Name: _____ Date: _____

The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Circle group

Watch a movie. You hear footsteps, a creaking door, and the rustle of a jacket. Those sounds often did not come from the scene. A Foley artist added them later. This person makes everyday sounds in a quiet studio while watching the film on a screen.

The craft is named for Jack Foley. He worked on sound effects in early Hollywood. Why do films need this work? The microphones on a set aim at the actors' voices. They miss small sounds. They also pick up noise like wind and cars. The Foley artist fills in the gaps.

The studio looks like a junk shop. The floor has patches of gravel, wood, tile, and dirt. The artist walks on what the character walked on. Shelves hold many shoes, because a boot sounds different from a sandal. A bag of cornstarch gets squeezed and sounds like footsteps in snow. Coconut shells sound like a horse running. A leather glove flapped fast can sound like a bird's wings.

Timing is important. The artist watches each shot and matches each step. A step that is too early or too late spoils the picture. If the work is good, nobody notices it. That is the best praise.

Questions

1. What is a Foley artist?

_____

_____

2. Why do films need sounds added later?

_____

_____

3. Who is the craft of Foley named after?

_____

_____

4. What does the artist squeeze to sound like footsteps in snow?

_____

_____

5. Why would a studio keep many kinds of shoes on its shelves?

_____

_____

6. Why is it good when nobody notices the Foley sounds?

_____

_____

Words to know

craft: a job that takes special skill and practice
gravel: small pieces of stone, like the ones on a path

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Triangle group

When you watch a movie, the footsteps, the creaking doors, and the rustle of a jacket may seem to come straight from the scene. Very often they do not. The sounds were added months later by a Foley artist, a sound worker who recreates everyday noises in a quiet studio while watching the finished film on a screen.

The craft is named for Jack Foley, an early sound-effects worker in Hollywood who developed the method of performing sounds in time with the picture. The reason it is needed is practical. Microphones on a film set are aimed at the actors' voices, and they often miss small sounds or pick up unwanted noise such as wind and traffic. A Foley artist fills in the gaps.

The studio looks like a junk shop. The floor has pits and patches of gravel, wood, tile, and dirt, so that the artist can walk on whatever the character walked on. Shelves hold shoes of every kind, because a boot sounds different from a sandal. A bag of cornstarch, squeezed in the hands, makes a crunch that sounds like footsteps in snow. Coconut shells knocked on a hard surface imitate the hoofbeats of a galloping horse. A leather glove flapped quickly can stand in for the wings of a bird.

Timing matters as much as the props. The artist watches each shot and matches every step and movement exactly. A footstep that lands a fraction too early or too late breaks the illusion. When the work is done well, audiences never notice it at all, and that is the highest compliment a Foley artist can earn.

Questions

1. What is a Foley artist?

_____

_____

2. Why do films need sounds added later?

_____

_____

3. Who is the craft of Foley named after?

_____

_____

4. What does the artist squeeze to make the crunch of footsteps in snow?

_____

_____

5. Why might a Foley studio keep shelves full of different shoes?

_____

_____

6. Why is it a compliment when audiences never notice the Foley work?

_____

_____

Words to know

recreates: makes something again, as close to the original as possible
craft: a job that takes special skill and practice
gravel: small pieces of stone, like the ones on a path
imitate: to copy the sound or look of something
illusion: something that seems real but is not

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Square group

When you watch a movie, the footsteps, the creaking doors, and the rustle of a jacket may seem to come straight from the scene itself. Very often they do not. Those sounds were added months afterward by a Foley artist, a sound specialist who recreates ordinary noises in a quiet studio while closely watching the finished film projected on a screen.

The craft takes its name from Jack Foley, an early sound-effects worker in Hollywood who developed the method of performing sounds in perfect time with the picture. The need for it is entirely practical. Microphones on a film set are aimed at the actors' voices, and they frequently miss delicate sounds or record unwanted noise such as wind and passing traffic. The Foley artist fills in all of the gaps.

The studio resembles a junk shop. Its floor contains pits and patches of gravel, wood, tile, and dirt, so that the artist can walk across whatever surface the character walked across. Shelves are crowded with shoes of every kind, because a heavy boot sounds nothing like a light sandal. A bag of cornstarch, squeezed in the hands, produces a crunch that convincingly imitates footsteps in snow. Coconut shells knocked against a hard surface stand in for the hoofbeats of a galloping horse, and a leather glove flapped rapidly can pass for the wings of a bird.

Timing matters as much as the props. The artist studies each shot and matches every step and gesture precisely, since a footstep that lands a fraction of a second too early or too late shatters the illusion. When the work is done well, audiences never notice it at all, and that is the highest compliment a Foley artist can hope to earn.

Questions

1. What is a Foley artist, and where does the work take place?

_____

_____

2. Why do films need sounds added after filming is finished?

_____

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3. From whom does the craft of Foley take its name?

_____

_____

4. What does the artist squeeze in the hands to imitate footsteps in snow?

_____

_____

5. Why would a Foley studio crowd its shelves with shoes of every kind?

_____

_____

6. Why is it the highest compliment when audiences never notice the Foley work?

_____

_____

Words to know

recreates: makes something again, as close to the original as possible
craft: a job that takes special skill and practice
gravel: small pieces of stone, like the ones on a path
imitate: to copy the sound or look of something
illusion: something that seems real but is not

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Easier · 202 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. A person who makes everyday sounds in a studio while watching the film.
2. Set microphones aim at voices, so they miss small sounds and pick up noise.
3. Jack Foley, who worked on sound effects in early Hollywood.
4. A bag of cornstarch.
5. A boot sounds different from a sandal, so the footsteps must match the character.
6. It means the sounds fit the picture so well that they seem real.

Triangle: The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

This passage · 271 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.9

1. A sound worker who recreates everyday noises in a studio while watching the finished film.
2. Set microphones aim at voices, so they miss small sounds and pick up unwanted noise.
3. Jack Foley, an early sound-effects worker in Hollywood.
4. A bag of cornstarch.
5. A boot sounds different from a sandal, so each character needs the right kind of footstep.
6. It means the sounds fit the picture so well that they seem to belong to the scene.

Square: The Foley Artist's Studio of Odd Props

Harder · 290 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9.2

1. A sound specialist who recreates ordinary noises in a quiet studio while watching the finished film.
2. Set microphones focus on voices, so they miss delicate sounds and record unwanted noise like wind and traffic.
3. Jack Foley, an early sound-effects worker in Hollywood.
4. A bag of cornstarch.
5. A heavy boot sounds nothing like a light sandal, so each footstep must suit the character.
6. It shows the added sounds fit the picture so perfectly that they seem to belong to the scene.