

**Media Studies**

**Component 2A: Crime Drama**

**Media Language**

**Crib Sheets for Analysis**



## Sound

**diegetic sound:** sound that is part of the film world including: ambient sounds, dialogue, and sound effects (also called foley sounds)

- **ambient sounds:** sound that are part of the natural world of the scene e.g. the sound of a birds in the trees. Ambient sounds can add to the realism of the scene.
- **dialogue:** the words spoken by characters. Listen for the tone of the character's voice (angry, soft, comical, sarcastic), their accent (upper-class, lower-class), and the words they use (including any colloquial language). This will all give you information about the character.
- **sound effects:** although these are added in editing, they are part of the diegetic world of the film. Sound effects can emphasise particular actions and make them seem important, e.g. the loud sound of a gun being fired might shock the audience.

**non-diegetic sound:** sound that is added in editing and is outside of the world of the film, including: soundtrack, and voiceover.



- **soundtrack:** this is the music that we hear playing over a scene. In Luther this tends to be an orchestral **musical score**. The score helps to set the atmosphere and can help to build tension in the scene. The score might be harmonious or discordant. It might be foreboding, signalling danger ahead! The pitch can be high or low. The tempo can be slow or fast.
- **incidental music:** when the musical score signals the atmosphere of the scene. This could be a loud boom from a kick-drum signalling an important moment onscreen.
- **sound bridge:** when the musical score continues playing even though we have cut to a different scene. This signals a relationship between the two scenes.



**contrapuntal sound:** can be either diegetic or non-diegetic. Contrapuntal sounds contrast with what is on screen, which can give an uncomfortable feeling for the audience and can create confusion or anxiety.

**parallel sound:** can be either diegetic or non-diegetic. Parallel sounds compliment what is on screen.

## Editing

**continuity editing:** is the most common style of editing, when shots are joined together in a continuous flow emphasising the real-time movement of the narrative. Sometimes called invisible editing because we don't notice the edits taking place. This editing style gives a smooth feeling to a scene. Typically, this type of editing helps to create a sense of realism because it has a natural flow. Examples include cross-cutting, shot-reverse-shot, eye-line match, and action match.






	<p><b>shot-reverse-shot</b> – when the camera is shown looking at a character, then we cut to a shot of the other character looking back, and then back again.</p>	<p>Typically used to show the relationship between two people, usually in conflict as we move from one side to the other, and back again.</p>
	<p><b>eye-line match</b> – the camera shows us a character looking at something, then we cut to what they are looking at.</p>	<p>Typically used to show us something of significance a character is looking at. It might reveal something about the character</p>

	<p><b>cross-cutting</b> – when we cut between two locations showing the action happening simultaneously</p>	<p>Typically used to show us what is happening in two locations at the same time. It suggests there is a relationship between the two locations.</p>
	<p><b>action match</b> – a collection of shots that are seamlessly edited together to create continuity. We see every moment of the scene, but from different camera shots.</p>	<p>Typically, this type of continuity is used to create a natural and realistic feel to the scene. You can comment on whether the pace is fast or slow to suggest the atmosphere that it builds.</p>






**non-continuity editing:** when continuity editing is disrupted. Shots are mismatched to disrupt the impression of time and space e.g. jump cutting.

	<p><b>jump cuts</b> – when the camera cuts between sequential shots with a slight variation, which breaks the continuity.</p>	<p>Typically used to show disconnection, heightened out of control emotions, skill – dependent on the context. In this short sequence we see that the jump cut reflect Luther’s frantic and worrying state of mind.</p>
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### Camera shots/angles

	<p><b>close-up</b> – a camera shot that tightly frames a person or object.</p>	<p>A CU is useful for showing detail such as a character's emotion or reaction to something that has happened. It helps the audience to engage with the character and we often see close-ups on the hero, rather than the villain, so that we can identify with them.</p>
	<p><b>extreme close-up</b> – a camera shot that pulls us even closer to the person or object, completely filling the frame.</p>	<p>An ECU helps to intensify the emotions of the character and can heighten the emotions of the scene. An ECU might even feel uncomfortable for the audience as we're so close to the character.</p>
	<p><b>high-angle</b> – when the camera is positioned above the subject/object looking down upon it.</p>	<p>A high-angle can make the subject appear weak and vulnerable, or lacking power.</p>
	<p><b>low-angle</b> – when the camera is positioned below, looking up at the subject/object.</p>	<p>A low-angle can make the subject appear powerful or more dominant.</p>
	<p><b>worms-eye view angle</b> – an extreme low-angle where the camera is practically looking straight up (as if we were a worm!)</p>	<p>A worms-eye view angle makes the subject/object appear extremely powerful. In this shot though we can see that it is showing the steep drop that Henry is hovering over, and emphasises his peril.</p>



	<p><b>establishing shot -</b></p>	
	<p><b>over-the-shoulder shot</b> – when the camera is placed looking over a character’s shoulder</p>	<p>An over-the-shoulder shot is typically used to position the audience on the side of the hero. We can see the action from their perspective and this helps us to engage with their story.</p>
	<p><b>tracking movement</b> – when the camera follows the action</p>	<p>If the tracking movement is smooth it can help to create a sense of realism as we focus on the action within the frame. If the tracking movement is handheld and therefore shakier, this can heighten the frantic mood of the scene.</p>
	<p><b>two-shot</b> – when two characters are featured in the frame.</p>	<p>The effect depends on the characters positioning within the scene. In the first frame on the left the characters are walking side-by-side, and so the two-shot helps to connote that they are working together.</p>
		<p>However, the second frame shows the characters far apart and facing one another, the two –shot helping to emphasise the distance between them signalling that they are adversaries.</p>

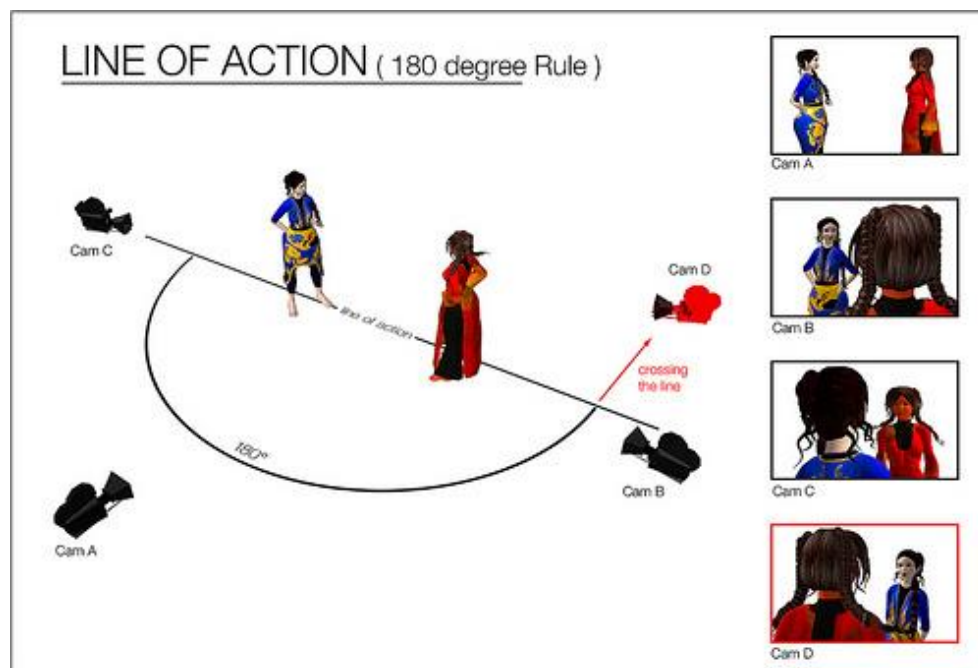


**180 degree-line rule** – when the camera only stays on one side of the action.

In these shots you can see the 180 degree-line rule being broken, because we move to the other side of the action, the characters has seemingly swapped sides.

This can help to ensure the audience do not become disorientated.

When the 180 degree-line rule is used it can signal a sense of realism and ease. However, if it is broken it can make the audience feel uneasy and so might signal a stressful moment.





## Mise-en-scene

**Lighting (general)** – can be used to highlight important characters

**High Key Lighting** – A bright and well lit scene with very few shadows. Often used to make a location or character seem friendly, happy, safe.

**Low key Lighting** – a dimly lit scene with lots of shadows. Often used to make a location or character seem shady, untrustworthy, dangerous, unsafe e.g. the opening establishing shot of the factory.

**Chiaroscuro Lighting** – a scene lit with extreme lighting, lots of shadows, some very bright parts. See the effects of low key lighting. Also used to make a location or character seem very dramatic and unusual.



**Natural Lighting** – a scene where the lighting appears to be natural e.g. daylight. This can add to the realism of the scene. If a scene doesn't seem particularly bright or dark, it's most likely just natural lighting. Natural lighting is important in Luther because it gives a sense of verisimilitude, which is conventional for crime drama which seeks to have a realist narrative.



**Body Language** – the way a character's body looks and the way they hold their body e.g. confident, slumping down, cowering from someone. It tells us what type of

person they are and how they feel about others. We might say that Luther has very confident body language, with a 'swagger' as he walks, which connotes his high status and maverick character type.

**Facial Expression** – the way a character's face looks and shows emotion. For example, a shocked expression, sadness, a look of love. You can also comment on the way they look such as interesting features such as bad teeth, small, squinty eyes. It tells us what type of person they are and how they feel about others.

**Props** – Items a character possesses or picks up e.g. a gun or a bunch of flowers. They can tell us lots about what type of person someone is.



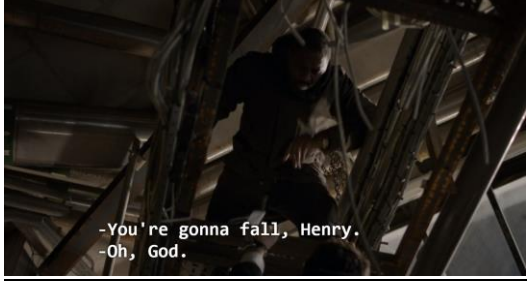
**Costumes** – clothes a character is wearing. You could comment on the style, shape, choice of item, colour, etc. They can tell us lots about a character, what type of person they are, how they are feeling etc. For example, Luther's smart suit and heavy coat tells us that he has high status in the police because he doesn't wear a police uniform – we can see this contrast when he is with Ripley. Alice's trouser suit costume suggests that she is an intelligent woman, with power, and is serious about her activities.






**Hair & Make Up** – the appearance of the hair of a character and the cosmetics a character might be wearing such as lipstick, a skin head etc. They tell us things about the character. For example, a woman wearing very little make up might be seen as being very naive and innocent. Alice's red hair and red lips connote her character as the 'femme fatale', who will lure Luther into her dangerous game using her sexuality.



**Location** – A place where the scene is set. A location can tell us lots about the people in it. For example, the establishing shot at the start of the episode of the factory shows barbed wire, low key lighting, with foreboding non-diegetic sound, all suggesting that this is not a safe place and that Luther is in danger here. Don't forget to look out for how a character reacts to their location as well (e.g. if they are comfortable there or not, do they belong there?)

## Camerawork

	<p>Establishing shot: a wide shot used at the start of a new scene to tell the audience where it is set to take place.</p>	<p>An ES can give information such as the atmosphere of the location, the weather (think pathetic fallacy), whether it is safe or dangerous.</p>
	<p>Close-up shot: The camera is close to the subject of the shot i.e. the face fills the screen. It can also be focused on an object to imply its importance.</p>	<p>A CU on a face can allow us to see the character's facial expression, to determine their state of mind or mood. In this shot we can see the determination and anger in Luther's facial expression as he catches up to Henry.</p>
	<p>Low-angle: the camera is in a low position looking up at the subject of the frame.</p>	<p>A low-angle might connote that the person is more powerful, has a high status, or is more intimidating than others. In these two low angle shots of Luther we interpret that he is in a position of power over</p>

 <p>-Where's Mia? -(STAMMERS) I don't know.</p>		<p>Henry, and Henry's life is in Luther's hands.</p>
 <p>-Stay away from Zoe! -Is this what you did to Henry Madsen?</p>	<p>High-angle: The camera is positioned to look down at the character.</p>	<p>A high angle might make a characters appear inferior, weak, having low status, of losing a battle, depending on the context. In this shot we can see Luther overpowering Alice with his physical strength.</p>
 <p>She's already gotten away with it once and she's eyeing her next victim.</p> 	<p>Two-shot: when two characters are shown in the frame, usually next to one another.</p>	<p>A two-shot might suggest a connection between two characters. In the first frame we can see Ian walking slightly behind Luther, which might also tell us that Luther is the more powerful and important of the two. In the second frame we can see Luther and Alice closely positioned within the frame, reminding us of their inappropriate flirtation, which is unconventional for the genre.</p>
	<p>Tracking movement: when the camera follows the action.</p>	<p>If we are following a character, particularly from behind, it can help to position the audience on that character's side, as we see here following Luther.</p>