

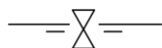


SET DESIGN TEACHING RESOURCE

Students will focus on the artwork from the *Harry Potter* film series and learn how the Production designer tackles a script, examining the process from sketch, to storyboard and model, resulting in the final set.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the role of a Production Designer in the film industry
- To follow the set design process from concept art through to the creation of a finished set
- To analyse how narrative and character are reflected in film sets



LESSON FOCUSES

PRE-VISIT:

Students will research a range of production designers and set decorators and their job roles within the film industry, in preparation for their Set Design lesson at Warner Bros. Studio Tour.

VISIT LESSON:

Students will have the opportunity to study the design plans, white card models and concept art used in the *Harry Potter* film series. They will also create their own miniature white card design for a house.

POST-VISIT:

Using the Warner Bros. Studio Tour set design glossary and house design from the workshop, students will create a set design plan for a film.



SET DESIGN

PRE-VISIT LESSON

Choose a selection of film clips from different genres, which show different types of sets. Ask students to think about how these sets might have been created and why they look the way they do. To look for deeper analysis, students should use the mise-en-scène worksheet.

Consider the relationship between film making and art. How many different jobs might be involved in the creation of a film? Focus particularly on set design. Look at the credits from a film of your choice, paying attention to:

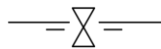
- Production Designer
- Art Director
- Draftsperson
- Concept Artist
- White Card Model Maker

Ask students to present a case study of an individual who has carried out one of these roles (for example, Academy Award winning Production Designer, Stuart Craig or Academy Award winning Set Decorator, Stephanie McMillan). What kind of skills are required for these jobs: an eye for detail, artistic skill, ability to work to a brief? What kind of background does the person they have researched have: did they study artistic qualifications; what else have they worked on?

Students should present their case study to the class. Everyone's ideas can be compiled into a class set of case studies.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

- Mise-en-scène worksheet





SET DESIGN

POST-VISIT LESSON

Students can work in groups of 3-4 and will decide on a film genre. They could also decide on a brief outline of a film and the main characters. Students should research their chosen genre and examine film sets that have been used in this genre in other films. Students can then decide if their design will be typical for their genre or will contradict the genre of their film.

After the students have decided on their initial ideas, they can use the set design glossary to start designing their film set, which will result in the creation of concept art.

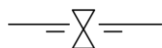
Following on from the concept art, students should make a white card model of the film set they intend to build.

The teacher should provide the pupils with a budget for set decorating and props needed for their film set. Students should consider which props are required for the film set, how much their film set will cost, and where they will acquire the items.

After students have completed their set designs, students should present their ideas and concepts to the rest of the class.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

- Set design glossary





SET DESIGN MISE-EN-SCÈNE

The placing of items in the frame is called mise-en-scène or 'what's in the frame'; the elements of which are:

Setting - including scenery, props, furniture and other set dressing

Costume and make up

Lighting - intensity, source, colour and direction

Character - expression and movement

Props

YOUR TASK - ANALYSE A FILM SEQUENCE AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

Setting

- What is the location? Where does the action take place?
- What details of the location indicate this?
- How does the setting indicate genre?
- Does the setting indicate mood? If so, how?
- What does the setting suggest about the characters? Their status? Culture? Occupation?
- How do props (moveable parts of the setting) contribute to the sense of place?
- How do the props and set dressing indicate the genre of the film? Give examples and explain why?

Costume

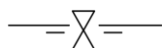
- Do the costumes suggest a certain historical period?
- How does costume indicate genre?
- What does the costume suggest about the character's background and current life?
- How do costume changes indicate the development of characters?
- What do costumes indicate about the way characters feel about themselves?
- What impression do characters want to make on others through their costumes?

Lighting

- What kind of mood does the lighting create in the scene? Are different techniques used to create different moods?
- How does the lighting indicate genre?
- Does the colour of the lighting change from earlier to later scenes? If so, to what effect?

Character movement and expression

- Where are the characters positioned within the frame? Does this reflect their importance? Feelings? Relationships with each other?
- What thoughts, feelings and emotions are evoked by the actors' performances?





SET DESIGN GLOSSARY

Minimalistic

The bare minimum required to facilitate the action.

Realistic

Location created as accurately as possible. Pays great attention to detail.

Symbolic

Through the items on set, an audience will be guided towards an interpretation of the scene. Each item has a symbolic value.

Expressionistic

The themes of the film are brought out or expressed physically.

Composite

All the locations are created within one design. Lighting is used to allow different areas to function as different locations. This is usual for theatre rather than film.

Flats

Flats, short for Scenery Flats, are flat pieces of theatrical scenery which are painted and positioned on set to give the appearance of buildings or other backgrounds. There is an example of a flat in *Diagon Alley*. Visual effects now replace "flats" in many films.

Scale

An important concept in design. You can use scale to create meaning, through size of windows, doors, walls, etc. in relation to the characters who inhabit the set. For example, *Hagrid's hut* set is oversized, so *Harry*, *Ron* and *Hermione* appear very small and the set appears to be huge.

Materials

You should think about what materials to use and the way different materials appear to an audience. The function of the set dictates which material is most appropriate.

Balance

Balance is related to symmetry. Symmetrical balance is the even placement of visual weight in a design. Asymmetrical Compositions are created by uneven spaces and therefore create "tension" in a design.



Unity, Proximity and Variety

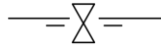
It is a principle focusing on creating a sense of continuity in a design. Proximity or the closeness of objects creates a bond between elements in a design. The relationship of distance between those objects implies their relationship to one another.

Similarity

The condition of elements being visually grouped according to similar features, contours or symmetries.

Colours

Choice of colours create atmosphere and mood for the set design? Consider the colours and textures used in the design of the *Weasleys' kitchen* set.





National Curriculum/Exam Board Links

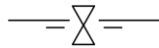
Design and Technology

KS3

To identify and solve their own design problems and understand how to reformulate problems given to them.

GCSE

Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities to address needs and wants.



Product Design

A-level

Analyse and evaluate:

Design decisions and outcomes, including for prototypes made by themselves and others

Wider issues in design and technology.

Art

KS3

To increase their proficiency in the handling of different materials.

GCSE

Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

A-level

Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.

