

A-Level Film Studies Transition Work (Summer 2024)

Learning about the Macro and Micro Elements of Film Form

Overview

This series of tasks is designed to help you understand the macro and micro elements of film form through research and careful analysis of some iconic film extracts. The tasks should take approximately 3 hours to complete and result in a typed word document. Each task includes specific questions and activities aimed at deepening your analytical skills and knowledge in preparation for the A-Level Film Studies course.

Task 1: Understanding Macro Elements of Film Form (60 minutes)

Objectives:

- Identify and analyse the overarching elements of film form such as genre, narrative structure, and themes.
- Understand how these elements contribute to the overall meaning of a film.

Instructions:

1. Define:

Define the following key terms – Genre, Narrative, Narrative Structure, Themes.

2. Research:

Choose an iconic film from the following list:

- "The Godfather" (1972)
- "Citizen Kane" (1941)
- "Pulp Fiction" (1994)
- "Inception" (2010)

Conduct brief research on the chosen film focusing on its genre, narrative structure, and themes.

3. Analysis:

Watch the film (or key excerpts) focusing on the macro elements.

Answer the following questions in a detailed analysis (approximately 500 words):

- What genre does the film belong to? How does it adhere to or subvert genre conventions?
- Describe the narrative structure. Is it linear or non-linear? How does this structure affect the viewer's understanding of the story?
- Identify and discuss the central themes of the film. How are these themes developed through the narrative and characters?

4. Output:

Compile your research and analysis into a section titled "Macro Elements of Film Form" in your word document.

Task 2: Exploring Micro Elements of Film Form (60 minutes)

Objectives:

- Examine the detailed components of film form such as cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, sound, and performance.
- Analyse how these elements contribute to specific scenes and the overall film.

Instructions:

1. Define the following key terms – cinematography (including camera shots, camera angles, camera movements, etc.), mise-en-scène, editing (especially 'Continuity Editing'), sound, aesthetics and performance (relative to Film Studies).

2. Selection:

Select a key scene from the same film analysed in Task 1. This should be a scene that is crucial to the development of the plot or themes.

3. Research and Analysis:

Watch the chosen scene multiple times, focusing on the following micro elements:

- Cinematography: Discuss the use of camera angles, shots, and movement. How do these choices affect the scene's impact?
- Mise-en-scène: Analyse the arrangement of everything that appears in the frame, including settings, props, and costumes. What does this convey about the characters and themes?
- Editing: Examine the pacing, transitions, and continuity. How does the editing shape the viewer's experience of the scene?
- Sound: Consider the use of diegetic and non-diegetic sound, including dialogue, music, and sound effects. How do these elements enhance the scene?
- Performance: Analyse the actors' performances, focusing on their expressions, gestures, and delivery. How do the performances contribute to the scene's meaning?

4. Output:

Write a detailed analysis (approximately 500 words) of the micro elements in the chosen scene.

Add this analysis to your word document under a new section titled "Micro Elements of Film Form."

Task 3: Comparative Analysis (60 minutes)

Objectives:

Compare and contrast the use of macro and micro elements in two different films.

Develop critical thinking by identifying similarities and differences in how these elements are employed.

Instructions:

1. Selection:

Choose a second iconic film from the initial list that differs in genre or style from your first choice.

2. Analysis:

Conduct a brief analysis of the second film's macro and micro elements following the same structure as in Tasks 1 and 2.

3. Comparative Analysis:

Write a comparative analysis (approximately 500 words) addressing the following points:

- How do the macro elements (genre, narrative structure, themes) differ between the two films?
- Compare the use of micro elements (cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, sound, performance) in a key scene from each film.
- Discuss how these differences reflect the filmmakers' intentions and the films' impact on the audience.

4. Output:

Include your comparative analysis in the word document under a section titled "Comparative Analysis."

Finalising the Document

1. Editing and Proofreading:

- Review the entire document for clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy.
- Ensure each section flows logically and all analyses are well-supported by examples from the films.

2. Formatting:

- Format your document with appropriate headings for each section: "Macro Elements of Film Form," "Micro Elements of Film Form," and "Comparative Analysis."
- Include a title page with your name, the course title, and the date.
- Arial or Times New Roman font ONLY. Size 12 pt.

3. Submission:

- Save the document as a Word file.
- Submit it to Mr Drew (sdrew@fromecollege.org.uk)