A LEVEL

Candidate Style Answers

FILM STUDIES

H410
For first teaching in 2017

H410/01 Film history

Version 1

Contents

Introduction

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers. Whilst a senior examiner has provided a possible level for each Assessment Objective when marking these answers, in a live series the mark a response would get depends on the whole process of standardisation, which considers the big picture of the year's scripts. Therefore the level awarded here should be considered to be only an estimation of what would be awarded. How levels and marks correspond to grade boundaries depends on the Awarding process that happens after all/most of the scripts are marked and depends on a number of factors, including candidate performance across the board. Details of this process can be found here: http://ocr.org.uk/Images/142042-marking-and-grading-assuring-ocr-s-accuracy.pdf

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SECTION A QUESTION 1

SECTION A – Film Form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990

Answer Questions 1 **and** 2**,** and **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4

You should have studied **one** US film from each of the lists below. Questions **1–4** require you to write about the US films you have studied.

Silent Era	1930–1960	1961–1990
Birth of a Nation (1915). Directed by DW Griffith. USA	*Citizen Kane* (1941). Directed by Orson Welles. USA	*2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Directed by Stanley Kubrick. USA
The Gold Rush (1925). Directed by Charles Chaplin. USA	*Singin' in the Rain* (1952). Directed by Gene Kelly/Stanley Donen. USA	*Raging Bull* (1980). Directed by Martin Scorsese. USA
The Mark of Zorro (1920). Directed by Fred Niblo and Theodore Reed. USA	*Stagecoach* (1939). Directed by John Ford. USA	*E.T. (1982).* Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA
The General (1926). Directed by Clyde Bruckman/Buster Keaton. USA	*Vertigo (1958).* Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA	*Do the Right Thing* (1989). Directed by Spike Lee. USA
Sunrise (1927). Directed by FW Murnau. USA	*Double Indemnity* (1944). Directed by Billy Wilder. USA	*The Conversation* (1974). Directed by Frances Ford Coppola. USA
The Wind (1928). Directed by Victor Sjostrom. USA	*All that Heaven Allows* (1955). Directed by Douglas Sirk. USA	*West Side Story (1961).* Directed by Jerome Robbins-Robert Wise. USA

Answer Questions 1 **and** 2.

1   With reference to a **sequence** from the film made between **1930–1960** which you have studied, explain how diegetic and non-diegetic sound have been used to create meaning in the sequence.

[10]

Exemplar 1 – Level 5 answer, 10 marks

I will be discussing the chase/battle sequence from 'Stagecoach' (Ford, 1939). This occurs at about 1 hour 10 minutes into the film and is the scene that has been anticipated since the start of the stagecoach's journey westwards. There isn't much dialogue, as it's the action which does the talking here. The key diegetic sound sources we can hear are the sound of the horses' hooves, the sound of the stagecoach travelling, the war cries of the Apaches attacking the stagecoach, the bullets being fired, and the sound of the bugle and horses marking the arrival of the US Cavalry to save the day. All of these elements of diegetic sound are used to signify a sense of conflict and danger. Ever present throughout the scene is the non-diegetic musical score to add to the impact of the scene.

Having watched this scene both with and without the sound on, I know that the diegetic and non-diegetic sound adds a great deal to the spectator's ability to understand the events of the scene. When watching without sound, it is understandable what is going on and the type of threat posed by the Apaches, but you do miss out on the impact that the range of sounds adds to the emotional realism of the sequence - the sound of the horses' hooves, the sound of the oncoming Apaches and the sound of the bullets being fired - all of these diegetic sounds add to the urgency and sense of drama of the scene. Also, given that most of the film appears to be filmed in a studio, with limited use of location footage in Monument Valley and a fair degree of use of back projection to make it look like much of the action is being filmed on location, the sound sources are needed to give the film a sense of realism - like this could actually all be happening.

Crucially, when watching without the sound, it becomes impossible to know about the coming of the cavalry to save the day in advance of actually seeing them. With the sound on, you hear the sound of the bugle and the line of dialogue spoken by one of the characters which makes plain the arrival of the cavalry to ride to the rescue. The knowledge this dialogue gives in addition to the sound of the bugles gives emotional relief to the spectator.

The non-diegetic musical score moves at a relatively high tempo, adding urgency to the scene. The drumbeats and their rhythm match the thumping of the horses' hooves, adding extra weight to this diegetic sound and again adding to the sense of excitement provided by this chase scene. The music and pitch changes when it becomes slowly apparent that the stagecoach riders have just about run out of ammunition - the change in music here is designed to reflect the worsening situation for the stagecoach riders. However, this is quickly alleviated by the sounds of the onrushing cavalry.

Overall then, sound is hugely important in communicating meaning in this sequence - the use of cinematography and editing are of course very important too, but the diegetic and non-diegetic sound help to really carry the sense of drama to the viewer.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a very clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film and of how micro-elements of film language contribute to the process of generating meaning. The candidate gives a wide range of examples of the use of sound from the extract, more than fulfilling the requirements of the question, and in the process, using a range of film terminology accurately. Overall, the response is a comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how diegetic and non-diegetic sound has been used to create meaning within a sequence.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further analysis of the use of the musical score, but this remains a very strong response at this level.

Mark awarded 10/10: the response clearly fits the criteria for Level 5 – comprehensive analysis of relevant examples.

Exemplar 2 – Level 3 answer, 6 marks

I will be discussing the chase sequence from 'Stagecoach' (Ford, 1939). The main sound sources we can hear are the sound of the horses' hooves, the sound of the stagecoach travelling, the war cries of the Apaches, the bullets being fired, and the sound of the bugle marking the arrival of the US Cavalry. There is also a non-diegetic musical score in most of the sequence.

The diegetic and non-diegetic sound adds a great deal to the spectator's ability to understand the events of the scene. The impact of the range of sounds adds to the emotional realism of the sequence - the sound of the horses' hooves, the sound of the oncoming Apaches and the sound of the bullets being fired - all of these diegetic sounds add to the urgency and sense of drama of the scene. Also, given that most of the film appears to be filmed in a studio, with limited use of location footage in Monument Valley, the sound sources are needed to give the film a sense of realism - like this could actually be happening.

The non-diegetic musical score moves quite fast, adding urgency to the scene. The drumbeats add to the sense of excitement provided by this chase scene. The music and pitch change when it becomes apparent that the stagecoach riders have just about run out of ammunition - the change in music here is designed to reflect the worsening situation for the stagecoach riders. However, this is quickly alleviated by the sounds of the onrushing cavalry.

Overall then, sound is hugely important in communicating meaning in this sequence - the use of cinematography and editing are of course very important too, but the diegetic and non-diegetic sound help to really carry the sense of occasion to the viewer.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film and of how the use of sound contributes to the process of generating meaning. The candidate gives a range of examples of the use of sound from the extract. Overall, the response is an adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how diegetic and non-diegetic sound has been used to create meaning within a sequence, identifying a range of sound sources and discussing the connotations of these sounds.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further analysis of the use of the musical score, and some further probing of how the different sound sources interact with each other to build up the aural picture in conjunction with the score.

Mark awarded 6/10: The response clearly fits the criteria for Level 3 – adequate analysis with accurate use of terminology.

QUESTION 2

With reference to a **sequence** from the **silent film** you have studied, analyse how cinematography has been used to create aesthetic effects.

[10]

Exemplar 1 – Level 5 answer, 9 marks

Cinematography plays an important role in achieving aesthetic effects in 'the shotgun sequence' from Chaplin's 'The Gold Rush', but there are other key elements of film language which help to generate meaning too. The sequence features three characters - the Lone Prospector (played by Chaplin), Black Larsen and Big Jim McKay. The story of the sequence is the Lone Prospector is sheltering in a cabin and starts eating off a bone. He is caught in this act by Black Larsen and then Big Jim who enters the fray, and there is some conflict between the three men.

There is a relatively simple range of camera shots used - different types of medium shot dominate. The furthest distance shot is the MLS and the closest is the MCU. Given the time of its production, the value of the close up and first person perspective had yet to be fully discovered. The shots help us to understand what Chaplin is doing with the bone - that isn't immediately understandable from the first shot of the sequence - the MLS acts as a master shot to enable the audience to develop their spatial orientation of the set. With the introductions of the other two characters, we get to understand their reactions to the Lone Prospector with the use of MCU's to show us their responses. The movement of the camera as it follows the Lone Prospector trying to avoid the struggle between the two characters emphasises his frantic movements to create comic effects.

Generally, the scene is lit with high key lighting so that all areas of the set are viewable to the audience and most shots observe the rule of thirds, although early in the sequence, some do place Chaplin at the centre of the frame, though there doesn't appear to be a specific reason for this. Composition also emphasises Chaplin's physical inferiority to the other two characters, again used to create comedy.

In addition to the cinematography, the performance of the actors and the editing are also crucial for the audience to understand what was happening before the Lone Prospector sees the characters entering the cabin - so cinematography is important, but cannot act alone to create meaning.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a very clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film and of how micro-elements of film language contribute to the process of generating meaning. The candidate gives a good range of examples of the use of cinematography from the extract, focusing mostly on camera shots, but also discussing aspects of composition (rule of thirds) and lighting with a view to understanding how these micro-elements generate meaning, and in the process, using a range of film terminology accurately. A precise, well focused response emerges and the candidate is able to demonstrate an understanding of how cinematography links with other micro-elements to generate meanings and aesthetic effects. Overall, the response is a comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how cinematography has been used to create meaning within a sequence.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further analysis of frame composition, particularly on balanced/unbalanced compositions and the reasons for this. However, this remains a very strong response at this level.

Mark awarded 9/10: This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 5 –comprehensive analysis of relevant examples

Exemplar 2 – Level 3 answer, 5 marks

Cinematography plays an important role in achieving aesthetic effects in 'the shotgun sequence' from Chaplin's 'The Gold Rush'. The sequence features three characters - the Lone Prospector (played by Chaplin), Black Larsen and Big Jim McKay. The story of the sequence is the Lone Prospector is sheltering in a cabin and starts eating off a bone. In this act, he is caught by Black Larsen and Big Jim, and there is some conflict between the three men.

There is a relatively simple range of camera shots used - different types of medium shot dominate. The furthest distance shot is the MLS and the closest is the MCU. The shots help us to understand what Chaplin is doing with the bone - that isn't immediately understandable from the starting shot of the sequence. The MLS is a master shot to help the audience to develop their awareness of the set. With the introductions of the other two characters, we get to understand their reactions to the Lone Prospector with the use of MCU's to show us their responses.

In addition to the cinematography, the performance of the actors and the editing are also crucial for the audience to understand what was happening before the Lone Prospector sees the characters entering the cabin - so cinematography is important, but cannot act alone to create meaning.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film and of how aspects of cinematography contribute to the process of generating meaning. The candidate gives a range of examples of the use of cinematography from the extract, focussing on camera shots. They use a range of film terminology accurately. A precise response emerges and the candidate is able to demonstrate an adequate understanding of how cinematography generates meanings and aesthetic effects.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further analysis of other aspects of cinematography, most notably frame composition, and lighting.

Mark awarded 5/10: Level 3 - adequate analysis of relevant examples.

QUESTION 3

'Film is just about spectacle; narrative resolution does not matter.' Compare how this quotation applies to **two** films you have studied. You must refer to examples from **one** film from **1930–1960** and examples from **one** film from **1961–1990** in your answer.

[35]

Exemplar 1 – Level 5 answer, 32 marks

With regard to the quotation in the question, I think whether you agree with the statement or not depends on what type of films you like and what pleasures you seek to gain from watching. If you watch an action film - whether it's a James Bond or superhero film - there is an argument to say that spectacle trumps narrative resolution. Such films will have a typical and predictable end, so it's easy to predict the narrative resolution - the world will be under threat and after a significant battle, the heroes will save the day. As a fan of Bond films and superhero films, the pleasure of watching such films comes from the spectacle - enjoying the stunts and situations that the characters have to face and resolve. While this is true for me and many of the films I enjoy watching, it may not be true for everybody and for all films. In my answer, I will be exploring 'Stagecoach' (Ford, 1939) and 'Raging Bull' (Scorsese, 1980) and arguing that while spectacle is important in both films, it doesn't trump narrative resolution but actually adds to the impact of how the narratives are resolved.

'Stagecoach' brings together a socially and economically diverse group of people for a journey westwards in America. It features a drunk man - Doc Boone - who fought on the union side in the American civil war; Dallas, who appears to be a prostitute, Peacock a salesman who is nervous about the journey ahead; Hatfield, who styles himself as a 'southern gentleman' like the ones in Tarantino's 'Django Unchained' and Mrs Mallory, who is pregnant and eager to reach her soldier husband and the star and Ringo the Kid, played by John Wayne, who is the stereotypical young man who finds himself on the wrong side of the law. Ordinarily, few of these characters would come into much contact with each other, but the proximity of the stagecoach and the danger of the circumstances - the threat of attack from Geronimo's band of Apaches - brings them together.

Given the repeated threat of Geronimo and his group of Apaches throughout the film, the sequence starting at approximately 1 hour 10 minutes into the film is the dramatic high of the film - this is where Geronimo actually attacks the stagecoach. The interplay between the cinematography, editing and sound to present the audience with a clear understanding of the scale and nature of the threat posed by Geronimo and the desperation of the stagecoach riders to try to withstand the attack. This is the most visually fluid part of the film - we are treated to camera shots from the top of the stagecoach as it dives into the river to try to escape the Apaches, and we have close up shots of the stagecoach riders, presenting us with their individual parts in the battle against the Apaches. We are also offered wide, sweeping shots of the Apaches as they attack the stagecoach, giving us panoramic views of Monument Valley. This scene, in all of its parts offers a great deal of spectacle and a tense, well-orchestrated chase/battle scene.

While this is the dramatic high of the film, I was still very keen to see how the narrative was to be resolved; after surviving the attack, what was to become of the stagecoach riders, and in particular, the hero figure, Ringo? Given how he was painted as a figure of youthful rebellion at the start of the film, but had also proven himself to be kind (ensuring that Dallas was offered a drink as well as Mrs Mallory on the stagecoach at one point) and honourable - not running away from being arrested even when presented with the opportunity - the question of what the future holds is important, and it was important that Ringo had a form of happy ending - metaphorically riding off into the sunset with Dallas, because he had earned it. The desire to see a happy outcome for Ringo is motivated by what we have learned about him - about his background and how he conducted himself throughout the stagecoach journey. The elements of spectacle are enjoyable in themselves, but they are important in helping to create the conditions where narrative resolution is valuable in itself.

Scorsese's 'Raging Bull' offers a wealth of spectacle - the film is peppered with the boxing scenes which have become very widely acclaimed in the years since the film's release in 1980. Those brutal scenes combined with the scenes of domestic violence ensure that violence is never far away in the film - whether it's the criminal violence where Jake attacks

his wife and his brother, as he does on a number of occasions, or it is the legitimate paid-for violence where Jake is giving and receiving serious punishment in the glaring lights of the boxing ring. The majority of the film's narrative and running time is focused on the prime of Jake's boxing career, and the film is bookended by sections later in time where Jake is reflecting back on the good old days. In the latter part of the film, as the film works to its conclusion, we see Jake has put on a considerable amount of weight from his boxing days and is now lamenting the downward track he now finds himself on.

As with 'Stagecoach' and other films, it very much depends on the individual spectator and the type of relationship they forge with a film to determine whether spectacle is more important than narrative resolution or not. Given this film is based on a real life person and events, this is intriguing to me, despite not being a fan of boxing, so the numerous boxing scenes are engaging spectacles to me because of the way Scorsese manages to take us right in there into these critical moments in fights when they are being won and lost. He gives us some psychological insight about what makes Jake tick at various points; just when he seems beaten, his eyes fire into life and he can come roaring back. The sophisticated use of cinematography is especially effective in getting us to see and feel all of the elements of a boxing fight - from the sense of size and scale of the venues, to the sounds of the crowds cheering and the sight of blood flying across onto the ropes. The excellent use of cinematography ensures that the spectator - whatever their personal view of boxing - really feels the action. The use of spectacle in both films, be it the chase sequence in 'Stagecoach' or the boxing scenes in 'Raging Bull' is clearly a key part of their aesthetic experience.

However for me, as a person with no interest in boxing, I am interested and engaged in how the narrative is resolved. The huge contrast in Jake's physical abilities is substantial and shows very well the 'fall from grace' he has endured since his boxing days followed by his nightclub owner days. In one sense, the film could leave the audience dangling and resolve the narrative at the end or peak of Jake's boxing career. However, this isn't really a sports biography film - this is a study of a man who struggles to exert his will on the world around him, lacking the verbal dexterity to express himself more clearly. Where his verbal skills leave off, his physical skills take up - it is with brute strength that Jake imposes order on the world around him - most forcefully with the assaults on his wife and brother. Where the film does end, with Jake squeezing a living out of being a nightclub entertainer, shows that he has received his just desserts and that he has now lost what he cared about most - his wife and his brother. He is alone and faces a lonely voyage into his old age with an uncertain means of supporting himself financially. Resolving the narrative in this fashion gives us a rounded and morally driven ending to the film and invites the spectator to feel some pity and perhaps sympathy for how Jake has declined.

To summarise, both films present us with narratives where the protagonist is a male, outsider character. Both Jake and Ringo demonstrate physical courage in very demanding situations. However, in terms of spectator engagement and sympathy, the ferocity and repetition of Jake's assaults on his wife put a limitation on how much sympathy can be given to Jake when he descends into a life outside of the limelight by the film's close. Whereas, with Ringo, while his future is somewhat uncertain, the spectator can feel happier that he has the chance of a better future in the new world of the American West. Narrative resolution is important to show the spectator/audience what the full journey of the protagonist is and to give us a moral steer (where film directors wish to offer it) on how to interpret the characters that we see, as is the case in both of these films. Spectacle contributes to a sense of enjoyment in the moment - such as happens in the moments from the two films discussed above, but these spectacles and the role the protagonists play in driving the narratives onwards is important to understanding how and why the protagonists have got to the point on their emotional journey that they have by the end of the film.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a very clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen films and of films in general, and is able to situate their response within the context of their own experience of film culture and as an audience member. A range of relevant examples from both films are discussed, and these are sophisticated and sustained in their analysis of whether spectacle is more important than narrative resolution or not. The discussion of the scenes chosen from the two films enables consideration of how spectacle is engineered by the use of micro-elements of film language. The candidate is also able to offer some direct comparison about the nature of the narrative resolutions and their personal interpretations of the situations for both films' protagonists. Overall, the response is a comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of elements of film, and the role of narrative and spectacle in cinema.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further examples of direct comparison between the two films as the response develops. Also, some tighter focus on the personalities and motivations of the protagonists from both films could have been achieved. However, this remains a very strong response at this level.

Mark awarded 32/35: This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 5 for both AOs – comprehensive analysis of relevant examples, with room for more direct comparison.

AO1 - 14/15, AO2 - 18/20

Exemplar 2 – Level 3 answer, 18 marks

A lot of films follow a familiar pattern of genre conventions - this means that quite a lot of films are quite predictable. For example, in superhero films, you know there will be a big battle at the end which the heroes will win. So the spectacle that films provide is usually more impactful than the narrative resolutions. I will be writing about Stagecoach and Raging Bull in my answer.

Stagecoach brings together a group of people for a journey in America. It features a drunk man - Doc Boone, Dallas, Peacock, Hatfield, and Mrs Mallory, who is pregnant and lastly Ringo the Kid - the typical young man who finds himself on the wrong side of the law.

Given the threat of Geronimo and his group of Apaches, the sequence starting at approximately 1 hour 10 minutes into the film is the high point of the narrative. The use of the camera together with editing and sound presents the audience with a clear understanding of the threat posed by Geronimo. There is quite a bit of variety in camera shots in this sequence - there are camera shots from the top of the stagecoach as it dives into the river to try to escape the Apaches, and we have close up shots of the stagecoach riders, presenting us with their individual parts in the battle against the Apaches. This scene, in all of its parts offers a great deal of spectacle.

After this sequence, the film mostly fizzles out into a kind of fairy tale, happy ever after ending, which I found a bit predictable. So for me, with this film, the spectacle was more important than the predictable narrative resolution.

'Raging Bull' is nearly all spectacle - combining the brutal boxing scenes with the brutal scenes at home too. The majority of the film's narrative is focused on Jake's boxing career. In the latter part of the film, as the film works to its conclusion, we see Jake has put on a considerable amount of weight from his boxing days and is now lamenting the downward track he now finds himself on. By the end of the film, he is a has-been, and given how the film started, you knew pretty much how it was going to end, so again, the spectacle in the main part of the film was of more interest than the actual narrative resolution. In both films spectacle is the most important element for the audience.

The numerous boxing scenes are engaging spectacles to me because of the way Scorsese manages to take us right in there into these critical moments in fights when they are being won and lost. The detailed use of cinematography is especially effective in getting us to see and feel all of the elements of a boxing fight - seeing cuts getting opened and seeing blood flying in close up and slow motion are good examples of this.

To summarise, narrative resolution is important, but for me, it's the sense of the spectacular along the way that makes a film memorable and special - the more of these spectacular moments, the better.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen films. A range of relevant examples from both films are discussed, and analysis and comparisons (explicit and implicit) are offered. The discussion of the scenes chosen from the two films enables a discussion of how spectacle is engineered by the use of micro-elements of film language. Overall, the response is an adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of aesthetics and spectatorship.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further examples of direct comparison between the two films as the response develops. Also, a more nuanced and balanced argument could be presented - the argument here is quite one-sided.

Mark awarded 18/35: This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 3 for both AOs – adequate analysis of relevant examples, with room for more direct comparison.

AO1 - 8/15, AO2 - 10/20

SECTION B QUESTION 5

SECTION B – European Cinema History

Answer Question 5 **and either** Question 6 **or** Question 7

You should have studied **both** of the **experimental surrealist films** below:

Un Chien Andalou (1929). Directed by Luis Buñuel. France. 15

L'Age D'or (1930). Directed by Luis Buñuel. France. 15

You should also have studied **one** film from the table below:

German expressionist	French new wave
The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920). Directed by Robert Wiene. Germany, U	*The 400 Blows* (1959). Directed by François Truffaut. France, PG
Nosferatu (1922). Directed by F.W. Murnau. Germany, PG	*À Bout de Souffle* (1960). Directed by Jean-Luc Godard. France, PG
Metropolis (1927). Directed by Fritz Lang. Germany, PG	*Cleo from 5 to 7* (1962). Directed by Agnes Varda. France, PG

Answer Question 5

With reference to examples from **both** experimental surrealist films you have studied, explain how cinematography and editing have been used to challenge conventional narratives.

[15]

Exemplar 1 – Level 3 answer, 12 marks

The choices made in surrealist films with regards to the use of cinematography and editing have a big impact on how you can (or cannot) go about the process of deducing narrative structure and meaning from a film. I will explore examples from both of the surrealist films to demonstrate this.

The first two minutes of 'Un Chien Andalou' (Bunuel, 1929) challenge conventional narrative forms through its use of cinematography and editing. The film opens with a man sharpening a razor blade. The lightness of the room suggest it is light outside, but when the film cuts to a shot of the man outside on his balcony, it is dark and it is night time - this is made clear with the cutaway to the moon. the normal sense of time is being ruptured and we cannot be certain as to the narrative reliability of the film.

One of the most iconic parts of the film happens in this sequence - the eyeball slicing scene. In contemporary films, we can see all sorts of violent acts in certain films, but it very rare to see violence presented in close up as is the case here. The slicing of the eyeball by the man challenges narrative orthodoxy because we might begin to assume him to be a good or heroic figure, but any such illusion of this is quickly shattered with this scene.

The arrangements of shots - from the medium close up on the woman's face to the cutting of the eyeball - brings the spectator into a close relationship with this violent act. Rather than distance the spectator from the horror, you are forced to be a close witness to it. Additionally, the eyeball being cut was an animal's - when you know this, this is also apparent

when you re-watch the film providing another rupture in the narrative created through editing choices.

In 'L'age d'or' (Bunuel, 1930) to some extent, it is editing more than cinematography which provides the challenge to conventional narrative. The choices made in how to combine different shots together and the sequencing of the whole film make it impossible to read this film in the same way you would with a film that features a conventional narrative. For example, take the scene where a woman finds a cow lying on a bed - there is nothing remarkable as such about the cinematography, rather it is the absurdity of the situation and the abstract use of mise-en-scène (the cow on the bed) which provides the challenge to narrative conventions. The film offers no explanation or rationale for this, it just happens, as can happen in dreams - where seemingly random events happen without logic or explanation..

However, earlier in the film, as a crowd are on a procession, they witness a man and woman rolling around on the floor and kissing. This provokes hysteria in the crowd in the film, and the use of cinematography here is deliberately challenging - putting the audience this close to the action was a step too far for British censors, one of the reasons why the film was banned for a considerable period of time. This overt display of human sexuality was simply too challenging for many censors at the time of the film's initial release. What seems harmless by today's standards was beyond the limits of acceptability then.

In both films cinematography and editing play a crucial role in challenging narrative structures, at the same time the films also rely on their abstract use of mise-en-scène and taboo imagery to further subvert narrative conventions.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a very clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen films. This is a very precise response which directly focuses on the use of cinematography and editing in both films for the entirety of the response. A range of relevant, well-chosen examples from both films are discussed, and there is a very clear understanding of what conventional narratives are, and how these films work to challenge these conventions through their uses of cinematography and editing. Overall, the response is a comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how cinematography and editing are used to resist the spectator's desire or ability to apply narrative conventions in fashioning their understanding and response to both films.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further interrogation of the use of cinematography particularly within the examples chosen - for example, exploring frame composition and/or lighting. However, within the time available to respond this is a very strong response at this level.

Mark awarded 12/15 – clearly fits the criteria for Level 3 for both AOs – comprehensive analysis of relevant examples, with room for more discussion of cinematography.

AO1 - 4/5 AO2 - 8/10

Exemplar 2 – Level 2 answer, 8 marks

The conventions of narrative are challenged in the first two minutes of 'Un Chien Andalou' (Bunuel, 1929) through its use of cinematography and editing. The film opens with a man sharpening a razor blade. The lightness of the room suggest it is light outside, but when the film cuts to a shot of the man outside on his balcony it is night time - this is made clear with the cutaway to the moon. So the normal sense of time is ruptured and we cannot be certain as to the narrative reliability of the film.

One of the most famous moments of this film happens in this sequence - the eyeball slicing scene. The slicing of the eyeball by the man challenges narrative conventions because we might begin to assume him to be the hero, but any such illusion of this is quickly stopped here. The arrangements of shots - from the medium close up on the woman's face to the cutting of the eyeball - brings the spectator into a close relationship with this violent act. Rather than distance the spectator from the horror, you are forced to be a close witness to it.

In 'L'age d'or' (Bunuel, 1930) to some extent the editing challenges conventional narrative. The choices made in how to combine different shots together and the sequencing of the whole film make it impossible to read this film in the same way you would with a film that features a conventional narrative. For example, take the scene where a woman finds a cow lying on a bed - there is nothing remarkable as such about the cinematography, rather it is the absurdity of the situation and the challenging use of mise-en-scène (the cow on the bed) which provides the challenge to narrative conventions.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a clear knowledge of the chosen films. This is a precise response which directly focuses on the use of cinematography and editing in both films for the entirety of the response. Relevant, well-chosen examples from both films are discussed, and there is a clear understanding of what conventional narratives are, and how these films work to challenge these conventions through their uses of cinematography and editing. Overall, the response is an adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of how cinematography and editing are used to resist the spectator's desire or ability to apply narrative conventions in fashioning their understanding and response to both films.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further use of examples from both films and greater commentary about both cinematography and editing in both films. This would add breadth and depth to the argument presented.

Mark awarded 8/15: This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 2 for both AOs – adequate analysis of relevant examples.

AO1 - 3/5 AO2 - 5/10

QUESTION 6

Analyse how the German expressionist or French new wave film you have studied approaches the concept of narrative.

[35]

Exemplar 1 – Level 5 answer, 33 marks

The French new wave emerged in the late 1950s into the early 1960s and was spearheaded by film critics turned directors Francois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard. Other notable directors of the movement were Alain Resnais, Agnes Varda, Jacques Rivette and Eric Rohmer. While in their films they all addressed different settings, characters and themes, they were all united in their desire to re-shape the French approach to cinema. Truffaut, in his critical writings for Cahiers du Cinema, had argued against the studio-bound, cinema du papa with its fondness for literary adaptations - the so-called 'tradition of quality'. Truffaut and others wanted to see contemporary France and its people on screen, and they wanted to take advantage of technological developments which facilitated more filming to be done on location. So stylistically, the new wave wished to be on the streets in a desire for greater modernity and a form of realism - offering spectators a world which was familiar to them. To different degrees, the new wave directors sought to challenge the conventional approaches to film-storytelling that were and still are dominant. Godard achieved some of this in 'A Bout de Souffle' and Resnais did likewise in 'Last Year at Marienbad'. However, Truffaut's first film as director, 'The 400 Blows' wasn't quite so daring in its approach to narrative, as I will be seeking to demonstrate in my answer.

Nearly all films have an identifiable hero and identifiable villain - the protagonist and the antagonist (some rare exceptions are to be found in the French surrealist films discussed in my previous answer). 'The 400 Blows' is no exception - the hero or protagonist (the character who helps to drive the story on) is the 13 year old Antoine Doinel and the antagonist can be found in various forms - his teacher and his dad, being the key antagonist characters to Antoine. Early in the film, a conflict between the young Antoine and the old 'Prof', as he refers to his teacher, develops though Antoine ridiculing the teacher to his new classmates. So here, a classic young versus old binary opposition is formed. The teacher is oblivious to some of the jokes being played around him by his class, while Antoine is at the centre of these escapades - old and out of touch is juxtaposed with young and cool from this early point. On another level, this represents what Truffaut was seeking to do with French cinema - he was the young director intent on stirring things up in the new environment he found himself in.

By introducing the audience quickly to Antoine as a playful character, we are being steered towards a positive interpretation of his character. This is vital for shaping how the audience may see events later in the film as Antoine slips into criminality. Conventional approaches to narrative are therefore being employed to bind the spectator emotionally to Antoine.

In terms of the structure of the narrative, it moves in a conventional pattern too. Its dramatic arc follows the conventional three act structure, and the five major plot points are identifiable at various points. Discussed above was the early scene where Antoine is first brought into his new class - Antoine's mockery of the teacher and then hiding behind a board acts as the lock-in. Antoine has now styled himself as a class joker and rebel character: he doesn't respect traditional authority as represented by the teacher; there will be no return from this position for Antoine.

Antoine's struggles with authority don't go away - he rebels against his teachers, his parents, and his grandmother (by stealing her money) and this ultimately brings him into conflict with the law, as embodied by the police. A variety of options for 'rehabilitating' the delinquent Antoine are considered - a form of youth prison, where the child inmates are also taught formal education is the chosen option - but this is far away from his native Paris. Antoine commits his ultimate act of rebellion, which is the third act twist, escaping the prison school by slipping underneath a fence and running away to the nearby sea. This is a twist because Antoine has never seemed to be 'lost' to mainstream society, but this act of escape will be a defining one for him, whatever the future now holds for him. In one sense, Antoine's run to the sea is a welcome end to the film, because it represents Antoine's desire to achieve freedom and control made real. On the other hand, the final shot of the film, the freeze frame close up on Antoine's face leaves us with unanswered questions - what is it that Antoine is looking at? What is he thinking in this final moment of the film? Finishing the film on

this questioning note does provide a challenge to the conventions of narrative form - there is no clear resolution to the story.

In conclusion, the film is quite conventional in terms of its approach to the concept of narrative - all of the expected components of a conventional narrative are firmly in place. However, a story which was unusual in terms of its subject matter is told which enabled French cinema to begin the process of reinvention which the new wave directors excelled at.

Examiner commentary

What went well: The candidate has a very clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film and of the wider French new wave. The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of narrative structure and is able to enter into a detailed and precise engagement with the points where the film's narrative structure cleaves to conventionality and elements where it breaks away, with particular interrogation of the meaning of the final freeze frame shot. A range of relevant, well-chosen examples from the film are discussed from points throughout the film, demonstrating comprehensive breadth and depth of understanding. Overall, the response shows a comprehensive understanding of narrative in general and of this film's narrative in particular.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some further interrogation of the use of micro-elements particularly within the examples chosen to help exemplify some of the points made about binary oppositions for example. However, within the time available to respond this is a very strong response at this level.

Mark awarded 33/35. This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 5 for both AOs:

AO1 - 15/15 AO2 - 18/20

Exemplar 2 – Level 3 answer, 20 marks

The French new wave emerged in the late 1950s into the early 1960s and was spearheaded by film critics turned directors Francois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard. Truffaut, in his critical writings for Cahiers du Cinema, had argued against the studio- bound, cinema du papa with its fondness for literary adaptations - the so-called 'tradition of quality'. Truffaut and others wanted to see contemporary France and its people on screen, and they wanted to take advantage of technological developments which facilitated location filming.

Nearly all films have an identifiable hero and identifiable villain - the protagonist and the antagonist. 'The 400 Blows' is no exception - the hero is the 13 year old Antoine Doinel and the antagonist is his teacher. Early in the film, a conflict between the young Antoine and the old 'Prof', as he refers to his teacher, develops though Antoine ridiculing the teacher to his new classmates. The teacher is unaware of what Antoine is doing behind his back - old and out of touch is opposed to young and cool from this early point.

By introducing the audience quickly to Antoine as a playful character, we are being steered towards a positive interpretation of his character - and this is vital for shaping how the audience see events later in the film as Antoine slips into criminality. So, conventional approaches to narrative are being taken and being used to position the spectator to Antoine.

In terms of the structure of the narrative, it moves in a conventional pattern too. It has a conventional three act structure, and the five major plot points are identifiable at various points. Discussed above was the early scene where Antoine is first brought into his new class - Antoine's mockery of the teacher and then hiding behind a board acts as the lock-in. Antoine has now styled himself as a class joker and rebel character: he doesn't respect traditional authority as represented by the teacher - there will be no return from this position for Antoine.

Antoine's struggles with authority don't go away - he rebels against his teachers, his parents, his grandmother (by robbing her money) and this ultimately brings him into conflict with the law, embodied by the police. A variety of options for 'rehabilitating' the delinquent Antoine are considered – leading him to a form of youth prison.

Antoine commits his ultimate act of rebellion, which is the third act twist, by escaping the prison school by slipping underneath a fence and running away to the nearby sea. In one sense, Antoine's run to the sea is a welcome end to the film, because it represents Antoine's desire to achieve freedom and control made real. On the other hand, the final shot of the film, the freeze frame close up on Antoine's face leaves us with unanswered questions - what is it that Antoine is looking at? Finishing the film on this questioning note does provide a challenge to narrative conventionality - there is no clear resolution to the story.

In conclusion, the film is quite conventional in terms of its approach to the concept of narrative - all of the expected components of a conventional narrative are firmly in place.

Examiner commentary

This response gives an adequate demonstration of knowledge and understanding of elements of film and it is a relevant and appropriate response to the question set. It shows a mostly accurate knowledge with sound breadth or depth of material used and the use of film terminology is mostly accurate.

The response provides an adequate analysis in relation to the question set. There is adequate analysis of relevant sequences from the chosen film and adequate application of understanding of critical approaches in response to the question set.

What went well: The candidate has a clear knowledge and understanding of the chosen film. The candidate demonstrates a good understanding of narrative structure and is able to enter into a detailed engagement with the points where the film's narrative structure cleaves to conventionality. A range of

relevant, well-chosen examples from the films are discussed from points throughout the film, demonstrating breadth and depth of understanding. Overall, the response is an adequate understanding of narrative in general.

Even better if: The response could be improved with some interrogation of the use of micro-elements particularly within the examples chosen to help exemplify some of the points made. Discussion of aspects of the use of mise-en-scène/ cinematography would have been beneficial in helping the candidate to advance their argument.

Mark awarded 20/35: This response clearly fits the criteria for Level 3 for both AOs:

AO1 - 9/15 AO2 - 11/20

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