



Best practice for your presentation and independent study

Presentation

When addressing the reasons for choosing your extract, focus on the areas that you will discuss in depth later. At higher level (HL), you must *discuss* responses to the film. You need to comment on the quote or, better still, use it as a jumping-off point to add new analysis.

Simply quoting a few responses from critics does not add to the analysis. Don't waste time re-telling the plot, listing awards, or giving scores from IMDB or Rotten Tomatoes.

Sociocultural context and/or genre need to be discussed at HL. Take note of the 'and/or' option in the criteria. Depending on the film you have chosen, one may be much more relevant than the other.

Be sure to include links to the film as a whole. Do not restrict your links to plot. Find film elements in your extract, and compare and contrast their use in other parts of the film. You could discuss how lighting is employed similarly or differently, or how changes in costume or colour palette create meaning.

You should sound like a film student, not a film fan. Show your control of the terminology of film, e.g. the phrase 'language of film' (in the assessment criteria rubric) refers to both the techniques of film-making **and** the vocabulary of film analysis. 'Director's intention' refers to the motivation behind the choices made in your extract. Every observation on the use of lighting, camera movement, music, and editing should address the effect/intended effect of the choices being made. If you don't do this, the examiner will see this as 'simple description'.

Read the assessment criteria carefully and understand that the first sentence in each mark band is the most important one. That's where your focus should be.

Watch video essays about film. Try the YouTube channels 'Lessons from the Screenplay' and 'Channel Criswell'. Notice how they often use text on the screen.

The first thing the examiner will read is your rationale. You have 100 words to impress by recounting the findings of your independent study. An excellent rationale is a clear indication of an excellent independent study.

Independent study

Your independent study is not a script for a documentary film, it's an IB assessment using the documentary script format. The difference is subtle but very important. In a documentary film, large parts of the film's argument are told through the visuals, with minimal or no dialogue. This is unacceptable in your independent study — having lengthy visuals-only sections with sparse narration will not score well.

Your independent study should have an argument (similar to a thesis statement or an extended essay research question). It should prove your argument by using evidence from your selected film.

Don't divide your independent study into sections about each film. Instead, divide it into topics and use the films to support each of these topics. If you have four main points you wish to make, devote a section to one point and link your four films (two at SL) to that point. Move on to your second point and repeat the process. Finally, work on the transitions between the points. You should make 'insightful comparisons' between your chosen films.

- Ensure your video and audio content is aptly matched. Use this method to check. Highlight the key work or key point in each box in the audio column. The images in the corresponding video column must match.
- Check your formatting. Are you using two vertical columns in 12 Courier font? Is your bibliography annotated and in alphabetical order? Do you have a separate 'Works cited' section?
- Do not include an appendix. The examiner will not give credit to anything beyond 10 (SL) or 15 (HL) pages.

The number one piece of advice is: pick a **topic** — not a set of films. The films are there to support the topic, not the other way around.

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