NARRATIVE Year 10

NAME: _____

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

When media students undertake the study of Narrative they are ultimately learning the skills and techniques to construct a moving image for specific audiences. Once we understand the codes and conventions behind the moving image we can develop the skill of writing for narrative.

The first place to start is identifying what media language will help you get the best marks when breaking down Code & Conventions that underpin the narrative.

MEDIA CODES are the physical construction to the narrative. I like to describe them as the technical components to communicating the story elements within the narrative.

- Camera Techniques
- Acting
- Setting
- Mise-En-Scene
- Editing
- Lighting
- Sound
- Special Effects
- Typography
- Colour
- Visual Composition
- Text & Graphics

MEDIA CONVENTIONS are the ingredients that bring to life the narrative. They are the building blocks to the story within the moving image. Without story elements, there would be nothing for the production elements to communicate to their audience.

- Story Principals
- Form & Structure
- Generic structures
- Character & Story Arc
- Cause & Effect
- Point of View
- The Structuring of Time
- Elements of page layout
- Paper stock and print
- Titles & Credits
- Hyperlinking & Mounting
- Framing & Images

CONVENTIONS OF NARRTIVE STORYTELLING are all the elements that work to propel a story and allow the audience to understand the actual plot and story being told.

- Opening, Development, Closure
- Multiple Storylines
- Narrative possibilities
- Character Development
- Cause and Effect
- Setting
- Structuring of Time
- Point of view

AUDIENCE

Audiences are central to media narratives. In every narrative produced, careful consideration is given to how audiences consume and receive media texts.

"The ways in which audiences consume media texts vary depending on the reception of the text; an audience may be large and consume the text collectively, as in a cinema, or a text may be received independently, accessed through a computer, an audio device, a magazine or observed in a gallery space. Media forms and texts are therefore constructed with an understanding that audiences have their own individual characteristics."
VCAA Media Study Design.

Audience have certain expectations when they view narrative texts especially in relation to **genre**
Audiences will expect in thrillers:
- A sense of suspense tension and uncertainty.
- There will be a crime committed.
- There will be false leads laid for the audience to follow (a McGuffin)
- Enigmas/problems will be established at the start of the narrative and be resolved by the end
- Deceptive mind games between characters will be played
- Low key lighting and dramatic music will be used
- A battle between good and evil - with the protagonist thwarting the antagonist
- The protagonists will often be flawed characters
- The plot usually builds towards a climax near the end where the protagonist defeats the antagonist

Audiences can choose to watch films of a certain genre because they want to feel a particular way or it may suit the mood they are in.

The marketing of the film can also influence audience expectations. If the film fails to live up to the marketing hype then audiences may be disappointed. Sometimes audiences respond to a film a personal level because they may have an affinity with a character or a storyline.

The consumption and reception of a fictional narrative text refers to how and where an audience will view it and how they respond.
The era of the film can also have an impact on the audience's reception of the narrative text. Audiences will have different expectations about the quality of the sound, film stock, special effects, acting styles and nature of relationships between characters.

A BREAKDOWN OF SOME OF THE ELEMENTS THAT WE WILL INVESTIGATE IN YEAR 10

Camera Techniques
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.

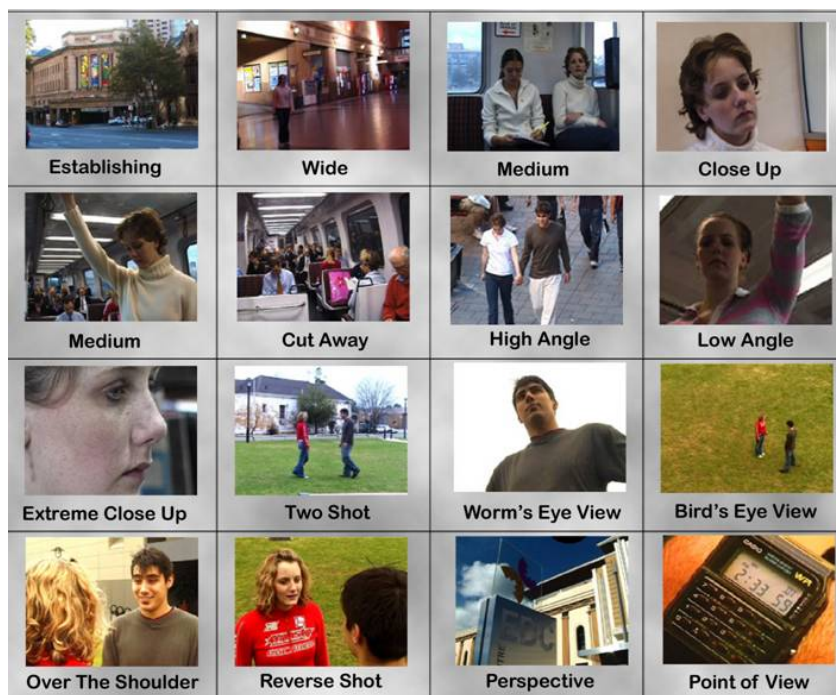Medium long shot – in this shot the subject in the foreground is equally balanced with the background.

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

Shot Angles

| Low | Eye-level | High |
| Worm's eye | Canted | Bird's eye |

Acting

Acting is the most obvious production element to observe and analyse when watching a moving image. Where students often fall down when discussing, this production element - acting is not applying the correct media language. 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 real person may have in similar circumstances.

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

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
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
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

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.

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

SOME STORY ELEMENTS WE WILL INVESTIGATE IN YEAR 10

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

Time

The order, duration and frequency of events are important in the narrative. 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.

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. The audience may also see the same event twice, the event may occur at the start of the film and then flashback to the event later on.

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

Opening, Development, Resolution

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.

Multiple Storylines

In VCE Media, multiple storylines is a story element that refers to how narratives might use different storylines or subplots

There is usually more than one story contained in a film, often there are several stories that run concurrently and interrelate to each other.

The way in which the story lines interrelate or contrast is important to the narrative as often one storyline will impact on the other.

A common convention is that storylines run alongside to each other and then at some point in the narrative they connect and then each story becomes entangled with the other. For example a narrative may have a storyline where a character is in trouble and is trying to search for a solution out of this trouble and while this is happening this character may be involved in a storyline where they have a love interest. The storylines interrelate and impact on each other when the love interest is dragged into the trouble that the character is in.

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.
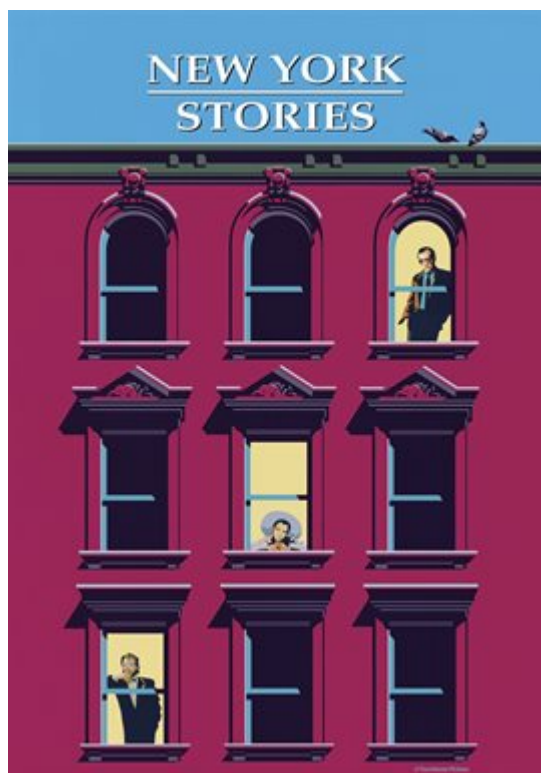
Point Of View

Whose point of view is the narrative presented from? Is it the main character, a minor character, someone else, a number of characters or possibly the Director? The way a character experiences the events in a film influences the manner in which the narrative presents these events to the audience. This determines how the audience views the film; from whose perspective they view the film from and whom they sympathise or identify with.

Point of view can be revealed to the audience through an objective view where they see the external actions of a character. For example if a character is upset then an objective point of view demonstrate this by showing crying to provide an insight as to how they are feeling.

Point of view can be revealed by:

- The number of storylines that revolve around or include a particular character.
- If the narration or inner monologue is spoken by a character or if characters speak directly to camera.
- How often a character is framed in close.
- The amount of story information that is withheld from or revealed can also indicate from whose point of view the narrative presented.
- Who the protagonist is, as it is usually their story the audience is being told and also whom the audience wants to succeed.

Cause and 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.

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

If character motivation were the only element in a film (the desire for a character to reach a goal) then the story would be boring, as the goal would be reached immediately. 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.

Characters not only motivate actions, chance encounters or events both natural (earthquake) and supernatural causes can also have consequences on the story.

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.

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.

Sometimes films have open-ended resolutions where everything is not neatly resolved. These types of conclusions make the audience wonder about what will occur after the film ends.

Characters

Character believability through characterisation can help the audience believe in and more fully experience the narrative. Character traits are important, these involve attitudes, preferences, psychological drives, detail of dress and appearance etc.

The narrative is often dependent on that things will occur because of characters actions and motivations. The narrative is centered around and driven by character choices, decisions and traits. If the character wants something, their desire to achieve this can motivate the narrative. This desire can set up a goal, and the course of the narrative's development will involve achieving that goal. Characters and their traits and desires are a strong source of cause and effect.

The ways in which characters are established and developed reveal a great deal about their role and function in the film. The audience learns about characters by what they do, the way they behave, what they say and what others say about them. These things all provide clues to the audience about what the characters are like and what their motivations and goals may be.

Characters need not be stereotypical; presenting a character that does not fit the mold can create impact on the audience. The dramatic impact is created when the character behaves in a non-typical manner. Alfred Hitchcock often used ordinary people for his villains or flawed heroes in order to achieve this.

The purpose of the character in the narrative should also be considered.

- 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?