

Year 11 Film Knowledge Booklet

Term 2

Name:

Class:

MATTHEW BRODERICK
**FERRIS
BUELLER'S
DAY OFF**



Ferris Bueller's Day Off (Hughes, 1986):

Summary

High school senior Ferris Bueller (Matthew Broderick) decides to skip school on a spring day by faking an illness to his parents (Lyman Ward and Cindy Pickett), then encourages his girlfriend, Sloane (Mia Sara), and his pessimistic best friend Cameron (Alan Ruck) to spend the day in Chicago as one of their last flings before they graduate and head off to different colleges. He sets up an elaborate ruse in his bedroom with a mannequin, a trophy and his stereo in case anyone decides to check on him. Ferris persuades Cameron to let them use his father's restored 1961 Ferrari 250 GT California to pick up Sloane (as part of their cover) to travel into the city. He also has Cameron impersonate Sloane's stuffy-toned father to have Sloane excused for the day due to a faked death in the family. The rest of the school and many residents learn of Ferris' exaggerated illness and offer donations to help "Save Ferris". However, only two people are not convinced by Ferris' deception: his sister, Jeanie (Jennifer Grey), outraged at Ferris' ability to defy authority easily, and the school principal, Edward Rooney (Jeffrey Jones), believing Ferris to be truant.

Ferris and his friends arrive downtown and leave the Ferrari with two garage attendants (Richard Edson and Larry Jenkins), who drive off in it a short while later to take a joyride. Ferris, Sloane, and Cameron enjoy the sights, including taking in a game at Wrigley Field, visiting the Sears Tower, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, and taking part in the Von Steuben Day Parade, with Ferris lip-syncing to "Danke Schoen" and the Beatles' version of "Twist and Shout." Ferris also uses his ploys to pretend he is Abe Froeman, the Sausage King of Chicago, to dine at an upscale restaurant on Rush Street (while narrowly avoiding his own father who is dining out with some business associates).

Meanwhile, Mr. Rooney has gone off-campus to try to find Ferris, first at a local hangout, then to Ferris's home, where Mr. Rooney attempts to gain entry, but ends up getting stuck in the mud and losing his shoe and wallet while being chased by the dog. Jeanie comes home to look for Ferris, instead discover Mr. Rooney, whom she mistakes for a burglar, kicking him several times in the face and retreating. She calls the police, forcing Mr. Rooney to flee the scene. When the police show up, they haul Jeanie in for prank calling, and at the police station, she talks to a drug dealer (Charlie Sheen), who tells her that she needs to stop obsessing about her brother and focus about herself. Jeanie's mother shows up to collect her, upset at having to do so, and finds Jeanie making out with the boy.

At the end of the day, Ferris and his friends retrieve the Ferrari, but discover on the way home that hundreds of miles have been added to the odometer, sending Cameron into a panic fearing his abusive father's reaction. After calming Cameron down, Ferris comes up with a plan to run the car in reverse, in place, with its rear wheels jacked up, at Cameron's father's hillside garage, hoping to reverse the odometer. When they realize this is not working, Cameron unleashes his pent-up anger against his father, yelling about how his father loves the car more than his own son and damaging the front of the car, but comes to realize he is long due to stand up to his father, and vows to accept the consequences. Cameron calms down and rests himself against the car, but his previous actions have unbalanced it from the jack it was on, the car hits the ground, races in reverse, and crashes through a glass wall, landing in a ravine. Despite Ferris's offer to take the blame, Cameron still plans to admit his actions to his father and take the consequences.

Ferris walks Sloane home, then quickly races through the backyards of his neighborhood. While running across a street, he's nearly hit by a car: it is his sister and mother driving home. His mother doesn't spot him but Jeanie does and she floors the gas pedal, trying to beat him home.

Ferris continues his race home. When he gets there, he finds Mr. Rooney waiting for him. However, Jeanie, apparently having come to appreciate her brother's craftiness, has beaten him home despite her mother's demands and getting a ticket for speeding. She pretends to scold Ferris for trying to walk home from the hospital while he is so ill, and thanks Mr. Rooney for

Ferris Bueller's Day Off (Hughes, 1986):

Summary

driving him home, making sure to show Mr. Rooney the wallet he left behind when he broke in earlier. Rooney is once again chased by the dog. Ferris races to his room and makes it into bed just as his parents check on him. After they leave, he breaks the fourth wall and imparts some wisdom to his audience: "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

As the credits roll, Mr. Rooney in his disheveled state is forced to catch a ride back to school on a school bus as it drives students home. In the tag at the very end of the credits, Ferris emerges from the bathroom, pleading to the audience directly, "You're still here? It's over! Go home! Go!" before he turns around and reenters the bathroom.

Characters		Protagonist: central to the film in so many ways. He's the physical embodiment of Generation X; entitled and materialistic but fortunately, charming, engaging and always entertaining. His use of monologue and direct address to camera is a direct manner of engaging the audience creating a direct relationship.
Ferris Bueller:		In many respects the opposite of Ferris but a recognisable characters from teen films; he is the dour conscience to Ferris' ambitious and risky personality.
Cameron Frye:		Ferris' girlfriend and another recognisable teen movie character. She often acts as the slightly more rational and empathetic character who aims to temper Ferris but also encourage Cameron. Perhaps the most 'normal' of the main characters. Often shot in a sexualised manner however, unlike the male characters.
Ed Rooney:		Antagonist: he embodies the role of authority figure in a dramatic manner-a somewhat extreme version of this, especially compared to Ferris' parents.

Key Elements of Film Form (Micro elements)	
Mise-en-scene:	Establishing shot is of a classically suburban, upper middle class home, a 'white house'. This is iconic of the American dream, complete with 3 new cars parked out front. Ferris' room is filled with the trappings of an 80's teen in consumerist America, a TV stereo, synthesizers and a computer. These were high value goods at the time and reinforce that Ferris is wealthy and this is an aspirational position for many.
Editing:	There are a few scenes in the film that adopt a MTV/Music Video style montage, this montage actually starts with the MTV ad. Characters also often shown in staggered, jump-cut montages. For example, introduction of Jeannie is staggered, with a CU of the foot tapping, then CU of hands on hips before the reveal of the face.
Blocking/camera angles:	Cinematography often shows off Chicago's landmarks and the architecture. Ferris is generally shot in medium close-ups. During the parade scene the camera is placed in the crowd looking up at Ferris; he is in an elevated position on the float and in society as a wealthy white male.
Soundtrack:	Music is used to appeal to the teen audience with contemporary music used to anchor the feeling of excitement and demonstrate how cool Ferris is.
POV (cinematography):	The first time we see the parents is in POV shot, positioning the audience as the 'child' in the scene. A POV rack focus is also used when Ferris looks at Jeannie. When Ferris opens the curtains there is a shot from the outside looking in, solidifying Ferris' position as a privileged prince in his tower.

Institutional information	
Director:	John Hughes
Release:	June 1986 (USA), February 1987 (UK)
Production company:	Paramount
Country of production:	USA
Starring:	Matthew Broderick, Mia Sara, Alan Ruck, Jennifer Grey
Genres:	Drama; comedy; teen drama; coming-of age.
Other information:	Matthew Broderick was 23 during filming. Directed by John Hughes who wrote SIXTEEN CANDLES, THE BREAKFAST CLUB, HOME ALONE and many more.

Context:	
	Like all John Hughes films, set in Chicago.
	Gently mocks the materialistic values of white, middle class teenagers; the 80's economic boom meant that teens found it easier to afford cars and such, led to selfish teens.
	Questions how we define education; depicts education as a boring ritual.
	Explores the disparity between intelligent teenagers and ignorant adults.
	MTV was launched in 1981 and became the voice of the teen generation.
	Generation X, were called 'latchkey kids' due to changes in society these teens had less adult supervision than previous generations.
	The US was the most powerful nation in the world, and was winning the Cold War. This feeling of invincibility can be seen in scenes like 'The Parade' where the whole country appears to be united.

Narrative (The method and means by which you construct the events of a story into a plot)	
Narrative structure:	Three act structure. Five act structure could be applied.
Narrative viewpoint:	Teen POV.
Binary oppositions:	Adults seen in direct opposition to adults in many ways, especially in adults aiming to 'restrict' teens. This helps to drive the narrative through conflict.
Narrative style:	Breaks the fourth wall.

Themes/issues.	
Conflict:	Seen both in the conflict between adults and teenagers and with authority figures and teenagers, conflict occurs throughout the film. The desire of teenagers to want to do some things with what they're allowed to do.
Education:	Depicted as being a boring ritual, Ferris learns more outside of the classroom.
Rebellion:	Throughout the film people rebel from their expected roles. Notice how some of the adults rebel too; consider why they do this and how rebellion is depicted.
Materialism:	The want and need for 'things' is key to Ferris, but does not dominate his desires.
Peer pressure:	We see many instances where peer pressure leads to decisions being made.
Fear:	Many characters experience fear, some are crippled by it. Consider who has fears and what people are fearful of; does it define them or their character type?
Key quotes:	
Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it. - Ferris	A classic quote from the film and one that outlines Ferris' outlook on life and helps to explain his somewhat selfish and apparently care-free nature. It also allows the audience an insight into his attitude towards the importance of experience.
I do have a test today, that wasn't bullshit. It's on European Socialism. I'm not European, nor do I plan on being European, so who gives a crap if they're socialists? It still wouldn't change the fact that I don't own a car! - Ferris	Another direct-to-camera monologue here from Ferris. He makes clear his attitude towards formal, school-based education here as well as his arrogant nature. As a character, as a person from Generation X, he's quite selfish and this quite provides the idea that he doesn't value a formal education as much as he values materialistic objects. He also broadly reflects the arguably ignorant approach that America in general had towards others in the 80s.
"I am not going to sit on my ass as the events that affect me unfold to determine the course of my life. I'm going to take a stand. I'm going to defend it. Right or wrong, I'm going to defend it." - Cameron	This quote shows Cameron's development through the film and shows how he's come to terms with the fact that his relationship with father has undermined his own destiny so far. It's a clear example of how the themes of fear, rebellion, conflict and peer pressure have affected Cameron and how they can be seen in his actions.
The question isn't 'what are we going to do', the question is 'what aren't we going to do?' - Ferris	A clear sense of Ferris' rebellion can be seen in this quote. He is carefree, unencumbered and wanting to experience things that he cannot do if 'imprisoned' in school.
"I weep for the future" - Restaurant Maitre'd	Here we get an adult, a person in power or responsibility outwardly expressing disdain for 'Generation X'.

Key scenes	
The Opening Monologue: (bit.ly/FBDOKS1)	This opening scene sets the tone for the film; humorous, rebellious and modern. Ferris breaking the fourth wall and use of text on screen suggests that Ferris knows that he's in a film. At the very least he knows the audience is there and this establishes a clear-sense of relationship between Ferris and ourselves and we immediately warm to his engaging personality. Editing and the use of music are especially important to this scene also.
Skipping school and calling Cameron: (bit.ly/FBDOKS2)	School & the register are presented as being dull and repetitive. Editing and the lack of soundtrack help emphasise this. Note how Cameron is introduced; the opposite of Ferris' introduction. The colours are muted, lighting and low key directly contrast with the warmth and vibrancy of Ferris's poolside-lounging.
At the museum & nearly being caught: (bit.ly/FBDOKS3)	Another scene which uses montage style editing. We also have a lot of 'static' shots where neither the camera or the characters move. This is done, in part, to reflect the nature of the art that the characters are looking at. Cameron's performance as the film cuts between his face and that of a painting ever closer with each cut, reflects his emotions. The second half of the clip reflects the vibrancy of the city and Ferris' energy and ambition. There is some very clever use of camera movement, editing and performance in the taxi when they see Ferris' father.
The Parade Scene (bit.ly/FBDOKS4)	The closest the film comes to creating a scene that looks like a music video, the style which it borrows ideas from throughout. This scene allows us to see how Cameron is both worried about the future but somewhat accepting of it and Ferris's much more impulsive nature. Use of cinematography here is key; lighting is high-key, the scene is colourful, busy and full of extras, props and bright clothing. The mood is joyous and united; everyone in the city joins in and we see an unashamed form of celebration. Whilst Sloane and Cameron are shot in medium and medium-close shots, broadly at eye-level. Ferris however, is often shot from below and at a distance creating the sense that we are looking up at him in admiration.
Ferris rushes home (bit.ly/FBDOKS5)	A classic scene which has been parodied many times. Interesting to see that initially, Ferris' mum is more concerned with her job and her success rather than the reasons for Jeannie's arrest. This helps to emphasise the themes of capitalism and materialism. This scene is especially noted for its great use of parallel editing; we see 3 different narratives happening at once as the scene cuts between all three. Some interesting sound effects; a 'cartoonish' skidding noise and slow-mo sound from Ferris creates an exaggerated, comedic tone.

Big Questions = FBDO

1. How does John Hughes use the elements of film form to establish the Bueller family dynamic in the opening of Ferris Bueller's Day Off?
2. What roles do Cameron and Sloane have in the film?
3. How is the antagonist Rooney presented in the film? How does this presentation reflect the target audience of the film?
4. To what extent does the ending of the film satisfy audiences?
5. What is the context of FBDO?
6. What are the major events in FBDO?
7. Who are the main characters in the film?
8. How can narrative theory be applied to 'FBDO'?
9. How does the presentation of themes in FBDO compare to the presentation of themes in RWAC?
10. How do the codes and conventions of the teen drama in FBDO compare with those in RWAC?
11. What representations are explored in FBDO?
12. How does John Hughes use the elements of film form to establish characters in the opening sequence of the film?
13. How does John Hughes use the elements of film form in the parade sequence of Ferris Bueller's Day Off?
14. How is cinematography used in at least one sequence of Ferris Bueller's Day Off?

American Cinema of the 1980s

- ⇒ Trends in Hollywood in the 80s can be seen by looking at the popular films at the time. The 1980s can be viewed as the decade in which Hollywood built on the blockbuster foundations laid by movies such as *Jaws* (1975, Steven Spielberg), and *Star Wars* (1977, George Lucas) in the 70s. Of the box office top ten films of the 1980s, seven were part of multi-film franchises, much as we see today—*Star Wars*, *Batman*, *Indiana Jones* and *Back to the Future*. Of those remaining, *Ghostbusters* would spawn a sequel and a 2016 re-boot and *Beverly Hills Cop* would have two sequels and be an indicator of the enduring popularity of the comedy genre.
- ⇒ *ET* stand alone at the top of the chart without a sequel and as a template for the blockbuster that became the favoured Hollywood production model especially for children's animation films that were to follow (such as *Toy Story* (1995, John Lasseter)). Outside the charts however, 80s films reflected the times in which they were made. The America of the 1980s was a time of economic confidence and the true emergence of the Hollywood blockbuster was a reflection of this. It became the era of the **high-concept film** (movies with simple ideas at heart that could be pitched in one or two sentences making them easy to market and easy to understand by the mainstream audience).
- ⇒ Mainstream movies became big business again in the 80s. Traditional franchises were not neglected, with James Bond appearing in six films. New action heroes also emerged; the two 'titans' of the box office of the 80s were Stallone and Schwarzenegger, who between them starred in 23 films across the decade.
- ⇒ It wasn't all big business in Hollywood, though—*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* was an example of a wave of 80s teen movies most associated with the group of young actors who became known as the 'Brat Pack' starring in many of the films of director John Hughes.
- ⇒ Science fiction continued to be popular (*The Thing* (1982)), as did musicals such as *Flashdance* (1983, Adrian Lynne).
- ⇒ Traditional films and modern day dramas were also steadily popular as well as a continued rise of independent filmmaking outside of the Hollywood system.

Key Terms

- ⇒ **Box office**—the financial success or failure of a movie measured by the total value of ticket sales
- ⇒ **Auteur**—A filmmaker whose individual style and complete control over all elements of production give a film its personal and unique stamp
- ⇒ **Blockbuster**—Any film that takes over 100 million dollars at the American box office. Usually created with both huge production and marketing budgets.
- ⇒ **Integrated studio system**—the system of organisation where studios controlled production, distribution and exhibition. This enabled the studio to apply assembly-line manufacturing and cost control methods to film production.
- ⇒ **Globalised conglomerate**—A large business made up of many smaller businesses and brands that are large enough to trade on a worldwide basis.
- ⇒ **Pre-sold property**—A basis for a film that the producers have paid exclusivity to use. Pre-sold as it comes with its own audience. For example, the Harry Potter books film rights were sold to Warner Brothers and had sold millions of copies before the movie were made.
- ⇒ **Hollywood ten**—of the 41 screenwriters, directors and producers called to testify by the US government about Communists working in Hollywood, ten refused to cooperate. They were 'blacklisted' by Hollywood and not allowed to work in movies due to their stand on free speech.
- ⇒ **Multiplex**—A cinema with several separate screens.

Camera Shots and Angles

Eye level shot - There are as many camera angles as there are shots, but in general they can be classified in three ways, eye level, high angle, and low angle.

Eye level shots put the viewer on an equal status with the subject.

High angle shot - The high angle shot looks down on the subject. As the words imply, it puts the viewer in a superior position to the subject, or conversely, it makes the subject appear weak or inferior.

Low angle shot - The low angle shot, in contrast, looks up at the subject. This gives the subject the appearance of strength or power.

Over the shoulder shot- The over the shoulder shot is used for longer conversations, and establishes near eye contact between the subject and the viewer, over the shoulder of another subject.

Extreme Close-up (ECU) - An Extreme Close-Up, sometimes called a "tight close-up," might perhaps frame only a part of a human face (an eye or the mouth), or perhaps a hand or foot. Extreme Close-Ups can in fact frame anything very small. This is a common shot found in video demonstrations of intricate procedures (e.g. dissections, drawings, etc.)

Close-up (CU) - This camera shot, sometimes called a head shot," usually frames an object about the size of a human head usually not including shoulders

Medium Close-up (MCU) - This camera shot indicates a space equivalent to a person's head and their shoulders

Medium Shot (MS) - This shot includes space which would frame a person's head and torso. This shot can also encompass two people standing next to each other filmed from the waist up. Two people sitting at a desk, such as can be seen in television newscasts, represents an example of a Medium Shot.

Medium Long Shot (MLS) - A Medium Long Shot can frame one or two people standing up, that is, their entire body

Long Shot (LS) - A Long Shot will be able to take in an entire room or large group of people. When the camera pulls back at the end of a newscast to allow you to see the entire set (cameras, desks, cables, lights, etc.) they are using a long shot

Extreme Long Shot (ELS) - An extremely long shot might encompass a picture of an entire house or, in fact, anything large. An extreme example can be found in the opening shot of "The Sound of Music." Here the camera actually frames several mountains, and then zooms in until we see Julie Andrews singing and smiling.

Editing Terminology

Straight Cuts = increase the pace of a scene. The most obvious example being an action sequence. It could also occur in a dialogue sequence when two people are yelling at each other so you cut back and forth between them faster, often overlapping dialogue, in order to increase the tension/emotions between them.

Fade Out = an image is made to disappear gradually or the sound volume is gradually decreased to zero.

Fade In = a gradual increase in a motion-picture or television image's visibility at the beginning of a sequence.

Dissolve = is a gradual transition from one image to another

Wipe = A **wipe** is a type of **film** transition where one shot replaces another by travelling from one side of the frame to another or with a special shape.

Jump cuts = are when the editor disrupts the continuity of an action. For example the action of someone throwing a baseball after picking it up off the ground.

The person bends over and picks up the ball. Instead of watching them come back up from the ground, it cuts from their hand on the ball on the ground immediately to them throwing the ball.

Cross cutting = is when a film is edited to show two lines of action occurring at the same time

Glossary of Film Terminology

Aesthetics = The specific 'look' of the film. The film's style.

Auteur = From the French 'author'. A director who has control over the style of the film.

Cinematography = Aspects of camera angles, distance and movement.

Context = When, where, how, and why the film is set. Time, place and circumstances.

Conventions = Methods, ingredients, things necessary for the style/category of film.

Diegetic Sound = Sound that is part of the film world (car horns beeping, birds singing)

Non-diegetic Sound = Sound added in post-production to create a certain atmosphere.

Genre = The style or category of the film.

Iconography = The images or symbols associated with a certain subject.

Indie/independent = Film that is independent of the constraints of mainstream Hollywood. These films are often characterised by low budgets, location settings (rather than studio), (often) inexperienced directors and fairly unknown casts.

Key lighting (high and low) = Lighting design to create different light/dark ratios. High-key lighting is bright and produces little shadow, whereas low-key lighting is used to specifically create shadow and contrast.

Mainstream = Popular, conventional, and/or part of a major film studio system.

Mise-en-scène = Literally, 'what is in the frame': setting, costume & props, colour, lighting, body language, positioning within the frame all come together to create meaning.

Motif = A dominant theme or recurring idea.

Plot = Different to story, plot is the narrative order that the story is told in.

Representation = The way that people, places and events are constructed.

Screenplay = Written by the screen writer, this document tells the story and will contain no camera direction.

Story = The ideas & events of the narrative whole.

Shooting script = Written by the director & cinematographer (not the screen writer), this script focuses on planning the camera shots & other practical elements that will bring the screenplay to life.

Spectator = An individual member of the audience.

Sound Terminology

Diegetic sound = Sound that is part of the film world.

Non-diegetic sound = Sound that is added into the film in post production.

Contrapuntal sound = Sounds and music that contrast with the images on the screen.

Pleonastic sound = Sound that is heightened or exaggerated for effect.

Sound bridge = Sound that carries from one scene to the next.

Ambient Sound = Background sound.

Voiceover = Characters or narrator speaking over other images on screen.

Dialogue = Speech by the characters.

How Ferris Bueller's Day Off nails the adolescent experience.—Article

How Ferris Bueller's Day Off nails the adolescent experience.

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/how-ferris-bueller-s-day-nails-adolescent-experience> [Nikki Baughan](#)

Years after its original release in 1986, [John Hughes' Ferris Bueller's Day Off](#) looks like one of the classic movies about the teenage experience, as relevant to today's Snapchatting kidults as it was to those coming of age in the era of Pac Man.

This enduring popularity is thanks to its simple story – teenage boy throws a sicky and embarks on a day of mayhem around Chicago – energetic cast and quotable dialogue, but also because, underneath the knockabout comedy, Hughes absolutely nails the in-between psychology of adolescents. No longer children and not yet adults, titular anti-hero Ferris ([Matthew Broderick](#)) and his socially awkward friend Cameron (a superb [Alan Ruck](#), to whom the film actually belongs) – and, to a lesser extent, jealous sister Jeanie (Jennifer Grey) – use this single day of wild abandon to better understand their place in the world.

Their struggles with self-confidence, identity and finding one's path through life are as resonant today as they ever were; and, perhaps, in this age of constant interaction, oversharing and scrutiny, even more deeply felt. Indeed, anyone who is, or has ever been, a teen can surely recognise Hughes' genius and insight, as evidenced in these key moments.

Parents are there to guide us through our teenage years, sure, but they are also there to be played. Ferris is a master of manipulation for his own ends, and when he pulls a sicky his parents are the first of many to fall for his considerable charms.

Sibling rivalry is at its most potent during adolescence, with hormones and a burning sense of entitlement adding to the fray. Jeanie's (Jennifer Grey) white-hot anger that younger brother Ferris continually gets away with things she dares not do herself drives her increasingly erratic determination to bring him down at any cost.

Teenagers are notoriously self-involved, and tend to think they are at the centre of any story. They are often wrong and – despite his starry behaviour – Ferris is no exception.

Teens' seemingly innate ability to master technology enables them to stay one step ahead of the older generation. In the days before the internet, mobile phones and social media, Ferris utilises an array of gadgets, including computers, hi-fis, answer-phones and intercoms, to pull off his audacious scheme.

Cameron: 'He'll keep calling me, he'll keep calling me until I come over. He'll make me feel guilty. OK, I'll go, I'll go, I'll go, I'll go, I'll go, I'll go.' Your best friend can be your worst enemy. Ferris's sheer force of will sees the reluctant, bed-ridden Cameron capitulate to his demands, at enormous emotional cost. Overcome with rage at his own weakness he beats up his already beat-up car; a motif that will be returned to in the film's dramatic climax.

Worse still, Ferris pinches Cameron's father's priceless 1961 Ferrari despite Cameron's pleas for him not to, mainly because Ferris is self-obsessed to the point of being an asshole. Cameron, by contrast, is a fairly normal teenager, totally insecure, and debilitated by anxiety and paranoia. The film is fundamentally about his journey to self-acceptance.

Grace: 'The sportos, the motorheads, geeks, sluts, bloods, wastoids, dweebies, dickheads – they all adore Ferris.' As evidenced in films from *The Breakfast Club* (1985) to *Mean Girls* (2004), teenagers run in packs. A distinct social hierarchy exists in any school, and inclusion in a particular group can define one's identity through the entirety of adolescence.

The cross-generational divide is a key characteristic of adolescence. While Hughes paints the adults of his piece as particularly naive, the relationship between Ferris and determined headmaster Ed Rooney (Jeffrey Jones) comes to embody the (often well-placed) suspicion and lack of mutual respect which can exist between young and old...

...although adults can be as ageist as teens. Maitre d': 'I weep for the future.'

If teens can be horrible human beings, parents can be even worse. While his father is never seen on screen, Cameron's relationship with his dad is the dramatic heart of the narrative. Described as a cold and distant man, who loves his cars more than his family, his behaviour is the cause of Cameron's palpable and perpetual paranoia.

How Ferris Bueller's Day Off nails the adolescent experience.—Article

The push-pull nature of pubescent hormones, the looming responsibility of adulthood and the carefree nature of late teenhood means that the highs can be really high...

...and the lows can be utterly overwhelming.

Irrational behaviour and uncontrollable mood swings mean that things can go from bad to much, much worse in a heartbeat.

Ferris: 'We'll wait for your father to come home and we'll tell him I did this. He hates me anyway.' Even if he's an arrogant narcissist, your best friend can also be a life-saver. Despite having a selfish streak a mile wide, Ferris leaps into action when he believes Cameron to be suicidal, and immediately offers to take the wrap for the ruined car.

Teens can make instant connections that are both fleeting and enlightening. Jeanie's passionate encounter with a young man in the police station – played, in prophetic cameo, by Charlie Sheen – lifts her bitter mood and makes her take a look at her motives for hating Ferris...

...proving that loyalty bests rivalry and family can be relied on to save the day, as Jeanie does by covering for Ferris when Rooney finally catches him red-handed.

Cameron: 'I am not going to sit on my ass as the events that affect me unfold to determine the course of my life. I'm going to take a stand.' Although much of teenage interaction is through the medium of quips, banter and often reckless behaviour, true friendship can have a profound effect on a troubled soul.

And ultimately, despite appearances, the underdog may actually turn out to be the bravest soul of all.

Comprehension Questions.

1. What year was FBDO released?
2. What is the simple story of the film?
3. What type of hero is Ferris?
4. How is Cameron described in the article?
5. What do the young people struggle with in the article?
6. Why are parents in the film?
7. What are teenagers notorious for according to the article?
8. Who has a cameo in the film?
9. What does the article say about the underdog?
10. What does the article say is done through the medium of quips and banter?

Homework for weeks 1 and 2: Revision Due =

1. Revise the plot summary of Ferris Bueller's Day Off and American Cinema of the 1980s ready for a recall quiz in lesson.

Homework for weeks 3 and 4: Revision Due =

1. Revise the key terms and FBDO article for a recall quiz in lesson.

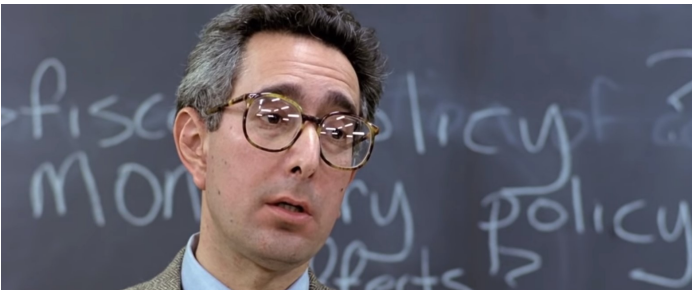
Homework for weeks 5 and 6: Micro Analysis Due =

Micro analyse the 'register' scene from Ferris Bueller's Day Off.

Watch the scene at least three times and make notes on mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound.

Include freeze frames from the scene and refer to representation of teenagers, adults and school.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS6f1MKpLGM>



Wider Reading List

- Ferris Bueller's Day off (Hughes, USA, 1986)
- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0091042/>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/1980s/1980s>
- Ferris Bueller's Day Off Screen play—<http://www.screenplay.com/downloads/scripts/FerrisBuellersDayOff.pdf>
- John Hughes: A Life in Film: The Genius Behind Ferris Bueller, The Breakfast Club, Home Alone, and more
- The Breakfast Club
- Pretty in Pink
- Sixteen Candles

