

Kind of film (genre)

- drama
- action film
- thriller

Producer

- produced by ...

Director

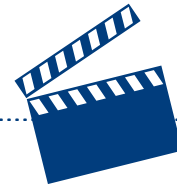
- a film directed by ...
- to develop a story
- well-directed
- expertly directed.

Screenplay/script

- ... from a screenplay by ...
- multi-layered script
- screenwriter ...
- The script was written by ...
- ... co-writes ...
- ...'s writing is astonishing/plausible/witty
- tightly written
- give characters the opportunity to ...

Setting/atmosphere

- is set in ...
- The story unfolds in ...
- ... provides the setting for ...
- create a certain atmosphere/mood



Actors/characters

- exceptional performance
- fervently performed, well acted
- ... does a very good job as ...
- The performances in ... are excellent.
- ... gives the part much personality
- ... adds a lot to the film
- ... is absolutely remarkable/especially memorable as ...
- ... is very/less convincing ...
- The most complex/incredibly played character is that of ...
- newcomer
- a film full of wonderful characters
- appealing, fascinating, funny, stereotypical, two-dimensional, warm-hearted

Plot/story

- amusing, boring, clichéd, confusing, entertaining, exciting, melodramatic, thrilling, unbelievable
- arouse curiosity
- full of tension
- build up to/reach a climax
- develop a story
- interlocking stories/fragmented narrative/non-linear narrative
- unexpected plot twists
- One of the most surprising moments in the film occurs when ...

Dialogue



- melodramatic
- (un)convincing
- realistic

## Music/soundtrack



- The music conveys a sad/happy/melancholy atmosphere
- The music underlines a mood/evokes feelings/shows a character's emotions/connects scenes
- The music and the lyrics support the plot.

## Miscellaneous

- The film contains a few funny bits.
- ... full of humorous moments
- The film gets extremely dramatic in places.
- One of the most poignant scenes of the movie ...
- powerful scenes
- final scene
- The film is close to reality.

## Evaluation

- a must-see/a smash hit
- a box-office success/failure
- an audience pleaser
- well worth seeing
- not to be missed
- a moving production/an emotionally strong film
- a truly great piece of filmmaking
- a skilful piece of filmmaking
- an impressive debut
- a very moving portrayal
- I definitely recommend this film to everybody ...
- The film is a worthwhile watch.
- On a scale from zero to five, I give this film a five.
- The film literally brought tears to my eyes.
- I highly/strongly/definitely recommend the film.
- If you like ..., this is the film for you.
- If you found films like ... or ... compelling then be sure to give ... your full attention.
- I certainly wouldn't recommend the film, because ...
- I'm afraid ... is a complete waste of time and money.
- It's a film that will change the way you think about ...
- I was impressed by ...



## Adjectives you could use

action-packed, amusing, badly acted, balanced, beautiful, (extremely) boring, breathtaking, captivating, compelling, complex, (totally/slightly) confusing, contrived, disappointing, enigmatic, enjoyable, entertaining, exciting, fantastic, (totally/rather) far-fetched, (truly) fascinating, funny, gripping, hilarious, humorous, inspiring, lousy, manipulative, masterful, perfect, poignant, powerful, (un)realistic, ridiculous, romantic, overacted, overrated, overwhelming, (im)perfect, predictable, provocative, silly, stupid, surprising, super, tense, unbelievable, unoriginal, (highly) uplifting

- ▶ *When writing a film review, use words and phrases from the list.*
- ▶ *You can add expressions from film reviews you have read.*

**The film**

- is the dramatic/thought-provoking story of ...
- has a circular structure, beginning with ... and ending with ...

**The director ...**

- aims to achieve a certain effect by ...
- uses ... to underline/emphasise sth.
- draws the viewer's attention to sth.
- tries to convey a certain impression
- creates a mood
- provides information about ...

**Narrative structure**

- non-linear/fragmented narrative
- ensemble film
- plot structure
- The plot contains several cleverly woven together

**The opening sequence**

- shows/presents/mirrors/reveals ...
- captures the atmosphere
- conveys the setting
- portrays the characters

**Camera operations ...**

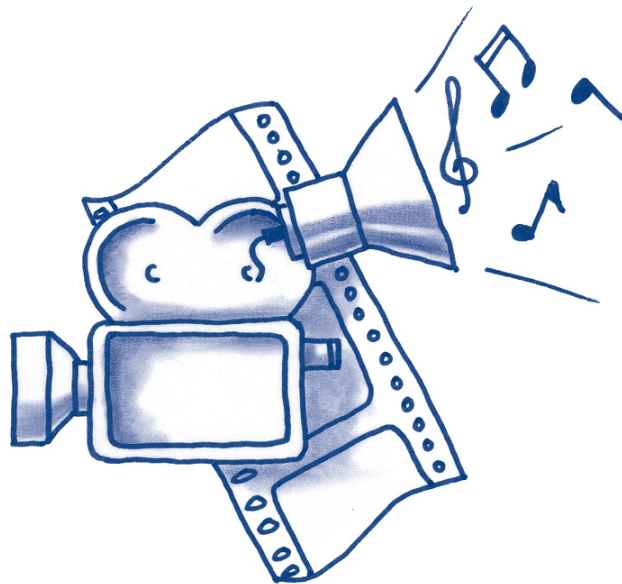
- describe characters indirectly
- show a character's emotions
- draw attention to sth.
- describe the setting
- evoke a certain atmosphere

**The camera**

- is at a great distance from .../is very close to ...
- shoots from a high/low angle.
- pulls back
- moves in/closes in on ...
- cranes up over ...
- fades in on .../fades out from ...
- pans from left to right
- tilts up/down
- zooms in on/zooms out from ...
- cuts from ... to ...

**Camera distance and camera perspective**

- The director uses a long shot of the setting.
- The ... shot establishes where the action is about to take place.
- The close-up is used to focus attention on .../reveals the character's feelings/makes the situation more intimate.
- ... uses a lot of close-ups.
- ... is shown in a close-up so we can see the reaction in her face when ...



- There are many brief shots.
- The director uses a high-angle shot of .../a helicopter shot of ...
- We see a low-angle shot/high-angle shot of the characters.
- ... are presented in a low-angle shot/high-angle shot.
- This shot is taken from a bird's eye view/worm's eye view.
- ... is/are filmed from above/below.
- The scene is shot from ...'s point of view/... is seen from the perspective of ...
- The over-the-shoulder shots include the viewers in the action.
- The POV shots make the audience experience the (emotional) perspective of a character.
- There is a tracking shot as the camera follows ...
- ... uses a fade-in ...
- The hand-held camera underlines .../gives the scene an unsteady quality/aims at authenticity

### Mise-en-scène

- The person living in this room is characterized by the items shown by ...

### A visual symbol ...

- stands for sth.
- takes on a deeper meaning
- signals/symbolises/visualises sth.

### Sound/music

- The ... suggests that ...
- The rhythmic/.../... background music contributes to the atmosphere of ...
- The lyrics suggest ...
- The effect of this scene is enhanced by the music.
- The scene is accompanied by soft/alarming/melancholic music.
- There is a voice-over.
- The soundtrack contributes to the mood/atmosphere of the scene.
- The sound / the music provides an extra feeling of tension/adds to the atmosphere.
- The sound sets the scene/builds tension/acts as cue/finishes the scene/...
- The soundtrack provides an atmosphere of .../contributes to the somber atmosphere/...
- The sound of ... can be heard.
- Continuous background music bridges ...
- Music can be upbeat/gloomy/aggressive/slow/fast-paced/ ...



### Lighting

- low-key lighting
- shot into light
- backlighting
- bright light
- ... makes the scene seem (un)realistic, ...
- gives the scene a ... quality
- Lighting in the scene of.....is used to enhance the sense of ...

### Editing

- The pace of the film is slowed down/accelerated by ...
- slow motion
- cross-cuttings
- match cuts

<b>affirmative action</b>	refers to concrete steps that are taken to eliminate discrimination.
<b>Barry Gibb dude</b>	refers to Conklin's resemblance to singer and songwriter Barry Gibb (Bee Gees).
<b>black vote</b>	African-American voters
<b>cookie jar</b>	jar in which cookies are kept (and sometimes money is hidden); a person who has his hands in the cookie jar is doing something illegal or dishonest; Flanagan implies that Lewis is corrupt and a drug dealer.
<b>Cosby Show</b>	American situation comedy, in the 80s the number-one show in America.
<b>cracker (sl.)</b>	abusive or slang term for a white person
<b>D.A.</b>	District Attorney, a United States Attorney or County Attorney
<b>dawg (sl.)</b>	slang term for friend, a salutation teenage boys use with each other
<b>Discovery Channel</b>	cable and satellite TV channel that provides non-fiction programmes. Lucien probably refers to <i>The FBI Files</i> , a docudrama series that describes actual FBI cases, with dramatic re-enactments and interviews with forensic scientists.
<b>equestrian team</b>	Cameron insults Christine for being on her high school's exclusively white and privileged equestrian team; allusion to Christine's WASP background.
<b>HMO</b>	Health Maintenance Organization
<b>homies (sl.)</b>	good friends
<b>honkies (sl.)</b>	whites
<b>Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, Eldridge Cleaver, Fred Hampton</b>	African-American activists
<b>Internal Affairs</b>	investigates incidents and suspicions of lawbreaking and professional misconduct by police officers.
<b>jihad</b>	'Holy Struggle', one of the 'ten practices' of the Islam. The term can refer to striving to live a virtuous life, to spreading and defending Islam, and to fighting injustice and oppression.
<b>L.A.P.D.</b>	Los Angeles Police Department; official website <a href="http://www.lapdonline.org/">http://www.lapdonline.org/</a>
<b>law-and-order vote</b>	conservative voters
<b>Lincoln Navigator</b>	a full-size luxury SUV produced by the Lincoln division of Ford Motor Company

<b>long colts, short colts, bull heads, flat nose, hollow points, wide cutters</b>	expressions for different kinds of bullets, ammunition
<b>minority-owned companies</b>	cf. affirmative action
<b>narc (sl.)</b>	short for narcotics agent, sb. (as a government agent) who investigates narcotics violations
<b>redneck</b>	slang term for a member of the white rural working class; a white person regarded as having a provincial attitude; an unsophisticated country person
<b>Shaniqua</b>	stereotypical name used to describe an African-American woman from the inner city
<b>shuck'n'jive</b>	to manipulate sb.; slang term primarily used by African-Americans. It refers to the speech and behavioural mechanisms adopted in the presence of an authority figure. <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuckin'_and_jivin'">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuckin'_and_jivin'</a>
<b>Staples Center</b>	sports arena in downtown Los Angeles, financed privately and named after the Staples office-supply company.
<b>St. Christopher</b>	patron saint of travellers
<b>Three-strikes law</b>	The exact application of the three-strikes law varies from state to state. In California, for example, the law applies to any third conviction and entails a sentence of 25 years in prison.
<b>UCLA</b>	University of California, Los Angeles, main campus is located in the Westwood neighbourhood of Los Angeles.
<b>wetback</b>	illegal Mexican immigrant

## [ Places ]

**Brentwood** One of the wealthiest neighbourhoods in Los Angeles, and one of the prominent districts of the Westside. Celebrities living there include California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Steven Spielberg, Jim Carrey.

**Compton** Suburb of Los Angeles, often labelled as an 'inner-city' community due to poverty, the elevated crime rate found in the city, and its location in South Los Angeles; Waters teaches basketball there.

**Sherman Oaks** A fairly affluent area, with several fashion boutiques and many upmarket houses and restaurants; other white neighbourhoods mentioned by Anthony: Burbank, Santa Monica, Toluca Lake.

**Studio City** A 4-square-mile district in the San Fernando Valley region of the City of Los Angeles.

**Westwood** Westwood Village is located in west Los Angeles.

**Wilshire** Region of the City of Los Angeles, a collection of wealthy middle- and working-class neighbourhoods.