

# Film Study Example

## Analysing Camera Techniques

In this lesson, we look at some of the camera techniques that have been used in the short film *Come See the Bioscope*, and we discuss possible reasons why they were chosen, and the effects that they have created.

### Lesson Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- identify a range of camera shots and angles in the film, *Come See the Bioscope*
- comment on the effects that these have created

### Curriculum Links

#### LO 2: Reading and viewing

- recognise the use of visual, audio and audio-visual techniques such as the use of colour, dialogue, music, sound, lighting, editing, framing, styles of shot, camera techniques, foregrounding and backgrounding (linked to task)

### Lesson notes

When analysing a film sequence in a test or exam, you should be able to

- identify the camera technique that has been used
- state why you think this technique was chosen
- describe the effect that it has created
- comment on the effectiveness of the technique

Below, several scenes from the film *Come See the Bioscope* have been analysed using this approach.

#### Opening sequence

- In the first shot that we see of Mmusi the cinematographer has used a rock overhang to show us the action from an interesting visual perspective. We see the car filmed from a high angle – this gives us an interesting perspective, and helps to set the scene because we see the natural surroundings.
- This shot is also a point-of-view shot, because we are seeing the car and the man in it from the perspective of the small boys.
- Seeing the action from the perspective of another person helps us to develop empathy with that character as we see things as they see them. To the small boys, the stranger in the car looks very grand and impressive.

#### Bioscope sequence

- As part of this sequence, we are shown a full shot of the policeman who comes to break up Plaatje's bioscope viewing session. The full shot enables us to observe the character's costume and body language.
- We can see that the policeman doesn't approve of the bioscope – he uses an aggressive tone of voice and his gestures also indicate that he is being authoritative.
- The close-up of his facial expression shows that he is forbidding and contrasts with the tone of enjoyment and wonder of the audience. The fact that he is white and wearing a policeman's

uniform also makes him a symbol of the apartheid government.

#### Studying a film

It is worth keeping notes on your set film to refer to when you are revising for exams. One way of doing this is to use a table to record significant components of each scene.

- Keep list of what **characters** were involved.
- Note the **film techniques** that have been used, including camera shots, angles & movement, focus and lighting.
- Keep a record of the **soundtrack**, including important dialogue, music and sound effects.
- Record the **effect** that the soundtrack film techniques and action create. For example, do they make you see a character in a positive light or do they set an ominous mood?
- Finally, write down your comments on how **effective** you think the various components of the film have been. Think about whether they add to your understanding or experience of watching the film.

### TASK

Watch the opening sequence and complete the following table:

Characters	Film techniques	Soundtrack	Effect	Effectiveness