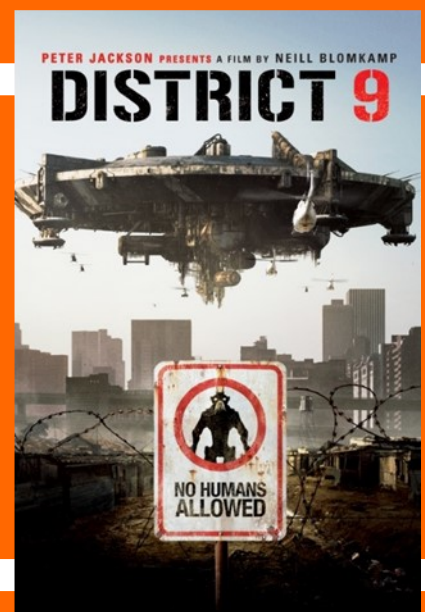
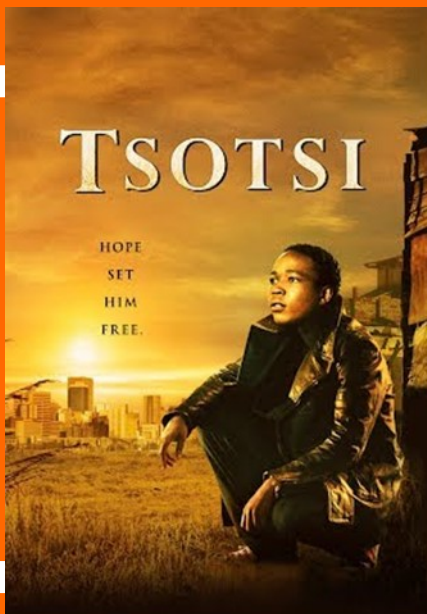


Year 11 Film Knowledge Booklet

Term 4

Name:

Class:



Film Studies GCSE—Overview

Component 1: Key Developments in US Film

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of qualification

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of **three** US films chosen from a range of options.

Assessment consists of **four** questions on **one** pair of US mainstream films and **one** US independent film:

Section A: US film comparative study

- **one** stepped question on the **first** of the chosen pair of films (produced between 1930 and 1960)
- **one** stepped question on the **second** of the chosen pair of films (produced between 1961 and 1990)
- **one** question requiring a comparison of the chosen pair of films

Section B: Key developments in film and film technology

- **one** multi-part question on developments in film and film technology

Section C: US independent film

- **one** question on one US independent film.

Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of qualification

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of **three** global films produced outside the US chosen from a range of options.

Assessment consists of **three** questions in three sections:

- **Section A:** **one** stepped question on one global English language film
- **Section B:** **one** stepped question on one global non-English language film
- **Section C:** **one** stepped question on one contemporary UK film.

Component 3: Production

Non-exam assessment

30% of qualification

This component assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of film to a production and its accompanying evaluative analysis. Learners produce:

- **one** genre-based film extract (**either** from a film **or** from a screenplay)
- **one** evaluative analysis of the production, where learners analyse and evaluate their production in relation to comparable, professionally-produced films or screenplays.

Tsotsi

(2005, Hood SA, UK)

Component 2: Global Film; Narrative,
Representation & Film Style

Focus Area Representation

PART 1: Key Sequence(s) and timings and/or links

Sequence 1

'Opening Sequence' 0.00 – 5.05 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmXW4fkMTXY>

Sequence 2

'Come and hold my hand' 6.03 – 7.23 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVNHidjRHoA>

PART 2: STARTING POINTS - Key Elements of Film Form (Micro Features)

Cinematography (including Lighting)

- The opening sequence wastes no time in introducing us to the characters and their relationships. We see a series of close ups of Aap, Butcher and Boston's hands as they gamble with money and dice, which could indicate the themes of luck, fate and destiny. We also see a close up of the bradawl which could suggest the potential for violence and the slow motion shot of the dice signals the stylised filmmaking as well as the theme.
- As the gang walk through the township the camera's dollying is motivated by movement of Tsotsi as close ups pick him out from the group. He is also favoured by point of view shots of the other young gangsters to whom he gestures.
- During the stake out (SE1) we see Tsotsi's point of view of several victims before he concentrates on one we get tighter shots of.
- Sequence 2 occurs 40 mins into the film by which time Tsotsi has 'acquired' the baby, sought out Miriam to feed him and named him 'David'. Tsotsi's shack is a candle lit and much more peaceful place than it was in the opening sequence.
- We are looking into Tsotsi's home rather than out of it as before and a stream of light from outside falls on Tsotsi and the baby, linking them in the frame as he puts the baby down on his bed.
- The half lit nature of Tsotsi's face as he watches the baby settle suggests the two sides of his character, which are battling with each other.

Mise-en-Scène

- In the opening shots Tsotsi is shown separate from his gang as they play the dice game in his (very basic) house. As he looks out of the window perhaps he is already longing for a better and different life. He walks in front of them through the township – as the leader.
- The transition from the township to the city is marked by notably different colour palettes (reddish brown becomes grey blue) as well as levels of development. The huge HIV/Aids poster which dwarfs them in the station is worth noting though.
- Facial expressions during and after the murder give a clear indication of the different characters. Butcher looks in to the eyes of the victim, showing no remorse, while Aap looks at the others for some indication as to how to react and Boston is shocked and sickened. Tsotsi is harder to read, alternating between a stony impassive expression and occasional looks of fear.
- In sequence 2 we see a much more peaceful Tsotsi's home as he settles the baby by candlelight and we see a flashback to the home that Tsotsi grew up in. We see Tsotsi as a child again looking at someone in bed. This time it is his mother, who is clearly very sick. She looks at him, calls his name, David, and asks him to hold her hand. He does so briefly as a candle flickers in the foreground exactly as it does in the Tsotsi's shack.

Editing

- In the opening sequence the initial shots are of hands, dice, beer, money and the bradawl before we see an establishing shot of the group. This series of shots combined with the impatient voices of characters makes for curiosity and directs us towards the themes of chance, fate and violence.
- The stakeout sequence in the train station features editing around shots of Tsotsi's point of view as he targets his victim. The shots become shorter and faster around the moment that he makes his decision.
- In sequence 2 editing is employed to crosscut between Tsotsi looking at baby David in the present, and the child Tsotsi looking at his sick mother. The cutting creates the feeling of a unified geographical space so that the parallel-ing of these events is reinforced.

Sound

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- Initially in the opening shots the other members of Tsotsi's gang speak about their game before asking Tsotsi what they will do tonight. He is clearly the one to whom they all defer. He says nothing before we cut to them following him through the township, where he still remains silent despite the taunting of Fela about his driving.
- The 'Kwaito' music that begins as they leave provides energy and a contemporary feel as a hybrid between familiar black urban music and an indigenous South African sound.
- During the stake-out rattling sounds are used to reinforce the idea of Tsotsi hunting. This gives us the idea that he is seeking out his prey. We hear a faint heart beat as Tsotsi scouts the train station, to build the tension. When they follow him to the train the rattling sounds get louder, connoting something is about to happen. The sound comes to a sudden stop when Butcher's weapon pierces the man's skin and we cut to several close ups of the groups' faces showing their different reactions.
- In sequence 2 the quiet diegetic sounds are accompanied by music which is the quiet calm of African wind instruments, contrasting with the 'Kwaito' in the opening sequence.
- Before we cut to the flashback we hear a voice say 'David' as Tsotsi sits in his shack. We don't realise this is his mother

PART 3: STARTING POINTS - Contexts

Social

- Set in contemporary South Africa, in the township of Soweto, where post-Apartheid survival is still a fraught process for many South Africans, who struggle to get out of poverty. Tsotsi (a nick-name meaning 'thug') has no access to the new South Africa so he seeks to take it with violence and threat.
- The stereotypical representation here is not specifically South African, despite the culturally specific term. The urban black violent criminal posing a threat to the comfortably wealthy is familiar from films of many contexts including Hollywood and the UK.
- The interesting thing about Tsotsi is the impact of the baby on his character and the transformation it causes him to undertake. The drama in the film comes from Tsotsi's emotional inner conflict rather than the physical external conflict typical of crime films.
- The co-existence of poverty and affluence in modern day South Africa, symbolised effectively by the gate with which the Dube's attempt to protect themselves from people like Tsotsi but which John Dube opens at the end as he calls Tsotsi 'brother'.
- The theme of 'decency' and the exploration of the roles of mothers and fathers as carers.

Historical

- Films are a product of their historical context. The original story (in the novel) of *Tsotsi* was set in the late 1950s, at the height of apartheid. This was the system by which the white minority in South Africa ruled over the black majority and denied them the right to vote among other things. The film, however, is set in a post-apartheid South Africa which allows it to represent themes that are common to many black people around the world – themes that have expressed themselves in the recent 'Black Lives Matter' movement in the USA and elsewhere. It is nevertheless a film born of the history of Africa and more specifically South Africa.

PART 4: STARTING POINTS - Specialist Focus - Representation

1. What do we know about South Africa? Apartheid. Wealth vs Poverty.
2. The character of Tsotsi at the outset and as he changes.
3. The other members of the gang.
4. Mothers and Fathers.
5. Draws influence from the US crime movie and hip/hop culture.
6. Key narrative elements – use of 'black gangster' stereotypes but ultimately about inner emotional conflict rather than external physical conflict, despite violent moments.
7. Look at writer/director Gavin Hood. He is a white South African who had received critical acclaim for low budget films before *Tsotsi* and has gone on to direct Hollywood blockbusters like *Ender's Game* and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* since.

PART 5 – Further resources

- <http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/secondary/Tsotsi.pdf> <http://www.scoop.it/t/tsotsi>
- <http://www.film.sentamu.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/TSOTSI-STUDY-GUIDE.pdf>
- <http://ames.scot/resources/pdf/MEJ41.pdf> <http://www.slideshare.net/judithgunn/teaching-tsotsi-notes> <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/case-studies/tsotsi>

Rabbit-Proof Fence

(Phillip Noyce, 2002)

Component 2: Global Film - Narrative, Representation and Film Style Focus
Area: Narrative

PART 1: Key Sequence(s) and timings and/or links

Sequence 1 - Neville's inspection

00:20:38 – 00:23:55

Sequence 2 - Hunted 00:35:31 – 00:38:45

PART 2: STARTING POINTS

Key Elements of Film Form (Micro Features)

Cinematography (including Lighting)

- In one scene, the three protagonists sit, just off centre, in dirty robes in contrast to the other girls who stand to attention in pure white robes, waiting to be told to begin eating. This highlights the difference between the new arrivals and those girls who have already been conditioned to behave in a manner approved of by the camp (and by white Australian society). The other girls have been 'cleansed' of their ethnic identity in a way the three protagonists haven't yet.
- Sequence 1: Symmetrical ELS of the children gathered ready for inspection. This framing implies 'order' and the imposed 'civilisation' of white culture. Throughout the scene there is a separation between the characters on the left and right-hand side of the frame which suggests an ideological gap between the two groups: the children separate from Neville plus the 'headmaster', or in other shots, Nina (the dorm monitor) and the three protagonists.
- Like much of the film, the camera is positioned at the eye-level of the children. This forces the audience to empathise with their view of things, and makes the adults seem towering and powerful, intimidating even if their tone of voice attempts kindness. As Molly approaches Neville, a steadicam tracking shot is used to directly place the audience in her position.
- Sequence 2: As with Sequence 1, most of the shots are from a child's eye-level (even those of Moodoo), again encouraging the audience to see the narrative from their perspective. There is a combination of tightly framed group shots of the girls huddled together (emphasising both their vulnerability and their close bond) and ELS of the river. These panoramic shots show us the scale of the Australian landscape - mixing a feeling of intimidating vastness, but also suggesting places the girls can hide from their pursuers.

Mise-en-Scène

- Sequence 1: The colour schemes is divided between the blue sky and the bright green of the trees (familiar as being Australian) and the unblemished white of the church, huts, matron's uniforms and children's smocks. This symbolises the school/camp's aim to 'cleanse' the indigenous people of their ethnic identity. Neville's black suit and book recall the costume of a priest, and though he has no religious authority, this does reflect his 'missionary zeal' to 'civilize the natives'.
- Sequence 2: The location of the Australian landscape is used by the girls to aid their escape on a number of occasions. This stresses the Aboriginal connection to the land and nature. Though this also used a device to build tension, as Moodoo is able to look at innocuous-seeming twigs and mud, and detect signs of the girls' path. The prop of Gracie's bag is used to try to throw him off their trail.

Editing

- Sequence 1: There is consistent use of shotreverse-shot to show Molly's viewpoint (and those of other children) and responses to this new life. There is also an eye-line match between Nina and Molly, to show their shared heritage - but when she refers to the fairer children as 'cleverer' the girls are separated by cutting, showing how they are also very different in their beliefs.
- Sequence 2: There is cross-cutting between the girls and Moodoo that is typical of the 'chase movie': as the scene progresses, the
- time cuts between the two begins to speed up, communicating that he is getting closer and closer - until finally they are in the same shot.

Sound

- Sequence 1: The song performed by the children is an old 'minstrel' song from the US. Minstrels were white performers who 'blackened up' to mock African-Americans. The fact that this is Neville's favourite song is ironic considering the race issues surrounding it. His words to Molly, though initially reassuring, revolve around "duty, service, responsibility" - which also echo American slavery.
- Sequence 2: There is an atmospheric musical soundtrack of haunting wind instruments that adds tension and threat to this scene. They are also reminiscent of indigenous instruments that emphasises the ethnicity of the protagonists and their pursuer. (The soundtrack was composed by Peter Gabriel who is renowned for promoting non-Western artists and sounds).

PART 3: STARTING POINTS - Contexts

Social

- Representation of indigenous and White Australians - though the major themes and plot of the film revolves around the mistreatment of Aboriginal people by the white government (personified by Neville), the representation of individual people of both ethnicities is more complex. Not all the white characters are evil (e.g. the woman on the farm who helps rather than reports the girls) and the character of Moodoo is established as a main antagonist (though it is questionable how much he actually tries to find the girls and to what extent he is going through the motions to please his

bosses). In contrast to what Neville believes, the Aboriginal people are not a doomed or inferior race. The girls, especially Molly, are cunning and resourceful. They (and Moodoo) are also portrayed as having a spiritual connection to the land: they often use the landscape itself to hide their trail. When Molly collapses in the desert, it is the call of her hawk 'totem' and the song of her mother that rouse her and enable her to finish her journey. This shows the importance of Aboriginal identity for the people's survival - the very thing the Australian government was trying to remove.

- Good comparisons of the representation
 - of Indigenous people would be *Walkabout* (1971) - which is by a British filmmaker who has an 'outsiders' view of Australia - and *Ten Canoes* (2006) which is still by a white director, but which won praise for representing Aboriginal people and culture more accurately. Both films feature David Gulpilil, who plays Moodoo in *Rabbit-Proof Fence*.

Historical

- The film was inspired by a 1997 report *Bringing Them Home* which was the first acknowledgement of the forced relocation of Aboriginal children, thereafter known as the 'Stolen Generation'. This was a major victory for Indigenous groups' campaigns for Australia and the wider world to acknowledge the human rights abuses suffered by Aboriginal peoples for over a hundred years. During the colonisation of Australia, the Europeans used 'social Darwinism' to portray the Indigenous people as 'savages', little more than animals. They saw the land as 'terra nullius', an empty, unclaimed place; ignoring that the Aboriginal people had managed the land for over 60,000 years and had a culture that predated prehistoric Europeans. This colonial viewpoint obviously morally excused the stealing of the land and mistreatment of the Indigenous people.
- The film (and the book by Molly's daughter, Doris Pilkington Garimara) was controversial and was accused of misrepresenting history by conservative critics. They claimed the children were removed because there was evidence of child abuse in their families, and that their pursuers were concerned for their welfare.

PART 4: STARTING POINTS - Specialist Focus - Narrative

- The screenplay is by documentary filmmaker Christine Olsen, who said that she was attempting to reveal the 'hidden history' of the hundreds of testimonies in the *Bringing Them Home* report by focusing on just one story. She also said she was deliberately drawing on traditional fairy-tale narratives where children are stolen from home by an 'evil witch' character, who then pursues them through a harsh landscape when the children escape (see the Russian Baba Yaga tales). The film also follows the traditional 'chase movie' narrative where the protagonist(s) escape from confinement and undergo a series of physical tests and situations
- of near-capture (often by a cunning hunter). Films like *The Fugitive* (1993) and *Apocalypto* (2006) are good examples of this genre.
- The film is also reminiscent of a colonial genre known as the 'Lost Child' narrative, where a white child disappears into the wilderness and a 'native' hunter is employed to find them and guide them home. *Walkabout* (1971) is a good example. *Rabbit-Proof Fence* inverts these conventions though and the children are Aboriginal and find their own way home, whilst the hunter is an antagonistic character rather than a saviour.
- The Rabbit-Proof Fence itself is a complex and potent symbol in the narrative - and in real life. It was built to stop rabbits from spreading to richer pastures - the rodents themselves could be seen as symbols of the ecological devastation wrought on the land by colonists. Many see the fence as a European attempt to peg out and control a wild landscape - and one which ultimately failed to prevent the spread of pests. Within the film, the fence's historical symbolism is inverted: its meaning is appropriated by the girls as a route to guide them home and aid them in their escape from white authority.

Skyfall

(2015, Sam Mendes, UK)

Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style

Focus Areas Film Style, Aesthetics

PART 1: Key Sequence(s) and timings and/or links

Sequence 1

Istanbul chase 00:00 - 00:06:43

Sequence 2

Silva's lair 1:09:24 - 1:14:00

PART 2: STARTING POINTS - Key Elements of Film Form (Micro Features)

Cinematography (including Lighting)

- *Skyfall* opens unusually for a Bond film. Instead of the 'roaming circle' ident, there is just the silhouette of a figure, out-of-focus; he strides forward, into focus, but with only a patch of light illuminating part of his face. What does this mean? He is obviously Bond, but introduced in this way he seems unfamiliar and mysterious. This suggests that this is a new 'vision' of Bond, promising something we haven't seen before. It also links to the theme of MI6 working "in the shadows" (as M says later). The shot composition is symmetrical, with Bond in the centre - this is a motif repeated throughout the film (see 'Aesthetics').
- Sequence 1: Mostly typical - but very effective
- - mix of whole range of shots and angles: CU/ MS/POV used to emotionally engage us and immerse us in the action; LS, ELS and helicopter shots used to show larger scale action and produce a sense of spectacle. Additionally, Roger Deakins, the cinematographer, uses kinetic camera movement to follow the action, but keeps the camera steady (cf. to the 'jerky-cam' of the *Bourne* series) which suggests that Bond is in control of the situation despite the chaos the chase creates.
- Throughout the film the action appears to come 'straight at' the viewer (e.g. Bond's gun at the start, the jeep crashing into the stall, and the police motorbike skidding directly into the camera). This heightens the immersive quality of the sequence and intensifies the sense of danger.
- Sequence 2: LS used to show the scale of Silva's island lair - but also to show the wrecked, crumbling architecture.

Shots are composed so that Bond is always in lower centre of the screen. This composition is also used in the hall where Bond is tied up. The shot is symmetrical, one small man surrounded by technology, apparently isolated and besieged. However his central position throughout the film suggests stability, solidity and sense of control even when seemingly overwhelmed by elements in the rest of the shot.

- When Silva enters: a single shot of him approaching Bond (and us) - mirroring the entrance of Bond in the opening shot of the film (small, indistinct figure, striding into view). As he gets closer, the camera moves to meet him, eventually becoming Bond's POV. The movement reduces the distance between them and the proximity creates danger, but also queasy intimacy (suggesting the two characters aren't that different).

Mise-en-Scène

- Sequence 1: All the elements of the generic chase sequence are thrown into the mix here: chases on foot, car, bike and train; with bystanders dodging the carnage, other vehicles crashing, windows to crash through, bridges and rooftops to fall off - all adding to the sense of danger. Plus: the London HQ has large screens and computer monitors that surveil the action from afar. The colour palettes used in the two locations are contrasting: oranges, browns, dirty/dusty, chaotic and crowded in Istanbul vs. cold navy blues and pale washed-out colours for London, connoting relative calm.
- Sequence 2: Though Severin states the island city shows Silva's power via the use of technology, his victory seems literally empty. It looks more like the war-ravaged architecture of Aleppo than the glittering techno-lairs of other Bond villains (e.g. *You Only Live Twice's* volcano, *The Spy Who Loved Me's* underwater city). Similarly, the heart of his lair is a crumbling hallway filled with dusty servers and wires - far from the bright, clean or glamorous location we would expect. This is the tawdry 'reality' behind his 'virtual' power.

Editing

- Sequence 1: Cutting between shots that create a spectacle - LS, ELS, helicopter shots (esp. during rooftop bike chase) - and those that create a sense of immersion: MS, CU and POV.
- Cross-cutting: Between Istanbul and London (to show Bond is both being assisted by technology, and that he's being held accountable by higher authority); and between Bond, London and Eve (in the jeep) once the bike chase begins. This introduces the core theme that no matter how advanced surveillance technology we have, there is still a need for 'field agents' to do the more traditional chasing, shooting and fighting.
- Sequence 2: As Bond waits for the arrival of his nemesis, there are cutaways to his calm face, showing that though he may be prisoner - and surrounded by the technology that threatens his ability to protect his country - he is calm and almost amused by the familiarity of his situation.

Sound

- Sequence 1: Unusual use of music - opening two chords of traditional Bond theme, then stops: again suggesting this may be a version of the character that is unfamiliar; similarly used during the bike chase.
- Dialogue: Jokes during car chase, when Eve smashes the wing mirrors off. Emphasises the danger of the narrow streets, Eve's control of the jeep, and their control of the situation: calm enough to make quips. Also shows Eve can match Bond with wit, establishing her as not 'just another Bond girl'.
- Sequence 2: Severin's explanation of why the island is deserted emphasises the almost godlike power that technol-

ogy has given Silva. When we finally meet him, Silva's speech about the rats on his grandmother's island is typically cryptic and sinister (mocked as 'monologuing' in *The Incredibles*). His revelation that M lied about Bond's test scores again asserts that Silva is Bond's 'dark double': what we previously interpreted as M's pride and confidence in Bond, Silva interprets as betrayal.

PART 3: STARTING POINTS - Contexts

Social

- Representation of age/tradition vs youth/ modernity: a core theme of the film is whether Bond, M and their agency is 'out of step' with the more technological threats of the modern world. Are they "dinosaurs" (how she branded Bond in her first film as M), powerless to the point of incompetence? This theme is made explicit when Bond meets the new, youthful Q in the National Gallery and they interpret a Turner painting differently: Q sees a "once great ship towed to the junkyard", whilst 007 ignores complexity and nuance: "I just see a bloody great big ship". Is his blunter, straightforward approach what is actually needed to defend against the 'new breed' of cyber-criminal?

Historical

- *Skyfall* is similar to two other successful franchises that were 're-booted' around the same time: Batman (in Nolan's *Dark Knight* Trilogy) and *Star Trek*. All three take familiar characters that have grown almost comical, and add depth, humanity and darker, more complex themes. They also cleverly balance fresh perspectives and elements with iconography that is familiar to fans. In *Skyfall*, the references to Bond's past haunting the present becomes a source of danger (Silva) and power: his Walther PPK gun, the Aston Martin, with the Skyfall estate of his childhood a fresh element that provides back-story.

PART 4: STARTING POINTS - Specialist Focus - AESTHETICS

- The film is an accomplished fusion of character, theme and visual style. Though the cinematography and production design is striking, it is more than just 'style over substance'. There are three key visual motifs throughout:
- A blue/orange colour scheme that symbolises the thematic conflict between the new, digital technology and the 'old school' espionage
- of chases, fistfights and gunfights. Electric blues (especially in the Shanghai scenes) represent the 'virtual' power of technology, bright, shiny but intangible and distracting. Orange/brown symbolises the tangible (if physically dangerous) 'dirty realism' of the solid world that Bond is expert at negotiating.
- Mirrors / doubles / reflections: the symmetrical composition of many shots, and use of actual reflections, symbolise two things: the way the 'actual' and 'virtual' worlds are connected; and the connection between Silva and Bond. Both are agents who "overstep the mark", both have
- been 'betrayed' by M in the service of their country. Like Batman and the Joker in *The Dark Knight*, they are two sides of the same coin.
- The consistent framing of shots that places Bond (or M) at the centre establishes them as a stable, dependable presence in a changing, chaotic world, reassuring the audience of their relevance. The second to last scene of Bond staring out over London suggests he is a champion and protector of Britain (a shot familiar from superhero films). The presence of other national flags flying above their embassies suggests he is also a protector of the whole world.

Film Studies Exam Style Questions Homework

Below you will find examples of exam style questions.

These can be applicable to any of your C2 films.

Practice exam writing skills by completing the questions.

1a) Name a camera angle used in your chosen film. [1]

1b) Explain briefly why this camera angle is typically used in film. [4]

1c) Explore how cinematography is used in your chosen film. [10]

2a) Name a costume seen in your chosen film. [1]

2b) Briefly describe what costume can reflect in film. [4]

2c) Explore how costume is used in your chosen film to reflect the identity of a character. [10]

3a) Name a genre convention used in your chosen film. [1]

3b) Briefly explain why genre conventions are used in film. [4]

3c) Explore how genre conventions can be seen in your chosen film. [10]

4a) Name a setting in your chosen film. [1]

4b) Briefly explain why this setting was used in your chosen film. [4]

4c) Explore how settings are used to represent the contexts in which the film was written. [10]

5a) Name an aspect of context relevant to the study of your chosen film. [2]

5b) Briefly explain why context is important in the study of film. [3]

5c) Explore how this aspect of context can be seen in at least one key sequence in your chosen film. [10]