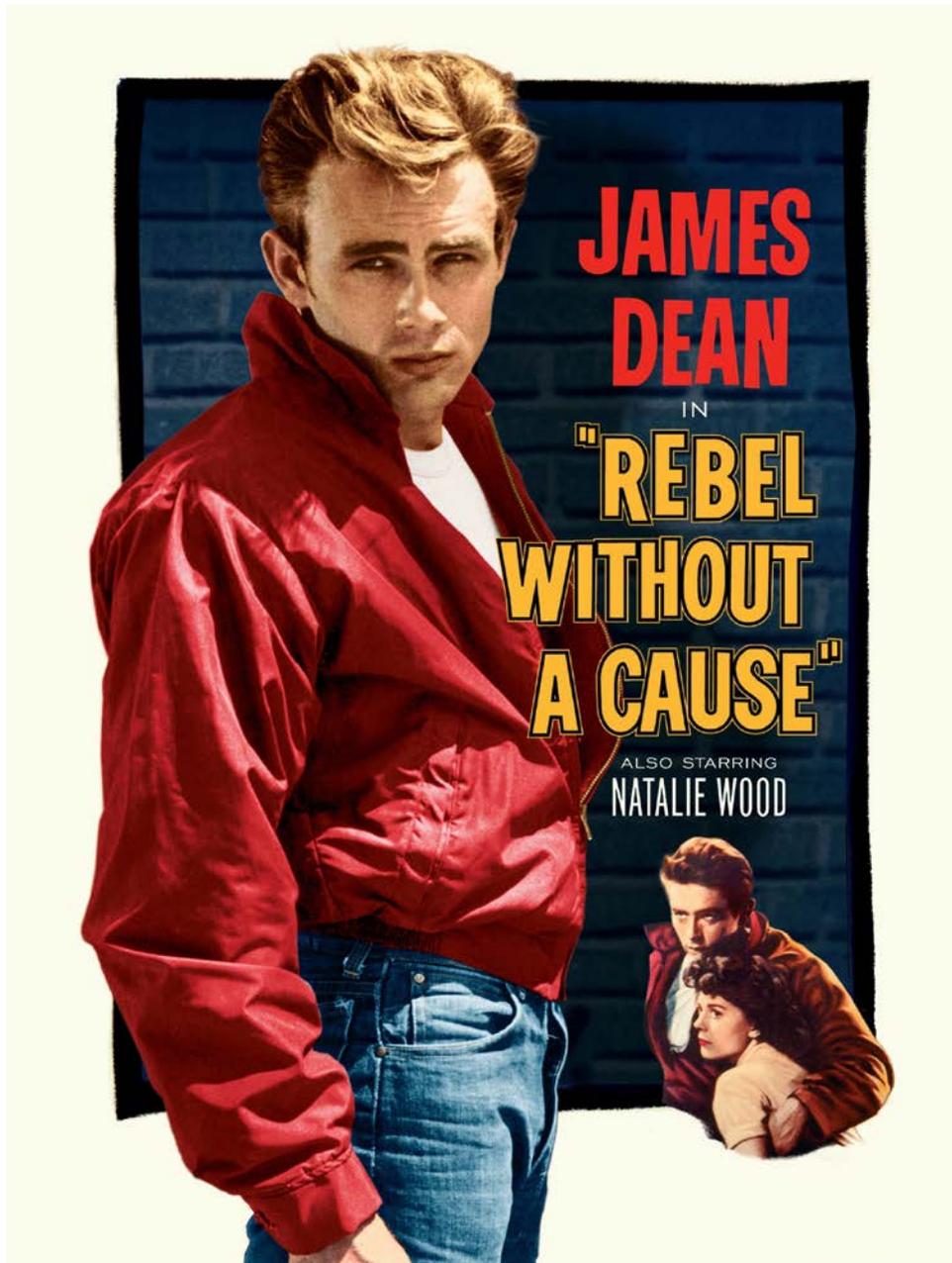


REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE (1955)

Eduqas GCSE Film Studies

Component 1: Key Developments in US Film

Section A: US film comparative study



CONTEXT REQUIREMENTS

Context is the vitally important information relating to the making of the film and the issues and environment surrounding the making of the film. We examine context in terms of the social, political, institutional and historical background details of the film. For REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE these are especially important given that the film was made during the 1950s, a period of dramatic change in the USA. In order to truly appreciate how much the world was changing and how REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE had such a cultural impact, you should ensure that you study and learn about the context of the film.

As a reminder, the context we'll be studying can be defined as:

Social: aspects of society and its structure reflected in the film. For example, consider who holds the power? Who is oppressed? Are characters treated or defined by their class? Do we see social hierarchy and structures at all and if so, how are they reflected in the film and how do they affect the characters? ?

Cultural: aspects of culture – ways of living, beliefs and values of groups of people – reflected in the film. For example, what do we see in the film or know about the time the film was made in terms of religions and religious practises, clothing, aspects of culture and the arts? Are there references that a modern audience may not appreciate or understand because it's tied into the culture of the time?

Political: the way political issues, when relevant to the film chosen, are reflected in a film. For example, is there a key political event depicted or implied? Consider world leaders such as Presidents and Prime Ministers and the choices they made that may be reflected in, or that affect the film. Perhaps political decisions made before the film are seen in the film in some manner.

Institutional: how films are funded, how the level of production budget affects the kind of film made and the main stages of film production. For example, which companies produced the film? Where did the budget come from? Where was the film made? Why there? Significant people involved in the making of the film and is it part of a wider franchise, studio system or production company? If so, how does this affect it?

Historical: aspects of the society and culture at the time when films are made and, where relevant and when they are set. For example, is the time the film was made or set in significant? Was there a key event around the time the film was made or set? How might that have affected the film or the making of the film?

Technological: the technologies reflected in a film's production and, in some cases, in its narrative. For example, think mise-en-scene (props) here: how can we see technology (or the lack of) in the film? Does this help to date the film? Also consider the production of the film: does the film use any specific technology in the production (3D cameras, widescreen, HDR, colour, CGI etc.)?

The basic areas of context you need to be able to recall and apply to this film are listed on your Knowledge Organiser on previous pages but much more is provided on the next few pages.

Where possible, aim to include as much context as is relevant to help explain your ideas and explore how the film has been made.

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE CONTEXT

- Released in 1955, the film is set during the America-led crusade against Communism.
- This crusade was otherwise known as the "Red Scare", with the large sections of the American population and media believing that Communism threatened the American way of life and that communists wanted to take over the world.
- This means that there was a paranoia as a recurring mood in many films of the 1950's and created an often a climate of fear created by the mass hysteria of the McCarthy 'witch hunts'.
- Many people - especially families - moved out of city centres, to the 'suburbs' or to small towns, where new, more spacious houses suited growing families.
- The story focuses on the suburbs of Los Angeles and how the youths of 1950s adjusted to this new way of life. These family homes were desirable, but cold and lifeless resulting in little affection.
- Inequality and the importance of civil rights was an important political movement in this time, especially for young people who wanted to do the right thing and treat each other with civility and respect.
- The US had a post-war economic boom, becoming the wealthiest population in the world
- in the 1940s, many men left to fight in WWII. Women took many traditionally masculine jobs: mining, steel-working, farming, but also in banking, law and other areas.
- When the war ended many women were now expected to return to domestic life. By the 1950s, it seemed that once again women were expected to take a traditionally feminine role such as nurse, teacher or secretary. By the 1960s, this frustration would help fuel the feminist movement.
- Scarred by war, mainstream America seemed to want to return to traditional values and gender roles. But children who reached adolescence during the 1950s felt these values were old-fashioned. They began to rebel against them.

- Young people of America began to question and reject traditional beliefs, and generated a distrust for the authorities (government, FBI, police, army, even doctors and teachers). As films, fashion, TV and music sought to target this age group, young people found they had more power than ever before.
- This was considered to be the 'birth of the teenager'. It was a time of peace, so young men were not at war, a confusing era for young men who could not identify with their war time fathers or have a war to fight and prove themselves.
- This new social group was considered by some as threatening, unruly and out of control, the film reflected and responded to this concern.
- This film was a sympathetic representation of teenagers, blaming the parents for their delinquency.
- James Dean was a new kind of actor and became an icon, and the face of a generation.
- Dean appeared to be tormented and brooding, not the usual 'hero' type and he came to be seen as the 'poster boy' for the new social group.
- For the first time, young people had a disposable income; products such as music, film and fashion were targeted at this group. They were powerful consumers and therefore a powerful 'voice' in consumerist America.
- Education was perhaps better than ever before, which led young people to question the world, leading to highly political movements and a drive for equality.
- The marketing of the film showed that films centred on teenagers could be from the teenagers point of view, and appeal to teens at the same time.
- The film is from the male POV, girls are quite passive figures. Female led teen movies became more dominant in the 1990's, despite the feminist movement becoming mainstream in the 1960s.
- The focus of the film is a teenager who does not 'fit in' or 'belong'. This narrative convention of 'The Outsider' is a typical of the teen genre and this trope allows the audience to experience the new school location & characters with the protagonist.

- Francis Crick and James D. Watson discover the helical structure of DNA and publish their findings in 1953.
- The first organ transplants are done in Boston and Paris in 1954.
- The Polio vaccine was widely distributed for the first time in 1955 leading to a dramatic decrease in deaths from the disease. The advancements in health care and meant that many felt that there was a huge progress in quality of life.
- Traditional pop music reaches its climax; early rock and roll music (with Elvis Presley in the lead) was embraced by teenagers/youth culture while generally dismissed or condemned by older generations.
- Juvenile delinquency said to be at unprecedented epidemic proportions in USA, though some see this era as era relatively low crime compared to today.
- James Dean's previous movie, EAST OF EDEN, had won the actor critical and popular acclaim.
- Dean was was killed in a car crash after filming, but before releasing REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE and this increased the public interest in the film.
- Despite being marketed as a film about a troubled teenager, the star power of Dean and his death, the money spent on the making of the film in colour and widescreen meant that it was a 'prestige' production, aimed an older generation.
- Originally shot in black and white, REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE was intended to be just another but was re-shot by Warner Brothers in the more expensive Cinemascope widescreen format to capitalise on the cultural phenomenon of teenage rebellion.
- It was not the first movie about troubled teens, nor was it the first to examine teenager-parent clashes as they had existed since the 1930s with films such as KNOCK ON ANY DOOR and CITY ACROSS THE RIVER examining teenage crime and violence. In fact, KNOCK ON ANY DOOR was directed by Nicholas Ray who also directed REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE. Both relied heavily on the youth versus older generation theme.
- REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE was also not new in depicting teenage violence and bravado in the form of fights and car races - these were features of the cheap 'teenager' movies of the early and mid-1950s.

CONTEXT

GROUP TASK

For this task, you are to read the contextual information on the previous pages. Assign yourself into a group, either social, historical, political, cultural, institutional or technological and write it on the top of a blank card, as seen below. In your groups, carefully read all of the contextual information and, one at a time, select which bullet point suits your area of context. When you find information that applies to your area of context, write it down on the blank card, as seen below. Aim to find at least 8 different examples of context for your group's chosen area. Finally, when all groups have selected the context that suits their group, share with the rest of the class. You may want to consider asking our teacher to photocopy the cards so that you'll have a wide range of contextual information, or perhaps choose a few of the most important ones from each area of context and copy those into your own notes. However you decide, ensure that it works for you and that you have a copy of a range of different contextual information, as you'll need these to answer the questions on the next page and be able to use the information in your work. Blank cards can be found on the next page, ready for photocopying/printing.

AREA OF CONTEXT

| | |
|--|--|
| Contextual information gets written in here. Contextual information gets written in here. | |
| | |

CONTEXT

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE CONTEXT ASSESSMENT

1. When was the film released?
2. **What was the main political issue during the 1950s?**
3. How did the political mood at the time affect films being made in the 1950s?
4. **Families began to change after the Second World War. List 5 ways that things changed for families and the roles of people within families.**
5. The 1950s are often described as the "birth of the teenager". What does this mean?
6. **Generally speaking, how did the public view teenagers? What were their overall impressions of them?**
7. Give at least 3 examples of cultural context that show that teenagers were treated as outsiders, rebellious or juvenile.
8. **Education was said to be improving during this time. Explain how better education contributed to the change in society. Aim to give at least 2 examples.**
9. How did events of the 1940s and 1950s affect what happened with women in the 1960s?
10. **Why was James Dean important to the film? Give at least 2 examples.**
11. What medical advances were made in the 1950s and what does that tell us about the time the film was made in?
12. Explore how films that had been released before REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE and other cultural aspects of the 1950s contributed to the idea that teenagers were 'delinquents'.
13. **Explain how the rapidly improving technology of the time affected the production of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE.**
14. Why do you think that Warner Brothers made the decision to re-shoot the film using new technology?
15. **Overall, summarise what you have learned about the context of the film and create a long sentence that explains the context of the film, referring to a variety of examples from different aspects of context.**

THE POSTER

SOLO TASK

Below is a poster used to market the film. Use the space around it and annotate the images. For every aspect of the poster consider two things; what can we see (the explicit details) and then what does each thing suggest (the implicit suggestion)? To include detailed annotations, consider the context of the film, especially America in the 1950s to help explain some of the design choices made.



WATCH THE FILM

SOLO TASK - CORNELL NOTES EXPLANATION

Now it's time to watch the film!

Use the note sheet below to make notes either on your first or second watch. The note sheet is specifically designed to allow you to focus on the film, but make brief notes on the left hand side; your teacher may instruct you as to when a key scene starts or finishes or they may leave that up to you.

When you have finished watching, use the space on the right hand side to write more detailed notes. These notes may be the expanded versions of your notes on the left, or about something more specific which you've been asked to write about. If unsure, make notes specifically on the characters and how they look, what they do and why you think they act in certain ways at certain times.

The space on the left has space for specific elements of film language that you need to look at and make notes on. Be specific in describing where/when you see this element of film language being used.

On the right hand side is a larger space. Use this to write a detailed explanation of how the scene looks, using film language and your notes on the left hand side.

Finally, the space at the bottom is for you to add any additional notes, instructions from your teacher or feedback from teacher, peers or yourself.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name of film / location of scene: | |
| Focus / overall purpose of notes: | |
| Key idea or scene 1: | |
| Key idea or scene 2: | |
| Key idea or scene 3: | |
| Key idea or scene 4: | |
| Key idea or scene 5: | |
| Key idea or scene 6: | |
| | |

WATCH THE FILM

SOLO TASK - CORNELL NOTES 1

Name of film / location of scene:

Focus / overall purpose of notes:

Key idea or scene 1:

Key idea or scene 2:

Key idea or scene 3:

Key idea or scene 4:

Key idea or scene 5:

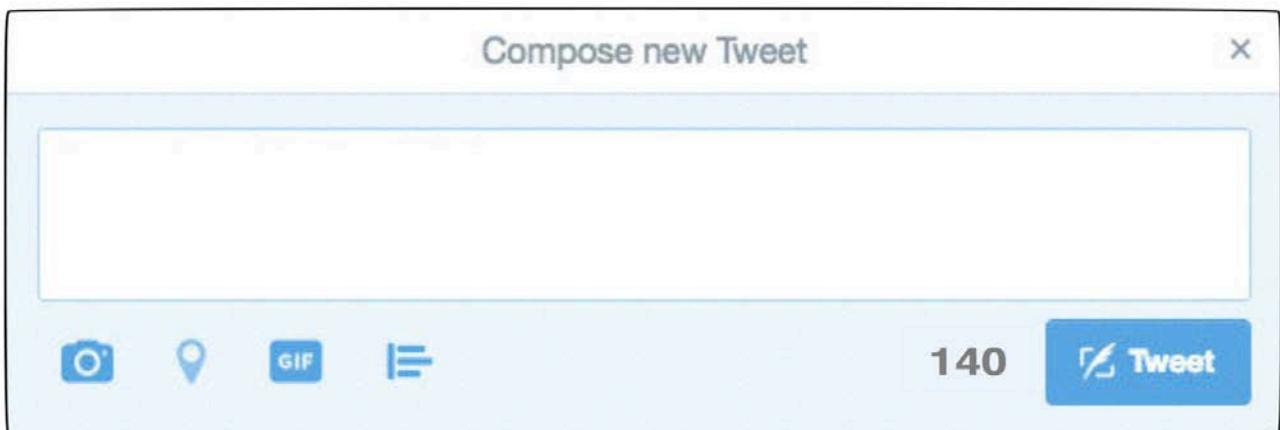
Key idea or scene 6:

TWITTER REACTIONS

SOLO TASK

Having just watched the film, use the Twitter reaction box below to record your immediate thoughts and reaction to the film. These will be useful later on when you will need to consider how the film has a range of affects on different people. To help, your teacher will collate all of the reactions in the class and give you copies of these to stick into the next page of your booklet.

Aiming to keep in the style of a tweet, try to keep your ideas relatively brief, using only the space provided. HOWEVER, given that the focus of this film is to compare it to a film you have not yet seen, aim to describe what you think the film is like compared to a modern day film.



The image shows a screenshot of the Twitter 'Compose new Tweet' interface. At the top, the text 'Compose new Tweet' is displayed in a light blue font, with a small 'x' icon in the top right corner. Below this is a large, empty white text input area. At the bottom of the interface, there is a row of icons: a camera icon, a location pin icon, a 'GIF' icon, and a list icon. To the right of these icons, the number '140' is displayed, indicating the character limit. On the far right, there is a blue button with a white paper plane icon and the word 'Tweet' in white text.

TWITTER REACTIONS

GROUP TASK-COLLECT REACTIONS

Next: read the reactions of others (or indeed, discuss with them) based on their Twitter reactions. When looking at the reactions of others, look closely at the opinion of other people and, perhaps more importantly, WHY they felt how they did. For example, did people feel the same about the film as you or someone else? Was there one thing that stood out as being especially interesting or badly done? Was there one thing that everyone disliked? How did the film look or feel different to something we've already seen? As much as possible, use film language, focusing on cinematography and mise-en-scene. Perhaps compare...

Overall, most people...

...because...

The things people really liked were...

Things that seemed a little different to more modern films were...

People who disliked the film didn't like...

CHARACTERS

SOLO TASK

Next to each picture, add the name of each character and then 3 things you learned about about each of them.



Jim Stark

-
-
-



Frank Stark

-
-
-



Judy

-
-
-



Carol Stark

-
-
-



Plato

-
-
-



Judy's Father

-
-
-



Buzz

-
-
-



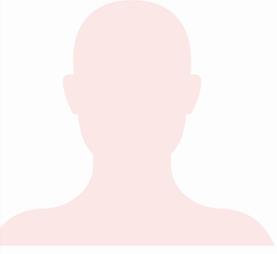
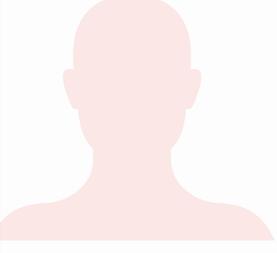
Judy's Mother

-
-
-

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

PAIRED TASK

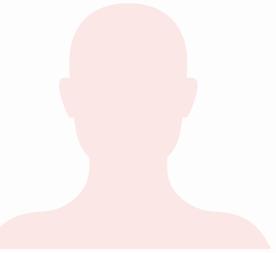
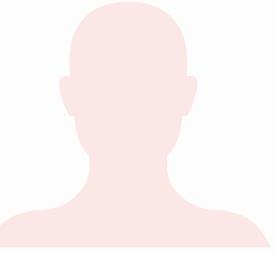
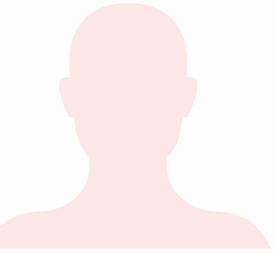
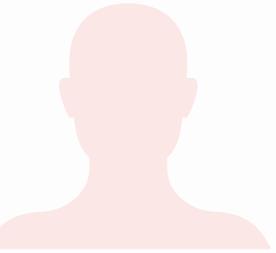
Using film language, describe the characters in the film. In each box, describe the different aspects of film language . Write the character name, or draw a picture of them in the left hand side box then add as much detail as possible for each film language element as possible.

|  | Hair & make-up | Costume | Performance | Props |
|--|----------------|---------|-------------|-------|
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

PAIRED TASK

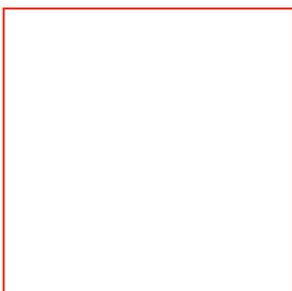
Using film language, describe 4 more characters in the film. In each box, describe the different aspects of film language . Write the character name, or draw a picture of them in the left hand side box then add as much detail as possible for each film language element as possible.

|  | Hair & make-up | Costume | Performance | Props |
|--|----------------|---------|-------------|-------|
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

SOLO TASK

Time to take your descriptions of characters using film language and turn these into a summary of who each character is. Aim to keep this brief but detailed.-concise but comprehensive-ideally no more than 2 sentences. Be sure to refer to key aspects of film language. You may want to do this for more than just these 3 characters below so a space has been left blank for you to add one of your own characters. Aim to choose someone who is significantly different to the character already selected for you.



CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

GROUP TASK

In order to test how detailed your description of the characters are, read out a description to a group but DO NOT read out name and DO NOT include any details that makes it too obvious. Something like "dies in the chicken car race" is too easy to guess.

The first person who recognises the person by the description then reads one of theirs.

If no one guesses, tell the group who it is and then ask the group what else you could have described to make the description accurate.

Continue with the same process until everyone has read out a description.

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

PAIRED TASK

Representation involves three main stages; identify who or what is being represented, then *how* they are being represented (broadly speaking, whether this is a positive or negative representation) and finally *how* does the film create that specific representation using film language.

Below are images of some of the main characters from the film. Two have been left blank for you to add two more characters of your own choice. For each character label who you think they represent in the real world, or who you think the filmmakers want them to represent.

To do this, think about who that person is and what they do. Then apply this to a wider group of people in the real world, away from the film.

For example, Jim is a character who is young man who lives in Los Angeles in America. This means that he represents teenager/young men in America. However, as a young, white adult who owns a car and has relatively wealthy parents who care for him, he doesn't represent *all* young men in America-some other young men in this film represent other types of teenagers and therefore you need to be careful that you aren't *too* specific in explaining who or what each character represents. If a description of a character doesn't represent many people in the real world, if at all, the description is too *narrow* and isn't a true representation.

To help create your descriptions of representation, use the headings provided on the next page for each character. You'll need these for the next task and of course, potentially the exam!



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:



Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

CHARACTERS & CONTEXT

As we watch a film, the representation of the characters can not only provide a window into what the film thinks of people in the real world, but can also show us what people were like at the time of making a film. Society is constantly changing and evolving; what was once accepted and tolerated 100, 50 or even 10 years ago may not be accepted in today's society. Public opinion changes, political decisions adapt and culturally speaking, things evolve and move on. When we watch *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* we are not seeing a world that is recognisable as being modern, but instead 'old' and very much of the time. As a result, the characters reflect a time period that we do not recognise. Characters may use different language, dress may be different, attitudes towards others may have changed and therefore the representation of people, such as teenagers, may be different to that of today.

Using the task below, consider how different the characters of 1955 and *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* are compared to today. You'll be doing so by referring to film language as much as possible, so refer to your previous notes on the narrative and character as much as possible to help.

| | THEN | NOW |
|---|------|-----|
| Teenagers | | |
| Adults | | |
| Teachers | | |
| People in authority (police, security guards etc) | | |
| Cars | | |
| Clothes | | |
| Technology | | |
| Language | | |

CHARACTERS & CONTEXT

SOLO TASK

Having considered the style and the context of the narrative and characters in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, it's time to apply these to ideas to some questions.

First of all, create a summary below. Using your notes from the previous page, finish the sentences below by creating a brief summary in each of the boxes below about the world of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE and the world of today for a modern, contemporary audience. Then, answer the questions below to apply what you've learned to exam-style questions.

Overall, 1955 and the world of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE could be described as...

Whereas, in contrast, the modern world watching the film could be described as being...

1. How would you describe the clothing and overall style of teenagers in 1955?
2. **What adjectives would you use to describe the props and adjectives in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE and 1955?**
3. In what ways would you say there is some similarity in costume, make up and hair between 1955 and today?
4. **Overall, teenagers in 1955 might be described how? Give some examples of key scenes or moments in the film that are effective examples of this.**
5. The relationship between teenagers and adults in 1955 is...
6. **Some examples of scenes where teenagers and adults are interacting are...**
7. Overall, teenage men in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE are...Give some examples of characters including their names to help justify your ideas.
8. **In 1955 in general and in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, women could be described as...**
9. Give at least one example of a woman who is dominated by men or others and describe using film language.
10. **Give an example of a young character who does not control their own destiny.**

GENRE AND GENERIC CONVENTION

Genre is one way of categorising and identifying film by the category or the style of the film.

Category of style

These categories can be defined as **generic convention**, or the “things” which keep popping up in different films in the same genre. These things can be varied and cover a wide range of ideas. For example, in an action film the generic conventions are likely to be explosions, guns, chases and a clear villain. In romantic comedies, the generic conventions will include romance, dates gone wrong and a happy ending, whereas in a western you’ll see generic conventions of horses, six-shooter guns, a shoot-out and the film to be set in the American West.

Style of film

By style, we refer to film language and how the style of a film needs to be broadly recognisable across a range of films. In horror films for example, we’re expecting to see lots of low-key lighting, close-ups of people as they scream and of course, special effects of blood and violence. In science fiction films, we’d expect to see props of weapons that don’t exist, vivid high-key lighting of non signs or costumes and editing that is purposefully slow.

Why stick to genres?

Genres are important for film companies and audiences for a variety of reasons. First of all, audiences like genres as it allows them to identify a type of film they enjoy and then watch others in the same style. This makes choosing a film to watch easier and also to compare-if the films are similar, then comparisons are easier and fairer to make. In this way, it’s also easier for film companies-if they know that films in a certain genre are successful, they know types of films to make and also know what to include in them.

What’s the reason for using generic conventions?

Conventions then are important in signposting what genre a film belongs to. If you watch a genre of film you like, you would expect to see key aspects or conventions being used, otherwise you would feel shortchanged and let down. Film companies also know what they need to include in their films then to keep the audiences happy.

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE is a drama film. What does drama mean?

Well, overall the term "drama" comes from a Greek word meaning “action”. The modern use of "drama" however, is much more narrow and tends to designate a specific type of film or play.

It is often said that the drama genre “intends to portray life or (a) character/s or to tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions through action.” Drama generic conventions can broadly be said to be “exciting, emotional, or unexpected events or circumstances.” In this respect, most films can be said to be *dramatic*, and are often filled with *drama*. However, what makes a drama film and can we identify any precise generic conventions for a drama film?

PAIRED TASK

Below is a table that asks you to consider the key aspects of drama, excitement, emotion and unexpected events in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE. Either as you watch, or after a viewing of the

film, include explanations of a scene that suits that generic convention and then, in as much detail

| | Example scenes/moments | Key aspects of film language |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| DRAMA | | |
| EXCITEMENT | | |
| EMOTION | | |
| UNEXPECTED EVENTS | | |

using film language as possible.

| | Example scenes/moments | Key aspects of film language |
|---|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Stereotypical characters | | |
| Becoming an adult | | |
| From the teenage PoV | | |
| Rebellion | | |
| Conflict between adults and children | | |
| Sympathetic towards teenagers | | |
| Conformity = 'fitting in' | | |
| Wanting acceptance | | |

DRAMA AND GENERIC CONVENTION

As explored previously, most films can be said to be *dramatic*, and are often filled with *drama*. However, as most films have drama, what other genres do we see in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE?

SOLO TASK:

Below are a series of screenshots from the film. For each, annotate with descriptions and analysis of what genre of film is on show. Aim to use film language to help identify and explore the generic conventions on display.

If unsure, consider these genres as possible examples: romantic comedy, spy film, gang film, racing film and sci-fi film.



Genre: Film language that creates that genre:



Genre: Film language that creates that genre:



Genre: Film language that creates that genre:



Genre: Film language that creates that genre:



Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

DEFINITION: MELODRAMA

Overall then, *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* is a dramatic film. It contains generic conventions from other genres and by modern standards may seem at times slow or overly dramatic. Whilst it is typically described as a drama, the way in which the film is designed to make the audience have an emotional reaction and feel key emotions throughout means that the film can be described therefore as a *melodrama*. The definition of a melodrama is having "exaggerated characters and exciting events intended to appeal to the emotions" and even the historical definition which was designed to suit theatrical plays is "a play interspersed with songs and orchestral music accompanying the action".

SOLO TASK

Rewatch the key scenes below. For each, summarise the narrative. Explain the audience reaction and then give examples of the film language used to help create that emotion. Finally, write a short paragraph for each that collects the ideas into one summarised paragraph. The first one has been started for you.

Scene starts:
10:04

JIM IS ARRESTED AND TAKES HIS FRUSTRATION OUT ON THE DESK

Scene ends:
15:00



| (POINT) AUDIENCE REACTION | (EVIDENCE) FILM LANGUAGE | (COMMENT) FILM LANGUAGE |
|--|--|---|
| Jim is angry and frustrated. Seemingly drunk when he was arrested, we learn that Jim has a lot of pent-up aggression and is frustrated with his life | Camera angles, editing, costume and music are key in this scene. We see Jim framed in medium close-ups, Jim is not shown in the same shot as his family, the policeman removes his | Jim's anger and frustration is shown to be created through his isolation and loneliness. The use of the medium close-up shows us who is the protagonist and who we should sympathise with. His use of the white |

Overall analysis of how this scene is melodramatic:

In the scene near the start of the film where Jim is arrested and takes his frustration out on the desk, Jim is angry and frustrated. Seemingly drunk when he was arrested, we learn that Jim has a lot of pent-up aggression and is frustrated with his life. Camera angles, editing, costume and music are key in this scene. We see Jim framed in medium close-ups, Jim is not shown in the same shot as his family, the policeman removes his jacket when talking to Jim and the music is high-pitched and fast-paced when Jim starts beating the desk.

Jim's anger and frustration is shown to be created through his isolation and loneliness. The use of the medium close-up shows us who is the protagonist and who we should sympathise with. His use

Scene starts:
31:00

**JIM FIGHTS WITH BUZZ AND THREATENS TO
KILL HIM:**

Scene ends:
37:00



| (POINT) AUDIENCE REACTION | (EVIDENCE) FILM LANGUAGE | (COMMENT) FILM LANGUAGE |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | |

Overall analysis of how this scene is melodramatic:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Scene starts:
59:25

**JIM ARGUES WITH HIS PARENTS BEFORE
STRANGLING HIS FATHER**

Scene ends:
1:05:35



| (POINT) AUDIENCE REACTION | (EVIDENCE) FILM LANGUAGE | (COMMENT) FILM LANGUAGE |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | |

Overall analysis of how this scene is melodramatic:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

NARRATIVE

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE is a fairly traditional film in its use of narrative structure. In many ways the narrative neatly suits the classic 3 Act Structure and the 5 Act Structures.

You may have already spent some time covering narrative structures but if not, the definitions and activities below will be a useful help.

DEFINITION: 3 ACT STRUCTURE

The **three-act structure** is a way of examining narrative fiction that divides a story into three parts or acts. These 3 acts are often called the Setup, the Confrontation and the Resolution.

FIRST ACT: THE SETUP or BEGINNING

The first act is usually used for *exposition*-another way of describing how important information such as main character names, locations and background details are explained to the audience. We also find that later in the first act, a on-screen incident occurs which forces the protagonist to deal with this situation. This is known as the *inciting incident*. This is where the first act ends; the protagonist has to set off on a quest or deal with something that ensures their life will never be the same again.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

What exposition is given in the setup of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE?

What is the *inciting incident* in the first act of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE?

SECOND ACT: RISING ACTION or THE MIDDLE

The second act, also referred to as Rising Action shows the protagonist's attempt to resolve the problem from the Inciting Incident. Often protagonists are unable to easily resolve their problems is because they do not yet have the skills or emotional development required to deal with the forces that confront them. The middle of the film then usually has the protagonist learning new skills but also learn about themselves. This is referred to as *character development* or a *character arc*. This usually cannot be achieved alone so the protagonist often will require help from mentors and other characters.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

What skills or emotional change does Jim have to learn?

What does the Jim learn about themselves and others during the rising action?

Who are some the characters who help Jim?

THIRD ACT: THE RESOLUTION or THE ENDING

The third act features the *resolution* of most of the stories and the plot of the film. The *climax* is the scene or sequence in which the main problems of the story are brought to their most intense point, often through action or an intense meeting. The inciting incident is finally dealt with in some way, with the protagonist and other characters having changed and developed in some way.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

List the ways that the protagonist in **REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** changes.

List the ways that other characters in **REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** change.

Re-watch the climax of the film. Describe what happens in the main story and explain if and how it resolves the inciting incident.

Describe the narrative of the climax referring to film language as much as possible to help describe what happens.

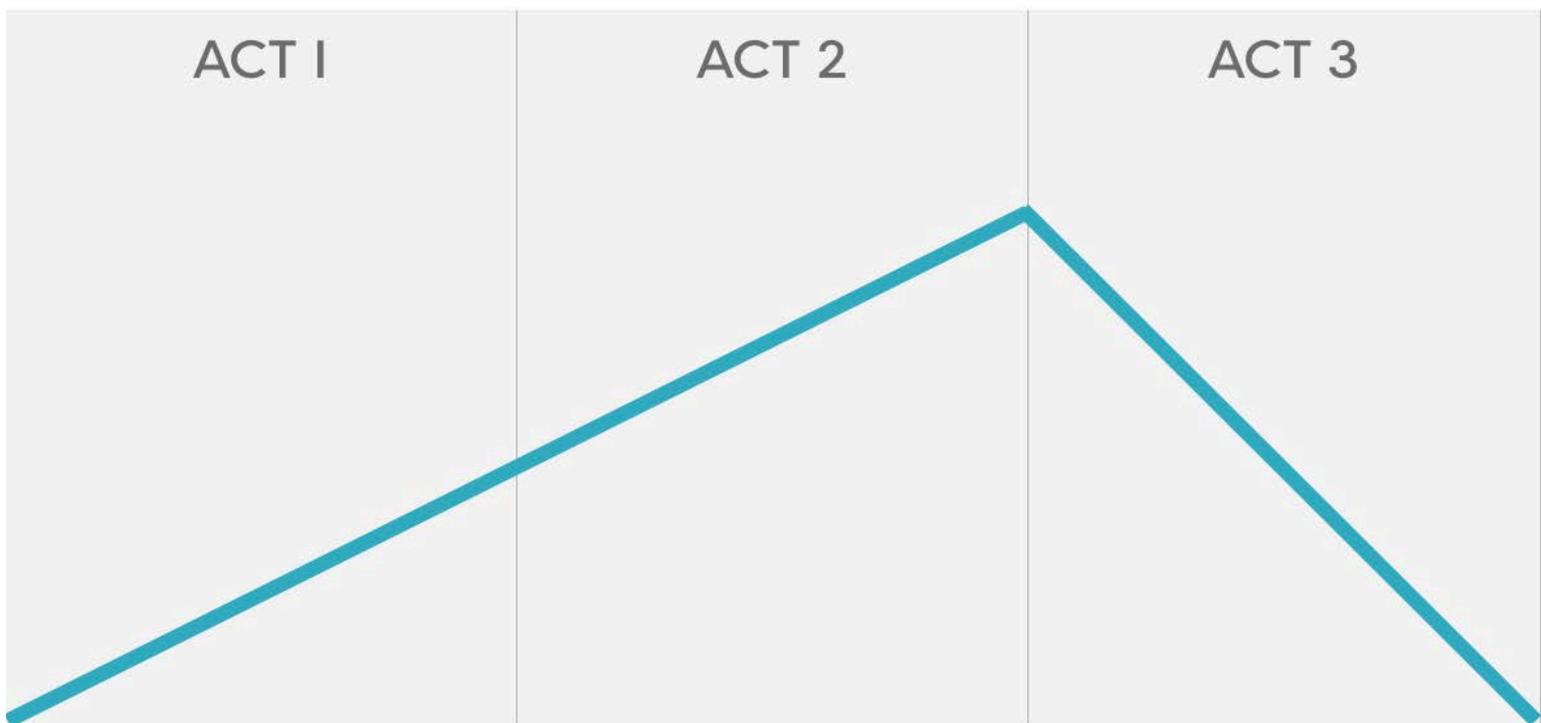
SOLO TASK:

In the spaces of the Act boxes, label each act with the key plot points from **REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** that fit into that Act.

ACT 1

ACT 2

ACT 3



DEFINITION: 5 ACT STRUCTURE

The **5 Act structure** is a slightly different way of examining narrative fiction that divides a story into five parts or acts. The German playwright and novelist Gustav Freytag wrote the definitive study of the 5-act dramatic structure, in which he laid out what has come to be known as Freytag's Pyramid. Under Freytag's pyramid, the plot of a story consists of five parts: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution.

ACT 1: EXPOSITION

Here, the audience learns the setting (the time and the place), who the protagonist is and other main characters are. A conflict or inciting incident is introduced to propel the main story.

ACT 2: RISING ACTION

Here the protagonist is on a journey, quest or is aiming to achieve something set up by the inciting incident. The action of this act leads the audience to the climax. Complications or problems will arise and the protagonist will encounter obstacles which they can only overcome by learning new skills or developing as a person.

ACT 3. CLIMAX

This is the turning point of the film. A big moment of action or a big decision will usually occur here. This does NOT have to be in the middle of the plot however, and the climax is usually accompanied by the highest amount of suspense and/or tension.

ACT4: FALLING ACTION

This is the opposite of Rising Action, in that the Falling Action will see the story is coming to an end in some way. Unknown details or plot twists may be revealed but the goal of the protagonist is wrapped up at this point.

ACT 5: RESOLUTION

This is the final outcome of the narrative. Often a lesson is learned or a significant change has happened which is thought about and considered at this stage.

SOLO TASK:

In the spaces of the Act boxes, label each act with the key plot points from **REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** that fit into that Act.

SOLO TASK:

Answer the 5 questions related to the 5 Act Structure. These will be needed to help you summarise the narrative in the film.

ACT 1: What is the general time and place the film takes part in? What happens in the opening scene?

ACT 2: What does our protagonist need to do in the first few scenes of the film? What stops him from doing this?

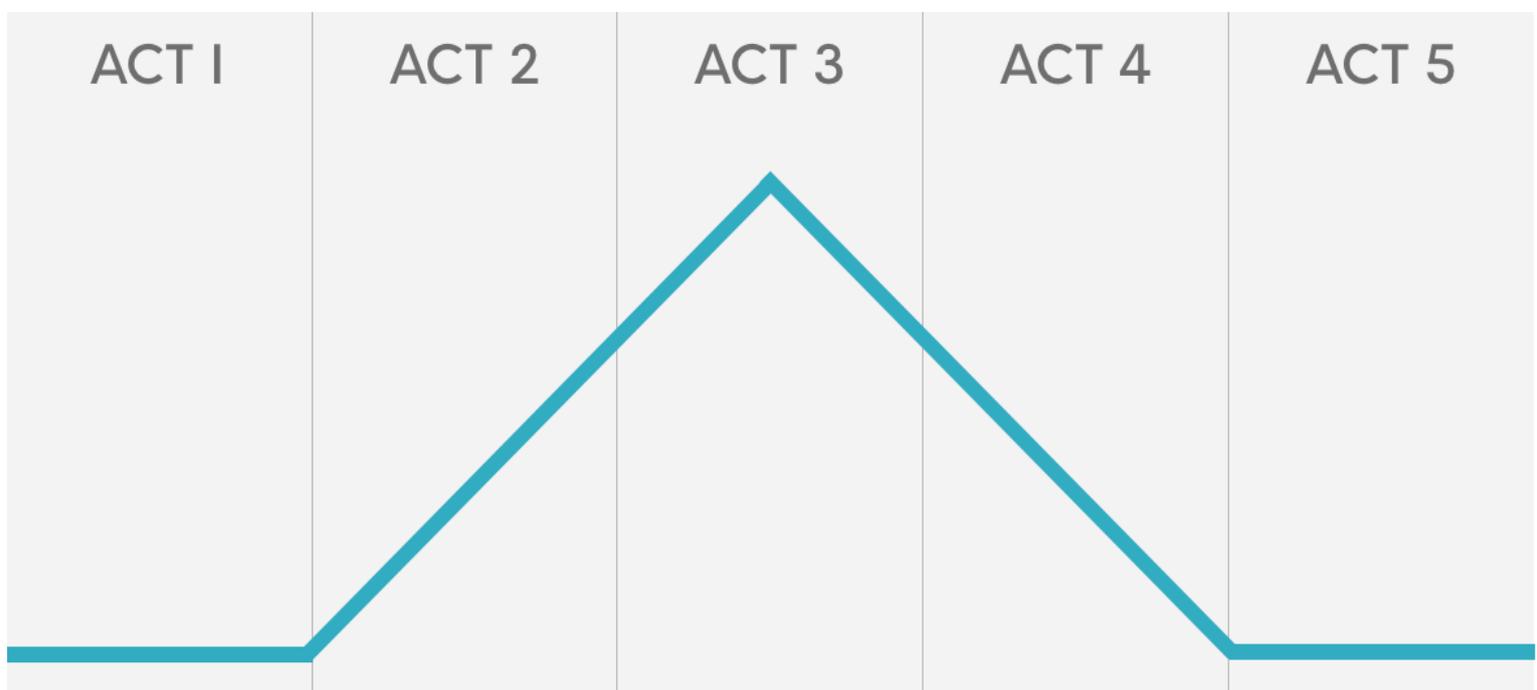
ACT 3: What key moment sparks our protagonist into change? Where does the tension come from with this?

ACT 4: What do we eventually learn about the protagonist or some of his friends? How does that affect what the main character is trying to do?

ACT 5: What significant changes take place at the end of the film?

PAIRED TASK:

Consider the overall narrative in *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE*. Try to summarise by thinking of one key scene for each of the Acts from the 5 Act Structure. Aim to include film language as you do so.



the *construction* of 'reality' and especially *how* that representation has been constructed, referring to film language as often as possible. A key thing to consider in terms of representation is the idea that the person or place we see on screen may be the only example of that person or place; therefore, this is the representation of the version we have on screen. For example, this might be the first time you have seen America in the 1950s and for that reason, it creates a certain image or idea of what these places and times is about. Representation then, is very important as it provides an idea of what some people or places are like, depending on how the filmmakers choose them to be on screen and as a result, how the audience feels about those people or places.

Representation involves three main stages; identify who or what is being represented, then *how* they are being represented (broadly speaking, whether this is a positive or negative representation) and finally *how* does the film create that specific representation using film language.

For this exam, you may need to focus on the representation of, as a minimum, how the film represents teenagers and adults, especially those who have, or don't have, authority

As well as this, it's important to be able to explain and explore how representation can create, and play with, the idea of stereotypes. A stereotype is a commonly- held image of a person or group, based on an overly-simplified or believed appearance or behaviour. The key here is the idea that a stereotype is a form of representation but isn't especially new, detailed or even accurate in some cases.

For example, Jim can be said to represent teenagers in America in the 1950s. He also represents the Baby Boomer generation, the first recognisable, modern teenager but he also represents rebellion. However, the way in which these representations are slightly stereotypical; he wears a red Harrington jacket, drives a car typical of classic 'drag racing' and is confident in holding weapons. The film *could* have taken a slightly different approach and had Jim wear the formal suit and tie that his parents also wear and not get involved with any crime or rebellious acts at all. Instead, the film uses the stereotype of a young rebel, who engages with other trouble-makers and takes part in dangerous and illegal activities. To this end, he is a stereotype.

Over the next few pages a series of activities will explore the characters in terms of their representation. There are also some activities that will ask you to explore how stereotypes are created and whether you feel like any of the character in the film are stereotypes and why this might have been done by the film makers.

CHARACTERS

PAIRED TASK

Over the next few pages are images of the main characters. It is again important to remember that the characters we see on screen are *constructions* of characters- the job of the filmmakers is

to choose costumes, create hair and then actors are asked to perform in their roles in a specific way, as they are trying to make us, the audience, think or react in a specific way. Because of this, we need to analyse how and why each of these character have been created the way that they have. On the left hand side are spaces are describe and write down your examples of different aspects of film language related to the appearance of each character. These are the **explicit** details of the characters. On the right hand side you are to explore what each of these elements is trying to suggest-these are the **implicit** ideas. Some examples have been completed for the first character, Jim, below but aim to add more. Where possible, aim to add 9 different explicit ideas and to do so, consider a wide range of different film language elements, concentrating on cinematography and mise-en-scene.

- Explicit details**
1. White shirt
 2. No blazer
 3. Fighting stance
 4. Isolated
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
 - 9.



- Implicit ideas**
1. Innocent
 2. Not grown up
 3. Ready to fight/defend himself
 4. Lonely
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
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- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
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- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
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- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
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- 7.
- 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
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- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Explicit details

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Implicit ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

GROUP WORK

On the next page are images of each of the main characters in the film. Follow the instructions below to analyse who the characters in the film represent in the 'real' world. The images provided are only a guide-consider what the characters are like throughout the film, not just how they appear in these images.

You may find this easier if you print out this page so that you can cut the images out and group them, or you could colour code them by group, draw circles around certain groups or just label with a pen. To give you an idea about how each could look, the first one has been done for you below.

1. First of all, write their name next to each character.
2. Then, group them one of three groups; teenagers, parents and authority figures.
3. Next, using descriptions of film language (and not referring to dialogue the characters use or examples of narrative they are involved with) try to explain WHY they fit into that group.
4. Finally, considering the details learned about context and using the words at the bottom of this page, label who you think each character represents-some characters may represent more than one type of person and may fit into more than one group.

teenagers

adults

authority figures

children of war

young men

young women



role models

rebels

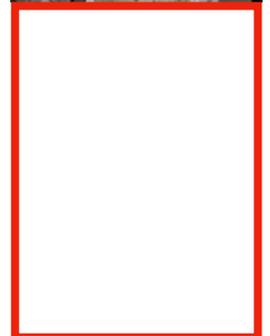
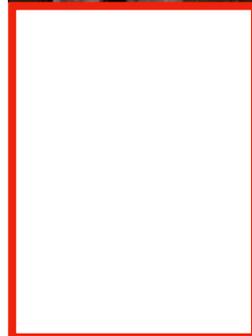
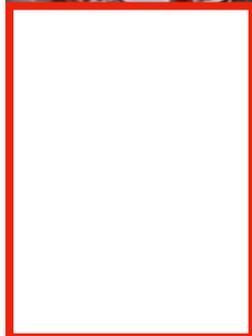
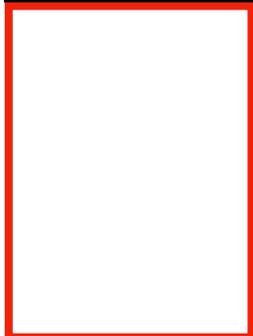
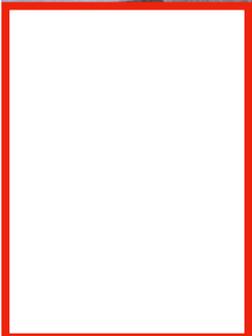
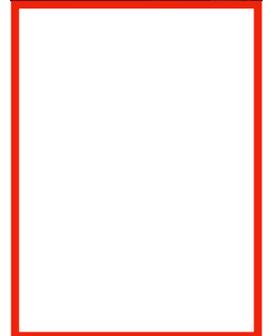
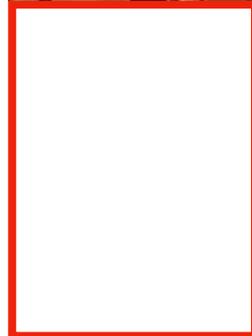
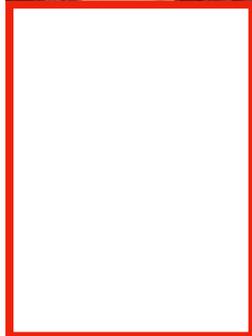
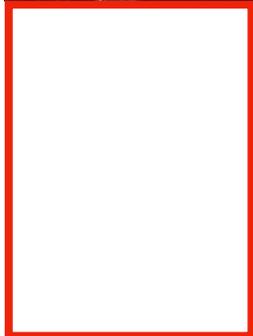
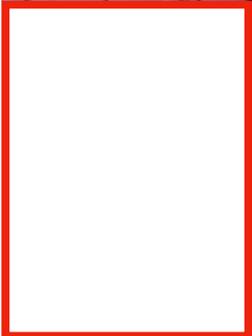
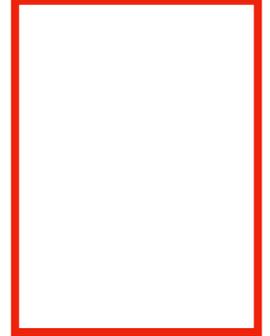
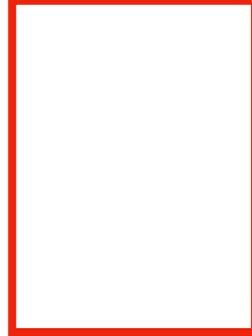
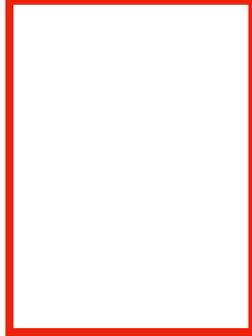
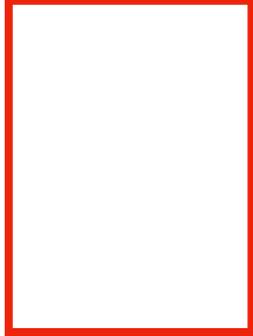
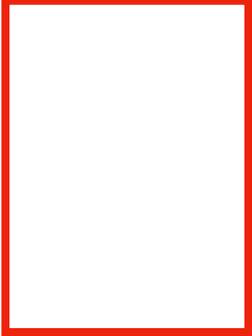
children of peace

young people

greasers

emasculated men

1. Jim Stark
2. Teenager
3. Wears a t-shirt. Removes tie. Usually not wearing a blazer. Wears jeans and boots. Goes to school. Sullen facial expressions.
4. Jim represents teenagers, rebels and the young people who grew up in a world without a major war and relative peace. He represents a challenge to the status quo and tradition.



CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

SOLO TASK

Overall, who do each of the main characters represent?

Use your ideas and notes from above to create a summary for each of the characters provided below. Then, answer the questions on representation on the next page to check your knowledge on representation.



Overall, Jim represents...



The police officer Ray Fremick represents...



Jim's overbearing grandmother can be described as representing...



Plato represents...



Whilst not in the film much, Judy's mum represents...



He's a complicated character but Jim's father Frank represents...

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

PAIRED TASK

Consider the images and the key scenes they represent. Discussing your ideas with a partner and then noting down ideas, analyse how representation is created in the key scenes below. Your ideas and notes will be needed for the questions on the next page.

KEY SCENE 1

Re-watch from 1:30 to 7:00



KEY SCENE 2

Re-watch from 31:00 to 38:00



KEY SCENE 3

Re-watch from 58:00 to 1.05:20



CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

SOLO TASK

1. In your own words, what is representation?
2. **Name the groups of people you think this film represents.**
3. Starting with the most positive, rank the groups you listed for question 2 from most positive to least positive representation.
4. **Overall, how would you describe the representation of teenagers in this film?**
5. Referring to film language and at least 1 key scene, explain how the representation of teenagers is created.
6. **Considering details of context, try to explain how contextual details affected the representation of teenagers that the filmmakers have created.**
7. Teenagers are not all represented in the same way in this film. Referring to at least 3 teenage different characters, explain how these teens are represented as being different.
8. Overall, would you suggest that the representation of teenagers is positive or negative in this film? Referring to at least 2 key scenes to help prove your ideas, explain in detail analysing how this representation is created.
9. **Overall, how would you describe the representation of adults in this film.**
10. Referring to film language and at least 1 key scene, explain how the representation of adults is created.
11. **Considering details of context, try to explain how contextual details affected the representation of adults that the filmmakers have created.**
12. Overall, would you suggest that the representation of teenagers is positive or negative in this film? Referring to at least 2 key scenes to help prove your ideas, explain in detail analysing how this representation is created.
13. **Referring to film language as much as possible, explain how teenagers and adults are represented as being different. Refer to at least one key scene.**
14. Overall, would you suggest that the representation of teenagers is positive or negative in this film? Referring to at least 2 key scenes to help prove your ideas, explain in detail analysing how this representation is created.
15. **Overall, summarise what you have learned about the representation of people in this film.**

TEENAGERS AND COSTUME

Jim's journey on screen can be seen in numerous ways, but none more evident than in his costume. Consider the information over the next few pages and then analyse the screenshots that do not yet have a written commentary underneath.



The first time we see Jim sober and in day light he is dressed in a very formal manner. Whilst this would have been a standard way for young adults to wear during the 1950s, it appears to be a strange costume for someone who is still at school. It also ages Jim, making him appear to be much older than he is. Finally, it suggests that Jim is a sensible, mature and almost professional person because his costume here resembles the business dress that a modern audience would associate with.



As soon as Jim leaves the family home and finds a peer, he removes his tie in an effort to make himself seem more approachable and less formal. Being out of the family home he no longer wants to appease and please his family, but instead wants to appeal to people that he actually wants to impress. The removal of the tie is a way to make himself look slightly more informal and approachable, though as we soon discover, he still stands out compared to those who he wants to be around.



As Jim arrives at school, we see a long shot that allows us to see other people and their costumes, as well as Jim's. If we look closely, we can see other young men in leather jackets, Harrington jackets and 'sport jackets' (informal blazers) as well as t-shirts being more popular than shirts. This makes Jim's choice of costume makes him look older, more formal and therefore as an outsider. Notice too, how the positioning of others emphasises how isolated Jim is; most of the other characters are next to someone else.



To really emphasise that Jim is an outsider, we get this low angle shot of Jim walking over the school crest. Whilst Jim is unaware of the fact that people do not walk across it, it serves two purposes here: firstly that he is wearing formal clothes from head to toe and secondly that he is a rebel. He acts in a way that is different to everyone else and that means he's breaking an (unspoken) rule. Whilst apologetic about his actions, this cleverly marks him out as being rebellious and established that teenagers, whilst they can be respectful and determined to do the right then, often don't. This idea is a key aspect of foreshadowing for Jim's actions and that of other teenagers later on in the film.



Almost immediately after we have this shot, again a low angle shot but this time designed to show why Jim can't now simply walk up the steps. His way is blocked by the teenagers and the people who laughed at him earlier. In this respect, the shot is a visual metaphor-Jim can only go to school and do the thing he is supposed to do by either causing trouble and barging through the teenagers or by joining in and becoming one of them. Whilst Jim doesn't immediately join them, his change of costume later on shows that he is in fact a rebellious teenager. Jim then, is stuck and cannot move on and is going to be defined by his choices, exactly as teenagers were then and arguably still today.



Later, we see Jim in his now iconic red Harrington jacket. This marks his change from the young adult who wants to fit in and do the right thing to the rebel who does whatever he wants, even if it means breaking the law to keep face. Red is obviously symbolic with its connotations with danger and blood and this is especially important in this shot, given that he is centrally aligned making him literally the most immediate person in the shot. As well as this, the colour choice makes him stand out compared to the others in the scene and allows him to stand out despite the low-key lighting here. Note too his body language which while defensive, is much more informal, languid and confident than before. He seems relaxed, at ease and in a more 'normal' state than earlier when in suit and tie.

TEENAGERS

SOLO TASK

The teenagers in *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* are represented as, generally speaking, rebellious and without respect or care for elders or even their peers in some cases. The film is set amongst a time when America was changing. Society realised that the 'teenager' was someone who no longer fit into the traditional 'children' and 'adults' category and because this idea was new and different, many people were afraid of teenagers.

Look closely at the images below and, writing in the boxes, analyse how teenagers are represented referring to costume predominantly costume but any other relevant examples of film language to do so. Remember to explain the explicit of what you can see and then analyse the implicit of what it is trying to suggest to the audience. Use the images and commentary and analysis from the previous pages to give you an idea of what to include.





ADULTS AND COSTUME

The adults in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE are represented in numerous ways but the use of costume is key to helping create this representation. Read the commentary below each image and then analyse the images on the next page to show what you have learned and understand about representation of adults.



The first time we see Jim on screen he is wearing a (slightly disheveled) suit and tie. In order to ensure that his parents appear older and even more formal than he is, they are dressed in dinner jackets and formal wear, having just arrived from a party. Jim's father wears a hat and bow-tie and this makes him seem immediately different from Jim: older and more stern. The positioning and the editing also ensures that Jim is different from his family. We see here in this medium shot that their costumes are well-looked after, that they are not happy about this situation and crucially, that Jim is not in the same frame and belonging to their family unit. Adults are together and united, Jim is isolated and insecure.



Later in the same scene, the police officer can be seen doing almost the exact opposite of what Jim's parents have done. He is in the same shot, has removed his jacket so that his clothes are similar to Jim's and he's leaning in closer to speak to and listen to him. He still sits above him, showing that he is more important, but this shot shows that adults can be supportive and have authority. Jim sits slumped and looks like he's a miserable child being told off and we can see that he's the child in this situation, compared to the adult he connects with.



By contrast, we later see Jim's father emasculated and everything that Jim hates. He wants someone to look up to, someone who is an authority figure, someone powerful and someone who stands up for himself. However, we see Jim's father cleaning up on his hands and knees and wearing a pinny. This imagery in terms of the costume and the body language is traditionally associated with women, especially housewives. As well as this, he is positioned behind the wooden bars of the stairs, symbolically suggesting that he is trapped, a prisoner and cannot escape his role. For Jim, this is the opposite of what he wants from a father figure and this spurs his resentment as he finds it difficult to respect his father. In this shot then, we see father's as no longer being role-models and instead people to mock or look down on

ADULTS

SOLO TASK

The adults in *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* are represented in numerous ways. From the very beginning of the film we see how Jim's parents, for example, act in different ways and whilst his father is told what to do by his mum, it's his Grandmother who seems to hold the most 'power' in the family. When talking to the police however, Jim seems to respect the authority and dominance of Ray Fremick. Plato is looked after not by his parents and this seems to be a reason for his rebellion, whilst Judy's delinquency seems to be driven by her father not giving her the attention she used to receive when she was older. Throughout the film, many adults seem to lack the authority they used to experience and the respect they perhaps would have expected. This causes conflict throughout.

Look closely at the images below and, writing in the boxes, analyse how adults are represented, referring to costume predominantly costume but any other relevant examples of film language to do so. Remember to explain the explicit of what you can see and then analyse the implicit of what it is trying to suggest to the audience. Use the images and commentary and analysis from the previous pages to give you an idea of what to include.





RELATIONSHIPS

The characters in the film seem to be involved in, or want to be a part of, a key relationship. Whilst the relationships they are in are relatively straightforward but what people, specifically the teenagers, want is much more complex. Most of these relationships involve families, but others relate to family. These desires are driven by lots of different reasons, with each character motivated by personal reasons (some of which are affected by contextual reasons) but many of these drive conflict in the film. Some characters may also want more than one type of relationship but the reasons for these may be the same.

PAIRED TASK

Below are some character names and to the right, a range of desires in terms of relationships. Match up the characters with their desires either by drawing lines and connecting them or by printing, cutting and sticking.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Jim | To get revenge on Jim |
| Judy | A present and loving father |
| Plato | An authoritative and strong father figure |
| Frank | An affectionate father |
| Buzz and the gang | A respectful and responsible son |

Next, think of a scene or an extended moment when the characters make their desires clear. Aim to describe it in a sentence.

Finally, describe, referring to context, *why* you think each character is trying to get that specific relationship. One has been done for you as an example.

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| Jim | | |
| Judy | An affectionate father. A boyfriend. | During the scene at the dinner table, Judy laments not getting a kiss from her father. They get into a fight and Judy storms off. She later on declares her love to Jim because he does show her affection and love in a way that her father doesn't. Teenagers during the 1950s found their role to be a confusing one and just like their parents, struggled to adapt to a world in peace where teenagers could, for the first time, act their age. |
| Plato | | |
| Frank | | |

RELATIONSHIPS

How does film language show us that family relationships are difficult in this film?

How does film language show us that friendships are much more comfortable, natural and enjoyable?

Screen shots. Rank in terms of comfort for the teenager.

Then, analyse each image. Sum up relationship in one or two words and then use film language to describe in detail how that relationship is made clear.



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:



Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

RELATIONSHIPS: FAMILY & FRIENDSHIPS

How does film language show us that family relationships are difficult in this film?

How does film language show us that friendships are much more comfortable, natural and enjoyable?

Referring to cinematography and mise-en-scene, analyse the screenshots by finishing off the sentences that have been started for you.



In the image above, Jim is about to leave the house to start his first day at a new school. In this long shot, we can see that the relationship between the family is complicated but certainly not close because...



Even though many of the people in this screenshot have been winding up Jim, the mise-en-scene here seems to suggest that Jim belongs with this group, or at the least, feels secure with them. The deep focus means that we can see...



In this classic scene from the film, Jim is arguing with his parents. He has confessed to them that he was involved in the incident that killed Buzz and Jim is trying to convince his parents that he needs to confess to the police. His parents disagree, and the mise-en-scene and cinematography combine here to suggest that...



Later in the film, we see a similar set-up, Jim on some stairs, flanked either side by a man and a woman. However, the mood is much ore different here. Despite being on the run, trespassing and in a n abandoned house in the middle of the night, all three characters are happy and content. This is because...

and the use of the cinematography helps to suggest this by...

RELATIONSHIPS

Overall, there are 3 main groups who are recognisable in the film; teenagers, authority figures and parents. Each of these are connected in a variety of ways, but can broadly be linked as:

1. teenagers generally don't respect authority figures;
2. authority figures generally don't respect parents and
3. parents who generally don't respect teenagers.

Of course, these relationships are more complex than this, but the relationships above are just a starting point. Often, the way that a group of people treat others and the reason why their relationships are like they are, is because they reflect contextual issues from the 1950s.

For example:

1. teenagers were distrustful of authority figures and leaders because of improving education and a their distrust of leaders was informed by a changing world which teenagers saw and understood that the mistakes of the past were often the result of poor leadership decisions.
2. it was often said that parents did not have 'control' over their delinquent teenagers. Authority figures such as teachers and policemen would be used to respectful and compliant people but the changing world meant that teenagers were different to how they had been before. Blaming parents for this was the easy thing to do and as a result, authority figures did not respect parents.
3. people who were parents in the 1940s and 1950s would have grown up being incredible respectful of their parents and of their authority figures. This would have especially given been the case towards people involved in law and order, especially during times of war. By the time that they became parents in the 1940s, the world was quickly changing-peace was on the way, technology was rapidly advancing, medicine meant that people lived longer and the overall quality of life was improving. The world as they knew it was different, and therefore, so were their children. By not acting the way in which their parents did, the teenagers of 1950s America were seen as 'tearaways', 'delinquents' and of course, rebels, leading to a lack of respect from their parents who expected better but who didn't know how to have a relationship with their each other.

TASK:

Re-read the above commentary on the main relationships in the film related to context. Use the space below to give an example of a key scene from each of these relationships and then explain how we see this relationship in seen in that key scene via use of film language.

1 .

2 .

3 .

FILM STYLE/AESTHETICS: PRODUCTION DESIGN

DEFINITION:

Style refers to the way that things look in terms of design or its particular name or description or title. Style usually refers to key aspects of mise-en-scene and/or cinematography and whilst we can also refer to it as aesthetics, in terms of the film industry, the way that the mise-en-scene is created as is known as *production design*. This is important because it allows an audience to understand what type of people characters, what their lives are like and even personalities in general. Style is also important because it helps to establish the tone of a scene or film as well as providing ideas about context. Describing style can be difficult however, but generally speaking refer to colours, lengths, heights, material, weights, locations and anything else that allows you to describe the visual differences between two characters.

The production design of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE can be said to be very realistic or traditional-it appears to want to make the film look just like life did in the 1950s in America. Whilst this means the film 'looks' old or dated to us now, when it was released it would have been recognisable to audiences then.

TASK

Screenshots. Describe referring to different film language (I provide what the FL focus is).



How does costume show that Jim is an outsider?



How does the staging of people and props indicate that Judy is uncomfortable and feels alone?



What does the mise-en-scene overall here suggest?



How does the mise-en-scene here make the film look old and make Jim seem naive?



Identify elements of mise-en-scene to help explain what we learn in this shot.

FILM STYLE/AESTHETICS: CINEMATOGRAPHY

PAIRED TASK:

Carefully study the images below. Analyse how the cinematography is used in the screenshots to communicate key ideas in the film.



How does the cinematography here show that Jim is going to a busy school full of teenagers?



How does the cinematography here show that Jim and Judy are interested in each other and that Plato sees them as a *surrogate* father and mother?



How does the cinematography and mise-en-scene here reflect the context of the 1950s?

FORESHADOWING

GROUPED TASK

Foreshadowing is a technique that suggests or hints about something that will happen later in a narrative. *REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE* uses this often. On the left are some examples of shots that foreshadow events later on. Underneath is space to analyse the screenshot using prompts. Then use the empty box on the right to either describe or draw what is being foreshadowed and use the boxes underneath to analyse the shot you chose using the prompts and to ensure that you chose the right shot.



What does this shot suggest about Jim and how does the cinematography help?

How does this shot, and the editing in the scene, help to create tension for the audience?



What does this shot tell the audience and how does cinematography help?

How is drama and/or shock, created in this shot? Refer to any relevant examples of film language.



Mise-en-scene is key to this shot; what does it tell us about about Buzz and Plato and how does it do this?

How does this shot, and the editing in the scene, help to create tension for the audience?

FILM STYLE / AESTHETICS - QUESTIONS

SOLO TASK

1. What is foreshadowing?
2. **What can cinematography do to make an audience react?**
3. What might mise-en-scene do to suggest something for the audience.
4. **Give at least 3 examples of foreshadowing in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE by explaining what we see and then what is revealed later on in the film.**
5. Give 3 examples of how mise-en-scene creates a film which is clearly from 1950s America.
6. **Give one detailed example of how teenagers are represented via the use of mise-en-scene.**
7. Give one detailed example of how cinematography is used in a scene of your choice to create drama or excitement.
8. **Give one detailed example of how cinematography is used in a scene to create tension.**
9. How does cinematography help to make foreshadow a key event in the film?
10. **How does mise-en-scene create the sense of who is a teenager or not?**
11. How does the film use mise-en-scene to show that some teenagers are more rebellious than others?
12. **How does the film use mise-en-scene or cinematography to show that parents or authority figures are not respected by teenagers?**
13. How do you think the audience is supposed to feel about Jim? Give at least one example of film language to support your ideas.
14. **How do you think that the audience is supposed to feel about Jim's parents? Give at least one example of film language to support your ideas.**
15. Referring to a range of examples of film language and at least ONE key scene, explain why the film may seem 'old fashioned' to a modern audience.

THEMES AND ISSUES

DEFINITION

Before we consider the specific themes & issues of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, it may be useful to consider the difference between story types and themes. Story types are, as the name suggests, the types of stories you may see in a film. These are generally the genres or the generic conventions you see in a film that you see in more than just this film. Themes however are what the underlying message, or 'big idea' is behind the story. In other words, what the Director, producer, actors, scriptwriter or anyone involved in the creative choices in the film are trying to say about the world. This belief, or idea, is universal in nature meaning that it can be applied to almost anyone in any place in the world.

Trying to work out what themes (we can also refer to them as issues-the two words here are interchangeable) a film has can be quite tricky, but here are a few ways.

- First of all, think about what does the film have to say about the 'human experience' or, what it means or is like to be human?
- Consider less of "what is the film about" and more of "what is the *point* of the film?" and "what is it trying to tell us?"
- Finally, consider these possible ideas in two main ways; major themes and minor themes. Major themes are the 'big' important ideas. Minor themes are the smaller ideas-perhaps only 'showing up' in a scene or two or only relevant to one or two of the characters.

Having done that, now it's time to see if we can identify some major themes in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE. Major themes can generally be separated into 3 main areas; feelings, relationships and social structures. Films may have ideas and things it wants to say or suggest and these 3 areas will generally cover most major themes. Of course, there will be many others, but these are a good place to start.

SOLO TASK

Watch REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE. As you do, see if you can spot any of the themes below across the whole film, not just in one moment or in one character. Highlight each you identify, but aim to highlight only a small number and try not to do so until you've finished watching the film.

| Feelings | Relationships | Social Structures |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| love | weakness | justice |
| fear | convenience | responsibility |
| hate | fatherhood | altruism |
| nervousness | power | crime |
| joy | friendship | discrimination |
| empathy | honesty | rebellion |
| embarrassment | motherhood | leadership |
| excitement | loyalty | selfishness |
| anger | lying | equality |

THEMES & ISSUES

PAIRED TASK

Looking at the themes you identified in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, now it's time to link these to which parts of the narrative they are most visible in.

Below are a series of screencaps that represent key parts of the film. For each one, write down underneath what each image represents in terms of the narrative and, as much as possible a major or minor theme that is seen in each. You should find quite quickly that you are repeating the themes you identify, but this is fine and will help with the next task.

You will notice the screenshots are not in order. This will also allow you to practice recalling the narrative and you can do this in two ways; by numbering these screenshots so that they follow the order in the film, or by printing off and cutting out and re-organising so that they are in the correct order.



| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: |
| Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: |
| Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: |



| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: |
| Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: |
| Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: |



| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: | Narrative: |
| Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: | Minor theme: |
| Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: | Major theme: |

KEY SCENE ANALYSIS

SOLO TASK

Having now analysed, examined and explored the film in some depth, now is the time to start focusing what you've learned onto three key scenes.

To do this, we're going to be making sure to identify key explicit details in a scene and then analyse the implicit ideas behind each one.

One approach is to use the PEC method; what is the POINT of the scene; what film language can use explicitly identify and use as EVIDENCE and then can you COMMENT on how the film language implicitly creates the point of the scene?

All together, (P)oint, (E)vidence and (C)omment.

To further develop this approach, Hexagon Analysis can help you to structure your ideas and your analysis in a way that allows you to explore scenes in a detailed and purposeful way.

For example, to analyse a key scene-watch and consider (ideally) six things we learn, discover or understand from this scene. This is the POINT of the scene. These could be related to narrative, genre, context, audience reaction and more. Then, in the inner ring, add 6 brief ideas as the 6 Points you learned. Around the next middle 6 sections, identify 1 important explicit example of film language as EVIDENCE that helps to create that feeling/reaction/idea/overall point of the scene. Finally, in the outer ring, analyse *how* the example of film language creates that reaction by COMMENTING on how the film language implies a key idea.

To help with this, one example of from each key scene has been created for you. The three key scene you will be analysing are:

1

One of the opening scenes involving Jim, his family and officer Ray Fremick. The scene runs from 13:00 to 18:20. A shortened version of the scene can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/_EpizUY_las



2

The key scene of conflict between Jim and his parents. The scene runs from 59:40 to 1:05.35. A shortened version of the scene can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/lFCOM8_kQJg



3

The final scene involving Jim, Judy and the death of Plato. The scene runs from 1:44.25 to 1:50.00. A shortened version of the scene can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EpizUY_las



By writing about six different points, covering dozens of examples film language for 3 different Key Scenes, you're covering a lot of the film and this in turn is great practice for

your GCSE film exams. You may want to practise analysing other scenes though, so a blank hexagon is included as well.

KEY SCENE 1

Jim is frustrated with his parents in this scene. We can see this through the exasperated body language and facial expression-he cries, looks angry and looks tired, slumping into a wall at one point. This is made clearer by the close up shots of his face meaning that we can see how agonised he is. The high-key lighting means we can see his face clearly as well.

Close ups of Jim's face show his emotions. Even, high-key lighting allows us to see him clearly. His body language shows that he is exasperated and tired.

Jim is frustrated



KEY SCENE 2

Jim wants to come clean and admit his role in the death of Buzz, but his parents won't allow him. Stuck between his two parents, he's trapped and can't leave meaning that he can't do what he wants to because of his parents. He is wearing the clothes he is more comfortable in and not the suit he wore earlier, showing that he prefers the more informal clothing, rather than what he parents want him to wear. Lastly, the canted angle is a classic way to show that something is confused and in this case, it's what Jim wants.

The canted camera angle shows that things are confusing in some way. Jim's clothing shows who he wants to be rather than who he was earlier in his suit. The staging makes Jim trapped.

Jim is
conflicted



KEY SCENE 3

This scene visually echoes the scene earlier when Jim was on the stairs, surrounded by his parents. While Jim looked trapped, Plato looks supported as here Jim and Judy are trying to help him. We can see this in the MLS which allows us to see all three of them in the same shot at roughly equal size, meaning that they are a happy family. Plato is in the middle of the frame suggesting that he is the most important person in this moment and the red jacket, earlier worn by Jim, emphasises this. The 'parents' look at him directly & stand close, suggesting that they're a family.

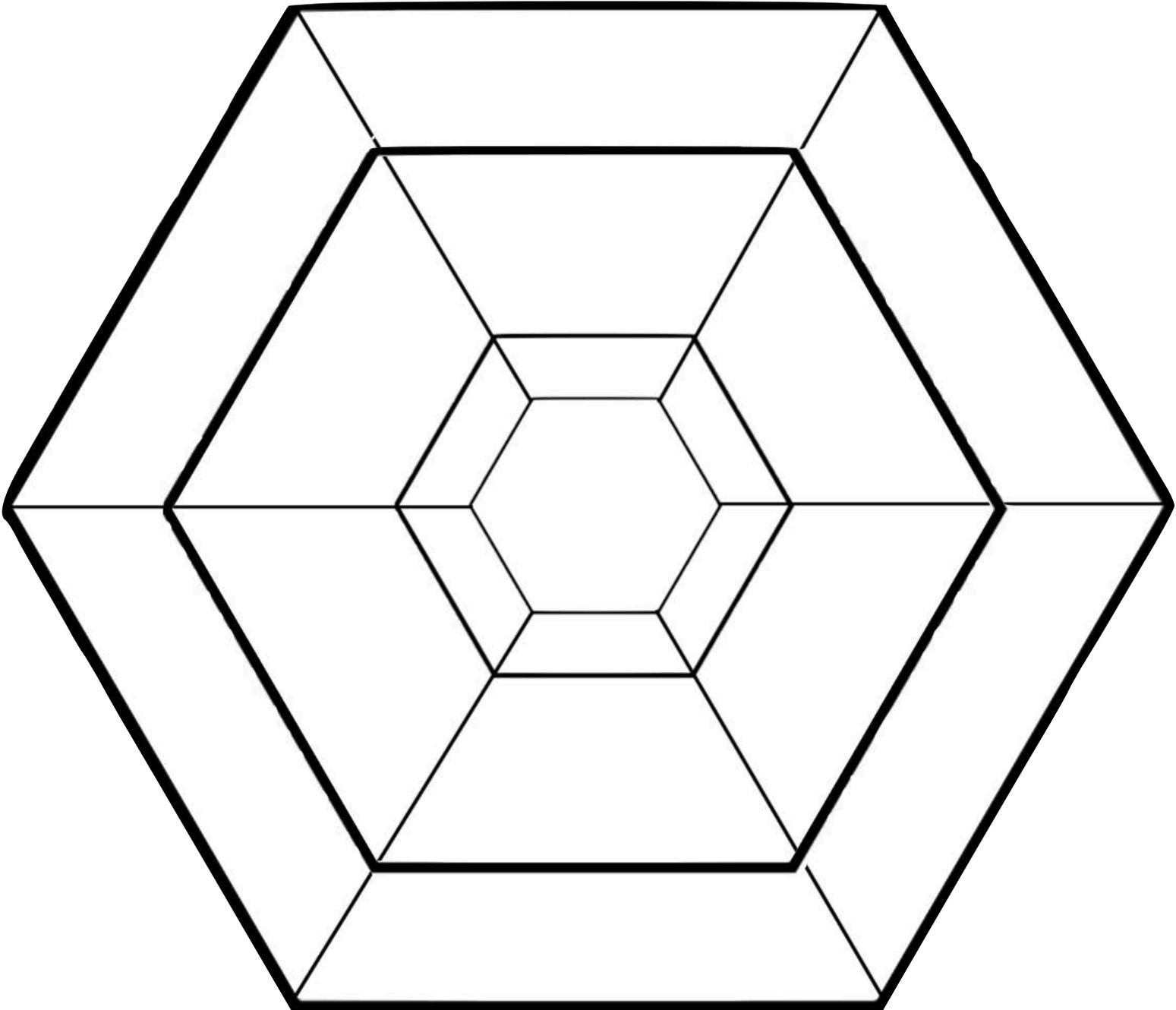
The staging of the scene is similar to the scene where Jim is trapped on the stairs but instead Plato is in the middle. The medium long shot allows all 3 in the frame. Plato is central making him the most important.

Jim, Judy & Plato
are family.



BLANK HEXAGON

By writing about six different points, covering dozens of examples film language for 3 different Key Scenes, you're covering a lot of the film and this in turn is great practice for your GCSE film exams. You may want to practise analysing other scenes though, so use the blank hexagon below for this.



KEY SCENE ANALYSIS

Now that you've completed the hexagons for each key scene, you can now take those notes and, as a minimum, simply turn those into detailed analysis of each scene. By working from the inside outwards, you could simply copy one segment for the point, then the evidence and then the comment. This would then create a detailed examination of the explicit features of the scene and then a detailed analysis of the implicit ideas for each scene.

By writing about six different examples of film language you're covering a lot of possible exam questions and this in turn is great practice for your GCSE film exams, though you may need more than space than is below, so a blank copy is provided as well.

KEY SCENE 1:

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

Jim is frustrated. Close ups of Jim's face show his emotions. Even, high-key lighting allows us to see him clearly. His body language shows that he is exasperated and tired. Jim is frustrated with his parents in this scene. We can see this through the exasperated body language and facial expression-he cries, looks angry and looks tired, slumping into a wall at one point. This is made clearer by the close up shots of his face meaning that we can see how agonised he is. The high-key lighting means we can see his face clearly as well.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE 2:

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

Jim is conflicted. The canted camera angle shows that things are confusing in some way. Jim's clothing shows who he wants to be rather than who he was earlier in his suit. The staging makes Jim trapped. Jim wants to come clean and admit his role in the death of Buzz, but his parents won't allow him. Stuck between his two parents, he's trapped and can't leave meaning that he can't do what he wants to because of his parents. He is wearing the clothes he is more comfortable in and not the suit he wore earlier, showing that he prefers the more informal clothing, rather than what his parents want him to wear. Lastly, the canted angle is a classic way to show that something is confused and in this case, it's what Jim wants.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE 3:

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

Jim, Judy & Plato are family. The staging of the scene is similar to the scene where Jim is trapped on the stairs but instead Plato is in the middle. The medium long shot allows all 3 in the frame. Plato is central making him the most important. This scene visually echoes the scene earlier when Jim was on the stairs, surrounded by his parents. While Jim looked trapped, Plato looks supported as here Jim and Judy are trying to help him. We can see this in the MLS which allows us to see all three of them in the same shot at roughly equal size, meaning that they are a happy family. Plato is in the middle of the frame suggesting that he is the most important person in this moment and the red jacket, earlier worn by Jim, emphasises this. The 'parents' look at him directly & stand close, suggesting that they're a family.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE :

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

EXTRA VIEWING / ANALYSIS

The list of extra films and YouTube channels below are by no means an exhaustive list and you will find plenty of other material from other films and channels. The list is also by no means a compulsory list-these should all be very much treated as things which can compliment your appreciation of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE rather than things which must be watched. Please note as well that some of the suggested films may be a difficult watch or may not be suitable for all viewers. It is suggested that you consult the imdb page for a film before watching, using the 'Certification' section to judge whether a film is appropriate before watching.

FILMS

THE WILD ONE [PG] (1953) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0047677/?ref=nm_sr_1

LOOK BACK IN ANGER [PG] (1959) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0051879/?ref=nm_sr_1

THE GRADUATE [15] (1967) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0091790/?ref=tt_rec_tt

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW [15] (1971) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0067328/?ref=kw_li_tt

AMERICAN GRAFFITI [12A] (1973) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0069704/?ref=kw_li_tt

CARRIE [18] (1976) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0074285/?ref=fn_al_tt_1

ANIMAL HOUSE [15] (1978) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077975/?ref=fn_al_tt_1

GREASE [PG] (1978) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077631/?ref=fn_al_tt_1

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

SCREEN PRISM (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVjsbqKtxkLt7bal4NWRjJQ>)

EVERY FRAME A PAINTING (<https://www.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting>)

LESSONS FROM THE SCREENPLAY (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCErSSa3CaP_GJxmFpdjG9Jw)

ROCKET JUMP FILM SCHOOL (<https://www.youtube.com/user/RJFilmSchool>)

CINEFIX (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CineFix>)

NOW YOU SEE IT (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWTFGPpNQoMs6afXhaWDiRw/featured>)

FILM STUDIES FUNDAMENTALS (<https://www.youtube.com/c/MrMorenoMelgar>)

