila Troilo - Sophie Calle Hacedores de Mundo, 2015

PAPER STOCK FOR PRINT

Paper stock is often something the reader takes for granted when purchasing or flicking through a printed media product. Paper stock can be used as an effective tool to ensure the magazine is exclusive and a marketing tool to increase the price of the product.

When looking at paper stock for print productions often these things will be considered:

- Weight
- Thickness
- Colour
- Pattern
- Feel
- Matt / Glossy

Research into what readers anticipate and want when reading and purchasing the print production is a factor into the paper stock selection. For example, if low cost is a factor for the audience then selecting paper stock that is cheaper in cost and easier to run through the print machine then the producer will select that variety.

Magazines like, 'Frankie' take pride in the paper stock selection they use for the print production. The magazine feels different and more exclusive than its competitors. The paper stock was a huge factor when considering who their audience is and what they want. The magazine itself feels different. The paper is weighted, thicker, matt finish and has a rough patterned surface. A reason for this would be so they reader does not throw this magazine out. They often use this a coffee table book. This in turn will give the brand more recognition. Doing this however, increasing the price of production, which results in a more expensive final product.

Magazines such as, 'New Idea, Women's Day, People' use very cheap, glossy, thin paper. These magazines are distributed weekly and therefore the producer knows that they are tossed out the moment the reader flicks through them. Low cost is what their audience is expecting, therefore the producer must use cheaper paper stock to ensure the final purchase price for their reader is minimal.

TITLES & CREDIT SEQUENCE

Most people that when it comes to Titles & Credits that this is an add on to any moving image. They would be very wrong. When you consider the fact that the first thing an audience is presented with is the Titles and Opening sequence then the Producer and Director will know this is their moment to capture their attention.

The title sequence is an important part of film and TV narratives. At the conclusion of a title sequence, even a very short one, the audience knows a great deal about the narrative. Some title sequences are extensive and others can pack a punch by only keeping the sequence short.

The timing and duration of a title sequence can be as important as its content.

Nelson Media – Jo Flack

Things to consider when thinking and discussing Title & Credit Sequence:

- Font choice
- Background selection (Colour or location – moving or still)
- Duration – Length of Opening sequence
- How much information you wish to give away to your audience
- Narrative possibilities
- Closure of the narrative or sequel possibilities

You want to analyse these elements and why they were considered for their audience and the impact they had on them.

**From the opening of the film text, 'Catch me if you can'**

HYPERLINKING & MOUNTING

HYPERLINK = Embedded links within online text or images that allow the user to branch away from the main narrative.

MOUNTING = Placing the media product on its final destination. Creating a platform for the media product to be viewed by the audience.

Both these conventions are considered in the post-production phase of production. They are a critical design and marketing element to any media product. Different audiences will have expectations on what they want to see and access when it comes to mounting and hyper-linking.
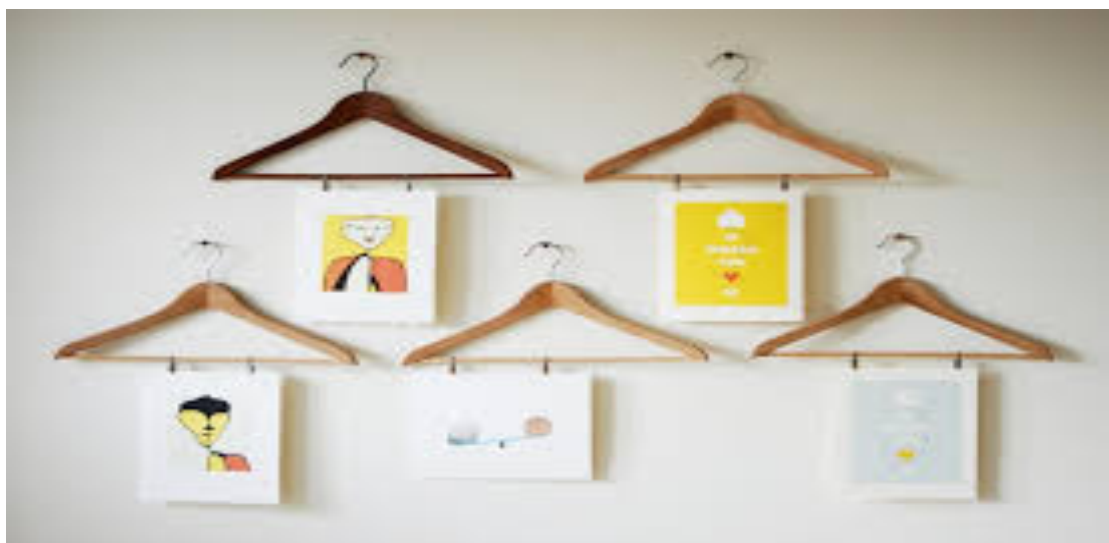
FRAMING OF IMAGES

Framing is the process of which the final print production will be framed. There are many effective techniques to framing a still image.

This section is where you need to visualise and plan how you will present your images and where they would be exhibited. Some things to consider:

- Location of exhibition (eg. inner city gallery, café etc.)
- Size of paper (A4, A5, A3, A1*)
- Border colour or borderless
- Mounting (mount card, foam core etc)
- Order of images
- Presentation style (all in a row, a grid, 3 by 3 square etc.)

The Basic Components of Framing Art

- Backing Paper
- Mount Board
- Artwork
- Mat Board
- Glass (Glazing)
- Frame

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