

HOW TO WRITE A FILM ESSAY

Introduction Paragraph

- State the title and director of the film.
- Use words from the question to outline the topic of the essay.
- State the three points you will make in the main body paragraphs.

SEXY Paragraphs x 3

S = State your point

E = Example; give a film technique example from the text that proves this point

X= Explain how this example links with your point

Y= You expand this point out to links with the real world.

Conclusion Paragraph

- Re-state your topic and main points
- Make a final summing up statement about your topic and how it relates to real life.

Achieved

Describe an important scene in the text.

Explain how verbal and/or visual features were used in this scene to show it was important.

In the film 'The Blind Side' directed by John Lee Hancock an important scene was where Michael is interviewed by the college sport investigator. She thinks that the Tuohys helped him so that he would play for Ole Miss, the college football team they support. This scene is important because it is where Michael has to really think about his situation and his place in the Tuohy family. It leads to a turning point for him. The verbal and visual techniques used to show this were close up, low angle and dialogue.

Firstly, the director used close up to show us this scene was important. In this scene the close up is of Michael's hands as he rubs them on his knees under the table while the investigator aggressively interviews him. This shot is important because we also see it in other parts of the movie when Michael is nervous or upset. It is a small movement and only those who really know him would know what it means. This helps make the scene important because we know it is a serious situation Michael has to cope with and we wonder what he will do. He has not had to deal with something like this on his own and it could change his future.

Secondly, the director uses low angle to show us this scene was important. For example we see the investigator from Michael's point of view as she is leaning over him and asking him why he thinks the Tuohys helped him. This is important because traditionally Michael is seen as the one bigger than everyone else but this shows he is can be just as scared and vulnerable as anyone else. This helps show us the scene is important because Michael is going to have to be mentally strong and think for himself. She is an adult and he is used to being told what to do but he needs to stand up for himself in this scene.

Lastly, the director uses dialogue to show us this scene is one of the most important in the whole movie. In this scene, when Michael angrily confronts Leigh-Anne about why she helped him he says, "Don't you lie to me!". This is important because this was one of the first things Leigh-Anne said to Michael when she asked him where he was going. He is turning it back around to show he is angry that she may have not been honest with him. It helps show the importance of this scene because Michael is now using words to stand up for himself.

The scene with the investigator is one of the most important in the film because it is where Michael has to think for himself and stand up for himself. It forces him to think about his future and why all these good things have happened to him. When everything is resolved he can move on with his life.

Merit

Blue additions reflect NCEA standard (Y10 Excellence).

Describe an important scene in the text.

Explain how verbal and/or visual features were used in this scene to show it was important.

Everyone has an important moment where they have to decide what they believe in and stand up for themselves. In the film 'The Blind Side' directed by John Lee Hancock an important scene was where Michael is interviewed by the college sport investigator. She thinks that the Tuohys are "boosters" who only helped him so that he would play for Ole Miss, the college football team they support. This scene is important because it is where Michael has to really think about his situation and his place in the Tuohy family. It leads to a turning point for him and shows not only how far he has come. However it also shows how the preconceptions of others could threaten his future. Hancock used to close up, low angle and dialogue to highlight the significance of this scene and to get the audience drawn into the tension of the moment.

Firstly, Hancock used close up to show us the pressure Michael was under. In this scene the close up is of Michael's hands as he rubs his knees under the table while the investigator asks him a series of aggressive and pointed questions. The director has included this shot because he has used it in other parts of the movie when Michael is nervous or upset. It is a small movement and only those who really know him would know what it means. However we quickly realise that this moment has more riding on it than other times when he has been nervous so this is going to be an important turning point for him and we want him to make the right decisions. It also shows us that he is different to the stereotype of an angry young man as he does this rather than be violent and lash out.

Secondly, the director uses low angle to show us the tension within this scene. During this scene low and high angles are used to show that the investigator is trying to intimidate Michael. For example we see her from his points of view as she leans over him and asks why he thinks the Tuohys helped him. She is using both her physical location and her tone of voice to try and make him tell her what she thinks she knows already. This is important because traditionally Michael is seen as the one bigger than everyone else but this shows he is can be just as scared and vulnerable as anyone else. It also shows that the women has her own ideas about his situation and is trying to force him to agree. This illustrates the idea of people making judgement before they know the situation, just like people did about Michael himself.

Lastly, the use of dialogue within this scene shows us how far Michael has come. Throughout the film Michael does not say much and Leigh-Anne does most of the talking. In this scene, when Michael angrily confronts Leigh-Anne about why she helped him he says, "Don't you lie to me!". This is important because this was one of the first things Leigh-Anne said to Michael when she first meet him and asked him where he was going. Michael has turned her words on her and shown that at this point in time he may not trust her. It is important because although he is angry with Leigh-Anne she is the one who has made him confident enough to confront her. She has helped him voice his feelings and figure out who he is.

The scene with the investigator is one of the most important in the film because it highlights how people can make incorrect judgements and need to take the time to figure out what is really going on. On the outside Michael's situation with the Tuohys may seem unusual and people are judging them. This scene shows how easily people in power can manipulate others but this scene ultimately makes Michael realise he really is just part of the family.

Essay Topics

These range from easy to hard and are taken from a Year 11 exam.

Read them all and choose your topic. Circle it.

Write your essay question into the topic box of your plan; EXSACTLY as it is written below.

Highlight or underline the words from the topic that you will repeatedly use in your essay.

TOPICS

1. Describe at least ONE character who played an interesting role in the film.
Explain how film techniques were used to show you the character(s) was interesting.
2. Describe at least ONE important event at (or near) the end of the film.
Explain how film techniques were used to show you the event(s) was important.
3. Describe at least ONE idea that you thought was important in the text(s).
Explain how film techniques were used to show you the idea(s) was important.
4. Describe at least ONE important conflict in the film.
Explain how the director used film techniques to make the conflict(s) help you understand an idea in the film.

Film techniques could include:

lighting

costumes / props

editing

special effects

music

sound effects

dialogue

