Technical terms for close viewing

Use with Phantom Thread and The Grand Budapest Hotel. Choose the term that matches what you see or hear, then explain its effect.

Camera

Framing
What the camera includes or leaves outside the image.

Composition
The arrangement of people, objects and space within the frame.

Close-up
A shot that frames a face or detail tightly to direct attention to it.

Mid-shot
A shot that usually frames a person from about the waist up.

Camera angle
The camera's viewpoint. A high angle looks down at the subject; a low angle looks up.

Tracking shot
A shot made while the camera travels through space.

Mise-en-scène and meaning

Mise-en-scène
The arrangement of production design, lighting and color within the frame.

Production design
The location, set, costume, make-up and props arranged for a production.

Props
Objects used or placed within a scene, such as a cup, key or letter.

Costume
The clothes and accessories worn by a character.

Color palette
A group of colors selected to work together.

Tone
The attitude or feeling suggested by a media text's choices.

Enigma
An unanswered question that encourages the audience to keep watching.

Lighting

Contrast
The difference between the light and dark areas of an image.

High-key lighting
Bright, even lighting with few deep shadows.

Low-key lighting
Lighting that uses stronger contrast and deeper shadows.

Hard light
Light that produces a distinct shadow edge.

Soft light
Light that produces a gradual shadow edge.

Key light
The main light on a subject.

Fill light
Light used to reduce shadows.

Back light
Light used to separate the subject from the background.

Sound

Diegetic sound
Sound that belongs to the story world, such as dialogue or footsteps.

Non-diegetic sound
Sound added for the audience that does not belong to the story world, such as a musical score.

Off-screen sound
Sound whose source is outside the visible frame.

Editing

Cut
An immediate change from one shot to another.

Shot duration
The length of time a shot lasts.

Editing pace
The speed of a sequence as shaped by shot duration and the frequency of cuts.

Build an explanation: "In [film and scene], the [technique] draws attention to [detail]. This suggests [interpretation] because [reason]."

Definitions adapted from the class camera, mise-en-scène and editing lessons; Cambridge International AS & A Level Media Studies coursebook, §§2.2–2.5; and the Scheme of Work (from 2021), Appendices 1–4. High/low key describes contrast; hard/soft describes shadow edges.