



## Christopher Whitehead Sixth Form

### A-level Film Studies Summer Bridging Tasks



### Congratulations on choosing to study WJEC-Eduqas Film Studies A-level at CWLC!

This A level is about so much more than just watching films: as you progress through the course, you will learn about the history of film through the ages; you will also develop your understanding of how films are created and why certain films can influence entire generations! **To enable you to read this booklet properly, please download it and save it to your home and / or school computer or print out your own copy.**

### A-level Film Studies Summer Bridging Tasks

In the rest of this booklet, there are the summer bridging tasks you need to complete before you start your Film Studies A level course in September. The aim of these tasks is to prepare you for the beginning of the course in the best way possible and introduce you to some of the topics you will be studying.

Once you have completed these tasks, you should bring them with you to your first A Level Film Studies lesson in September. You can complete the tasks in writing or complete them on the computer and print them out – the choice is yours – if you choose to complete them on the computer, you will need to print them out yourself; please do not email them.

#### **Task 1: A film which has had an impact on you!**

As you might expect, A level Film Studies requires students to study, analyse and deconstruct films through written responses and group discussion. So, for your first task, we would like you to create a short presentation about a film which has had an impact on you. When choosing your film, think about these points:

- Was it a film which had an impact on you in some way: did it shock you or affect you emotionally? Did it make you think about something you had never considered before, or think about something in a different way?
- Was it a film which has 'stayed with you' over the years and which you have kept returning to and thinking about?

- Is it a film which is your favourite and which you absolutely love? If so, you will need to tell us what it is about this film which is so brilliant – in your opinion!
- Is it a film which has a message or a moral or perhaps a film with a brilliant, unexpected twist?
- Is it a film which shows us something about society, human nature, the future or ourselves?
- Is it a film which is experimental or unusual in some way or a film which influenced or even started a particular cinematic movement or franchise?

### **What do you need to include in your presentation?**

In your presentation, you need to include:

- ✓ Some basic information about the film: when it was produced and released; who directed and produced it; a little bit of information about its plot.
- ✓ At least three different reasons / parts of the film which particularly made an impact on you and an explanation as to why.
- ✓ Anything significant we need to know about the film's setting – so, where / what time period the film takes place in.
- ✓ A brief profile of one or two of the film's actors / actresses and how their role in this film was particularly important.  
.... anything else which you feel you need to tell us about in order to show why and how this particular film had such an impact on you!

### **How to create your presentation:**

- **Your presentation should be between 5 and 10 minutes long.**
- You can create a PowerPoint presentation if you wish to, or, some kind of handout to give out to your teacher and the rest of your class to look at whilst you present.
- You can (and you will probably need to!) show us short, relevant clips from your chosen film so that you can illustrate and support the points you are making.
- You could even find some still images from your film to either project onto the board / print out and talk about!
- If you want to use a PowerPoint presentation, make sure you bring it with you on a memory stick or email it to yourself and save it on your school user area so that you can log in and project it during your lesson. If you need to print out handouts, please do this before the lesson so that you are prepared (I would suggest printing out about six copies as that will be enough for the group to share).



**\*\*A note about 18-rated films:** Your A level Film Studies teachers will talk to you about this at the beginning of the course, as some of the film choices prescribed by the exam board for study are rated 18. For this first task though, you **can** use an 18 – rated film if you wish, **however**, if you are selecting films clips / still images for the class to look at during your presentation in September, **please avoid using clips which include graphic violence or sexual content.**

When you receive your timetable, have a look at when your first A level Film Studies lesson will be in September: this is when you will be expected to perform your presentation so you will need to make sure it is finished by then and that you have all of your necessary materials ready and prepared.

**Don't be nervous and worried about this presentation: it is just a chance for you to tell the rest of the group about a film which means something to you!**

## Task 2: Independent American Films

**'Independent American films characteristically explore non-mainstream cinema subjects and tend to adopt stylistic features associated with lower budget production.'** (A level Film Studies specification, 2017)

As part of the A level Film Studies course, you will study an *American Independent Film* and your next task relates to this component of the course. Below you have been given three different research questions to answer. You should aim to write about **150-200 words only** in response to each one. You could visit The Hive to find out some information to help you to write your answers, or complete some internet research. However, if you use the internet to complete your research DO NOT copy and paste. It will be very obvious if you do this and would also make us concerned as to whether you have the skills and commitment required to be an A level film student!

1. What is an independent film? What kinds of characteristics would we expect an independent film to have in comparison to say, a Hollywood blockbuster?
2. Have a look at this website: <https://www.filmindependent.org/about/> How does this organisation, 'Film Independent' support the production of independent films?
3. What is the Sundance Film Festival and how does it link to independent films?



## Task 3: Independent American Films: turning your research into experience!

Your final task is to find and watch any example of an American independent film. You can choose the film you wish to watch by searching the internet for different examples of independent American films or, go to this website <https://www.empireonline.com/movies/features/50-greatest-american-indies/> and you will find a list of 50 films to choose from.

Some films are available to watch on You Tube for free; otherwise Netflix or Amazon Prime will certainly have at least one example of an American independent film which you can watch. Otherwise, you would be able to pick up your own copy of a DVD very cheaply on Amazon or, even ask your parents if they have any of these films. If you are struggling, these films are all available at a very low cost on the Amazon website – especially if you buy used copies:

- 'Dazed and Confused'
- 'Lost in Translation'
- 'Juno'
- 'Winter's Bone'
- 'Little Miss Sunshine'

Whilst you are watching your film, note down any characteristics or features which you feel represent the independent film genre. Come back in September ready to tell us which film you watched and what you think made it 'independent'. You can note down some bullet point-ideas for this task if you wish, or otherwise, just be ready to discuss it.

