

01

THE CAMERA DECIDES WHO LOOKS STRONG.

THE POINT

- Camera height changes who looks strong
- Shot size changes how close we feel
- You choose both before you roll

CAMERA HEIGHT

BELOW LOW ANGLE

Looking up. The subject reads strong

LEVEL EYE LEVEL

Straight on. Equal footing

ABOVE HIGH ANGLE

Looking down. The subject reads small

► WATCH: MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE (1996), THE PRAGUE RESTAURANT

02 LOW ANGLE: LOOKING UP GIVES A CHARACTER POWER.

THE POINT

- Camera below the eyeline, tilted up
- Reads as dominant, threatening or heroic
- The story decides what that power means

WHERE THE LENS SITS

TOP SUBJECT

Towers over the viewer



LENS CAMERA

Below the eyeline, tilted up

► CITIZEN KANE: THE CAMERA SAT IN A HOLE CUT IN THE FLOOR

03

HIGH ANGLE: LOOKING DOWN TAKES IT AWAY.

THE POINT

- Camera above the subject, tilted down
- Reads as small, weak or exposed
- Empty space around them adds to it

WHERE THE LENS SITS

LENS CAMERA

Above the eyeline, tilted down



BOTTOM SUBJECT

Shrinks into the frame

► THE RING: HIGH ANGLE AND EMPTY SPACE LEAVE KATIE EXPOSED

04

OVERHEAD SHOTS WATCH. DUTCH ANGLES UNSETTLE.

THE POINT

- Overhead: 90 degrees down on the scene
- Dutch: the camera tilts on its axis
- Dutch says something is wrong

TWO SPECIAL ANGLES

TOP **OVERHEAD**

Straight down. The audience watches from above

TILT **DUTCH**

Horizon off level. Something is off

► CASINO: THE OVERHEAD MATCHES THE EYE IN THE SKY

05

SHOT SIZE SETS HOW CLOSE THE AUDIENCE FEELS.

THE POINT

- ▶ Wide: place, context and isolation
- ▶ Medium: neutral. Cowboy: a standoff
- ▶ Close-up: emotion and thought

FOUR SIZES

WS WIDE

Whole body and the room around it

MS MEDIUM

Waist up. Neutral

CU CLOSE-UP

The face fills the frame

ECU EXTREME CLOSE-UP

One detail: eyes, hands

▶ 12 YEARS A SLAVE HOLDS ONE MEDIUM CLOSE-UP FOR 483 SECONDS

06

MOVE IN AS THE TENSION RISES.

THE POINT

- ▶ Wide for setup, medium as it builds
- ▶ Close-up for the moment that matters
- ▶ Lower the camera on whoever gains power

THE PROGRESSION

01 WIDE

Setup. Where are we?



02 MEDIUM

Rising action. Who wants what?



03 CLOSE-UP

Climax. What do they feel?

▶ PRACTICE: SHOOT ONE EXCHANGE TWICE AND FLIP WHO HOLDS POWER

07

ASK THREE QUESTIONS BEFORE EVERY SETUP.

THE POINT

- ▶ Who holds the power in this moment?
- ▶ Where does the camera sit to show it?
- ▶ How close should the audience be?

WRITE IT ON THE SHOT LIST

SIZE **SHOT 04A**

Two-shot, cowboy framing

ANGLE **LOW ON A**

A takes control here

ANGLE **HIGH ON B**

B loses the argument

COLUMNS SIZE ■ ANGLE ■ REASON

▶ EVERY ANGLE ON THE LIST NEEDS A STORY REASON