

Topic no. 56

Production stages

There are three stages of production:

1. PRE-PRODUCTION

This is the stage in which all the planning for the project takes place. During pre-production, the production is broken down into individual scenes and all the locations, props, cast members, costumes, special effects and visual effects are identified. The script, if not already complete, is written at this stage. A detailed schedule is produced and arrangements are made for the necessary elements or people to be available to the film-makers at the appropriate times.

2. PRODUCTION

This is the stage at which all the filming is carried out. All scenes planned out in pre-production are filmed at the relevant locations. Each scene is filmed as many times as the director deems fit, to ensure the best quality scenes will be used to construct the film. This is where the strength of the pre-production work is put to the test. Great care must be taken to make sure that all the filming is done correctly and all necessary shots are taken, as it is sometimes difficult or impossible to go back and repeat certain events if the filming is incomplete when it comes to the post-production stage.

3. POST-PRODUCTION

This is the stage in which the film is assembled by the editor. The first job of the film editor is to build a rough cut taken from sequences (or scenes) based on individual "takes" (shots). The purpose of the rough cut is to select and order the best shots. The next step is to create a fine cut by getting all the shots to flow smoothly in a seamless story. Trimming - the process of shortening scenes by a few minutes, seconds, or even frames - is done during this phase. As well as the editing of footage, all music, graphics, menus etc are added in this stage. After the fine cut has been screened and approved by the director and producer, the picture is "locked," meaning no further changes are made.