

TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 2: MISE EN SCÈNE

Multiple Choice

1. Mise en scène was originally a French theatrical term meaning
- A. in three dimensions.
 - B. under the proscenium arch.
 - C. in the middle of the scene.
 - D. placing on stage.

Answer: D

Topic: Introduction

Page Number: 47

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

2. Mise en scène in the movies resembles the art of painting in that
- A. an image is presented on a flat surface.
 - B. the frame is unimportant.
 - C. three-dimensional images are created from two-dimensional space.
 - D. it has depth as well as width and height.

Answer: A

Topic: Introduction

Page Number: 47

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

3. The frame of the screen defines the
- A. auditorium.
 - B. world of the film.
 - C. real world.
 - D. length of the shot.

Answer: B

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 47

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 1. Identify the two main screen aspect ratios and evaluate how directors have used masks and other techniques in order to both enhance and overcome them.

4. Unlike the painter or still photographer, the filmmaker
- A. must fit the composition to a single-sized frame.
 - B. is unconcerned with the frame.

- C. fits the frame to the composition.
- D. can vary the aspect ratio of the composition.

Answer: A

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 47

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the concept

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

5. Most movies today are projected in one of two aspect ratios: 1.85:1 and

- A. 1.33:1.
- B. 1:1.
- C. 2.35:1 .
- D. 1.66:1.

Answer: C

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 47

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 1. Identify the two main screen aspect ratios and evaluate how directors have used masks and other techniques in order to both enhance and overcome them.

6. Filmmakers always think in terms of a framed image. Some of them, like Steven Spielberg, carry what portable device to help them pre-frame an image?

- A. a viewfinder
- B. a zoom lens
- C. a photograph
- D. a plate

Answer: A

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 49

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 1. Identify the two main screen aspect ratios and evaluate how directors have used masks and other techniques in order to both enhance and overcome them.

7. The area of the frame that often suggests powerlessness is the

- A. center.
- B. top.
- C. left/right edge.
- D. bottom.

Answer: D

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 55

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

8. Highly symmetrical designs are generally used when a director wishes to stress
- A. chaos.
 - B. stability.
 - C. imbalance.
 - D. confusion.

Answer: B

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 58

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

9. In movies, the _____ is usually the determining factor in composition.
- A. the need for balance
 - B. the photographable material
 - C. dramatic context
 - D. aspect ratio

Answer: C

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 61

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

10. Filmmakers outside the classical tradition tend to favor compositions that are
- A. balanced.
 - B. symmetrical.
 - C. off-center.
 - D. uneven.

Answer: B

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 61

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

11. In black-and-white movies, the dominant contrast is generally achieved through
- A. the use of color.
 - B. the juxtaposition of shapes
 - C. the use of lines.

D. the juxtaposition of lights and darks.

Answer: D

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 62-64

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

12. Movie images are generally scanned by a viewer

A. in a structured sequence of eye-stops.

B. from right to left.

C. from bottom to top.

D. randomly.

Answer: A

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 63

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

13. Psychological experiments have revealed that certain lines suggest directional movements. If movement is perceived, horizontal lines tend to move

A. from top to bottom.

B. downward.

C. from right to left.

D. from left to right.

Answer: D

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 66

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

14. Parallelism is a common principle of design, implying

A. unity.

B. conflict.

C. chaos.

D. weakness.

Answer: A

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 66

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

15. Directors generally emphasize _____ in their images precisely because they wish to avoid an abstract, flat look in their compositions.

- A. color
- B. width
- C. volume
- D. height

Answer: C

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 67

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

16. The amount of _____ included within the frame can radically affect our response to the photographed materials.

- A. colors
- B. shapes
- C. foliage
- D. space

Answer: D

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 68

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

17. In his study *On Aggression*, psychologist Konrad Lorenz discusses how most animals—including humans—are

- A. bipedal.
- B. territorial.
- C. color blind.
- D. calm.

Answer: B

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 68

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

18. A director can make a viewer feel insecure by doing what with respect to a character we identify with, as Mike Nichols did in *The Graduate*.

- A. by placing a hostile foreground element between us and the character we identify with
- B. by removing all background elements behind the character we identify with
- C. by placing the characters at a social distance from the camera
- D. by placing the character at a personal distance from the camera

Answer: A

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 69

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

19. An actor can be photographed in any of five basic positions. Which position is most intimate with respect to the audience?

- A. quarter-turn
- B. profile
- C. full-front
- D. back to camera

Answer: C

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 75

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 4. Diagram the five basic positions in which an actor can be photographed, and describe the different psychological undertones of each.

20. If a director wanted to portray an intimate, romantic conversation between a man and a woman, what would be the most advantageous way to stage the two characters?

- A. both in profile, looking at each other
- B. both facing full-front, looking directly at the camera
- C. one in profile and one facing full front
- D. one with their back to the camera, one facing full front

Answer: A

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 80-81

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Analyze It

Learning Objective: 4. Diagram the five basic positions in which an actor can be photographed, and describe the different psychological undertones of each.

21. Anthropologist Edward T. Hall subdivided the way people use space into _____ major proxemic patterns.

- A. six
- B. five
- C. four

D. three

Answer: C

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 81

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

22. Social distances range from

A. eighteen inches away to about four feet

B. four feet to about twelve feet

C. from skin contact to about eighteen inches away

D. twelve feet to twenty-five feet and more

Answer: B

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 82

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

23. In movies, proxemic patterns are generally most closely related to

A. the shots and their distance ranges.

B. the number of people in the scene.

C. how many people are in the theater.

D. cultural norms.

Answer: A

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 82

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

24. Each proxemic pattern has an approximate camera equivalent. The social distances correspond to

A. medium or full shots.

B. close-ups or extreme close-ups.

C. long shots.

D. extreme long shots.

Answer: A

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 82

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Analyze It

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

25. Which one of these best explains why Charlie Chaplin would choose an intimate proxemic distance for the camera in the final scene of *City Lights*?

- A. to heighten the tragedy of the scene
- B. to heighten the comedy of the scene
- C. to increase the audience's objectivity to the scene
- D. to lessen the audience's connection to the Tramp

Answer: A

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 85

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their relationships.

26. In terms of design, open form emphasizes

- A. formality.
- B. self-consciousness.
- C. organization.
- D. unobtrusiveness.

Answer: D

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 86

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.

27. Because they are influenced by _____ films, realist directors prefer open forms.

- A. documentary
- B. classical
- C. color
- D. black-and-white

Answer: A

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 87

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Analyze It

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.

28. _____ more precisely controlled in closed forms than open.
- A. Color is
 - B. Lighting is
 - C. Mise en scène is
 - D. Angles are

Answer: C

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 88

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.

29. In open-form movies like *Traffic*, the _____ generally leads the camera.
- A. lighting
 - B. dramatic action
 - C. setting
 - D. mise en scène

Answer: B

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 89

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.

30. Anticipatory setups tend to imply
- A. fatality.
 - B. spontaneity.
 - C. free will.
 - D. choice.

Answer: A

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 89

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.

Essay Questions

31. Explain why mise en scène is more complicated in film than it is in live theater.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Originally a French theatrical term meaning “placing on stage,” the phrase refers to the arrangement of all the visual elements of a theatrical production within a given playing

area—the stage.

2. No matter what the confines of the stage may be, its *mise en scène* is always in three dimensions. Objects and people are arranged in actual space, which has depth as well as height and width. This space is also a continuation of the same space that the audience occupies, no matter how much a theater director tries to suggest a separate “world” on the stage.

3. *Mise en scène* in film is a blend of the visual conventions of the live theater with those of painting.

4. Like the stage director, the filmmaker arranges objects and people within a given three-dimensional space. But once this arrangement is photographed, it’s converted into a two-dimensional image of the real thing.

5. The space in the “world” of the movie is not the same as that occupied by the audience. Only the image exists in the same physical area, like a picture in an art gallery.

6. *Mise en scène* in the movies resembles the art of painting in that an image of formal patterns and shapes is presented on a flat surface and is enclosed within a **frame**. But cinematic *mise en scène* is also a fluid choreographing of visual elements that are constantly in flux.

Topic: Introduction

Page Number: 2

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

32. Explain how the fixed frame of a movie screen affects the way a director shoots a particular object or scene. What are some of the challenges presented by the constant size of the movie frame?

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. In the traditional visual arts, frame dimensions are governed by the nature of the subject matter. Thus, a painting of a skyscraper is likely to be vertical in shape and would be framed accordingly. A vast panoramic scene would probably be more horizontal in its dimensions. But in movies, the frame ratio is standardized and isn’t necessarily governed by the nature of the materials being photographed.

2. The constant size of the movie frame is especially hard to overcome in vertical compositions. A sense of height must be conveyed in spite of the dominantly horizontal shape of the screen.

3. One method of overcoming the problem is through masking. In *Intolerance*, for example, D. W. Griffith blocked out portions of his images through the use of black masks. These in effect connected the darkened portions of the screen with the darkness of the auditorium.

4. To emphasize the steep fall of a soldier from a wall, the sides of the image were masked out. To stress the vast horizon of a location, Griffith masked out the lower third of the image—thus creating a widescreen effect.

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 49-53

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 1. Identify the two main screen aspect ratios and evaluate how directors have used masks and other techniques in order to both enhance and overcome them.

33. Explain how the frame can act as an aesthetic device in movies.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. The sensitive director is just as concerned with what’s left out of the frame as with what’s

included. The frame selects and delimits the subject, editing out all irrelevancies and presenting us with only a “piece” of reality.

2. The frame is thus essentially an isolating device, a technique that permits the director to confer special attention on what might be overlooked in a wider context.

3. The movie frame can function as a metaphor for other types of enclosures. Some directors use the frame voyeuristically. In many of the films of Alfred Hitchcock, for example, the frame is likened to a window through which the audience may satisfy its impulse to pry into the intimate details of the characters’ lives. In fact, both *Psycho* and *Rear Window* use this peeping technique literally.

4. Certain areas within the frame can suggest symbolic ideas. By placing an object or actor within a particular section of the frame, the filmmaker can radically alter his or her comment on that object or character. Placement within the frame is another instance of how form is actually content. Each of the major sections of the frame—center, top, bottom, and sides—can be exploited for such symbolic purposes.

Topic: The Frame

Page Number: 53

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Analyze It

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

34. Explain the way the human eye perceives a movie composition and briefly explain how directors Roman Polanski and Orson Welles used composition and visual design differently in their adaptations of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* to enhance the ideas of madness and isolation.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Movie images are generally scanned in a structured sequence of eye-stops. The eye is first attracted to a dominant contrast that compels our most immediate attention by virtue of its conspicuousness. The eye then travels to the subsidiary areas of interest within the frame.

2. Roman Polanski’s presentation of Lady Macbeth’s isolation and madness is conveyed in a relatively realistic manner, with emphasis on acting and subtle lighting effects.

3. For example, in one shot where Lady Macbeth lies next to her husband in bed, Polanski lit the shot in high contrast, with Lady Macbeth brightly lit and her husband lit in a more subdued manner. She is also surrounded by darkness except for the brightly lit “empty” space between her and her husband. This emphasizes the dramatic context of the film, for Lady Macbeth is slowly descending into madness and feels spiritually alienated and isolated from her husband.

4. Orson Welles took a more formalistic approach, using physical objects with the frame to convey Lady Macbeth’s interior states.

5. For example, in one shot Welles photographs Lady Macbeth next to an iron fence’s knifelike blades, which almost seem to pierce the character’s body. The fence is not particularly realistic or even functional. Welles exploited it primarily as a symbolic analogue of her inner torment.

Topic: Composition and Design

Page Number: 63

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 2. Analyze the way the human eye perceives a composition and the way design and the geography of the frame is used to enhance a thematic idea.

35. Explain how the amount of space included within the frame can radically affect our response to the photographed materials.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. With any given subject, the filmmaker can use a variety of shots, each of which includes or excludes a given amount of surrounding space.
2. The way we respond to objects and people within a given area is a constant source of information in life as well as in movies. In virtually any social situation, we receive and give off signals relating to our use of space and those people who share it.
3. The way that people are arranged in space can tell us a lot about their social and psychological relationships. In film, dominant characters are almost always given more space to occupy than others—unless the film deals with the loss of power or the social insignificance of a character.
4. A master of *mise en scène* can express shifting psychological and social nuances with a single shot by exploiting the space between characters.
5. The amount of open space within the territory of the frame can be exploited for symbolic purposes. Generally speaking, the closer the shot, the more confined the photographed figures appear to be. Such shots are usually referred to as tightly framed. Conversely, longer, loosely framed shots tend to suggest freedom.

Topic: Territorial Space

Page Number: 68-77

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 3. Describe how the three visual planes suggest depth in a scene and how the use of this territory can act as a means of communication.

36. How do proxemic patterns relate to the various types shots in film and their distance ranges, and what effect do they have on the viewer?

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. In terms of psychological effect, the various shots tend to suggest physical distances.
2. Usually, filmmakers have a number of options concerning what kind of shot to use to convey the action of a scene. What determines their choice is the emotional impact of each of the different proxemic ranges.
3. Each proxemic pattern has an approximate camera equivalent. The intimate distances, for example, can be likened to the close up. The personal distance is approximately a medium shot. The social distances correspond to the full shot ranges. And the public distances are roughly within the long and extreme long shot ranges.
4. In general, the greater the distance between the camera and the subject, the more emotionally neutral we remain. Conversely, the closer we are to a character, the more we feel that we're in proximity with him and hence the greater our emotional involvement.
5. "Long shot for comedy, close-up for tragedy" was one of Charles Chaplin's most famous pronouncements. The proxemic principles are sound, for when we are close to an action—a person slipping on a banana peel, for example—it's seldom funny, because we are concerned for the person's safety. If we see the same event from a greater distance, however, it often strikes us as comical.

Topic: Proxemic Patterns

Page Number: 81-85

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 5. Explain the four main proxemic patterns in film and culture, and describe how the distances between characters can be used to establish the nature of their

relationships.

37. Explain how a director like Gillian Armstrong, through the use of open and closed forms, tackles the problem of period films having a tendency to look stagey and researched.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Period films often have a tendency to look stagey and researched, especially when the historical details are too neatly presented and the characters are posed in a tightly controlled setting.
2. In *Mrs. Soffel* Gillian Armstrong avoided this pitfall by staging many of her scenes in open form, almost like a documentary caught on the run.
3. Armstrong photographed the main character and her children in such a way as to almost obscure them with the surrounding foreground and background environment and unimportant details like extras.
4. A more formalist director would have eliminated such foreground and background “distractions” and the clutter and brought the principal characters toward the foreground.
5. Armstrong achieves a more realistic and spontaneous effect by deliberately avoiding an “arranged” look in her *mise en scène* through the use of open forms.

Topic: Open and Closed Forms

Page Number: 86

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Learning Objective: 6. Illustrate why open and closed forms serve as two distinct attitudes about reality and list in which circumstances they each prove most effective.