

Analysis of Doctor Who, June 2009 AS Examination

The following notes are **selected examples** from the extract only.

Camera Shot, Angle and Composition

- Mid shot of female character, Martha Jones framed with two security guards behind, signifying imprisonment, or that she is held captive. In a mid shot, Martha glances to the left creating the impression that she is looking at something or someone.
- Cut to a tracking shot left to right shot of three 'servants' apparently under arrest, signified by the uniformed guard who is holding an armed rifle. Cut back to the framing of Martha Jones who is looking nervously ahead, the camera shot is taken from a high angle, creating a perspective of fear or not knowing.
- Cut to a mid shot of the Master, from a low angle, this suited character has a menacing appearance to him, the camera cut back to the female as she then looks right, signify continual awareness of what is around her. Cut to an a blackened faced man who is also held captive (Captain Jack) who has 'been in the wars'.
- There is the use of gradual zooms in this sequence of shots to signify the movement of the character as slow, meaningful, perhaps hesitant? This is anchored by the atmosphere of the music as is the Martha Jones who is on parade or about to bow/ become subservient to the Master.
- In contrast, earth is represented by the shots of the female character, who is on a journey informing the people of the crucial name they all need to chant: Doctor. Earth is represented as gloomy and in danger. Earth's inhabitants appear dull and dressed in mundane rags.

Mise en scène

- In metamorphosis the doctor is surrounded by a radiant blue light as he changes from a fragile old man to the his real self. The dominance of the field of light is a part of the special effect, which signifies an empowered Doctor. This can clearly be contrasted to the feeble old man who was caged by the Master. A rejuvenated doctor is strong, confident and at the top of his powers, signified by the ineffectiveness of the Master's ray gun in trying to kill the Doctor.
- The use of costume and performance is important to the extract. The humans are represented by the 'ordinariness' of their costume and actions. In contrast, the Master is bold smart and well presented, he is surrounded by armed guards with weapons, the woman to his right in a red dress, is represented as an object as she stands by his side, as do his uniformed male helpers to his left.
- For most of the extract the Master is positioned powerfully in the frame whilst he controls the interior of the spaceship and the characters, the Doctor undergoes a transformation when the Doctor becomes a man again, he is

reborn and becomes a powerful challenger to the Master's powers, which have evaded him by the end of the extract.

Sound

- The exposure of the Master's weapon 'tings' and the zap of the laser gun at the end of the sequence, signifies weapon like qualities. These sounds are diegetic and apart of the world of the drama. The pulses of music are used to signify moments of flashback and function as signposts for these narrative changes.
- The wind is harrowing as Martha Jones walks the earth and the metallic jingle, which accompanies the Doctor's metamorphosis signifies the magic of the transformation.
- Confidence is exuded by the Master's voice and the dialogue is important in the function of the narrative, for example in his glee and oratory in destroying earth. The voice of the Martha Jones is important and significantly develops and becomes more pronounced, when the extract reveals her role as the messenger, this voice changes from the timid to be more confident and louder as she explains her role in the Master's downfall.

Editing

- The editing is characterised by the use of cut transitions and the use of transitional flash effects to signpost past events. The pacing of the extract is important at the beginning of the sequence it is slow and orchestrated as the female character slowly marches towards the Master – this slowness in the sequence of shots signifies her attention, to what is happening around her.
- The editing is more dramatic and faster paced when the prime minister is controlling the technology and in conversation, where editing provides continuity through the use of character perspective and functions to carry the narrative forward.
- There is plenty evidence of the use of shot reverse shots, for example in dialogue between Martha Jones and the Master. The use of the 180-degree rule is evidenced in the dialogue led drama, these are combined with the shot selections outlined above. The use of the shot reverse shot provides continuity in the narrative as the plot is revealed and develops specific points of view for the audience, particularly in relation to the conversation between Martha Jones and the Doctor.

Representation

- Martha Jones is represented as a strong woman who acts centrally to the function of the narrative and is a messenger. Martha is a confident woman and it is she who helps the Doctor defeat the Master. She is articulate and confident, yet calm under pressure. The Doctor's success is due to her intelligent and calm actions and her role of delivering the message to the four corners of the earth.