

## Topic 98

### Camera Shots

A camera shot is the amount of space that is seen in one shot or frame. Camera shots are used to demonstrate different aspects of a film's setting, characters and themes. As a result, camera shots are very important in shaping meaning in a film. Reviewing the examples on the right hand side of this page should make the different camera shots clearer.

An **extreme long shot** (*animation on right*) contains a large amount of landscape. It is often used at the beginning of a scene or a film to establish general **location**(setting). This is also known as an establishing shot.

A **long shot** (*animation on right*) contains landscape but gives the viewer a more specific idea of setting. A long shot may show the viewers the building where the action will take place.

A **full shot** (*animation on right*) contains a complete view of the **characters**. From this shot, viewers can take in the costumes of characters and may also help to demonstrate the relationships between characters

A **mid shot** (*animation on right*) contains the characters or a **character from the waist up**. From this shot, viewers can see the characters' faces more clearly as well as their interaction with other characters. This is also known as a social shot.

A **close-up** (*animation on right*) contains just **one character's face**. This enables viewers to understand the actor's emotions and also allows them to feel empathy for the character. This is also known as a personal shot.

An **extreme close-up** (*animation on right*) contains one **part of a character's face** or other object. This technique is quite common in horror films, particularly the example above. This type of shot creates an intense mood and provides interaction between the audience and the viewer.

When analyzing a film you should always think about the different camera shots and why they are being used. The next time that you are at the cinema or watching television see what camera shots are being used.

**Important:** These camera shots are used in all forms of visual texts including postcards, posters and print advertisements.

## Camera angles

It is important that you do not confuse camera angles and camera shots. Camera shots are used to demonstrate different aspects of setting, themes and characters. Camera angles are used to position the viewer so that they can understand the relationships between the characters. These are very important for shaping meaning in film as well as in other visual texts.

The following examples will help you to understand the differences between the different camera angles

A **bird's eye angle** (*animation on right*) is an angle that looks **directly down upon a scene**. This angle is often used as an establishing angle, along with an extreme long shot, to establish setting.

A **high angle** (*animation on right*) is a camera angle that looks **down upon a subject**. A character shot with a high angle will look vulnerable or small. These angles are often used to demonstrate to the audience a perspective of a particular character. The example above demonstrates to us the perspective or point of view of a vampire. As a viewer we can understand that the vampire feels powerful.

An **eye-level angle** (*animation on right*) puts the audience on **an equal footing with the character/s**. This is the most commonly used angle in most films as it allows the viewers to feel comfortable with the characters.

A **low angle** (*animation on right*) is a camera angle that **looks up at a character**. This is the opposite of a high angle and makes a character look more powerful. This can make the audience feel vulnerable and small by looking up at the character. This can help the responder feel empathy if they are viewing the frame from another character's point of view.

As with camera shots, you will be able to see many examples of camera angles in any film or visual text that you view. The next time that you watch television or see a film, take note of the camera angles and think of how they affect your perception (idea) of different characters.

Another camera angle that you might come across is a Dutch angle.

A **Dutch angle** (*animation on right*) is used to demonstrate the confusion of a character. The example above should disorientate you.

An **Evangelion shot** (*animation on right*) is derived from the popular anime series 'Neon Genesis Evangelion'. This camera movement begins as an extreme close-up and zooms out abruptly, creating a blurring effect to emphasize the speed and size of the object.

