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Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2011

Moving Image Arts

Assessment Unit A2

[AX221]

THURSDAY 26 MAY, MORNING

MARK
SCHEME

Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives below provide an indication of the skills and abilities, which the A2 AU 2 examination is designed to assess, together with the knowledge and understanding specified in the subject content.

Total A2 AU 2 Examination Assessment Weighting: 30%
Total Marks Available: 90 (30 marks per question)

In A2 Assessment Unit 2 candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

AO5   Analyse and critically evaluate moving image products and texts, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions, purposes, meanings and contexts.
Assessment Weighting: 30%

Assessment criteria

The following Assessment Criteria AO5 a–c are directly based on this objective.

In Assessment Unit A2 2 candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

AO5a   **Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding** of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.

AO5b   **Analyse and Critically Evaluate** moving image products and texts.

AO5c   **Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding** of the personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts of historical and contemporary filmmakers/animators.

Candidates will also be assessed on the quality of their **written communication**.

This refers to candidates' ability to:

- Select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter;
- Organise relevant material clearly and coherently using specialist vocabulary where appropriate;
- Ensure typed writing is legible, with accurate use of formatting, spelling, grammar and punctuation in order to make meaning clear.

As the assignment will take the form of a paperless exam and will be performed by candidates on computer, basic keyboarding and navigation skills will therefore be necessary for the input of answers during the examination.

In the event that candidates have access to spelling and grammar aids on their computers during examination, assessment of spelling, grammar and punctuation accuracy will be relative to the availability of such assistance. Legibility and presentation of the typed word will maintain high assessment priority in these cases.

Advice to Examiners

Marking Bands

The Marking Bands overleaf contain criteria that are applicable to each examination question. These criteria are provided in order to detail the relationship between examination answers and their relevant assessment objectives.

They are intended to provide a broad indication of the general qualities associated with different levels of response. The marking criteria are set out in five levels reflecting the broad range of achievement expected.

The nature of this subject allows for a variety of responses even within a levels-of-response mark scheme and therefore mark schemes do not contain rigidly prescriptive responses. In an operational examination situation candidates' answers will be considered by all members of the examining and marking team at the marking conference for each paper. The answers will serve to exemplify the mark scheme and, if necessary, to illustrate where adaptation may be necessary to ensure proper credit is given.

Descriptive/narrative and beyond

Answers which consist of simple narrative or description as opposed to analysis or discursiveness should not be awarded beyond level 3. You should not, of course, undervalue answers where there may be **implicit** relevance in the narrative treatment; indeed, answers which, while basically narrative/descriptive, display qualities of perceptiveness and relevance, can score up to 15. Within level 4 you will find answers indicating increasing ability to analyse and discuss and to engage with the precise terms of the question. Top level answers will address key terms in an **explicit** and sustained way.

Key Terms/Issues

In all questions, candidates should take account of key terms, and structure their answers accordingly if they are to be relevant and properly focused. Key terms are of two distinct kinds: those which are directives (e.g. "discuss how effective…", "show how far…", "compare…", "examine…") and those which refer to specific qualities (e.g. "form", "structure", "tone", "imagery").

Audio-Visual Stimulus

Examiners will note that all A2 Unit 2 questions employ audio-visual sequences as a stimulus for their answers. Candidates are expected to show an awareness of the relationship of the audio-visual sequence to the question and to focus on the nuances of the sequence's visual language and construction. In general, the ability to "unpack" the question and to address all the issues, which it raises, is the sign of a good candidate.

Multiple Stimuli

Where questions require candidates to select more than one audio-visual sequence, distinguish between those requiring close examination of the second/third sequences and those, which ask for "reference to". In the first case, examiners should expect equal treatment to be given to each audio-visual sequence and reward accordingly; in the second case, candidates who make no reference to a second sequence should not be placed above the top of level 4.

Length of Answers

Length is not important in this examination.

Length does not always mean quality. Some lengthy answers are thorough and interesting, others repetitive and plodding. Some brief answers are scrappy, others cogent and incisive. In this A2 Unit 2 examination, time restraints will make it virtually impossible for candidates to contribute very lengthy responses to questions. Emphasis should therefore instead be made on candidates' ability to be concise and to the point in how they answer the questions set.

Answers in Note Form

Some answers may degenerate into typed note form or may, substantially take the form of notes. Do not assume that notes are automatically worthless. Look at them carefully. Some notes are better than others. The use of notes will generally mean that the candidate has failed to construct a properly developed and coherent argument, but they may contain creditable insights or raise pertinent points, however inadequately developed these insights or points may be. In other cases, poor time management under pressure may be a contributing factor. If in doubt, contact the Chief Examiner.

Uneven Performance

Be prepared for uneven performances. Mark each answer on its own merit. Do not mark up unfinished work because of the quality of the rest of the answers; mark what is before you. While some candidates may begin badly, they may "redeem" themselves during the course of the answer. Read all of each answer carefully and do not let obvious weaknesses blind you to strengths elsewhere in the answer. (The reverse, of course, also holds.)

Assessing the Responses of Candidates

- You will be expected to implement the decisions taken at the marking conference and maintain a consistent standard throughout your marking.
- Be positive in your approach. Look for things to reward, rather than faults to penalise.
- Using the marking grids overleaf, decide first which mark level best describes the attainment of the candidate in response to the particular question set. Further refine your judgement by deciding the candidate's overall competence within that level and determine a mark.
- Do not bunch marks. You must use the whole scale [0]–[30]. Do not use half marks.
- Excessive misspelling, errors of punctuation and consistently faulty syntax in answers should be noted in the comments section of the mark sheet and drawn to the attention of the Chief Examiner.

Question 1

Sequence 1. *A frantic chase causes a violent collision.*

Sequence 2. *A bystander is witness to a fatal accident.*

Examine the following two sequences. Compare and contrast how each director uses film language to portray the dramatic impact of a fatal accident.

Available Marks: 30

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

AO5a **Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding** of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.

(10 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.	1–2
2	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be some understanding of purposes and meanings.	3–4
3	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be growing understanding of purposes and meanings.	5–6
4	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions and a consistent understanding of purposes and meanings.	7–8
5	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions and a considerable understanding of purposes and meanings.	9–10

Knowledge and Understanding refers to:

Sequence 1

Camera:	Long shots, close-ups and medium shots. Extreme high-angle shot. Tracking shots. POV shot.
Cinematography:	Naturalistic cinematography. High-key lighting.
Editing:	Fast-paced editing. Rapid cross-cutting. Montage editing. Slow motion.

Mise-en-scene:	Outdoor urban setting – city streets, roads, a busy crossroads. Several vehicles, including cars, a motorbike and a bicycle.
Sound:	Ambient soundtrack of ominous drones and rhythmic drumbeats. Diegetic sounds of screeching tyres, cars crashing, a windscreen shattering.

Sequence 2

Camera:	Extreme low angle framing. Long shots, medium shots, close-ups. POV shot. Tracking camera movement.
Cinematography:	High-key, naturalistic lighting. Cinematography emphasizes the colour blue in the early morning mist and haze.
Editing:	Continuity style. Slow paced editing.
Mise-en-scene:	Outdoor setting of a motorway and the countryside at dawn. The iconography of nature – green fields, trees, blue sky and the dawn mist. Blue is the dominant colour – the child's jumper, the dawn light. A stick and ball game and a beach ball also feature in the narrative.
Sound:	Absence of any musical score. Diegetic sounds of the wind, traffic, a car horn, skidding, crashing, a dog yelping and a young man running in a field.

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AO5b **Analyse and Critically Evaluate** moving image products and texts

(20 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Minimal ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. The quality of written communication may be unsatisfactory.	1–4
2	Limited ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. Limited application of moving image terminology to support responses. The quality of written communication may be basic and there may be limited attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.	5–8
3	Uneven, but sustained ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Increasing confidence in application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses. The quality of written communication is satisfactory but there may be errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	9–12
4	A sound ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. The quality of written communication is good and there is fluency and confidence in the application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses.	13–16
5	A highly developed ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Exercising clear critical judgement and independent thinking. Quality of written communication is of a consistently high standard with moving image terminology applied fluently and effectively to justify arguments and responses.	17–20

Analysis and Evaluation refers to:

Both sequences focus upon the actions of a young man, one who is a witness to an accident and runs towards the aftermath, the other who actually causes the accident and runs away from it. Both are examples of a purely visual approach to storytelling (pure cinema) – only a single line of dialogue features in each sequence.

Both sequences offer us radically different viewing positions from which to experience the car crash. Sequence 2 employs the continuity style in a low key, restrained manner that places us at

a distance while the tragic accident unfolds. Sequence 1, on other hand, collapses the distance between spectator and accident placing the viewer inside one of the cars at the moment of collision. Both sequences capture a moment of eerie stillness in the aftermath of tragedy.

While Sequence 2 could be described as a pure example of cinematic realism, Sequence 1 journeys beyond realism, employing a formalist approach to the manipulation of time. In the use of slow motion and the replaying of the car crash three separate times, the director of Sequence 1 breaks through the boundaries of realism for expressive effect.

Sequence 1

One of the key differences between the sequences is pace and editing technique. Although Sequence 1 begins with a slow motion POV shot of the young man spotting the thief who has stolen his money, the tracking camera movement circling around him in medium close-up, creates an urgent sense of energy and motion. The inter-cutting between the medium close-up of the young man and his POV of the basket establishes the rapid editing pattern of the sequence. We are immediately thrust into the action of the chase by camera placement and editing. The pattern of inter-cutting between frontal medium shots of the thief and the long shot from behind the bike, generates tension and suspense. As both men increase their speed, the young man almost catches up with the thief, only for him to pull away again – the tracking camera falling behind as the chase becomes more frantic.

The director employs sound and music in a subtle, understated manner to heighten the tension and build up to the collision. The muffled, ambient sound at the beginning of the sequence conveys the sensation of being submerged underwater. Played over the slow motion POV shot of the bike passing the young man it conveys a sense of reality going out of kilter. When the chase begins and normal time resumes, a low, ominous drone can be heard in the background sounding a note of danger.

The director employs the technique of cross-cutting to powerful effect in the countdown to the collision. We are first alerted to the fact that an accident is waiting to happen by the medium shot through the windscreen of the two men driving along, deep in conversation. The tense, rhythmic drumbeats that begin to play over these images of the unsuspecting pair signal to us that the scene is building up towards something dramatic.

At this point we have no idea where this car is positioned in relation to the escaping thief. The imminent danger is suddenly revealed in the next cut. The desperate pursuit is captured in long shot before the camera pans abruptly left to show us that car and bike are on a collision course. The suspense that has been building since the first appearance of the bearded thief now reaches its climax as the director cuts to an extreme high angle shot of the crossroads. This dynamic composition creates dramatic tension by offering us a bird's eye view of the rapid movement of cars and people along converging diagonal paths. Disaster seems inevitable.

Split second cross-cutting plunges us headlong into the collision. The dramatic shift from extreme long shot to a medium close-up through the car windscreen brilliantly captures the moment of panic and alarm as the driver realizes he must swerve to avoid the speeding bike. The swift editing pace and changes of camera angle/shot effectively convey the split second timing of the unfolding events and the series of violent collisions that follow the narrow escape of the thief and his pursuer.

The director creates a frightening scene of chaos and danger through dynamic editing, shifting camera positions and the evocative use of diegetic sound. The powerful realism of the sequence, the dizzying sense of reality spiraling out of control, is conveyed by the high-pitched screeching of the tyres as the car skids across the road. The director employs diegetic sound to assault our senses with the shattering impact of the series of collisions between cars, motorbike and the body of the motorcyclist smashing into the windscreen. Each collision is felt like a blow to the head.

After the third medium close-up of the two men through the car windscreen, the camera position switches rapidly to inside the car interior. Through this claustrophobic composition, the director now forces the viewer to become a passenger in the car and to experience the feelings of helplessness, disorientation and fear as the vehicle skids into the path of the white car.

The director employs montage editing to manipulate time and subject us to the deadly force of the accident three times. In a series of rapid shock cuts, we experience the crash from three different vantage points, as if caught in a time loop. With each sudden cut – from extreme high angle, to long shot to medium close-up – the distance between spectator and accident collapses and we are drawn inexorably into the vortex of sudden death.

It is clear that the director does not want us to merely witness the accident, like a stunned and helpless bystander. Instead he wants to position us within the eye of the storm. He achieves this through a skilful use of shifting camera perspectives, frenetic editing and loud, diegetic sound. This sense of being a participant in the unfolding tragedy is reinforced in the next series of rapid cuts designed to throw us off-balance as if we are trapped on a rollercoaster that has gone out of control.

Before we have had time to absorb the shock of the triple crash, the director suddenly propels us through the air as the camera tracks behind a motorcyclist who is speeding towards disaster. In the split second before the motorbike slams into the back of the car, the director places us in the POV of a back seat passenger forced to look in horror as the motorcyclist is thrown through the air. As if this wasn't enough to unnerve and shock us, the director rapidly shifts position again, this time transporting us to just behind the front seat of the second crashed car where we can see the helpless victim through the windscreen.

After the quick exterior long shot of the motorcyclist spinning through the air, the camera position shifts back to the car interior. By cutting back at the precise moment that the body strikes the windscreen, we are subjected to the full force of the impact between glass and bone. Trapped within the confined space of the car, we have the feeling that the motorcyclist has actually crashed down on top of us, blocking out the light. The sound of the windscreen cracking apart amplifies the sense of shock and horror.

After revealing to us how the chase continues as the two men disappear round the corner, the director focuses his camera upon the aftermath of the accident. The dynamic editing pace is now replaced by slow, lingering camera shots that again collapse the distance between spectator and victims. Starting with a long shot of the two cars that resembles an image from a television news report, the director then tracks into a medium close-up of one of the two car passengers, before ending on a medium shot of the prone body of the motorcyclist.

Although both directors convey a strong sense of the deathly stillness and stunned silence in the aftermath of a fatal accident, the strange feeling that time has been briefly suspended offers a

stark contrast to Sequence 2. Whereas the director of Sequence 2 employs only diegetic sound throughout and withholds any image of the victims, here the director forces us to look closely at the victims for any sign of life while a slow, rueful musical score evokes a sense of the cruelty of fate.

Sequence 2

Sequence 2 is grounded in the conventions of realism. Observational camera technique, naturalistic outdoor cinematography and diegetic sound generate a powerful atmosphere of verisimilitude. We feel as if we are witnessing a real event counting down before our eyes. Suspense is created from the moment that the low angle shot of underneath the car reveals that something is not right.

No musical soundtrack is employed in this sequence. There are only the diegetic sounds of heavy traffic, the car skidding and striking the tree, the dog yelpings and the young man running. Amplified wind sounds accompany the extreme long shot of the aftermath of the accident. The cinematography emphasises the colour blue (also the colour of the car). The misty blue atmosphere of early morning is strongly felt.

The director's approach has some similarities to the observational camera technique of documentary filmmaking. A range of objective camera shots edited together at a slow, deliberate pace provide the build-up to the accident. The camera focuses upon the young girl as she exits the car, following her in a horizontal tracking shot. The extreme low angle close-up of the oil dripping from a tube underneath the car, with the background image of the young girl out of focus, is an unusual composition. This use of a low angle camera position reoccurs when the young man runs to the scene of the accident and the camera tracks from waist height.

The composition of the scene immediately preceding the accident is also unconventional. Sequence 2 is an example of contemporary European, rather than Hollywood, cinema so one would expect the director to diverge from the conventions of classical storytelling. Instead of remaining with the car and building up the suspense in a conventional way, the director cuts away to a close-up of a hand gripping a stick and ball.

A young hitchhiker, absorbed in playing a game, now becomes the focus of the sequence. The camera tracks slowly upwards, switching from close-up to long shot, as the car emerges out of the dawn light. There is a strange, ghostly quality to this composition. Our vision is completely obscured by the blue mist and for a few brief moments all that we can make out are two glowing headlights and the sound of a car horn.

Aware of the approaching car, the hitchhiker sticks his hand out. When the car passes him by, he returns, disappointed, to his game. It is precisely when he succeeds in getting the ball onto the stick, and smiles, that we hear the crash. After the primarily horizontal movement of the opening shots, the verticality of the stick game prepares for the shot of a tree on which the wrecked car is mounted.

The director frames the young man in a tight medium close-up as he reacts to the diegetic sounds of the car skidding and crashing. We hear, but do not actually see the accident. We have to imagine what the young man sees before a POV shot connects us to his gaze. The extended long shot of the car collapsed against the tree, as the beach ball rolls away, evokes the strange quality

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of eerie stillness experienced in the aftermath of a tragic event – as if time has been frozen for a few brief moments while the shock sets in. The strong presence of blue light, the white plumes of smoke billowing from the engine and the whistling of the wind establish a haunting atmosphere. We can also hear a low, hissing sound like air escaping from a balloon, perhaps representing the life that is draining away from the victims of the crash.

For a moment, the slow pace of the sequence is interrupted as a low angle tracking shot follows the running legs of the young man as he races towards the car. The director keeps the camera at a distance in a static, extreme long shot that holds for as long as it takes for the young man to run across the field and reach the car. This painterly shot of the blue, cloudless sky and silent landscape stretching to the horizon offers a striking contrast to the human tragedy that is taking place.

It is the decision to withhold the accident and only allow us to view the immediate aftermath from a distant perspective that makes this such a powerful and affecting scene. This is a director who believes that there are some sacred places where the camera should not go and that this approach is a more effective way to communicate the horror and sense of helplessness felt in the face of tragedy, than if the camera had been positioned inside the car as tragedy struck.

The director's intention is to position the audience as witness, rather than victim, of the accident. This is perhaps the greatest difference between the two sequences. Yet both endings leave us to ponder the vagaries of fate. We cannot help wondering if the accident would have happened at all, if the car had stopped to pick up the hitchhiker.

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Question 2

Sequence 1. *A young boy's attempt to frighten his brother backfires.*

Sequence 2. *Events do not go as planned for a monster.*

Examine the following two sequences. Compare and contrast how each director uses film language to create mood and atmosphere.

Available Marks: 30

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

AO5a **Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding** of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.

(10 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.	1–2
2	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be some understanding of purposes and meanings.	3–4
3	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be growing understanding of purposes and meanings.	5–6
4	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions and a consistent understanding of purposes and meanings.	7–8
5	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions and a considerable understanding of purposes and meanings.	9–10

Knowledge and Understanding refers to:

Sequence 1

Camera Technique:	Unbalanced compositions. Off-centre framing. Extreme high and low angles. Long shots, medium shots, close-ups and ECUs. Tracking camera movements. POV shots.
Cinematography:	Low-key lighting and heavy use of shadow.
Editing:	Fast-paced editing, cutting on camera movement.

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Mise-en-scene:	Bedroom setting. Two boys and a monster. Blue is the dominant colour – wallpaper, bedcovers and clothing. A wooden figurine.
Sound:	Sinister and mysterious soundtrack of discordant notes and white noise. Diegetic sounds of a howling wind, locks being unbolted, creaking doors, a tree striking a window, voices, heavy breathing, animal and bird noises, roaring and growling. Non-diegetic 'swooshing' sounds.

Sequence 2

Camera:	Long shots, medium shots, close-ups. Extreme high and low angle framing. Tracking camera movements. POV shots.
Cinematography:	Low-key lighting.
Editing:	Continuity style. Slow, unobtrusive editing.
Mise-en-scene:	Bedroom setting. A boy and a monster. Pastel colour scheme in the wallpaper, bedcovers and toys (yellow, blue, pink). Various toys – Humpty Dumpty, teddy bears, a yellow sailing boat, a football, a skateboard, skittles.
Sound:	Ominous musical score. Diegetic sounds of voices, the wind, crickets, owls, a ticking clock, a creaking door, a high-pitched scream and heavy breathing.

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AO5b   Analyse and Critically Evaluate moving image products and texts

(20 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Minimal ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. The quality of written communication may be unsatisfactory.	1–4
2	Limited ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. Limited application of moving image terminology to support responses. The quality of written communication may be basic and there may be limited attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.	5–8
3	Uneven, but sustained ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Increasing confidence in application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses. The quality of written communication is satisfactory but there may be errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	9–12
4	A sound ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. The quality of written communication is good and there is fluency and confidence in the application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses.	13–16
5	A highly developed ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Exercising clear critical judgement and independent thinking. Quality of written communication is of a consistently high standard with moving image terminology applied fluently and effectively to justify arguments and responses.	17–20

Analysis and Evaluation refers to:

The sequences are remarkably similar in narrative content, both featuring a bedroom setting where an attempt to scare a young boy goes badly wrong. Both sequences use the stylistic and generic conventions of the horror movie to establish a mood of fear and anxiety before the tables are dramatically turned on the one doing the scaring and both scenes take a comic turn.

The key source of fear and terror in both sequences is the remarkably similar looking monster. A door slowly opening to reveal the strange creature is a key scene in both sequences as is a low

angle camera shot of the darkness under the bed. The sounds of a howling wind and a creaking door play an important role in creating mood and atmosphere in both sequences.

Sequence 1

Sequence 1 quite literally plays upon a child's fear of the dark as a young boy, intent upon scaring his brother, asks him, "What are you afraid of?" The director takes us on a journey into childhood fantasy and imagination where supernatural threats lurk in the dark.

● Low-key lighting and the heavy use of shadow establish an eerie atmosphere of mystery and suspense. Shadows dominate the frame from the opening ECU of the eye. The menacing silhouette of a tree, swaying in the breeze, falls across the bed and crashes against the window. The bedroom is plunged in darkness as the director has chosen to light only very limited parts of each shot – the right hand side of the boy's face against the pillow, the pupil of his right eye framed in extreme close-up, the foreground of the solitary long shot of the room, the light coming from under the door, the ghostly glow from outside the window. When the door swings open or the camera tracks under the bed, the encroaching darkness threatens to swallow up the frame.

  The low-key lighting design enables the director to take us by surprise and create a powerful moment of shock and horror as the young boy is suddenly abducted by the monster. When the door closes, all light is shut out and we are left alone with our fear of the dark.

● Throughout the sequence, the director employs the colour blue within both the mise-en-scene and the cinematography to intensify the ghostly atmosphere of the bedroom. The blue wallpaper, bedcovers and clothing is complemented by the blue tones of the cinematography employed in the low angle shots from under the door, the tracking shot along the bed and the off-centre shots through the window. The blue glow of the curtains as the trees crash against the window brilliantly evokes a sense of the supernatural.

● Expressionist camera technique is used to gradually build up an atmosphere of fear and dread. The director employs fluid, tracking camera movements, extreme high and low angle compositions and canted angles to explore the darkened spaces of the room. The many ECUs of eyes and lips employed within the sequence and the tight, off-centre framing of doors, windows and under the bed creates a tangible feeling of claustrophobia.

● Stylised camera movements combined with an atmospheric soundtrack mixing diegetic and non-diegetic sounds are a key means through which the director conveys a sense of danger lurking in the dark. The sequence begins with the eerie sounds of a howling wind and a door being unlocked before the first low angle tracking shot along the floor reveals the presence of other people behind the door. The soundtrack that accompanies the high angle tracking shot along the bed is even more sinister and mysterious, featuring discordant notes, white noise, bird sounds like that of an owl. This ominous camera movement evokes a sense of an invisible predator sneaking up on the boy from behind.

● Throughout the sequence, the director uses editing to connect us with the gaze of the silent boy on the bed. The first ECU of the boy's eye is, in fact, the beginning of a POV of the door. This establishes the editing pattern of the sequence where the diegetic sounds heard by the boy trigger a series of POV shots around the room. For example, the creaking sound of the closet door swinging open, sets in motion a rapid POV tracking shot moving vertically

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along the door and then sideways to floor. This sudden camera movement is very effective in conveying the boy's fear of the dark. The diegetic sound alone is unsettling, but the director increases the mood of anxiety by adding a non-diegetic 'swoosh' sound to the swift camera track to the floor.

- Throughout the sequence, the interplay of sound and sudden camera movement constantly sets the viewer on edge. This can clearly be seen in the striking six shot POV sequence that ends with an ECU of the mouth of the boy in blue. The sound of another unseen door being unlocked triggers a sudden tracking camera movement upwards. The director then cuts between an ECU of the boy's eye as he turns his head to a low-angle POV shot of his brother. At the word "window", the camera tracks forwards spinning on its axis as the sound of a howling wind floods the soundtrack.

  This is a classic angular, expressionist composition that evokes a world of childhood dreams and nightmares. The abrupt cut to the close-up of the windowpane as the tree crashes against it, transports us to the terrifying landscape of the fairytale and the enchanted forest. As if we have entered a scene from the Brothers Grimm, we can almost taste the fear in the air as once again the director employs amplified, diegetic sounds to powerful effect. The heavy breathing of the boy is disturbing and the loud crash against the windowpane is designed to make us jump out of our seats. The final, menacing shot of the boy's tormentor is another of the ECUs used throughout the sequence to maintain a high level of claustrophobic intensity.

- The director's use of haunting, non-diegetic sounds to generate fear and anxiety reaches a crescendo in the final third of the sequence, setting the scene for the appearance of the monster. A reverberating, high-pitched note sounds a note of alarm and we hear a loud 'swoosh' as the camera tracks under the bed. We have a sense that this is yet another false alarm when the scene shifts to a close-up of a wooden toy, framed against the darkness. But the loud hissing on the soundtrack tells us otherwise. The sinister, creaking sound of the closet door triggers an ominous, backward tracking camera movement that conveys an immediate sense of mounting tension and fear of something dreadful about to happen.

- Before he reveals the final twist in the tale, the director returns us to the point of view of the silent boy. The terrifying scene of the attack on the unsuspecting victim is viewed from his low-angle POV. Throughout the sequence, the director has forced us to share the fears and dark imaginings of this young boy as his brother attempted to frighten him. Now we experience the moment when the story turns to true horror through his eyes. The appearance of the monster is signaled by ominous music swelling up suddenly on the soundtrack and a low, growling sound that can just barely be heard in the background.

- When the monster strikes from out of the closet, its fleeting appearance is shocking and disturbing. However, it is sound, rather than visual images, that communicate the full horror of the assault. The creature's sudden appearance is made more terrifying by the deafening animal roar that floods the soundtrack. The forward tracking shot into the closed door leaves us to imagine the fate of the young boy. But the ferocious roaring and growling sounds and the cries of the victim leave no room for doubt about his tragic fate.

- The director has one more shock in store for us. Far from being frightened by the appearance of the monster, the young boy appears to take pleasure in his brother's apparent death. This may be the most truly terrifying aspect of the sequence.

Sequence 2

Sequence 2 employs many of the same visual techniques (POV shots, close-ups) and narrative elements as Sequence 1. Sequence 2 takes place in the same setting as Sequence 1 and features some of the same elements of mise-en-scene such as toys. However, the contrast in mise-en-scene is equally striking and is perhaps the first clue that this sequence will have a very different outcome than Sequence 1.

- The mise-en-scene of Sequence 2 evokes a childhood world of innocence and safety. The warm, pastel colours of the wallpaper, bedcovers and toys (yellow, blue, pink) create a soft, cosy atmosphere that we associate with our fondest childhood memories. The various toys that fill the bedroom reinforce this impression. The presence of Humpty Dumpty, teddy bears and a yellow sailing boat convey a very different feeling from Sequence 1 where the wooden figurine lying under the bed appears like a sinister omen of the horror to come.

- Similarly, although Sequence 2 also employs a low-key lighting scheme and bluish cinematography, the effect is much less harsh and oppressive than the stark expressionism of Sequence 1. The shadows that cross the room are kept at bay by the light coming through the window so they never dominate the frame as they do in Sequence 1. Again, in contrast to Sequence 1, the light from under the door and the accompanying sounds of the parents do not convey menace or threat. On the contrary, they evoke feelings of love and security.

- Despite these differences in style and tone, it is clear that both directors aim to create an atmosphere of fear and suspense. In Sequence 2, there is a slow build up of suspense as the camera tracks downwards from the ceiling to reveal the boy snuggled under the bedcovers. The editing pattern is deliberately slow and long drawn out as the director cuts from a long shot of the bedroom to a series of close-ups of the child's clock and toys.

- The soundtrack is equally unobtrusive beginning with the diegetic sounds of crickets and hooting owls evoking the serenity of nature as the boy starts to fall asleep. The ticking of the clock introduces a subtle undercurrent of suspense, but it is only when the wind begins to howl and the curtains are caught in the breeze that a note of disquiet takes hold. The gentle sounds of breathing indicate that the boy has drifted off to sleep, but his eyes quickly open again when the creaking sound of the door slowly opening signals the presence of an intruder.

- The audience is alerted to the danger by the menacing soundtrack music that now begins to play. In order to intensify the mood of fear and mounting dread, the director now employs several of the same techniques used in Sequence 1. First he adopts the point of view of the young boy as the camera tracks around the room seeking evidence of the intruder. The ominous sound of a howling wind accompanies this anxious camera movement raising the level of fear and threat. As in Sequence 1, the director uses the sound of the laboured breathing of the boy as a way of making the audience share his panic and fear. The boy has caught a glimpse of the intruder as the roving POV camera suddenly freezes at the door.

- In the following series of shots, the two sequences diverge only slightly. While the creature makes only a fleeting appearance in Sequence 1, in Sequence 2 it takes on the role of a sinister prowler creeping up on the boy as he cowers in his bed. When in a second POV shot the boy sees only a jumper in the doorway, it appears for a moment as if this director is intent on playing the same tricks of the imagination as the director of Sequence 1.

- Suspense is raised to a whole new level of intensity when a giant shadow floats, bat-like, over the bed. While the clock continues to relentlessly tick, the director adds further depth and resonance to the fearful atmosphere by mixing together the diegetic swooping sound of the creature with a musical soundtrack of menacing notes and chords.

- The operatic tracking camera movement that sweeps downwards through the air to reveal the scarlet eyes of the creature glowing out of the darkness under the bed strikes a similar note of terror to the tracking shot towards the window in Sequence 1. Both shots are designed to spook us and their striking visual impact is heightened by the non-diegetic soundtrack of a howling wind.

- Sound, lighting, camera technique and editing are used to powerful effect in the sequence's dramatic conclusion when the young boy is scared out of his wits. As the shadowy figure of the monster rises over the helpless child, the director cuts from a low angle composition emphasizing the creature's menacing presence to a high angle camera position behind the creature as it grows in size. With low-key lighting casting the creature's shadow across the bed and the sinister soundtrack music rising in volume and intensity, the director summons up a frightening image of impending doom as he cuts to the boy's low angle POV of the monster towering over him.

- As in Sequence 1, the director employs high volume diegetic sound to bring the mood of horror and fear to a dramatic climax. The blood-curdling scream let out by the boy is truly disturbing and it pushes the scene over the edge. For a split second, we adopt the high angle POV of the monster as it looks down on the boy and it is a scary sight to behold. "Who is scaring who?" the director appears to be asking as the roles are suddenly reversed. The whole scene descends into farce as the creature runs around the room in Charlie Chaplin style falling over a football, a skateboard and finally ending up on a bed of skittles. In an instant, the scene switches from horror to high comedy and it is the petrified creature for whom we end up feeling sorry.

Question 3

Sequence 1. *A montage of sequences from Psycho.*

"I find it tremendously satisfying for us to be able to use the cinematic art to achieve something of a mass emotion. And with Psycho we definitely achieved this. It wasn't a message which stirred the audiences…they were aroused by pure film." Hitchcock.

In what ways do you feel Psycho illustrates Hitchcock's theory of pure cinema? Discuss with reference to at least two scenes from the film.

Available Marks: 30

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to

AO5c   Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding of the personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts of historical and contemporary filmmakers/animators.

(10 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	1–2
2	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be some understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	3–4
3	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be growing understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	5–6
4	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a consistent understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	7–8
5	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a considerable understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	9–10

Knowledge and Understanding refers to:

The director Alfred Hitchcock (1899–1980) is one of the principal figures in film history who bridged the divide between art and entertainment. Hitchcock articulated his own concept of cinema. *"The medium of pure cinema is what I believe in. The assembly of pieces of film to create fright is the essential part of my job."* Perhaps no other director has generated so much shock and terror in cinema audiences. In a career that spanned six decades, he created a series of chilling images that continue to haunt us thirty years after his death.

Hitchcock challenges many of our ideas about cinema. A child of the late Victorian Age, Hitchcock was able to harness the techniques of what he called 'pure cinema' to affect audiences in profound ways. Silent cinema, German expressionism, Soviet montage, the British documentary tradition of social realism, classical Hollywood cinema – these were all formative influences on the young Hitchcock and he drew them together to create a unique cinematic style.

Hitchcock is the director at the centre of the auteur theory developed by French film critics in the 1950s. The auteur theory provides a mechanism through which film can be read as an art form on a par with literature, the idea that we can identify a single mind – the director – shaping a film in much the same manner as a writer of literature.

Hitchcock's filmmaking career is a key example of the cross-over between the auteur theory and genre as a way of reading and understanding film. No other director is so closely associated with a single genre than Hitchcock for he virtually invented the suspense thriller.

Crime and the criminal mind were lifelong obsessions. From his 1926 silent classic The Lodger onwards, Hitchcock continually returned to familiar themes – how to commit the perfect murder, mistaken identity and the predicament of the wrongly accused man or woman, the transference of guilt and the strange bond between the innocent and the guilty – the theme of the double.

Throughout his career, Alfred Hitchcock employed the techniques of pure cinema to generate suspense. The director said;

"Suspense can be arrived at in so many different ways. To me, a surprise lasting ten seconds, however painful, is not half as good as suspense for about six or seven reels...I think that suspense has to do largely with the audience's own desires and wishes."

"Mystery is an intellectual process, like in a 'whodunnit'. But suspense is essentially an emotional process. You can only get suspense going by giving the audience information."

Hitchcock's 1960 low-budget shocker, Psycho, is regarded as one of the highest achievements in cinematic art. Hitchcock deliberately set out to frighten and disturb audiences and he employed the techniques of pure cinema to devastating effect.

"I don't care about the subject matter; I don't care about the acting; but I do care about the pieces of film and the photography and the soundtrack and all of the technical ingredients that make the audience scream. I feel that it is tremendously satisfying for us to be able to use the cinematic art to achieve something of a mass emotion. And with Psycho we most definitely achieved this. It wasn't a message that stirred the audiences, nor was it a great performance or their enjoyment of the novel. They were aroused by pure film."

According to film critic Christopher Tookey, the shower scene in Psycho is *"a revolutionary moment in cinematic storytelling, for the way it suddenly, brutally leaves the audience with no one to root for – and makes us transfer our sympathies to the one character we feel we already know: the villain. It is probably the most brilliant narrative twist in the history of the cinema."*

AO5b   Analyse and Critically Evaluate moving image products and texts

(20 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Minimal ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. The quality of written communication may be unsatisfactory.	1–4
2	Limited ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. Limited application of moving image terminology to support responses. The quality of written communication may be basic and there may be limited attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.	5–8
3	Uneven, but sustained ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Increasing confidence in application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses. The quality of written communication is satisfactory but there may be errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	9–12
4	A sound ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. The quality of written communication is good and there is fluency and confidence in the application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses.	13–16
5	A highly developed ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Exercising clear critical judgement and independent thinking. Quality of written communication is of a consistently high standard with moving image terminology applied fluently and effectively to justify arguments and responses.	17–20

Analysis and Evaluation refers to:

● Cinematography

Hitchcock's decision to shoot the film in black and white, rather than colour, had both an economic and an aesthetic rationale. The film's modest budget production only allowed for black and white photography, but just as importantly Hitchcock knew that the graphic murders of Marion and Arbogast would not pass the censors if the blood and gore were filmed in technicolour.

Psycho's black and white cinematography gives the film a stark realism that makes the strange events at the Bates Motel even more disturbing and terrifying.

- Mise-en-scene

Realism is also a strong feature of the film's mise-en-scene. While the Bates home rises up from the shadows like a gothic vision of horror, it is in the everyday setting of the bathroom that the film's most horrific scene takes place. While murders in conventional horror films would invariably take place in dark, mysterious spaces, Marion's brutal slaying is all the more shocking because it takes place in the antiseptic environment of a bathroom.

"Hitchcock disdained the cliché of staging suspense sequences against the usual set pieces of the dark, haunted house. Thus Stefano writes in the screenplay: 'The white brightness ..is almost blinding'. Production designer Clatworthy also recalls Hitchcock's enjoining set decorator George Milo to make certain that the bathroom fixtures gleamed." Stephen Rebello, The Making of Psycho.

- Editing

Editing is at the core of Hitchcock's theory of pure cinema as the following comment illustrates.

"If I have to shoot a long scene continuously I always feel that I am losing grip on it, from a cinematic point of view. The camera, I feel, is simply standing there, hoping to catch something with a visual point to it. What I like to do always is to photograph just the little bits of a scene that I really need for building up a visual sequence.

I want to put my film together on the screen, not simply to photograph something that has been put together already in the form of a long piece of stage acting. This is what gives an effect of life to a picture – the feeling that when you see it on the screen you are watching something that has been conceived and brought to birth directly in visual terms.

The screen ought to speak its own language, freshly coined, and it can't do that unless it treats an acted scene as a piece of raw material which must be broken up, taken to bits, before it can be woven into an expressive visual pattern."

In the 1920s, the Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein developed the radical concept of montage editing – the use of abrasive editing, jarring juxtapositions of imagery and explosive shock cuts to create a visceral impact on the senses. In the shower scene, Hitchcock pushes the concept of montage editing to new extremes.

"It took us seven days to shoot that scene, and there were seventy camera set-ups for 45 seconds of footage," Hitchcock explained to Francois Truffaut. When Marion steps into the shower at the beginning of the scene, the director cuts, at an even pace, between shots of the unsuspecting victim, the shower head and the water gushing from above. There is no indication of the chaos that is to come.

The homicidal assault on Marion lasts only 22 seconds of screen time with Hitchcock employing over 30 separate shots. The editing pace is frenetic. Marion's face and mouth are framed in a series of expressive ECUs conveying the victim's fright and terror. Graphic shots

of the downward stabbing knife are rapidly inter-cut with shots of Marion's body, creating the impression that the knife is entering the body.

The rhythm of the abrasive editing mimics the rhythm of the stabbing of the knife so that each cut of film conveys the visceral impact of a cut to the body. Through the techniques of montage editing, Hitchcock demonstrates the power of pure cinema to subject the audience to the horrifying violence of a frenzied knife attack.

In the final moments of the shower scene, Hitchcock creates a striking cinematic vision of death and the tragic ebbing away of human life through a combination of composition, editing and camera movement. Robin Wood writes: *"Much of the film's significance is summed up in a single visual metaphor, occurring at the film's focal point: the astonishing cut from the close-up of the water and blood spiraling down the drain, to the close-up of the eye of the dead girl with the camera spiraling outward from it….the sensation of vertigo inspired by this cut and the spiraling movement itself, are echoed later as we, from high above, watch Norman carry his mother down to the fruit cellar."*

● Camera technique

From the opening scene of the film when the camera tracks through a bedroom window, Hitchcock's composition and camera movement carefully position the audience as voyeurs to an unfolding tragedy. In this opening scene, the camera *"allows the viewer to become a Peeping Tom,"* Hitchcock explained to Truffaut.

Hitchcock shot the film with a 50 mm lens, rather than the conventional 35 mm lens used on most movies of that time. *"'He wanted the camera being the eyes of the audience all the time, to let them view the action as if they were seeing it with their own eyes,' script supervisor Marshal Schlom explained. Again Hitchcock reinforced the sensation of voyeurism – of 'cruel eyes studying you', as Norman Bates puts it – that permeates the entire film."* Stephen Rebello, The Making of Psycho.

The director frequently allows the camera to wander completely detached from characters and character point of view. For example, the camera moves away from watching Marion as she undresses and tracks around the room and after her murder, the camera tracks out of the bathroom to focus on the folded newspaper containing the stolen money and then to the window. According to Hitchcock scholar Robin Wood *"the effect of forward tracking shots in the film (from the opening right through to Lila's exploration of the house) is to carry us always further inside or into darkness."*

The director employs extreme high and low angle shots to emphasise key moments in the narrative. The murder of Arbogast is the most celebrated overhead shot in Psycho. The scene begins with the detective entering the Bates home with suspense and tension generated by the director cutting between MCU's of Arbogast's face and POV shots of the interior of the house. As he ascends the staircase, the camera tracks slowly backwards in front of him. The director heightens the suspense by cutting to a close-up of the bedroom door opening.

The sudden cut to an extreme high angle shot of the landing as "Mrs Bates" rushes out of the bedroom dramatically shifts the viewing position of the audience and raises the tension to boiling point. Amanda Sheahan writes: *"This creates a powerful effect of fear. Not only is the spectator*

made to identify with the person under attack, they also experience the horror of watching the attack – this creates a double whammy effect and is perhaps yet another reason why Psycho had such an impact on spectators on its release."

Hitchcock compared the striking visual contrast created by his abrupt cut from this extreme high angle to the close-up of the detective's head filling the screen to music. As the director characterized it, this sudden switch from violins to brass was another jolt to the audience's expectations and another cinematic blow to the head in a film packed with visual, narrative and sonic shocks.

Suspense in a Hitchcock film is generated through the audience experiencing anxieties and uncertainties on behalf of a character after being given important narrative information that the character is not aware of. This is what Hitchcock means by *"letting the audience into the secret as early as possible."*

Often the viewer is made to identify with more than one character. The entire second half of Psycho is an example of dual or split suspense where tension is generated by the conflicting emotions experienced by the audience over Norman's attempts to conceal Marion's murder (the viewer sharing his fear of discovery) and the investigative characters' attempts to discover his secret (the viewer therefore wanting them to succeed but dreading their success).

Another common form of suspense in a Hitchcock film is known as direct suspense. Direct suspense is where we experience anxiety and uncertainty primarily on our own rather than a character's behalf. In this form of suspense, which is not dependent on identification with a character for its effect, the audience itself is placed in grave danger.

The climatic scenes of Psycho are a striking example of direct suspense. Hitchcock employs POV camera technique to place the audience in extreme jeopardy. Susan Smith, author of Hitchcock: Suspense, Humour and Tone, explains:

"In Psycho, the viewer, as the only constant throughout the film, is required to shoulder the cumulative burden of the suspense more fully and directly than in any other Hitchcock film. The tracking point-of-view shots used during Lila's approach towards the Bates house not only build us into the female character's experience but also render us susceptible to the kinds of horrific attack already inflicted upon two of the characters. We not only fear with Lila and for her, but also dread that this time it is we who are going to be assaulted with something quite horrific."

At the moment where Mrs Bates' corpse spins around to face Lila, Hitchcock dispenses with POV camera technique and confronts the viewer directly with the shocking close-up of the dead woman's grinning skull. In Psycho's final scene, the viewer is again placed directly into the visual structure of the film in a situation of direct suspense when the camera takes us alone into Norman's cell and gradually tracks towards him as his eyes stare outwards at both the camera and the viewer.

● Sound/Music

Hitchcock acknowledged the role of composer Bernard Herrmann's minimalist musical score in generating suspense and terror in the film remarking that *"33% of Psycho is due to the effect of the music."* Herrmann's decision to score the film for a string section only was daring and

original. *"I felt that I was able to complement the black and white photography of the film with a black and white sound."*

With its high-pitched notes and driving rhythm, the fast-paced musical score that plays over the opening credits immediately establishes a mood of dread and mounting hysteria. Herrmann explained that the opening score was meant as an early warning to the audience *"who don't know something terrible is going to happen to the girl, that it's got to."* According to Nicholas Haeffner, *"this is the key to Hitchcock's suspense strategy in the first part of the film: he allows Herrmann's music to suggest subtly and indefinitely that something frightening is going to happen to the heroine without disclosing exactly what it is."*

The contribution of the music and sound to the creation of mood and meaning in the film is highlighted by Hitchcock's comment to Truffaut that *"Psycho is particularly universal because it's a half-silent movie; there are at least two reels with no dialogue at all."* Hitchcock's theory of pure cinema can be seen at work in the extended scenes of Marion's flight from the city. As she drives along the highway and through the darkness and rain, the incessant rhythm of the strings evokes tension and anxiety, putting the viewer on edge and turning the car journey into a descent into hell. When Marion spots the neon sign of the Bates Motel, the sense of dread is palpable.

Hitchcock's original intention was to leave the shower scene silent, but Herrmann's ability to match the director's graphic imagery with a spine chilling musical score transforms Marion's murder into a masterpiece of pure cinema. The siren-like wail of the shrieking violins is an aural assault on our senses that mirrors the terrifying knife attack on the helpless woman. As the sonic equivalent of the stabbing motion of the blade and the montage of shock cuts, the ear-splitting, high-pitched notes create a vortex of violence and terror.

At Marion's death, the musical score gives way to silence. The empty void left by the abrupt ending of a life is evoked by the close-up of the drain and the diegetic sound of running water. The screeching violins return on the soundtrack at the greatest moments of shock and horror in the film (Arbogast's murder, Lila's discovery of Mrs Bates) to maximize the emotional impact of these scenes.

Question 4

Sequence 1. *A montage of sequences from Blade Runner: The Final Cut.*

"Blade Runner draws upon a range of genre, visual and literary sources to explore the theme of what it means to be human."

With reference to at least two scenes from the film discuss how director Ridley Scott uses genre and visual style to explore this theme.

Available Marks: 30

Assessment criteria

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to

AO5c Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding of the personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts of historical and contemporary filmmakers/animators.

(10 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	1–2
2	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be some understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	3–4
3	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be growing understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	5–6
4	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a consistent understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	7–8
5	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a considerable understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	9–10

Knowledge and Understanding refers to:

Director Ridley Scott's 1982 film Blade Runner is one of the most influential science fiction films ever made. It has exerted a pervasive influence over all subsequent Science Fiction cinema, and indeed our cultural perceptions of the future.

Blade Runner is loosely based on Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep by Philip K. Dick, and it represents the first time any of the prolific science fiction author's work was adapted for the cinema screen. Reportedly, Dick was pleased with the result even though Blade Runner diverged considerably from his story. What most impressed Dick was the look of the film and that has become Blade Runner's legacy.

Scott's reputation as a director with an extraordinary visual sensibility can be seen in the unique cinematic worlds that he creates, whether it be the past (the period settings of the Napoleonic wars in his debut film, the Duellists, the urban landscape of Ancient Rome in Gladiator) or the future (the gigantic spaceship Nostromo in Alien, dystopian L.A. in Blade Runner).

Ridley's Scott's painterly visual style is marked by a detailed approach to production design, atmospheric lighting and the extensive use of smoke.

 "Creating the environment excites me the most when making a movie. It's the most pleasing aspect about making a film. All the rest of it is work."

"I was a painter and then a designer at art school…I ended up at the BBC as a set designer. I was a set designer for a number of years so whatever film I do, I always have great input into how the sets and the atmosphere will be." Ridley Scott

David Dryer, Special Photographic Effects Supervisor on Blade Runner, has said *"The environment in the film is almost a protagonist."*

In visualizing Blade Runner, the director drew upon myriad influences from cinema, comic books and the visual arts. Fritz Lang's 1926 German Expressionist classic, Metropolis, provided a model for the city of the future where the wealthy live above the workers. David Dryer used stills from Metropolis when working on Blade Runner's miniatures of the urban landscape. The visionary comic book artist Moebius, particularly his artwork for the French science fiction magazine Heavy Metal, was a major source of inspiration for Scott and the director tried unsuccessfully to secure Moebius as a creative collaborator on the film as he had earlier done with the German artist Giger on Alien.

Discussing the influence of Moebius on Blade Runner, Ridley Scott has said: *"It's a kind of comic strip. I still relate very strongly to that kind of material, to comic strips and comic strip characters."*

In many of his films, Scott has always drawn visual ideas directly from painters such as Edward Hopper, Johannes Vermeer and Jan van Eyck. The diner scene at the beginning of Blade Runner is clearly influenced by Hopper's famous painting Nighthawks (a work of art that features key elements of the visual iconography of film noir). The scene where Deckard explores the photograph with the electronic image enlarger is inspired by Jan van Eyck's iconic painting, The Arnolfini Portrait. In the background of the painting is a large convex mirror that reflects two tiny figures who are standing outside the pictorial space. The mirror reveals secrets hidden within the painting, if like Deckard, the viewer probes deep into the reflected image.

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AO5b Analyse and Critically Evaluate moving image products and texts

(20 marks available)

Level	Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	Minimal ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. The quality of written communication may be unsatisfactory.	1–4
2	Limited ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. Limited application of moving image terminology to support responses. The quality of written communication may be basic and there may be limited attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.	5–8
3	Uneven, but sustained ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Increasing confidence in application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses. The quality of written communication is satisfactory but there may be errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	9–12
4	A sound ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. The quality of written communication is good and there is fluency and confidence in the application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses.	13–16
5	A highly developed ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Exercising clear critical judgement and independent thinking. Quality of written communication is of a consistently high standard with moving image terminology applied fluently and effectively to justify arguments and responses.	17–20

Analysis and Evaluation refers to:

Ridley Scott creates a bleak, yet hauntingly beautiful vision of the future through a fusion of the Science Fiction and Film Noir genres. The director's design concept for Blade Runner was that it is *"set forty years hence, made in the style of forty years ago"*.

The visual iconography of dystopian Science Fiction cinema is represented in the film by the flying cars, the futuristic devices, the intrusive media and advertising signs and the decaying architecture of the city. The entire mise-en-scene speaks of a postmodern city in terminal

breakdown as Ridley Scott explains; *"One of the major visual ideas we had for Blade Runner was 'retrofitting', this over-laying of pre-existing architecture with patch jobs that side-steps the problem of tearing down old structures and replacing them with new ones."*

In the overpopulated and polluted city of Los Angeles, dominated by towering skyscrapers and the giant Mayan-inspired pyramid of the Tyrell Corporation, dystopian Science Fiction meets classic Film Noir. In the maze-like streets and back alleys, drenched in acid rain and neon lighting, Ridley Scott draws upon the visual style of film noir to evoke the existential dread and claustrophobia of the genre.

Particularly effective is the chiaroscuro lighting techniques that the director employs in all of the major scenes of the film. Ridley Scott creates a shadow world of dark interiors and ghostly spaces (like Sebastian's apartment block) into which shafts of light break through. As in Film Noir, light and shadow are used to convey the moral ambiguity of the characters and the lack of trust between individuals in a world in which the division between human and machine is no longer certain.

The introspective musical score by Vangelis also fuses motifs from both genres. The layers of electronic notes convey the depth and textures of a futuristic landscape while the saxophone blues solos evoke the noir mood of melancholy and loss.

Blade Runner also borrows many of the narrative conventions of film noir and the police-detective genre to which it is closely related. The main character is a jaded, world weary loner who travels through the city like a lost soul, dressed in the clothes of the classic noir detective. On first appearance, Rachel's dark allure and stylish costumes appear to identify her as the femme fatale and mysterious spiderwoman of classic noir. This turns out to be mistaken assumption.

The spectacular opening sequence of Blade Runner conveys awe and wonder as the director captures a breathtakingly beautiful panorama of the city in long shot, the symphonic musical score sweeping across the screen. The opening shot is an extreme close-up of a human eye with the cityscape reflected in the retina – but is it a human eye, and what, after all, does it mean to be human when man has developed the power of God – the ability to create artificial humans, identical to human in every way, except that they have a lifespan of only four years.

Blade Runner is an example of what Sean Redmond has identified as the dual purpose of the Science Fiction genre: *"On the one hand, Science Fiction is about making the audience giddy with its hyper-fluid and breathtaking creations, on the other it asks the audience to ponder over these creations, to feel and think through them as more than just special effect since they often attempt to say something profound about the human condition."*

One of the major themes of the film, that resonates with the genocidal history of totalitarianism in the 20th century, is the ability of the state to define what is human and to annihilate those who do not fit the definition. It is this very definition of what it means to be human, to be a real person, that Blade Runner is most concerned with. As artificial life forms, the replicants (or *"skinjobs"*) are deemed to be expendable after four years of existence and they can be hunted down and brutally executed by the forces of the law.

To prove one's humanity, one must pass the Voight-Kampff test, the method which the state has devised to measure emotional responses such as empathy which are considered to be key human

traits. In the interrogation scenes early on in the film where two replicants, Leon and Rachel, both fail the Voight-Kampff test, the visual influence of film noir is strongly felt. The low key lighting and mise-en-scene of Tyrell's opulent chamber, with its smoky haze and Rachel's stylish 40s costume, evokes the mysterious atmosphere of the Noir genre.

The morality of the state's attempt to police the boundaries of humanity through the Voight-Kampff test is continually called into question in the film. Rachel asks Deckard "have you ever retired a human by mistake" and enquires whether he has ever taken the Voight-Kampff test himself. The callous manner in which he kills Zhora and Pris would suggest that Deckard is the one who lacks empathy. For much of the film he is a cold-blooded killer, hunting down the replicants with mechanical precision.

As the narrative progresses, the distinction between human and replicant becomes blurred. According to Joseph Francavilla, *"The essence of humanity in human life becomes transferred to the replicants, while the inhumanity of the artificial becomes characteristic of the humans in the film. Or to put it in other terms, the human essence or 'soul', has separated from the human body and been transferred to the android."*

This reversal of roles between human and android is represented in the film by the character of Roy Batty and his existential journey to meet his maker. Batty first appears as a demonic figure, like one of Satan's fallen angels, but by the end of the film he has been transformed into a tragic hero, rebelling against the unjust system that denies him life.

Blade Runner shares with Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein the idea of confronting one's maker. With its low-key lighting and flickering shadows, the scene between Batty and his father, Tyrell, links the film to the Horror genre. Stuart Kaminsky writes, *"The true villains of many horror films are not the monsters but the men who created them. Quite often the creator is a scientist who has taken onto himself the role of God…Having released the monster, the scientist-creator becomes its victim…"* The mise-en-scene of Tyrell's bedroom, with the masses of candelabra and the silk dressing gown, recalls the laboratory in the Bride of Frankenstein when the bride takes her first steps. Comparisons have also been noted between both films in the visual motifs of hands and windmills.

For many commentators, Roy Batty is the central figure of Blade Runner. Judith B. Kerman writes, *"His nature, the question of whether he and the others are human, is at the moral and political centre of the film."* It is Batty, rather than Deckard, who displays those feelings and emotions that we think of as most human – love, sorrow, anger, loss, regret, awareness of mortality and empathy. Batty is emotionally sensitive to beauty and frequently quotes poetry. Unlike Deckard, he is reflective – *"I've done questionable things,"* he confesses to Tyrell. His display of anguish and tenderness after the violent death of his lover Pris is deeply moving.

Tyrell calls Batty *"the prodigal son"* and throughout the film Batty is associated with religious imagery. There are frequent close-ups of his hands, culminating in the Christ-like plunging of the spike into his palm. In Blade Runner's most memorable scene, the director suggests that the replicants do have a spiritual life. Batty's words of lamentation as he lies dying, framed in close-up and lashed by driving rain, convey a poetic sense of wonder: *"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe…All those moments will be lost in time like tears in rain. Time to die."*

Batty has just saved the life of the killer of his friends and the compassion and serenity shown in his dying moments identify him with the martyrs of the Christian faith. The low-angle, slow motion shot of the dove flying towards the heavens is a spiritual vision of redemption. Batty has become the saviour of our humanity, the reminder of what we stand to lose in a future where genetic engineering undermines the basic values that govern human life.

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A2 Moving Image Arts Examination Marking Grids Unit Total 90 marks (30 marks per question)

Assessment Criteria	Total Marks	Level 1 1–6 (1–18)	Level 2 7–12 (19–36)	Level 3 13–18 (37–54)	Level 4 19–24 (55–72)	Level 5 25–30 (73–90)
AO5a (Q 1&2) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.	10 (per question)	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of film language, forms, conventions, purposes and meanings.	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be some understanding of purposes and meanings.	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions. There is likely to be growing understanding of purposes and meanings.	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions and a consistent understanding of purposes and meanings.	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of film language, forms and conventions and a considerable understanding of purposes and meanings.
AO5c (Q 3 only) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts of historical and contemporary filmmakers/animators	10 (per question)	Show minimal knowledge and understanding of personal style, techniques, themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	Show a limited knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be some understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	Show a reasonably consistent knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques. There is likely to be growing understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	Show a confident knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a consistent understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.	Show a consistently high level of knowledge and understanding of personal style and techniques and a considerable understanding of themes, purposes, meanings and contexts.
		1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–10
AO5b Analyse and critically evaluate moving image products and texts	20 (per question)	Minimal ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. The quality of written communication may be unsatisfactory.	Limited ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image using appropriate terminology. Limited application of moving image terminology to support responses. The quality of written communication may be basic and there may be limited attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Uneven, but sustained ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Increasing confidence in application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses. The quality of written communication is satisfactory but there may be errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A sound ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. The quality of written communication is good and there is fluency and confidence in the application of moving image terminology to support arguments and responses.	A highly developed ability to comparatively analyse moving image texts and critically evaluate the formal and stylistic conventions of different genres and forms of the moving image. Exercising clear critical judgement and independent thinking. Quality of written communication is of a consistency high standard with moving image terminology applied fluently and effectively to justify arguments and responses.
		1–4	5–8	9–12	13–16	17–20

List of Film Sequence References

Question 1

Sequence 1:
Run Lola Run (1998) Director: Tom Tykwer
DVD Chapter 24
Timecode: 00:59:51-01:45:40

Sequence 2:
Three Colours Blue (1993) Director: Krzysztof Kieslowski
DVD Chapter 1
Timecode: 01:42:17-02:31:01

Question 2

Sequence 1:
A Little Night Fright (2007) Director: Mischa Livingstone
(Short Film)
Timecode: 00:40:00-01:52:00

Sequence 2:
Monsters, Inc. (2001) Director: Pete Docter, David Silverman and Lee Unkrich
DVD Chapter 2
Timecode: 01:29:05-02:54:00

Question 3

Montage sequence of various scenes from Psycho (1960) Director: Alfred Hitchcock (A2 Set Film 2011)

Question 4

Montage sequence of various scenes from Blade Runner: The Final Cut (1982) (DVD Release 2007) Director: Ridley Scott
(A2 Set Film 2011)