Words To Images

Production design

Camera views

Line of Action/Continuity

Production Design

Production Design Includes:

- Art Direction
- Visual Character Design
- Production Illustrations
- Storyboards
- Research & Reference

Visual elements to consider:

- **Basic design elements**
  - Different lines and shapes convey different meaning
- **Biological and anatomical specifics**
- **Colour**
- **Posture, facial expressions**
  - Chest out, shoulders back implies confidence (or just muscle definition)
  - Arched back, drooping shoulders, upturned eyebrows implies meekness
- **Exaggeration**
- **Clothing and accessories**

Visual Character Design
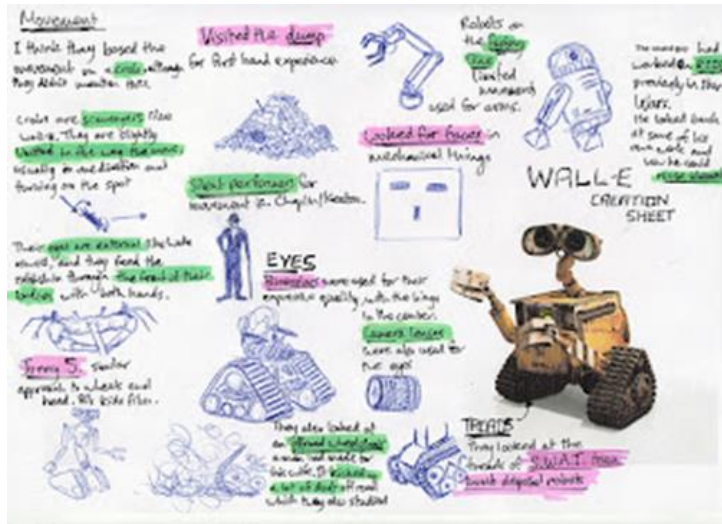
- Designing multiple characters:
  - Include a fair amount of variety (unless you are creating a clone army or swarm of killer robot spiders)
- Contrasting shapes and styles can keep it interesting and allow the characters' dynamics to play off one another.
- Model Sheets
  - Always a good idea. Include a variety of poses, facial expressions as well as head and hand close-ups

The Sliding Scale

- The shorter your piece, the more you must rely on indicative (visual) deign for characterization. Longer films allow you to use behaviour to convey this

Character development
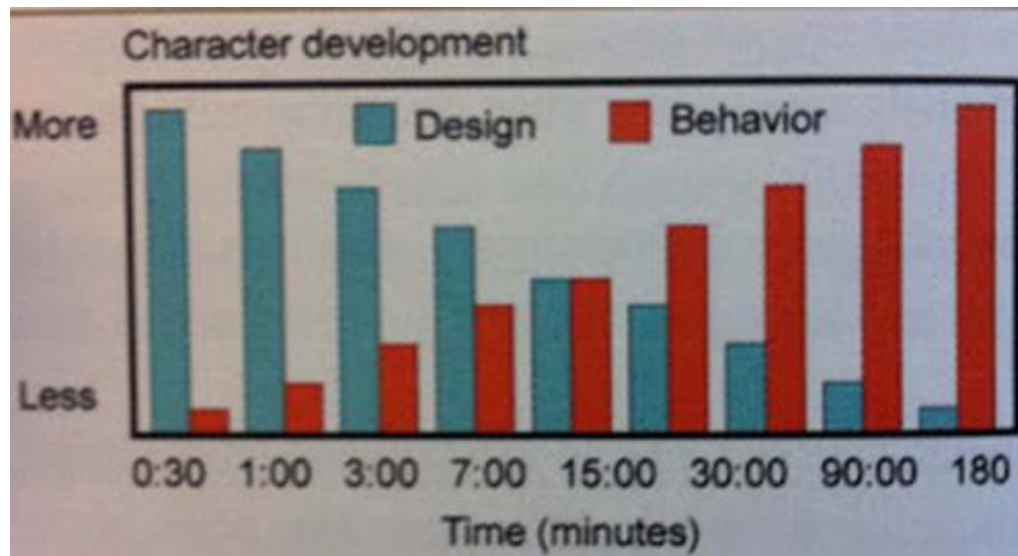
Visual style

- Connect Style with Story
  - Time
  - Place
  - Mood
  - Realism
  - Colour palette
  - Sets and Props, Vehicles
  - Lighting, rendering and post-production

Consider The Camera

Shot Types:

- Extreme Close-up – ECU
- Medium Close-up – MCU
- Close-up – CU
- Medium Shot – MS
- Wide Shot – WS
- Long Shot – LS
- Extreme Long Shot – ELS
- Background – BG
- Foreground – FG
- Over the Shoulder – OTS
- Point of View – POV

Framing Heights
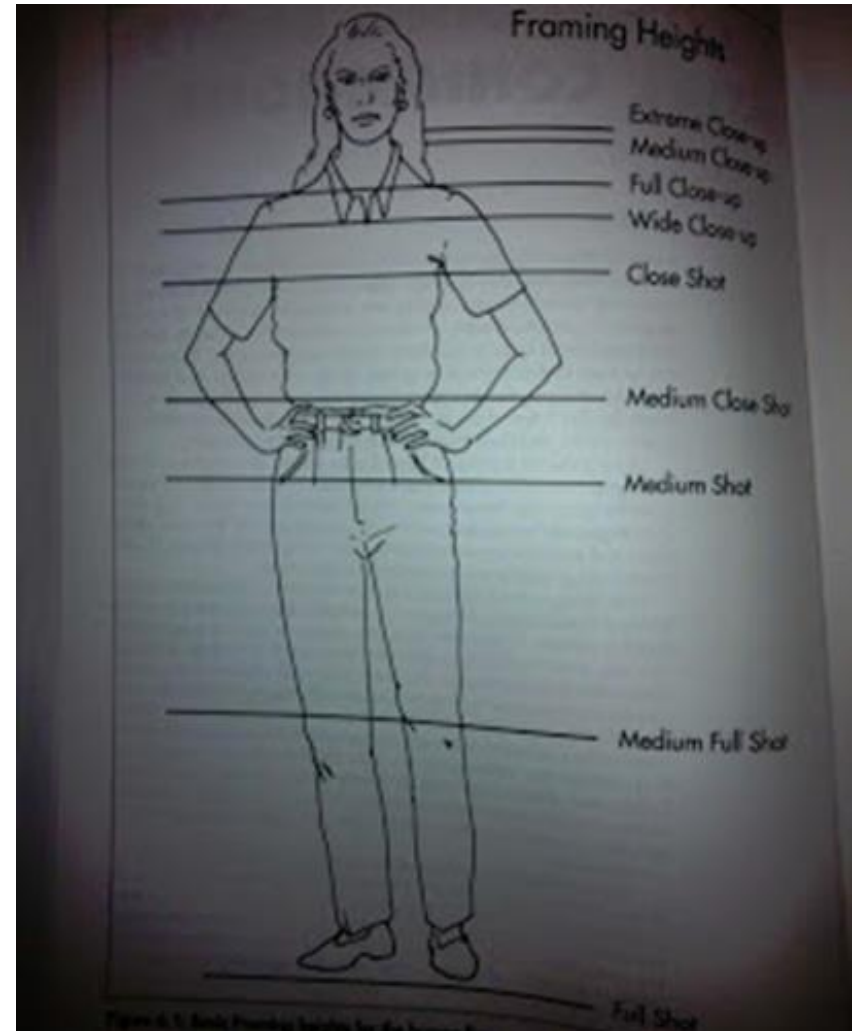
Background VS Foreground

The Background / Foreground

- Can reveal scene elements: what is in focus?
- Can also used with our without characters in the shot
- Can also be transitioned between to move smoothly
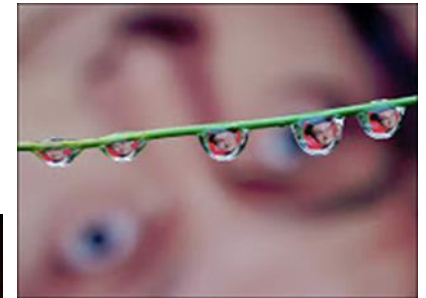
The Over the Shoulder (OTS)

- One of the most common shots in film,
  television, and game cinematics.
  It frames a dialogue speaker with
  the shoulder and back of the head
  of the character being spoken to.
- Can mix close, medium and long
  shots in OTS

Point of View (POV)

Typical points of view:

- First Person
- Third Person Restricted:
  - As seen by an observer. Most common in Hollywood films and game cinematics
  - Rarely used as the sole POV
  - Most of the time combined with omniscient
- Omniscient
  - We have to know what the characters are thinking for this to work
  - Requires some type of narration / voice-over / graphics
- Gets us in the perspective of a character in the scene
- Makes it more personal, but can be cheesy if over-uses / mistreated (the camera nod)

The Line of Action (Basics)

- The most basic rule of camera placement
- Organizes camera angles to preserve consistent screen direction and space.
- Also useful for organizing the shooting plan.

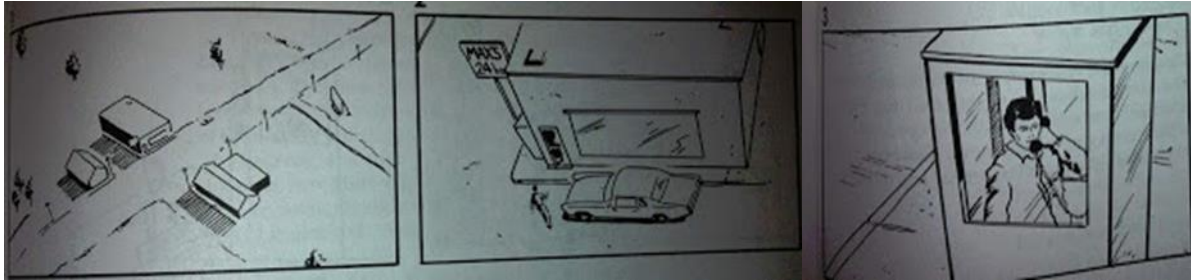Think of it as the imaginary partition running through the space in front of the camera.
Originally devised so that if multiple angles of a scene were shot, they could be cut together without a weird or jarring reversal or left and right screen space
Also called the "180 Degree Rule"
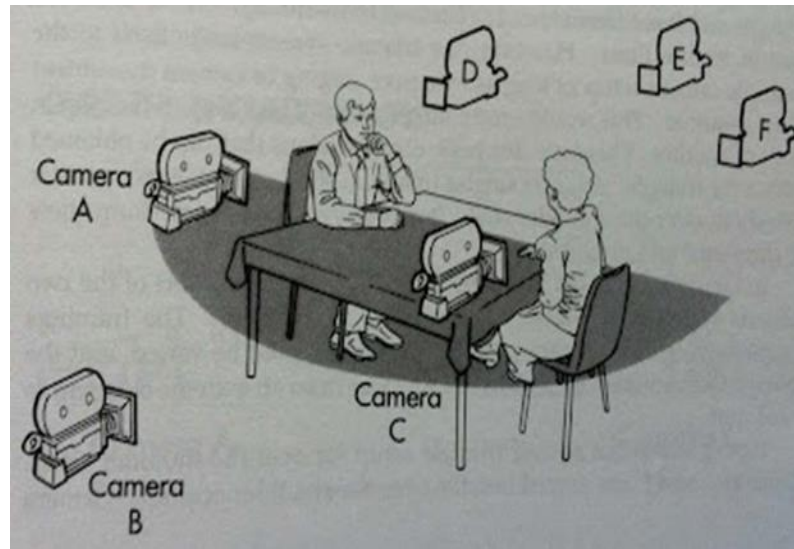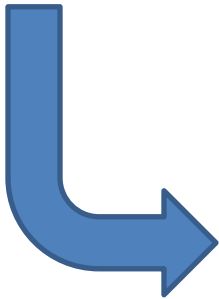
Camera Angles

- Eye- Level View:

- High-Angle View 1

- High-Angle View 2

- Low-Angle View

Storyboarding

- Staging refers to how each individual story beat or action will be conveyed visually.
- An effective combination of camera angles, point of view, composition, placement of characters and objects makes for good staging.
- Storyboards can be quick and rough sketches (thumbnails) or they can be carefully crafted pieces that convey visual style.

- Your first opportunity to work out cinematic issues of your scene (staging, camera, composition, POV etc)
- Keep in mind these can be ironed out in layout, animatic and animation stages, but you definitely want a strong foundation for all of these now.
- Main purpose is to continue refining the visual flow

Just like in 2D animation, draw fast first, then good later.

- Explore! Try things out! Have fun! Experiment! Then refine and edit

Story Beats

Story Beat is a particular piece of action (conversation, chase, fight)

- Every beat should be represented by a scene (so the scene you are creating should usually focus around one beat in your story)
- Each scene consists or a series of shots
- A shot is the space between camera cuts (typically identified as a number appended to a scene abbreviation like WC01 or CB12)
- A single story beat may require numerous shots to tell it.

Decide on the central focus of each shot

- Pay attention to the scene's line of action, indicated by direction an object or camera is facing or travelling (will look at this more in coming weeks)
- Apply traditional image composition principles – rule of thirds, symmetry, balance, lines – can use silhouettes to evaluate your composition

General to Specific

- When you start your storyboard, begin with broad strokes and work on the overall structure before focusing on individual elements and shots.
- See if you can fit your entire scene onto a single sheet of paper with loose rough thumbnails
- Consider each action in your script, then close your eyes and think of the most visually appealing and interesting way of showing this.
- Whose POV? One long shot or several? Can POV change? Can we see multiple character expressions or just 1?...
- Start with simple stick figures, work fast and loose
- One you have explored many options, use the "why" technique to justify / edit your decisions
- Do this for each story point, make sure it's existence is absolutely necessary!
- Once you can see the flow and it makes sense, then focus on the individual actions with an eye for cinematic staging...

Boarding? Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the action being presented?
- From what POV?
- What happened before, what will happen next?
- What is the intended style and mood?

Draw as many rough sketches as it takes to describe each movement effectively.

3 components of each panel:

- Character, object, background imagery
- Movement indicators (frames and arrows)
- Text

Basic camera moves

Write these into your script and storyboards!

- **Cut** – Instant transition to another POV
- **Pan** – Camera rotates to the left or right from a fixed spot
- **Tilt** – Camera rotates up or down from a fixed spot
- **Track** – Camera moves sideways or up/down
- **Dolly** – Camera moves away or towards the action
- **Zoom** – Camera stays in place, but focal lens changes so image gets larger or smaller.
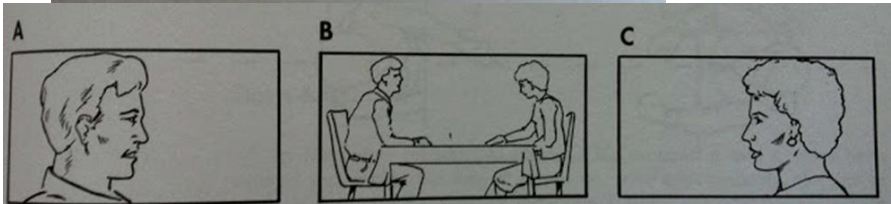
Floor plans + movement

- Sometimes the best way to illustrate character + camera movement is to combine POV frames with a floorplan view of a camera + character moving through a scene.
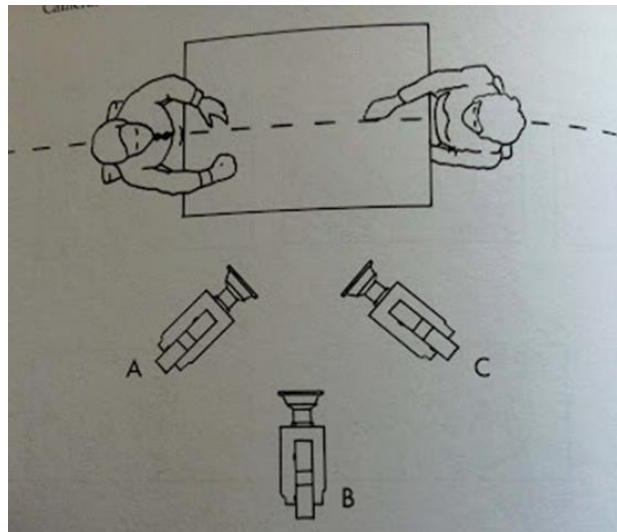
GOOD Line Of Action
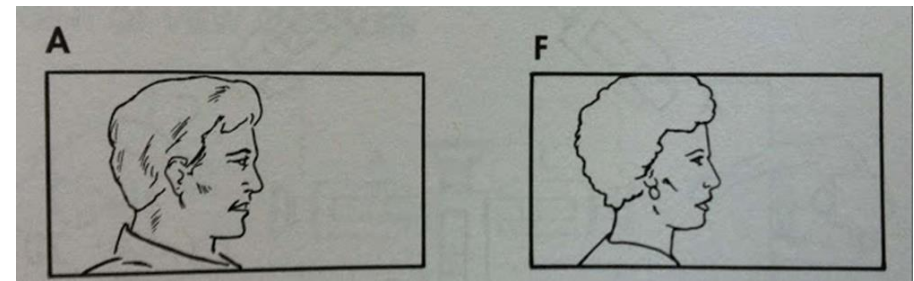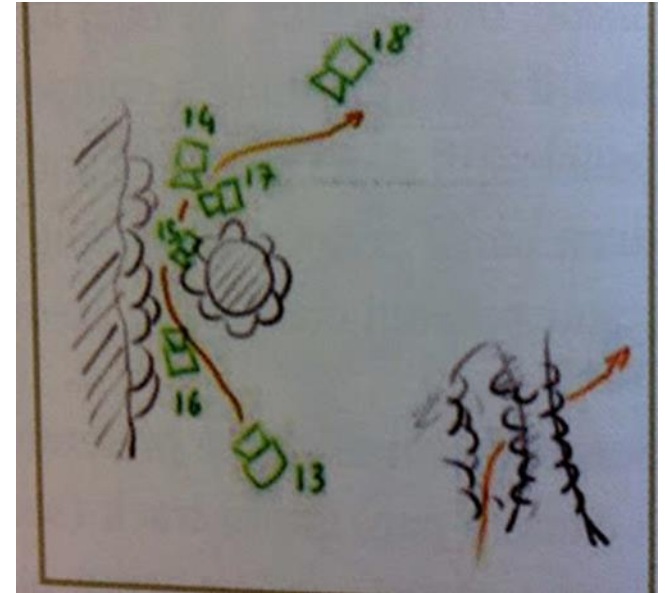
BAD Line Of Action

Homework:

- Scan Thru Movies 101
- Understand the Line Of Action
- Start working on Storyboards – we will look at *rough* boards next week