The Thomas Hardye School

Summer Preparation Task

Film Studies A Level
OCR

Purpose of task:

Enables students to think about film and cinema in an analytical fashion and begin to use film language to express their responses to texts.

Task:

Complete a film analysis of the opening two minutes of a film of your choice.

This may be presented in essay form/poster/PowerPoint/v-blog/ anything imaginative

Use the questions and glossaries below to help structure your work.

- What are the details of the Title, Year, Writer, Producers?
- Historical/Contextual Details: When was the film released? Which events, philosophies, etc. influence this film, and what do we need to know about them? Which genre/tradition does the film belong to? Are there ideas or terms from this work that would be helpful to define? Was this film adapted from another work? How was it received when released?
- What do you think the title means? What do you expect from the film because of it?
- How are the opening credits presented? Why do you think the director chose to present them this way?
- How does the film start? How does this affect you as a viewer?
- Characterization: How are the characters developed? What is their purpose in the film?
- What do they do/wear/say, etc. that establishes this purpose?
- Cinematography: How does the film use colour or light/dark to suggest tone and mood in different scenes? Are there any striking uses of perspective (seeing through a character's eyes, camera angle, etc.)? How does this relate to the meaning of the scene?

Recommended resources:

Film terms

<u>Framing</u>

What's included and excluded in an individual shot.

Very long shot/wide shot - A shot in which figures appear small in the landscape. Often used at the beginning of a film or sequence as an 'establishing shot' to show where the action is taking place; also used to make a figure appear small or isolated.

Long shot - A shot in which a figure can be seen from head to toe.

Mid shot - Shows the figure from approximately the waist to the head. In a mid-shot, you can easily recognise an individual but you can also see what they are doing with their hands.

Medium close up - From chest to head.

Close-up - Head and shoulders, enabling you to easily see facial expressions, so you can see what characters are thinking and feeling.

Big close up - Head only, used when expressions are important.

Extreme close-up - From just above the eyebrows to just below the mouth, or even closer: used to emphasise facial expression or to make the subject appear threatening.

Deadline for Task: First lesson in week commencing 14th September 2026

- Mise-en-Scene: Are there any motifs (scenes, images, colours) that are repeated or have a special impact? When do they occur and what purpose do they serve?

- Sound/Soundtrack: Is sound or silence used to enhance the film? (i.e. create drama, heighten tension, disorient the viewer, aid characterization, foreshadowing, etc.)

- Editing: How and when are scenes cut/organized? Are there any patterns in the way the shots and cuts function?

Other useful terms for shots are: two shot, point of view shot, reaction shot, over-the-shoulder shot, wide-angle shot, telephoto shot, zoom, depth of field, low angle shot, high angle shot, bird's eye shot, tracking, panning, whip pan, tilt, arc, crane shot, hand-held shot, montage, bricolage etc.

<u>Sound</u>

Diegetic sound - sound that the characters can hear.

Non-diegetic sound - sound that we know is not part of what's on screen, such as music (unless there's an orchestra in shot!) and voiceover.

Sound bridge - this uses sound to link two scenes, by having the picture and the diegetic sound change at different points.

Required Stationery and Equipment A Level Film Studies
memory stick
Essential Resources
'Essential Revision for A Level Film Studies' by Mark Dixon
Things to Consider Throughout the Year

Deadline for Task: First lesson in week commencing 14th September 2026