

- **Basic Film Terminology**

- **Flashback:** Shots or a brief scene that interrupt the narrative to show events that happened in the past.
- **Genre:** A commonly recognized group of films that share characteristics and conventions. i.e.: Westerns, Science Fiction, Documentary, Comedy, Action, Musicals, Drama. Many films are regarded as “multi-genre films” because they can be categorized in a number of ways.
- **Shot:** Presents a subject during an uninterrupted segment of time. Once the camera leaves a subject and focuses on another image, you have a new shot. Most films have well over a thousand shots. Rapidly moving from one shot to another can give the film a sense of urgency or excitement. On the other hand, using very few shots in a scene can set a much slower, more deliberate pace for the narrative’s action.
- **Reaction Shot:** A cut to a shot of a character’s reaction to the action of the preceding shot. For instance, the spectator will be shown a monster, and then the camera will cut to the character’s reaction to that monster.
- **Close-Up:** An image in which the subject fills most of the frame (screen) and little of the surroundings are shown. Close-ups are used to direct the viewer’s attention to texture or detail, or the expression on a person’s face. The camera is perceived as being directly in front of the subject of the shot.
- **Point-of-View Shot:** The camera seems to be placed in such a way as to reveal what a particular character is seeing. It almost seems as if that character has the camera strapped on. We see the action in the film through this character’s “eyes.”
- **Voice Over:** A spoken commentary in a movie, often used to convey a character’s thoughts or memories.