RRFC Quiz 9 Answers

1. Describe the basic duties of a DP. Explain the difference between a director of photography and a cinematographer.

The basic duties of a DP include that the visual image is captured at the highest possible quality. The difference between the cinematographer and the DP is that the DP does not operate the camera whereas the cinematographer does. The cinematographer controls the lights on a set and moves the camera in a unique way to capture the Imagery in a scene in an artistic way.

1. What jobs comprise the director of photography’s crew? What are the duties of each member of his team?

The jobs of the DP’s crew consist of: 1st assistant camera operator (focus puller), and 2nd camera operator (clapper and loader, also probably carries a lot of batteries. Also, part of the DP’s crew are grips and gaffers. The Gaffer is the one in charge of lights and those who help him are grips.

1. Why is depth perception important when lighting an actor?

When we use only one camera, we don’t have the advantage of what we call stereo imaging. Stereo imaging is the natural process of using two cameras (our eyes) and combining them to create what we understand to be depth perception. When we light our subject or actor different from the background we are recreating a process similar to stereo imaging with only one camera and creating depth within an image.

1. What are the three main lights used in cinematography? How are they used together to create "the visual image"?

Key, Fill and backlights are the three main lights that are used create the visual image. The key light is placed primarily in front of the subject that is being filmed, the purposes of this light is to make sure the subject is lit, the following light is the fill light. The fill light is used to restore any shadows to an image or perhaps creating an atmosphere intended for a scene or production. Finally, the third light used in a production is the backlight. The backlight is used to light used to light the background to differentiate the distances within a shot.

1. What is the difference between tungsten incandescent and HMIs? What is the purpose of each?

Tungsten lights give you a yellowish tint and they are made to imitate indoor lights or lights that are made to create moods, HMIs or daylights are used to imitate daylight or outside light, sometimes they are used together and you call that, salt and pepper.

1. What are some of the other tools a director of photography will use to create lighting effects?

Depending on what type of light color intensity a DP will use scrims or gels to change create different lighting effects.

1. What are the different parts of a camera?

There are five main components to a camera: the light-tight box, your choice of lens, a shutter, an iris and a flat surface opposite of the lens. This surface is called the focal plane.

1. Why is "vetting" your DP so important? When vetting him, what characteristics are you looking for? What do you want to avoid?

A primary reason for vetting you DP as a director is working relationship between the DP and the director, because they are both responsible for the image and bringing something to life, if they don’t agree, there will be a problem…with everything. “there is a difference between art and industry”.

You want to avoid key differences in opinion of the look of the film and how to accomplish it.

You want your DP to have a profile or similar work to the look you are trying to accomplish in the film. He or she must be easy to work with, smart, experienced and competent, you’ll find these things out by looking at previous work as well as checking with his or her references.

1. What is the most important quality of a camera?

The most important quality of a camera is the Light sensitive surface on the light box, either film or digital sensor, of this surface becomes damaged, scratched or dirty at any time it can ruin a camera.

1. What is a lens and what is its primary purpose?

A lens is a “collection of glass elements of different shapes mounted in a barrel made of metal or plastic for the primary purpose of forming a sharp image in the field of view of the camera. (sic)”

1. What is focal length and what does it affect?

Focal length is the distance between the lens and the object being focused on, zooms allow for a camera to manipulate this look, however the background and fore ground are emphasized when changing the focal length.

1. What is controlled by the iris?

The iris controls the light intensity level allowed to travel through to the film, it allows the image to be darker or lighter.

1. What does the shutter control?

The shutter controls the length of time that light is exposed to the film. Shutter speed is measured in fractions of time, the longer it is open, the more light will affect your picture.

1. In your own words, why is well executed sound important?

Sound can make or break a film, it isn’t only the line, but also the post. The execution of sound is important because it is the element that can make an experience and film different than just a picture or a memory.

1. Who generally comprises a sound crew?

A sound crew is comprised of a mixer, a boom operator and two assistants.

1. Why does the mixer need to make sure levels are kept within a proper range?

If sound is recorded at different levels or ranges that are too high or low they become distorted. Matching sound for appropriate effect in post becomes more difficult, and costs more.

1. What are the tasks of a sound assistant?

Tasks of sound assistant vary based on the size of the production. The tasks assigned to sound assistants include: attaching wireless mics to actors, wrapping cables, changing batteries on the wireless devices and making sure cables are out of the way.

1. What is time code used for?

Time codes are used for editing purposes, in post you can used time code to superimpose sound and help edit different scenes.