

In other words... More specifics, clarifications, requirements... And how to begin...

**The Independent Study for IB Film is:** A documentary script exploring an aspect of film theory or film history, based on the study of films from more than one country. You are basically choosing some aspect of film-making and comparing or contrasting (or comparing & contrasting) it in two main films.

**Requirements for the Independent Study:**

1) The script must clearly indicate the relationship between the audio and visual elements of the documentary, using the A/V format.

2) Scripts must be 8–10 pages long and must use 12-point Courier font and single spacing.

Notes: a. use cinematic rather than literary terms

b. audience of film students ages 14 to 18

c. primary voice of the documentary must clearly be you

d. must make reference to a minimum of two main films and films must originate from more than one country

3) Four (4) required sources – at least two must be actual book sources and two must be from Academic journals or scholarly/professional publications (start with: [Academic OneFile](#) & [JSTOR](#)).

- why you ask? because books look better and film professionals talking about film are the experts

- if you are testing for IB Film, all sources will need annotations (specifics later)

- you will also include citations for the movies you include in your discussion

4) Even if is not your theme/thesis, reference at least one historical film period/movement (like: Soviet Montage, French New Wave...)

5) Must have a clear theme/thesis\* (“...a documentary film supports an underlying argument, assertion, or claim”)

- this will guide your documentary and will drive the evidence you find and include (evidence from research and evidence from textual analysis)

- while not required, making a comparative statement would be most logical

6) Must include some discussion of filmmaking in the country of origin (for your two major films) related to your topic

**Should Include:**

7) Interviews

- by those relevant to your topic that worked on the films – director, cinematographer, etc. (most films you’ll chose are recent, you should be able to find actual interviews or transcripts of interviews – or look at DVD commentary)

- by critics/film theorists (NOT reviewers) regarding either your particular films or the theory you have chosen

**Formatting Notes:**

8) A/V Format... All descriptions of video and audio elements must be both detailed and specific.

a. In the Audio column:

- Should include the exact dialogue and sound you will hear at each precise moment of production.

- There should be a variety of different audio sources.

b. In the Video column

- a breakdown of all camera placements and movements

- must include shot descriptions

- use a variety of framing points: ECU- extreme close up/ CU- close up / MCU- medium close up / LS- long shot or FS- full shot/ ELS- extreme long shot/ OTS- over the shoulder/etc

- interviews are generally shot with a MCU and have a background that matches the content of the interview

- every shot/footage included must be motivated by the content in the script, audience wants to see examples of what you are talking about

*\*remember: for this, your thesis does not need to prove anything (no “so what” needed), it just needs to demonstrate*

## How to begin:

**A. Choose a Focus** Begin with one non-American movie that you know or want to know better, considering that, decide which of these you should address (and see **B.** below):

### 1) Formalist Theory

Attempts to explain how filmmakers' techniques/style create the movie's layered meanings, looking at how the ingredients of a film affect the outcome. A theory of film study that is focused on the formal, or technical, elements of a film: i.e., the style of the lighting, scoring, sound and set design, shot composition, editing, etc.

*Ask yourself: Is this what I should address, and if so, should I just choose one element (like editing)? Or a few (mise en scene, sound, and editing)? Think: The purpose and effect of \_\_ in film.*

### 2) Genre Theory

Concerned with identifying and analyzing the characteristics of particular genres - looks at a film as a representative of a genre, comparing it with other films from the same genre and finding meaning by identifying shared motifs and/or variations from the expected formula (do they follow/not follow genre conventions)

*Ask yourself: Is this what I can thoroughly research for my Independent Study considering the movie I watched and the others I will reference?*

3) Should I choose another film theory (feminist/queer/etc), based on the movie I chose (I will research the theory on my own)?

### 4) Film History

Choosing a particular period (or periods – though an assessment of film during a relatively similar period of time is most logical) in film history and discussing (comparing) your two main films using your knowledge of film elements, using film language.

*Ask yourself: Is this what I can thoroughly research for my Independent Study considering the movie I watched and the others I will reference? Does my chosen foreign film fit into a particular film making movement (or refer to one?)? What elements of film making should I focus on (editing, country of origin, narrative, etc...).*

## Next steps:

**B) Choose two main movies** from different countries of origin (think about a movie that you are reminded of when watching the non-American film... because it is a similar story, because it has a similar 'look', because a particular character reminds you of another... etc.)

- these should be movies that you have access to in some way
- AND at least two minor movies

**C) Write a question that will lead you to ponder your films and seek evidence that will give you an answer (ie: lead to a main theme or thesis).** Film theory/historical period should be clearly stated in your question.

**D) Due tonight before 11pm, submit your question** (or if you already have a theme/thesis – submit that). AND if your two primary movies are not named in the question, list them after your thesis.

**If you need – [some ideas here](#)** or via: IBFilm > Independent Study > “**ALL Ideas**” on 12/4