



CHARACTER

Protagonist

The leading character, hero or heroine.

Antagonist

A flawed hero or character who lacks conventional heroic qualities.

Foil

A character who contrasts with another character, usually the protagonist.

Symbolic

A character that represents an idea, attitude or theme.

Stereotype

An oversimplified, widely recognisable character type.

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- From whose point of view is the film told?
- Is there a narrator? Who is the narrator?
- Who is the main protagonist? How would you describe them?
- Are they a hero or an anti-hero?
- Is there a main antagonist or foil? How would you describe them?
- Which character interested you the most? Why?
- How do the relationship dynamics between characters drive the plot?
- What can we tell about the main characters from the way they look, stand and speak?
- Are there any character stereotypes in the film? Do these relate to the genre of film?
- Are any of the characters symbolic, i.e. there to represent an idea, attitude or theme?
- Where are the characters positioned within the frame? How are they positioned in relation to each other?

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COLOUR

Palette

The range of colours used throughout the film or in a particular sequence.

Mood

The main emotions and feelings the filmmaker would like to communicate.

Tone

The mood, style and visual qualities of a filmic product.

Motif

A dominant or recurring idea.

Atmosphere

The general spirit of the film, or the feeling that the film gives the audience.

Lighting

The arrangement or effect of light used to create or emphasise colour, light or shadow.

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- How is colour used in the film?
- Is there a particular colour palette i.e. warm/cold etc?
- What do the colours used in the location, props or costumes tell us about the narrative or characters?
- How does the use of colour affect the mood of the film?
- What is the tone of the film? Is it colourful or muted?
- What is the effect of the tone on the mood of the film?
- How would you describe the lighting in the film? Is it high key (brightly lit) or low key (creating shadows)?
- Do the colour and lighting change during the film? Why do you think this is?
- Is there a colour motif used in the film? What does this colour represent?
- What atmosphere has the director generated through colour and tone?

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CAMERA

Shot

A series of frames.

Point of view

The viewpoint from which the camera displays recorded action.

Framing

The composition of visual elements contained within a camera's view.

Angles

The position at which a camera is located when recording a shot.

Composition

The manner in which the elements of a shot are arranged.

Editing

The creative process of assembling shots and audio to create meaning.

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- What shots can you identify? What are the different shots used for?
- Through whose eyes are we seeing the story? Are we seeing an objective or personal point of view?
- When does the camera move and when does it stay still? Why do you think this is?
- What type of camera movement is used? Why do you think the camera moves as it does?
- What camera angles are used? Why might high and low angle shots be used?
- Can the audience see what the characters see or does any action take place off-screen?
- What is in focus/out of focus? Why?
- How can you tell what the characters are thinking or feeling through what the camera does?
- How long do the shots last? How quickly are the shots cut together?
- Does the pace of editing change during the film? When and why?

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SETTING

Location

The place or situation where the action takes place.

Interior

The film term for 'inside'.

Exterior

The film term for 'outside'.

Contemporary

Representing the present day.

Period

Representing a particular historical period.

Milieu

Social environment, backdrop or surroundings.

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- When and where does the action take place?
- When and how does the setting change?
- How does the setting affect the atmosphere of the film?
- What does the setting tell you about the lives and the personalities of the characters?
- Are any stereotypical settings used in the film that relate to the genre (type) of film?
- Would the story change if it were set in a different place/time?
- Is the film period or contemporary? How can you tell?
- What is the milieu of the film?
- Which scenes are set internally and which are set externally? How does this affect the scene?
- What differences can you note in mood or performance between scenes set inside or outside?

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SOUND

Diegetic

Sound set within the world of the film, which characters within that world can hear.

Non-diegetic

Sound external to the film world, which characters within the film world cannot hear.

Motif

A dominant or recurring idea.

Sting

A sound or musical phrase used for emphasis, to introduce a character or to indicate dramatic climax.

Soundtrack

Musical accompaniment to the film.

Dialogue

The words a character speaks.

- What diegetic sound can you hear?
- What non-diegetic sound can you hear? Why has this been added?
- How do the combined sounds in the film make you feel?
- Is there a musical soundtrack? What type of music has been used?
- Does the music used suit the genre of film? Why or why not?
- How does music affect the mood of the film? What feelings does the music elicit in you as a viewer?
- Does the music change during the course of the film? When and why?
- Can you identify any sound effects that have been used in the film sequence?
- Are there any musical motifs or stings used in the film? When do they occur and why do you think they have been used?
- How many layers of sound are used? (Are there background sounds, additional sound effects, music, dialogue?)
- Does the sound or music match the image on screen or does it deliberately contrast with the image?

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STORY

Narrative

The film term for story.

Genre

A type or category of film e.g. Western, Horror, Sci-Fi etc.

Non-linear

Narrative events told in non-chronological order.

Theme

A recurrent or dominant idea in the film.

Structure

The manner in which different parts of the story are arranged.

Plot

The sequence of events that make up a story.

- Describe the plot of the film in one paragraph. Can you think of any other films with a similar plot?
- What is the structure of the narrative?
- From whose point of view is the film told? Is their point of view trustworthy?
- Is there a narrator? What is the narrator's role?
- What is the genre of the film? How is story similar or different to other stories in this genre?
- How long does the story take in 'narrative' time? (e.g. a week, a year etc.)
- Is the story linear or non-linear? Are there any flashbacks or flashforwards in time?
- What do you think may have happened before the story began?
- Can you think of an alternative ending for the story?
- Can you spot any key themes within the narrative? Does it have a moral or a message?

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