

Induction task

Complete an analysis of the most significant micro elements in an extract from The Shining. (approx 750 words)

First watch the extract from YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtI0uG6tjew>

You will probably have to watch it 3 or 4 times

Second decide on the micro elements that you are going to analyse. Choose 2 of the following: sound, cinematography, lighting, mise en scene, editing.

Third make careful notes on what you see as a spectator, focussing on the key elements you have chosen: this is called denotation.

Fourth decide what the director (Stanley Kubrick) was trying to achieve by his choices of sound, camera angle etc. This is called connotation.

Fifth Comment on how successful you think he was.

Note: Use screen grabs where possible of the parts you are discussing for a clearer piece of writing. Google images search "shining baseball scene" may help.

How to write a micro analysis

Here is a guide to the way you should write an analysis that includes *film language*, *action description* and your *personal response*. It is only an extract from a larger analysis but may be useful for the style and content of the written work you are producing for your coursework.

Describe:

WHAT you see/hear?

+

HOW it is technically constructed?

+

WHY you think it is constructed this way?

= MEANING

Integrating all aspects in a coherent and clear way to show how meaning is constructed throughout the sequence is the key to achieving a good grade:

An analysis of the opening of The Virgin Suicides

The scene begins with the vibraphone version of the song, 'Playground Love', part of the score that was composed and written by Air specifically for the film, as it fades in from black. The addition of non-diegetic sound (music) signals to the viewer that the film is officially beginning and draws their attention as the first sound they hear from silence. 'Playground Love' has lyrics such as 'You're the piece of gold; the flashes on my soul' which reflect the feelings of a young teenager being completely infatuated with someone they regard as their 'playground love'. This holds significance in the fact that the boys hold this view of the Lisbon sisters as they become more obsessed and 'in love' with them. The version used in this scene – with no lyrics – is very peaceful and delicate but also slightly ominous; paired with clips of the neighbourhood's everyday lives, it creates a dream-like feeling as if it is all too good to be true. This proves to be correct as the audience know, from the title, that there are much darker themes and events about to happen. Putting this at the beginning of the film was perhaps done because it is classed as the most notable song on the score and summarises the theme of innocence and love well.



Initially the audience is presented with the wide shot of Lux, eating an ice-lolly (1); a symbol of youth and innocence. This, as an introduction to the character and film, is important because it makes the viewer aware that the girls are still very young and creates the contrast between their innocence and the dark themes of the film. This portrayal and connotation then creates more of an impact later on when the girls do eventually kill themselves as it emphasises the point that they were essentially only children and makes the audience more shocked and affected by the events. The way she is positioned as the main focus of the shot is also providing important information to the audience in that she is going to play a large part in the plot and be a strong force in the overall story.

