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Writing Assignment 2, Mise en scene  
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The mise en scene of a scene is often used to promote certain ideas, notions, or feelings about the film, characters, or environment. Color, setting, and framing may be used to convey these ideas. The audience may be further influenced by many other things as well, such as whether or not they recognize the actors and connect them to previous roles, or see them entirely as the current character. (nice opening!)

In the opening scene of *The Dark Knight*, the director and cinematographer chose to use a realistic color scheme. Most of the lighting, both exterior and interior comes from sunlight. They may have chosen to use realistic color to promote the idea that this film will be a more realistic take on these comic book characters than is usually seen. Batman, the Joker, and similar characters are often portrayed more imaginatively. The use of realistic color assists the opening scene in creating a proper introduction as a mostly serious and realistic film.

The opening shots are loosely framed and tighter shots occur mainly when a character is shown in close-up, which does not occur often in the opening scene of the film. Loose framing allows the characters room to move around freely allowing the audience to see what each character is doing, how they are reacting to the environment and in turn, how the surrounding environment is responding to their actions. ~~The audience is able to see what each character is doing, how they are reacting to the environment, and in turn, how the surrounding environment is responding to their actions.~~ The loose framing especially helps once the bank manager begins shooting at the criminals, as the criminals are given room in the frame to scatter away sporadically, searching for cover.   
 The primary focus of this scene is on the group of criminals breaking into the bank. Most of them are wearing masks, creating less opportunities for the audience to personalize them. Each mask is unique however, allowing the audience to separately identify each criminal. The hostages are not recognizable actors which better serves their purpose in the film as everyday people of Gotham. William Fichtner, as the bank manager, is the only truly recognizable actor in the scene. He is cast to type as an antagonistic character to the primary characters, the criminals, and therefore striving towards well-meaning goals.

Heath Ledger disappears into his role as the Joker in the opening scene and throughout the movie. Ledger is cast in this film very much against the type as a psychotic criminal as opposed to the type of heartthrob he has played in past roles. The other criminals are primarily used in this scene as a means to complete the bank robbery and as pawns in the Joker’s scheme. The bank manager, William Fichtner, acts as the primary antagonizing source, outside of the criminals, trying to stop them from carrying out the theft. He is also very important in this scene as he bears witness to the revelation of the Joker as one of the criminals and as the primary antagonist of the film

The opening scene was shot on location in Chicago, (revise following phrase) as was just about all of Gotham throughout the film. The bank scene was filmed at the old Chicago Post Office building. The use of real locations in this scene helps to further the realistic feeling of the film. This setting, as a bank, also serves to act as a convincing location where a robbery would take place, establishing the film as a crime drama. The use of Chicago as Gotham in the film allows the city to be much more believable as a real living and breathing place than in most previous Batman depictions.   
 The mise en scene evident here functions to help the opening scene be more believable as a whole. The color, setting, framing, and even the actors assist the opening scene with its purpose of setting an introduction to a realistic film with outlandish elements.