

Explain how meaning is constructed through film language.

Address the following, considering all the while...

"How do you know?" and/or **"Why?"**

1) The Narrative

- Who's the protagonist (hero/antihero?)?
 - Is he/she in this scene? Goals? Character flaws?
 - Other characters? Purpose?
- Is there a narrator? (1st, 3rd person, etc)
- Does film follow basic narrative structure?
 - What part/act is scene in, how do you know?
- Do characters seem realistic? Are they meant to?
- Plot: chronological?
- Scene's significance for protagonist/film as a whole
 - How does the scene move the plot forward?
- Screenwriter (who? known for? association w/director?)

2) Genre

- Which genre does it belong? (define genre some)
- How do you know? meets genre conventions? no?
- What specific elements of the genre are in scene/film?
- Specific character types?
- Where is the movie set/the environment?
- What is the film's theme? The target audience?

3) Mise en Scene

- What's included in the shot/scene?
 - Does arrangement of objects/props/charac. within setting have significance?
- What do the objects say about character's state of mind?
 - What do they reveal? What about their clothing?
- Does setting have significance? related to what?
- Is there balance in the shot? How much space is there between the characters? Where are the characters?
- Is the framing tight or loose?
- Where is our eye attracted first? Why?
- Props & Make-up? Purpose?
- Are there any metaphors in the scene?
- Lighting: quality & placement & contrast (hard/soft/natural; high-key/natural/low-key etc.)

Remember: everything is there for a reason, what are the reasons?

4) Cinematography *How does cinematography affect the mood/tone of the scene?*

- Shot & angle types: how they contribute meaning?
- Obvious time of day? Significant?
- How many people are in the scene? Does the camera angle/focus/shot-type change for different people?
- Physically where does the action happen in the scene?
- Does the cinematography call attention to itself? useful or distracting...
- What's in focus/depth of field?
- Composition: balance & symmetry (noticeable adherence to rule of 3^{rds}?)
- Camera, lens, & film stock choices; aspect ratio?
- Cinematographer (who? known for? assoc. w/director?)

5) Editing

- Any manipulation of plot time (flashbacks, parallel editing, slow motion, etc)?
- Length of takes, pacing, & rhythm?
- Does editing draw attention to itself? Is personality of the filmmaker apparent in the editing?
- Are there a master scenes? Type of cuts/transitions?
- Editor (who? known for? assoc. w/dir.)

6) Sound

- Sources: diegetic/non-diegetic, foley, on/off-screen
- Type: dialog, ambient, music/score, silence
- What role does sound play - how does it contribute to the situation/mood/meaning? Foreshadowing?
- Is there a soundtrack? Sound bridges? Clues to meaning?
- Sound designer? Sound mixer? (who? known for? assoc. w/dir.; worked in other mediums?)

Three additional aspects that add to a film's meaning that you will make note of:

7) Director's Intent

- Who is the director?
- What is he/she known for (movies, style, other)?
- What is the director trying to say/show (implicit meaning/s)?
- Who was it made for? How does it engage the audience – how do they feel after viewing/how should they feel?

8) Historical Context

- What other movies are being made at this time (or about this time in history) in this country?
- Specific producer, production company, other economic factors, political affiliations?
- Did the film have historical significance? How was it received (awards/criticisms)?

8) Socio-cultural Context *Referencing where the film was made & by whom, & what the subject matter is:*

- How do the aspects of culture & society affect the film? How are they reflected in the film?
- What do the film's themes say about culture it's part of? - customs & values included, re: religion, class, politics, attitude, bias...

10) Additional Requirements:

- Thorough explanation of the extract's relationship to the film as a whole
- Reason for choosing particular extract
- Incorporate at least four appropriate resources

Name: _____