Get Out - Character Establishment - Script

	In Act 1 of a narrative, screenwriters and directors establish a character's traits, goals, and motivations. While this can be achieved through dialogue or voiceover, the very best storytellers establish characters using the language of cinema. They establish their characters using…
Clip from Garden State	…camera…
Clip from No Country for Old Men	…acting…
Clip from One Hour Photo	…mise en scene…
Clip from The Bourne Supremacy	…editing…
The Departed	…lighting…
The Dark Knight	…and sound…
Title card	In this video, we're going to take a look at character establishment in Jordan Peele's Get Out. We're going to explore how Peele establishes the character of Chris Washington, Daniel Kaluuya, through the economic use of media language. Everything the audience needs to know about this character is conveyed in the first few minutes of the film.
Photographs	After the film's prologue and credit sequence, Peele cuts to a series of shots showing what he describes in the screenplay as 'striking urban photography': a man holding balloons, the bare stomach of a pregnant woman, a dog pulling on its chain.
Shot of Chris thumbing through DSLR	Later in the scene, after Rose emerges from the elevator, Peele cuts to an extreme close-up of Chris thumbing through more of these striking images on the display of his camera, then to a medium shot as he gazes out the window. This is a good example of how Act 1 establishes that Chris is a very talented photographer without a single line of dialogue.
Two shots of apartment—freeze frame and annotate.	After the initial montage of shots showing Chris's photography, Peele cuts to a full shot of the apartment's interior. The camera dollies in slightly, showing the small but tastefully decorated apartment. Two other large prints decorate the wall. The apartment is neat with polished floorboards. Peele cuts to a reverse shot, the camera dollying back in the opposite direction: another print, a large television, tastefully exposed bricks, and exposed ceiling. It's clear from the decor that Chris is a reasonably successful photographer.
Freeze frame while discussing 'Redbone'. Pull quote of Peele discussing character Redbone.	Peele pans right to reveal a medium shot of Chris wiping steam from the bathroom mirror and starting to shave. Shirtless, it's apparent that he's naturally athletic, a trait that becomes important later in the story. Underneath the opening shots, Peele uses the song "Redbone" by Childish Gambino. According to Peele, the song serves two purposes. While the lyrics "stay woke" refers to the film's themes of racial justice, it also helps to establish Chris as a character who's smart, grounded, and capable of making the right decisions. Peele said in the commentary for the film, "I needed the whole audience to understand that the lead character Chris is woke. He's not an idiot. He's alert and he's going to be making the right decisions."
Parallel editing of Rose and Chris, entering doorway.	Here, the use of parallel editing conveys the relationship between Chris and Rose before she arrives at his apartment. The camera tilts up from a shelf of pastries to reveal Rose as she attempts to decide what she should buy for him. Thinking about Chris, she gives a smile. The parallel editing continues until she arrives at the apartment. Peele uses a two-shot to convey the intimacy as they kiss on the threshold.
Wide shot showing distance, separate framing	In the dialogue scene that follows, the characters are largely framed separately and the scene is staged to convey a distance between them.
Handheld shot of embrace.	When Rose assures him that his race won't be an issue when they meet her parents, they embrace again. Throughout this scene, the gentle handheld quality of the shots lends a sense of realism to the relationship and helps to convey their intimacy.

Pull quote	"It was very important for me to shoot the scene handheld," Peele reveals in the commentary. "Handheld can achieve many things, one of them is a sort of romantic feeling like we're almost in this relationship with them, in the room with them."
Freeze frame of shot embracing.	In this scene, Chris leans forward and embraces her and they're framed in a tight medium close-up. The sense of intimacy in their relationship is conveyed through both this use of shot size and the naturalistic key light that spills in through the window behind them, flaring slightly around the edges of the frame and creating subtle rim lighting around the edges of their faces.
Scene continues to play.	It's at this point that Michael Abels' score enters the sound mix. The soft strings and the plucked guitar notes further establishing this loving relationship.
	And that's how Chris is established in Act One of Get Out. While his character develops as the story progresses, Peele uses these first few minutes to establish his intelligence, athleticism, skill in photography, and his loving relationship.