Film Studies A Level

Preparation work: Pre-course Reading, Research and Tasks

Pre-reading and research will help you to become more familiar with the topics you are going to study on your A Level Film Studies course. It is likely that this is a new course for you, so completing the tasks below will help you to become more confident when you begin your course.

Specification :

A good place to start to look at the A level specification and familiarise yourself with what you will be studying on the course:

https://www.wjec.co.uk/en/qualifications/film-studies-as-a-level#tab_overview

Task 1:

Produce an A4 poster on at least 2 of the topics you will be studying. To make your work more visual you can include images, graphs and charts, as well as written text. Use the resources below to find the information:

The Hollywood Studio System:

https://www.britannica.com/art/history-of-the-motion-picture/The-Hollywood-studio-system#ref786010

American New Wave Cinema:

http://www.newwavefilm.com/international/new-hollywood.shtml

British Cinema and Representation:

https://medium.com/@aaronguthrie/the-representation-of-class-in-contemporary-british-film-and-tv-afc5882dd7d3

Auteur Theory:

https://indiefilmhustle.com/auteur-theroy/

Film Language:

http://www.kenstone.net/fcp_homepage/language_of_film.html

Task 2:

Look at the British Film Institute's list of the 50 best films of 2019. Watch 1 of the films listed and complete the following:

- Write a critical review of the film, identifying which aspects you appreciated (cinematography, editing, performances etc.).
- Consider what makes a 'good' film. Which aspects have been highlighted by the BFI?

Websites for Further Research and Reading:

When studying film, it is important to keep up-to-date with current reviews, trends and news stories surrounding the topics you will be studying:

https://www.theguardian.com/uk/film

https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine

https://www.empireonline.com/

Here are some more specific course-related websites and YouTube channels you may find useful and interesting:

Screen & Sound: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEgLUogvcD8qEY5N6MWZAew
Documentary.net: http://www.documentaryfilms.net/
Internet Movie Database: https://www.imdb.com/
MUBI: https://mubi.com/showing (free for film students)

Books to Read:
- **An Introduction to Film** by Jill Nelmes
- **The Story of Film** by Mark Cousins
- **Alex Cox's Introduction to Film** by Alex Cox
- **Easy Riders and Raging Bulls** by Peter Biskind
- **Film Art – An Introduction** by David Bordwell

Podcasts:
BBC Radio 4's The Film Programme - https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r5jt
BBC 5 Live Kermode and Mayo Film Reviews - https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00lvdrj
Indiewire Podcasts - https://www.indiewire.com/2015/03/podcasts-248187/
The Big Picture - https://www.theringer.com/2020/4/23/21233537/top-10-original-netflix-movies
The Bigger Picture - https://www.bfi.org.uk/bfi-film-podcast

Task 3:
Source one of the above books or listen to one of the podcasts. Write a summary of the key issues, facts and points that you have learnt.

Films to Watch:
- **A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies (1995)**: an excellent detailed history of US cinema, its film-makers and their influence on film culture.
- **The Story of Film; An Odyssey (2011)**: a thorough history of world cinema told through a unique lens.
- **Side by Side (2012)**: a documentary on the importance of editing in cinema.
- **Citizen Kane (1940)**: why not start your journey with a classic. Perhaps the greatest movie ever made?

Progression Opportunities
Why study Film Studies A Level:
- https://www.raindance.org/5-reasons-study-film-university/
- https://www.studyinternational.com/news/film-studies-the-life-behind-the-lens/
- Career opportunities in the film industry:
- https://www.screenskills.com/
- https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7n8nrd

We hope you enjoy completing these tasks and look forward to you joining the course.