

# A Level Film Studies Transition Booklet



This pack contains information about A Level Film Studies and a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start an A Level in Film Studies in September. Please use this during the summer term and the summer holidays to prepare for your A Level course.



## **Please note the compulsory summer work which starts on page 3**

**About the course:** The specification we teach is produced by Eduqas. The unit code is A670QS A (A level) and a full copy of this specification and other useful information is available at:

[https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/film-studies-as-a-level/#tab\\_overview](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/film-studies-as-a-level/#tab_overview)

The course consists of the study of eleven films over three components:

**Component 1:** Varieties of Film Making

**Component 2:** Global Filmmaking Perspectives

**Component 3:** Non-examination assessment

### **Films:**

Bonnie and Clyde (Penn, 1967)

Vertigo (Hitchcock, 1958)

The films of Buster Keaton (Keaton, 1915-1930)

La La Land (Chazelle, 2016)

Beasts of the Southern Wild (Zeitlin, 2012)

Stories we Tell (Polly, 2012)

This is England (Meadows, 2006)

Trainspotting (Boyle, 1996)

Pan's Labyrinth (Del Toro, 2006)

City of God (Mereilles, 2002)

Pulp Fiction (Tarantino, 1994)

Learners will study all of their chosen films in relation to the following core study areas.

**Area 1.** The key elements of film form: cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, sound and performance

**Area 2.** Meaning and response: how film functions as both a medium of representation and as an aesthetic medium

**Area 3.** The contexts of film: social, cultural, political, historical and institutional, including production.  
Examination:

You will have three components of assessment as outlined below.

1. Varieties of Film Making, written examination, 2 hours 15 minutes, 35% of qualification
2. Global Filmmaking Perspectives, written examination, 2 hours 15 minutes, 35% of qualification
3. Non-examination unit, either the production of a short film or screenplay, with an evaluative analysis, 30% of qualification.

## Compulsory Summer Work

### Task 1: Film Aesthetics Terminology

Research and define these key terms for the study of film aesthetics.

<b>Denotation</b>				
<b>Connotation</b>				
<b>Cinematography</b>				
<b>Mise en scene</b>				
<b>Within each category, define the key terms</b>				
<b>Camera Shots</b>	<b>Camera Movement</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Sound</b>	<b>Editing</b>
Extreme close-up	Aerial	High key	Diegetic	Cut
Mid Shot	Pan	Low key	Non diegetic	Continuity Editing
Close-up	Crane	Three point	Sound FX	Cross cutting
Long shot	Tilt	Natural	Contrapuntal	Cut away
Extreme long shot	Tracking	Filters	Foley sound	Dissolve
High angle	Dolly		Parallel	Eyeline match
Low angle	Steadicam			Fade
Dutch/canted angles	Zoom			Iris
POV shots				Montage
Establishing shot				Shot reverse shot

## Task 2: Practice Scene Analysis

At the start of the Film Studies course, you will need to learn the basic skills of scene analysis using the key terminology of film aesthetics you have researched in task 1. For this activity, we would like you to watch the opening scene from *Skyfall* (0.00 – 2.15) several times and using the template below, develop an initial analysis of the scene.

Remember, where possible, use the terminology you have learned in task 1.

*Skyfall* clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dcTNWOoZlg>

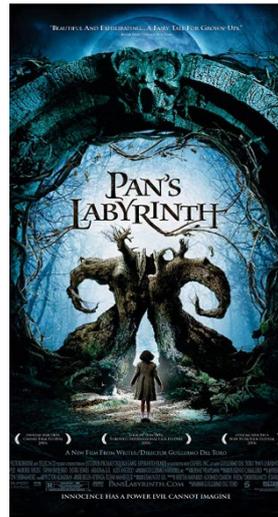
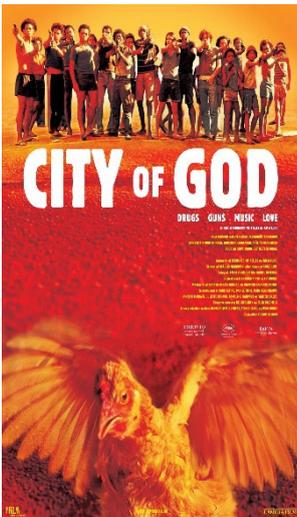
<b>Aesthetic Element</b>	<b>Denotations:</b>	<b>Connotations:</b>	<b>Meanings and Representations:</b>
<b>Cinematography</b>	Which camera shots and movements have been used?	Why do you think these camera shots and movements have been used?	What could be the wider meaning of these choices?
<b>Mise en scene</b>	What props, costumes, locations, colours have been used?	Why do you think these props, costumes, locations, colours have been used?	What could be the wider meaning of these choices?
<b>Sound</b>	What sound effects, music, dialogue have been used?	Why have these sound effects, music, dialogue been used?	What could be the wider meaning of these choices?
<b>Editing</b>	Which editing techniques have been used?	Why have these editing techniques been used?	What could be the wider meaning of these choices?

### Task 3: Summer Film Diary

Over the summer, we would like you to create a diary of the films you watch and to make notes on:

- The themes, ideas and issues presented in the films
- The visual characteristics of the films. For example: the use of specific colours, camera angles, settings, editing techniques
- How individuals or groups are represented to the spectator. What do we learn about different people or communities?

Challenge: You may decide to watch some of the films we will be studying during the course such as:



### A-Level Text Books and Revision Guides

We recommend that you purchase a copy of the course textbook to help you with your study. Please find details below:

Title	Author	ISBN	Where to purchase
WJEC/Eduqas Film Studies	Lisa Wardle	978-1911208440	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/WJEC-Eduqas-Film-Studies-Level/dp/1911208446/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&amp;keywords=film+studies+a+level&amp;qid=1621254274&amp;sr=8-2">https://www.amazon.co.uk/WJEC-Eduqas-Film-Studies-Level/dp/1911208446/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&amp;keywords=film+studies+a+level&amp;qid=1621254274&amp;sr=8-2</a>
WJEC/Eduqas Film Studies Revision Guide	Jenny Stewart	978-1912820351	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eduqas-Studies-Level-Revision-Guide/dp/1912820358/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&amp;keywords=film+studies+a+level&amp;qid=1621254377&amp;sr=8-1">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eduqas-Studies-Level-Revision-Guide/dp/1912820358/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&amp;keywords=film+studies+a+level&amp;qid=1621254377&amp;sr=8-1</a>

### Wider Film Viewing List:

#### **Classical Hollywood (1930-1960)**

- Casablanca (Curtiz, 1942), U
- The Lady from Shanghai (Welles, 1947), PG
- Johnny Guitar (Ray, 1954), PG
- Vertigo (Hitchcock, 1958), PG
- Some Like It Hot (Wilder, 1959), 12

#### **New Hollywood (1961-1990)**



- Bonnie and Clyde (Penn, 1967), 15
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (Forman, 1975), 15
- Apocalypse Now (Coppola, 1979), 15
- Blade Runner (Scott, 1982), 15\*
- Do the Right Thing (Lee, 1989), 15.

\*Learners study Blade Runner in the Director's Cut version, released 1992.

### **Mainstream film**

- No Country for Old Men (Coen Brothers, 2007), 15
- Inception (Nolan, 2010), 12A
- Selma (Duvernay, 2014), 12A
- Carol (Haynes, 2015), 15
- La La Land (Chazelle, 2016), 12A

### **Contemporary independent film (produced after 2010)**

- Winter's Bone (Granik, 2010), 15
- Frances Ha! (Baumbach, 2012), 15
- Beasts of the Southern Wild (Zeitlin, 2012), 12A
- Boyhood (Linklater, 2015), 15
- Captain Fantastic (Ross, 2015), 15

### **British film since 1995 (two-film study)**

- Secrets and Lies (Leigh, 1996), 15
- Trainspotting (Boyle, 1996), 18
- Sweet Sixteen (Loach, 2002), 18
- Shaun of the Dead (Wright, 2004), 15
- This is England (Meadows, 2006), 18
- Moon (Jones, 2009), 15



- Fish Tank (Arnold, 2009), 15
- We Need to Talk about Kevin (Ramsay, 2011), 15
- Sightseers (Wheatley, 2012), 15
- Under the Skin (Glazer, 2013), 15.

### **European film**

- Life is Beautiful (Benigni, Italy, 1997), PG
- Pan's Labyrinth (Del Toro, Spain, 2006), 15
- The Diving Bell and the Butterfly (Schnabel, France, 2007), 12
- Ida (Pawlikowski, Poland, 2013), 12A
- Mustang (Ergüven, France/Turkey, 2015), 15
- Victoria (Schipper, Germany, 2015), 15

### **Outside Europe**

- Dil Se (Ratnam, India, 1998), 12
- City of God (Mereilles, Brazil, 2002),
- House of Flying Daggers (Zhang, China, 2004), 15
- Timbuktu (Sissako, Mauritania, 2014), 12A
- Wild Tales (Szifrón, Argentina, 2014), 15
- Taxi Tehran (Panahi, Iran, 2015), 12.

### **Documentary film**

- Sisters in Law (Ayisi and Longinotto, Cameroon/UK, 2005), 12A
- The Arbor (Barnard, UK, 2010), 15
- Stories We Tell (Polley, Canada, 2012), 12A
- 20,000 Days on Earth (Forsyth and Pollard, UK, 2014), 15
- Amy (Kapadia, UK, 2015), 15.



### **Film movements - Silent cinema**

- One Week (1920), U and The Scarecrow (1920), U and The 'High Sign' (1921), U and Cops (1922), U, (Keaton, US)
- Strike (Eisenstein, USSR, 1924), 15
- Sunrise (Murnau, US, 1927), U
- Spies (Lang, Germany, 1928), PG
- Man with a Movie Camera (Vertov, USSR, 1928), U and A Propos de Nice (Vigo, France, 1930), U

### **Film movements - Experimental film (1960-2000)**

- Vivre sa vie (Godard, France, 1962), 15
- Daisies (Chytilova, Czechoslovakia, 1965), 15 and Saute ma ville (Akerman, Belgium, 1968), 15
- Pulp Fiction (Tarantino, US, 1994), 18
- Fallen Angels (Wong, Hong Kong, 1995), 15
- Timecode (Figgis, US, 2000), 15.

### **Wider Reading List**

#### **Studying *Vertigo* (Hitchcock, 1959)**

Barr, Charles *Vertigo* Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Modleski, Tania *The Women who knew too much* Routledge, 1998.

Wood, Robin *Hitchcock's Films Revisited (Revised)* Columbia University Press, 2002.

Auiler, D. (1998) *Vertigo: The Making of a Hitchcock Classic*, (St. Martin's Press: New York, USA)

Pippin, R.B. (2017) *The Philosophical Hitchcock: "Vertigo" and the Anxieties of Unknowingness*, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, USA)

Makkai, K. (2012) *Vertigo (Philosophers on Film)*, (Routledge: London)

Leitch, T.; Poague, L. (2014) *A Companion to Alfred Hitchcock (Wiley Blackwell Companions to Film Directors)*, (Wiley Blackwell: Hoboken, USA)



Duncan, P. (2003) Alfred Hitchcock: The Complete Films: Architect of Anxiety 1899–1980, (Taschen GmbH: Cologne, Germany)

### **Studying *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn, 1967)**

Wood, R. et al (2014) Arthur Penn: New Edition, (Wayne State University Press: Detroit, USA) pp.55–71

Bureau, P. (1968/2008) "Bonnie and Clyde is Like a War Film" in Chaiken, M. & Cronin, P. eds. Arthur Penn: Interviews, (University Press of Mississippi: Jackson, USA) pp.15–17

Segaloff, N. (2011) Arthur Penn: American Director, (University Press of Kentucky: Lexington)

Friedman, L.D. (2000) Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (Cambridge Film Handbooks), (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge)

### **Studying *Pan's Labyrinth* (Del Toro, 2006)**

Diestro-Dópodo, M. (2013) *Pan's Labyrinth* (BFI Film Classics), (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke)

Jones, T. (2017) *Studying Pan's Labyrinth*, (Columbia University Press: New York, USA) 81

Olsen, D. ed. (2016) *The Devil's Backbone and Pan's Labyrinth: Studies in the Horror Film*, (Centipede Press: Lakewood, USA)

Nunziata, N. (2016) *The Making of Pan's Labyrinth*, (Insight Editions: San Rafael, USA)

Del Toro, G.; Nunziata, N.; Cotta Vaz, M. (2017) *Guillermo del Toro's Pan's Labyrinth: Inside the Creation of a Modern Fairytale*, (HarperCollins: New York, USA)

Jones, Tanya *Studying Pan's Labyrinth* Columbia University Press, 2017

### **Studying *City of God* (Meirelles, 2002)**

Kwon, O.; Solot, S. (2015) *Brazilian Cinema Today: Essays by Critics and Experts from*



Across Brazil, (Latin American Training Centre: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Pires Vieira, E.R. (2005) *City of God in Several Voices: Brazilian Social Cinema as Action*, (Critical, Cultural, and Communication Press: New York, USA)

Soutar, J. (2008) *Gael Garcia Bernal and the Latin American New Wave*, (Anova Books: London)

Muir, S. (2005) *Studying City of God*, (Auteur: Leighton Buzzard)

Nagib, L. (2007) *Brazil on Screen*, (I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.: London)

Griffin, J. (2013) *Why I Love the Depiction of the Favela in City of God*, [www.theguardian.com/film/2013/sep/25/why-i-love-city-of-god-favela](http://www.theguardian.com/film/2013/sep/25/why-i-love-city-of-god-favela)

Anon. (2012) 'City of God' Director Fernando Meirelles: "That Scene Was Completely Improvised", [www.miramax.com/subscript/city-of-god-fernando-meirelles-interview-video/](http://www.miramax.com/subscript/city-of-god-fernando-meirelles-interview-video/)

Loader, J.-M. (2016) *How Does the Visual Style of 'City of God' Draw Attention to Social Realities in Brazil*, [www.cinemahumain.com/city-of-god/](http://www.cinemahumain.com/city-of-god/)

### **Studying *Stories we Tell* (Polley, 2014)**

Smaill, B. (2016) "The Documentary Film: Female Subjectivity and the Problem of Realism" in Hole, K.L.; Jelača, D.; Kaplan, E.A.; Petro, P. eds. *The Routledge Companion to Cinema and Gender*, (Routledge: London) pp.174–183

Wilson, R.A. (2015) "The Role of Oral History in Surviving a Eugenic Past" in High, S. ed. *Beyond Testimony and Trauma: Oral History in the Aftermath of Mass Violence*, (UBC Press: Vancouver, Canada) pp.199–140

Hoffman, K.D. (2017) "'Deceiving into the Truth': The Indirect Cinema of *Stories We Tell* and *The Act of Killing*" in LaRocca, D. ed. *The Philosophy of Documentary Film*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group Inc.: Lanham, USA) pp.517–536

Anderst, L. (2013) *Memory's Chorus: Stories We Tell and Sarah Polley's Theory of Autobiography*, [sensesofcinema.com/2013/feature-articles/memorys-chorus-stories-we-telland-sarah-polleys-theory-of-autobiography/](http://sensesofcinema.com/2013/feature-articles/memorys-chorus-stories-we-telland-sarah-polleys-theory-of-autobiography/)



Nayman, A. (No Date) Stories We Tell (Sarah Polley, Canada), [cinemascope.com/currency/stories-we-tell-sarah-polley-canada/](http://cinemascope.com/currency/stories-we-tell-sarah-polley-canada/)

**Journals and magazines** are a good way of keeping up to date. You can subscribe for a year or buy individual editions. We recommend:

Sight and Sound - <https://www.bfi.org.uk/sight-and-sound>

Film Comment - <https://www.filmcomment.com/>

Empire - <https://www.empireonline.com/>

It will help you to be aware of current events that are related to the texts you will be studying; so watch/read the news each week:

BBC Arts and Entertainment - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment\\_and\\_arts](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment_and_arts)

Guardian Culture - <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/culture>

### **Possible summer activities and trips**

1. Visit the cinema!
2. Visit local and national libraries such as the Library of Birmingham or if you want to travel further afield...The BFI Library, London.

### **Expectations and Workload**

We are delighted you have chosen to study English Literature. You can expect well-planned and resourced lessons delivered by teachers who genuinely want to see you achieve your potential. In return we expect you to arrive promptly and properly equipped to all lessons. You will also be expected to use your private study time in an organised and effective way to supplement and reinforce what you have learnt in class. **Simply turning up to most of the lessons will not be enough to secure your target grade.** The work you do outside of your lessons will have a very significant impact on your results. Above all else, we expect you to display *enthusiasm* and *passion* for Film Studies.

