

Writing a Film Analysis Paper

The film analysis paper is designed to be a short essay, which allows you to begin thinking about the movie. Writing helps you to think, since you have to articulate your otherwise unformed or vague thoughts. This, in turn, will help us to have a good discussion of the film in class.

The essay should be no longer than 600 words (2 double spaced pages). These words **should not summarize** the plot / story of the film, except where it is necessary to make your examples clear, since your audience has seen it (sometimes several times!). Rather, devote your limited words to ANALYZING the film.

In your analysis, you need to address the following questions, not necessarily in this order and certainly not as a checklist, but rather in the form of an essay, with a thesis statement, specific examples drawn from the film, and with a conclusion.

- 1) What is the film's goal?
- 2) How well has the goal been accomplished?
 - a) What are the primary conflicts in the movie?
 - b) How do they contribute to the movie's goal / meaning?
- 3) What religious / theological issues does the movie raise?
- 4) What does it simulate you to think about?

Your essay should incorporate discussion of technical issues related to film making (we will be learning more and more about this as we work through Giannetti's book). These sorts of issues might relate to issues such as:

- 1) *mise-en-scene*
- 2) music
- 3) lighting / color
- 4) acting / casting
- 5) sets / costume

These technical issues are not to be covered in a separate paragraph, but integrated into your general discussion.

Format and Submission

Papers will be written using either LibreOffice (a **free** alternative to Microsoft office available at www.libreoffice.org) or MicrosoftWord and saved RFT format (.rft extension). **No other formats will be accepted.** Or you can write it in GoogleDocs and "share" it with me.

They will be submitted via email **before class on Friday.**

They should be double spaced, with one-inch margins, using Times New Roman, 12pt font. They should have an interesting title (not just the name of the movie!) and your name should appear at the top of the first page.

The last part of your analysis paper will be the honor statement (this won't count towards the word limit!):

This paper is my own work, all in my words unless specifically indicated. I have fully indicated all sources, cited directly or indirectly, in the in-text notes and the bibliography or works-cited list.

=====

Film analysis papers will be graded using the following rubric. Before you submit your paper, you should examine it carefully and think about how *you* would fill this rubric for your own paper.

Score	Poss	Item
	3	Introduction / Conclusion: Does the paper have an introductory paragraph with a clear and argumentative thesis statement? Is it clear <i>what</i> you are going to argue?
	3	Organization: Is the essay clearly organized? How a paragraph relates to its predecessor and successor should be clear. Does the paper have effective transitions from example to example? Each paragraph should discuss only one example. Does the paper do this or are there multiple points made in a paragraph?
	10	Assignment: Does the paper address the questions posed: 1) What is the film's goal? 2) How well has the goal been accomplished? a) What are the primary conflicts in the movie? b) How do they contribute to the movie's goal / meaning? 3) What religious / theological issues does the movie raise? 4) What does it simulate you to think about?
	4	Examples: Does the paper cite specific examples from the texts to support the argument? Does it spend too much time summarizing the film? Or does it briefly describe scenes to facilitate their analysis?
	2.5	Mechanics: Does the paper follow the formatting guidelines, citation guidelines, and have a signed honor-statement?
	2.5	Grammar / Spelling: Is the paper written in formal, academic English, without spelling mistakes, punctuation errors, etc?
	25	