

# FRAMING *the* SHOT

**F**raming, the overall composition of the shot, is the placement of people and objects within the border of the film frame. Composition greatly influences the audience's experience of a movie and allows the filmmaker to emphasize people or objects that hold more importance than others. For example, if a filmmaker chooses to place a character center and more forward in the frame and light that character more brightly, the audience's attention will focus more directly on that character. The cinematographer generally works with the director to determine how each shot will be framed. But framing isn't unique to filmmaking—still photographers and painters also must determine how they will frame their compositions.

In a book or on the Internet, find a picture of a painting that especially appeals to you. Consider the following questions as you view the painting. How did the artist “frame” the painting? How are the people and/or objects in the painting arranged? How did the artist light the scene through use of light and shadow?

Name of painting: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

In a sentence or two, describe why you think the framing in the painting you selected is effective:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Locate a photograph by Ansel Adams (1902-1984), who is known for his dramatic pictures of western landscapes. Ask yourself the same set of questions as you view the photograph.

Name/description of photograph: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In a sentence or two, describe why you think the way Adams framed his photograph is effective:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Brianne Murphy at work.

**N**ow, using your cardboard viewfinder, practice framing your own photographic compositions. Keep in mind the relationships between the people and objects in each frame, the source of lighting, etc.

Finally, imagine a brief scene that takes place in your school—in the library or cafeteria or on the athletic field, for example.

The location for my scene is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The main characters are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In a sentence or two, describe what happens:

\_\_\_\_\_

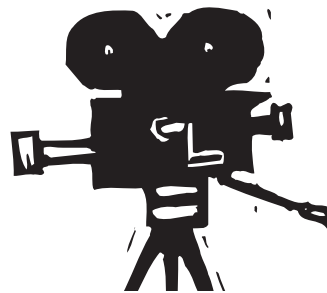
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the tone of your scene?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Part of telling the story is choosing how you would frame each portion of the scene. Divide your scene into ten pieces. With an instant camera or simple sketches, illustrate the story you are telling within the scene.

## THE BASICS OF FRAMING

**Close-up shot:** A very “tight” frame. A close-up of a person is generally just the face. A close-up of an object would include the object alone, or part of the object.

**Medium shot:** A frame that includes much of the object or person. The character might be shown from the waist up, for example.

**Long shot:** A frame that includes the entire object or person along with some of the surrounding environment.