**History Through Film FILM CRITIQUE Name:**



1. Meet in groups of 2-5 to discuss the film. What were the strengths/Weaknesses of the Film? Discuss acting, cinematography, writing, directing, sets, costume, dialogue, etc.

2. Rate the film and justify it; listen to group mates.

3. Come up with a “Hook” & get feedback from the group.

1. **Start with a compelling hook** (controversial statement, quote, metaphor, comparison, interesting background info). Make the reader want to keep reading!

2. **Rate it right away!** Stars / out of 10 / out of 100 / Thumbs up or down. Be clear right away.

\***Great Movie:**The Red Baron is the rare movie that succeeds on almost every level, where each character, scene, costume, and joke fire on all cylinders to make a film worth repeated viewings."

\***Bad Movie:**"It doesn't matter how much you enjoy kung-fu and karate films: with *47 Ronin,* you're better off saving your money, the calories you’d put on with the overpriced popcorn, and your time."

\***Okay Movie:**"I loved the wildly uneven *Interstellar* far more than I should have, but that doesn't mean it is perfect. Ultimately, the utter awe and spectacle of space swept me through the corn-maze of complicated plot at stilted dialogue reminiscent of an 8th grader trying to ask a crush out on a date.

3. **Give specific and direct references/examples** to back up your statements.

**\*Great:** "Michael B. Jordan and Octavia Spencer's chemistry would carry *Fruitvale Station* even if the script wasn't so good. The mid-movie prison scene in particular, where the camera never leaves their faces, shows how much they can convey with nothing but their eyelids, the flashing tension of neck muscles, and a barely cracking voice."

**\*Bad:** "*Jurassic World's* biggest flaw, a complete lack of relatable female characters, is only further underscored by a laughably unrealistic shot of our heroine running away from a dinosaur -- in heels."



**4. Discuss many facets of the film:** Cinematography, acting, dialogue, writing, characters, costume, lighting, musical score, choice of sets, etc.

**5. Clincher – end with a bang.** Much like your hook, end with something that makes the reader say “wow” or fully support your view.

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\*Many ideas borrowed from Wikihow: [https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Movie-Review#](https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Movie-Review)

Stylistic Techniques for the Creative Writing **Process**

(Submit this sheet with checkmarks in boxes when complete)

1. Circle all banned words and replace them with a higher level word. (Ie: Slang, cool, sad, like, any IM terminology.)

2. HOOK: Look at your beginning. Is it engaging? Does it inspire to keep reading?

3. Sentence variety: A. Do any of your sentences begin with the same sddddddddddddddddd word? If so, change them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sentence # | Length |
| 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 12 |
| 3 | 15 |
| 4 | 3 |
| 5 | 5 |

B. Do you have variety in the length and types of d sentences that you are using?

C. Count the number of sentences + words in each sentence and create a chart.

D. Did you back up your statements with rich examples?

4. Is your writing in the present tense?

5. Eliminate any use of the second person (you) unless for a stylistic purpose.

6. Find an image or situation in your paragraph. Think of something that is similar to it and create a thoughtful metaphor or simile to enhance that section of your review.

7. Circle at least three verbs per paragraph and replace them with one (or two) appropriate verbs from the thesaurus (the best word is not always the biggest).

8. Highlight any similes, metaphors, or allusions.

9. Underline at least three nouns. Think of at least one (preferably two) adjectives and use them. Join the adjectives with a comma + and, but, even, yet.

10. Put adverbs in front of at least three of your verbs.

11. Is the conclusion wrapped up with a satisfying ending. Is it a great clincher?

12. Rate the film.

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\*Dual Verbs: Some types of dual verbs are like running and jumping or skipping and falling. It is two verbs put together to make a more drastic effect in writing!

\*\*Dual Adjectives: He was a tall, tanned, attractive, rich and outdoorsy.

STUDENT SAMPLES FROM THE PAST

 Do you enjoy chewing a piece of gum after it has lost all of its flavour? Well then, the movie *Dunkirk* is perfect for you! *Dunkirk​* is a flavourless attempt​ at mixing a thriller and a war movie together.

       The movie, directed by Christopher Nolan, recreates the historical event of The Miracle of Dunkirk-Operation Dynamo-​from three different perspectives: land, sea, and air. ​Tommy (Fionn Whitehead) and Alex (Harry Styles), two British privates, and Gibson​ (Aneurin Barnard)​​​, a French soldier, all cross paths​ while trying to escape Dunkirk. Struggling against all odds, the three of them take the audience through an intense fight for survival both at land and at sea. A civilian sailor, Mr. Dawson (Mark Rylance), and his son, Peter (Tom Glynn-Carney), accompanied by their teenage hand, George (Barry Keoghan), respond to call for help​​​​​ from the Royal Navy to sail vessels from Great Britian to the beaches at Dunkirk to help the soldiers escape. Along the way, they encounter and help many people such as pilots who have crashed and soldiers involved in shipwrecks.

        While the movie successfully creates tension, it is also extremely repetitive and lots of scenes are too long. Many parts of the movie play off of the same ideas. While it was exciting the first time around, it becomes rather boring quite quickly. For example, when looking through the perspectives of Tommy, Alex, and Gibson, plenty of the scenes they appear in are during shipwrecks. They spend most of the movie escaping near death by drowning. While one could argue this shows the significance of the loss of soldiers and naval ships, it more successfully shows a loss of interest of the audience. After seeing it once, a concept is no longer as ​gripping​ to see again. Many of the scenes are drawn out for dramatic effect, but in multiple cases, it becomes tedious. This is shown in one of the opening scenes when ​Tommy and Gibson are carrying an injured soldier to a hospital ship. This scene is very long in an attempt to build suspense but conversely​ results in apathy. These are only a few examples of the movie's long and repetitive scenes.

        The director focuses solely on building suspense and using great cinematography but neglects creating a strong plot as a result. For instance, the movie does not have much dialogue. Large parts of the film are made to look very pleasing and accurate but fail to give the storyline enough purpose. If they had added more dialogue, the audience would have gotten to know the characters better, and therefore, would have had a stronger emotional connection to not only them but also Operation Dynamo itself. While the cinematography and tension were​ impressive, the lack of plot greatly takes away from the movie.

        The movie revolves greatly around the British's perspective at Dunkirk while almost entirely ignoring both the French and German perspectives. While French soldiers are shown at parts throughout the movie, the story is heavily focused on what the British were experiencing during the evacuation. Gibson was the only character that contributed to the French's involvement at Dunkirk, but that alone failed to capture the French's involvement​ as a whole. In addition, while it was clear that the Nazis were the ones attacking the Allies, they were never really shown but rather just implied. For example, the audience only sees Nazi planes. Even while under attack by Nazi soldiers and U-Boats, the audience can only see the British and the aftermath of the German's attacks.

        Overall, *Dunkirk* fails to live up to its full potential. What starts as a promising beginning quickly unravels into a bland entanglement of three different storylines.

 If you enjoy a terrible love arc, poor action scenes, and an empty feeling as the credits roll. Watch the German foreign film Red Baron. Directed by Nikolai Müllerschön in ​2008, the ​​infamous World War one ace fighter pilot Manfred von Richthofen​ makes his way to highschool classrooms -- for some reason.

 The history of the red baron is my favourite world war one topic. The thought of painting your plane red to scare your enemy is amazing, as I am sure it worked. The leading ace of world war one with 80 planes shot down before his unknowing demise. The best part of the red barons history, is snoopy fighting him on his red dog house -- which is more historically accurate than the movie Nikolai Müllerschön decided to create.

 As cool as the history of the red baron is, his movie is quite the opposite. With a very high rating of 6.3, which it definitely does not deserve. The acting is inadequate​, story telling was terrible and most of all the love interest or whatever you would call that. I find it sad that a whole highschool classroom can agree to hate a movie more than anything else, even threatening to watch it again as a punishment.

 The worst part is the scene transitions. going from a love scene in a tent, to flying the next day, fighting the enemy just does not flow. they introduced new characters just to kill them off 10 minutes later, making no one care or have any sort of lost feeling.

 With a budget of 28 million and a gross income of just over $37,000, this movie sucks, I have not watched a worse movie. To be fair, it is a foreign movie with different story telling and delivery. At the same time, they had a big budget for the German garbage that it became. I wish I could enjoy this movie more as I come from full German descent, but this movie makes me wish I was everything but that.

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Dunkirk can only be compared to getting your teeth ripped out one by one by the same dentist who broke my grandfather's jaw. In the film *Dunkirk, directed* by Christopher Nolan, three dreadful stories are told from the air, land, and sea. Based on the true story of the 1940 Battle of Dunkirk, this thriller (if you can even call it that,) depicts the struggles of Tommy, the only one to survive a German attack at the start of the film, Peter and George- two characters that are a yin and yang of useful and useless, who assist soldiers by using a boat. Last and somehow least, is the unremarkable Farrier, a fighter pilot with great achievements but is weakened by shotty camera angles and countless cuts back and forth. In good conscience, this film cannot be given a rating any higher than a 7.4/29.

Ultimately, Tommy is a forgettable character with nothing to redeem himself with. Seemingly cursed to watch every boat around him sink into the cold icy depths of the water, he just can't catch a break. Unfortunately, the boats get old fast, and after you watch a boat sink in the same fashion for the third time, you really can't find it in you to care. Teamed up with Alex, portrayed by Harry Styles, they struggle to find safety and, in the end, do nothing to add substance to the film. Honestly, Harry should stick to the one thing he’s good at, which is spitting on other actors.

Furthermore, Peter is an extremely helpful young man who takes pity on George, a useless teenager who wants to help out by doing diddly-squat! Looking back, the entire boat section of the movie has nothing but awkward and forced dialogue. I almost leapt out of my seat with joy when they finally got rid of George. Unfortunately, his death scene went on for far too long, with the film scrambling to get you to feel sympathy for this random guy you have seen for less than an hour. Somehow labeled a hero, George does nothing but get in the way and slow Peter down. How they feature George, but not Peter on the newspaper is beyond me.

By the time the movie is over, you would be suffering from whiplash. Groaning whenever the film showed planes, you would have to prepare for yet another onslaught of camera cuts and shotty angles. With cameras showing the view from the wing of the plane, I wished for nothing more than for them to dive into the ocean so it could finally be over. There is no meaning behind this angle, and just yet another nuisance. Farrier was the only character that kept me from leaving and never looking back. A true hero amongst yet another flop of a movie.

Nevertheless, Dunkirk is a film that can only be described as three stories that did not need to be told through film. Moreover, the camera angles were awkward, and the cuts were countless. Throughout this film I felt nothing but impatience as I waited for it to finally end. Action, adventure, and more can all be yours if you do yourself a favour and watch any other movie.  ​​