Resource Materials on the Learning and Teaching of Film

This set of materials aims to develop senior secondary students' film analysis skills and provide guidelines on how to approach a film and develop critical responses to it. It covers the fundamentals of film study and is intended for use by Literature in English teachers to introduce film as a new literary genre to beginners. The materials can be used as a learning task in class to introduce basic film concepts and viewing skills to students before engaging them in close textual analysis of the set films. They can also be used as supplementary materials to extend students' learning beyond the classroom and promote self-directed learning.

The materials consist of two parts, each with the Student's Copy and Teacher's Notes. The Student's Copy includes handouts and worksheets for students, while the Teacher's Notes provides teaching steps and ideas, as well as suggested answers for teachers' reference.

Part 1 provides an overview of film study and introduces students to the fundamentals of film analysis. It includes the following sections:

A.   **Key Aspects of Film Analysis**
B.   **Guiding Questions for Film Study**
C.   **Learning Activity – Writing a Short Review**

Part 2 provides opportunities for students to enrich their knowledge of different aspects of film analysis and to apply it in the study of a short film. The short film "My Shoes" has been chosen to illustrate and highlight different areas of cinematography (e.g. the use of music, camera shots, angles and movements, editing techniques). Explanatory notes and viewing activities are provided to improve students' viewing skills and deepen their understanding of the cinematic techniques.

While this set of resource materials is pitched at beginner level, references to websites and video clips that support further exploration are provided throughout the package. The weblinks and URLs included were accurate at the time of dissemination but may be subject to change in the future. Teachers may make use of a search engine to regain access to any relocated resources or look for similar resources on the web.

Acknowledgements

Part I

A. Key Aspects of Film Analysis

Film is a genre which shares some common features of other literary texts (e.g. a novel) and theatrical features of other performing arts (e.g. a drama), while having unique cinematic features of its own.

Literary aspects (as in a novel/short story)	Dramatic/theatrical aspects (as in a play/drama)	Cinematic aspects
➢ Plot (the story-line, development of events, narrative sequences and techniques, e.g. foreshadowing, flashback) ➢ Characters (protagonists, villains and heroes, round and flat characters) ➢ Point of view (e.g. narrative voice and perspective) ➢ Setting (time and place where the story happens) ➢ Theme (the subject and ideas explored) ➢ Sub-genre (comedy, tragedy, science fiction, horror, suspense, romance)	➢ Visualisation of action (movement of the characters, stage combat) and setting (stage design) ➢ Acting (actors' facial expressions, actions and speeches) ➢ Costumes (clothing of the characters) ➢ Make-up and hairdo	➢ Framing/mise-en-scène ➢ Camera angles (high angle, straight-on/ eye-level angle or low angle shots) ➢ Camera position and distance (close-up, medium and long shots) ➢ Camera movements (panning, tilting, rolling) ➢ Editing (continuity editing, montage editing, cuts, fades)
	➢ Lighting ➢ Visual effects ➢ Use of sound effects and music	

As film shares many features with other literary genres covered in the Literature in English curriculum (e.g. prose fiction, drama), you should start analysing a film by bringing in your previous knowledge of textual studies and skills for literary

appreciation and critical analysis. It is important to realise the parallel features between film and the other literary genres while understanding how film appeals to the audience's sense of sound and sight more directly.

B. Guiding Questions for Film Study

The following guiding questions may help you examine the core elements of a film and form a basic understanding of the film you are viewing:

Literary aspects: questions to consider

1. Who are the main characters in the film?
2. When and where is the film set?
3. What are the main plot elements?
4. Which is the most striking or exciting part in the film?
5. From whose point of view is the story told?
6. What is the theme or main message of the film?
7. What is the mood of the film?
8. What symbols are used in the film?
9. Does the film belong to a particular genre?

Dramatic aspects: questions to consider

1. Do the actors perform so well that you think the story is real?
2. How important are the costumes and make-up to the success of the film?
3. Are there any scenes particularly difficult to act?
4. How do the actors use their voice, speech/dialogue, body movement and facial expression to achieve the desired effects?
5. Do the actors establish their characters more through speech/dialogue or through body movement and facial expression?
6. Is there anything about the acting, set or costumes that you particularly like or dislike?
7. Do you recognise any particular style of the director?
8. How does the film compare to other films by the same director or other films of the same genre?

Cinematic aspects: questions to consider

1. What visual images impress you the most? What do the images make you feel or think about?
2. Are there any scenes which use colours and lighting effectively to create the

---

desired effect?

3. What sound or music does the film use? What do they make you feel or think about?

4. Which part of the film has special or unusual editing? What impact does the editing have on the overall effectiveness of the film?

5. Are there other technical or special effects used in the film? Do they add to the overall effectiveness of the film?

C. Learning Activity – Writing about a Short Film

Watch Ferdinand Dimadura's short film "Chicken a la Carte", which was awarded The Most Popular Short Film in the Short Film Competition on the theme FOOD, TASTE & HUNGER at the 56th Berlin International Film Festival in February 2006. The short film can be accessed at the URL below:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4AIUyydtHk

As you are watching, note down what happens in the film, as well as the audio-visual effects in the template provided. Some examples have been provided for your reference:

What happens	Audio-visual effects
Signboards of KFC, McDonald's, Jollibee and Chow King are shown before the film title appears.	• Close-up to clearly show the brands of the fast food chains • Mysterious and mystical music
Two girls walk into the restaurant, look at the menu, place their orders and wait for the food to be brought by the dumbwaiter.	• Tense drum sound
The two girls chat and giggle, while other customers line up to place orders. The girls eat little, leaving the restaurant with a lot of leftovers on their plates.	
A man travels on the road on a tricycle with a rubbish bin.	• Mysterious and mythical music again
The man checks the leftovers in the rubbish bin and picks out some meaty pieces of chicken.	

With reference to the guiding questions in Section B, choose one of the following aspects of the film to focus on:

➢ Literary aspects
➢ Dramatic aspects
➢ Cinematic aspects

Watch the short film a second time and focus on the aspect you will work on. Enrich your notes.

Form groups of three, with each student focusing on a different aspect. Share your general observations of the film with your classmates.

Individually, write a few paragraphs on the chosen aspect of the film. You do not need to answer all the guiding questions listed in Section B and may select a few relevant ones to focus on. You should explain and elaborate on your points and offer personal responses with supporting details from the film.

PART 1 – TEACHER'S NOTES

Warm-up Activities

Before introducing film as a new genre and explaining the literary, dramatic and cinematic aspects to students, teachers may arouse students' interest and enthusiasm for talking about films with some of the following warm-up activities:

➢ Ask students to brainstorm what comes to their mind when they hear the word "film" (e.g. Oscar, cinema, movie stars, Hollywood, director, box office, new releases)

➢ Show some film reviews on the latest box office hits taken from the Internet sources, newspapers or film magazines

➢ Play short clips of the Oscars or other film awards and events

➢ Ask students to talk about the last film they watched and what they like or dislike about it

➢ Ask students to think of a film that they would recommend to their classmates and share why this film is worth-watching

➢ Arrange a group visit to the cinema

Make it clear to students that in the Literature in English subject, they need to go beyond passive entertainment to active study and in-depth analysis of a film. It is not advisable to bombard students with a comprehensive list of technical film terminology at the early stage, as this can be intimidating to beginners.

A. Key Aspects of Film Analysis

To build on students' previous experiences and activate their prior knowledge, teachers may start by guiding students to think about the differences between a printed text (e.g. a novel, a short story) and a non-print text (e.g. a film, a drama performance).

It would suffice at this stage if students can identify some of the following similarities and differences between printed and non-print texts.

Similarities	Printed texts (e.g. a novel, a short story)	Non-print texts (e.g. a film, a drama performance)
Common features/	➢ Subject matter/theme ➢ Plot	

elements	➤ Characters ➤ Point of view ➤ Setting ➤ Sub-genre	
Differences	Printed texts (e.g. a novel, a short story)	Non-print texts (e.g. a film, a drama performance)
Mode of presentation	➤ Written words	➤ Speeches ➤ Written words ➤ Actions ➤ Images ➤ Music and sounds
Interaction with the audience	➤ More subtle and indirect appeal to the reader, involving their imagination ➤ More room for free interpretation ➤ Readers can adjust the reading speed and pace	➤ More direct appeal to the audience's sense of sound and sight with the use of technical effects ➤ Less narrative subtlety and room for imagination ➤ Spectators cannot adjust the viewing speed and pace of the film in the cinema (can rewind, fast-forward and re-watch with films on DVDs or the Internet)

After students point out the similarities and differences between the printed and non-print literary texts based on their previous learning experiences, teachers can refer to the table on page 3 and explain to students that the similarities are mainly the "literary aspects" (i.e. the left column) and the differences are mainly the "dramatic/theatrical aspects" (i.e. the middle column).

Teachers can then ask students to explain how a film is different from a drama performance on stage. This will help draw students' attention to the "cinematic aspects" (i.e. the right column), which are unique to films.

B. Guiding Questions for Film Study

After students have realised the similarities of film with the print-based genres they

have studied, it may be a good idea to play a film version, or an excerpt of a film version, of one of the set texts students have studied. This can encourage students to go beyond the literary elements (e.g. plot, characters, themes) that they are already familiar with and focus more on the dramatic and cinematic aspects to consider how the audio-visual elements create effects and change their understanding of the original text.

The guiding questions aim to provoke students' thoughts on a film and encourage them to interact with the texts more actively instead of just viewing the film for passive entertainment. Not all questions are applicable to all films. For example, the use of sound effects may be more prominent and effective in one film, while another film may rely a lot on the use of colours and lighting to achieve artistic effects. Students may focus on a few relevant questions that allow them to explore and discuss the salient features of the film.

C. **Learning Activity – Writing A Short Review**

Ferdinand Dimadura's "Chicken a la Carte" is chosen for this activity because it is a short film with a clear narrative structure. Students can easily identify the central message and audio-visual effects used to present the ideas.

This learning activity allows students to practise being a critical viewer and applying the three-aspect model to examine a film. The ultimate aim of the activity is to help students generate more ideas and critical responses from the viewing.

Note-taking Process
The note-taking process is crucial to helping students turn their viewing experience from passive entertainment to active interaction with the film. The notes taken also provide useful information for them to review key scenes and reflect on what they have watched, so that they can complete the subsequent discussion and writing activity more effectively.

Teaching Suggestions to Cater for Learner Diversity

Supporting the less advanced students:
Before students conduct the note-taking activity, teachers may ask them to focus on the left column and note down what happens in the clip (i.e. the plot and storyline) in the first viewing and complete the right column in the second viewing.

Where necessary, teachers may freeze the screen to show a static image from the film and then demonstrate how to describe scenes with different levels of detail.

Take the shot showing a skinny girl with dishevelled hair eating a drumstick (around 3:26 in the film) as an example. Below are three descriptions of the same image with different levels of detail:

1. A girl is eating a drumstick.
2. A skinny, hungry girl is munching on a drumstick and sucking every bit of meat from it.
3. In the close-up shot, a skinny, hungry girl is sucking every bit of a drumstick hungrily. She looks straight at us with her pleading eyes as if she was asking for more.

While describing the same image, a progression from factual to descriptive and then interpretative can be seen from the three versions. Students could be encouraged to model after the samples and describe a few powerful shots from "Chicken a la Carte".

Challenging the more advanced students:
Teachers may introduce two terms and concepts to help students describe and analyse a filmic image in detail and heighten their awareness of how a film-maker selects details to include in a scene to convey meaning:

(1) Mise-en-scène
It is a French term that literally means "put in the scene". It refers to everything that goes into a film before the shot is taken. It is generally made up of the following six elements:

➢ Setting and props
➢ Costumes, hairdo and make-up
➢ Facial expressions and body language
➢ Lighting and colour
➢ Sound
➢ Blocking/positioning of characters and objects

(2) Framing
Framing refers to how the camera sets the bounds of the image (usually a rectangle) to select the part of the scene to feature to audience. Camera movements lead to reframing of the image. Framing works with mise-en-scène to determine the overall composition of the image and define the relationship of people and objects in the shot. This works the same in still photography as it does in films.

When students are able to describe what they see in a static image (e.g. a photo), they are ready to explore the relationship between a static image and the motion picture (a film). Teachers may tell students that a film is made up of a series of still images which create the illusion of moving images when being shown at a high speed on screen.

Suggested points for the note-taking activity:

What happens in the clip	Audio-visual effects
Signboards of KFC, McDonald's, Jollibee and Chow King are shown before the film title appears.	• Close-up to clearly show the brands of the fast food chains • Mysterious and mystical music
Two girls walk into the restaurant, look at the menu, place their orders and wait for the food to be brought by the dumbwaiter.	• Tense drum sound
The two girls chat and giggle, while other customers line up to place orders. The girls eat little, leaving the restaurant with a lot of leftovers on their plates.	
A man travels on the road on a tricycle with a rubbish bin.	• Mysterious and mystical music again • Dollying/tracking is used to follow the tricycle's movement from behind
He checks the leftovers in the rubbish bin and handpicks some meaty pieces of chicken.	• Mysterious, mystical and spiritual music goes on • Close-up of the hands selecting the chicken

The man travels on the road in the dark to return home.	• Tracking shot is used to follow the movement of the bicycle from the back.
The tricycle enters the suburb. Kids flock to the tricycle, opening the trash bin eagerly to dig out the food, munching on them contentedly and excitedly.	• Contrast between the dark road and the bright countryside. • A soulful song "Let Me Tell Their Story" is played, arousing sad emotions.
The man returns to his dimly-lit house. The pregnant wife lays the table. The children are waiting eagerly and excitedly for the father to deal out the chicken and spaghetti.	• The song "Let Me Tell Their Story" goes on, with lyrics slowly shown.
The daughter wants to have a quick bite but the father stops her, reminding her to say a prayer to thank God for the food before eating.	
Words on the screen show 25,000 people die of hunger every day.	
Happy faces of children opening the garbage bin excitedly to get the food are shown again along the closing credits.	

Teachers may, in the process of viewing and answer-checking, introduce some basic film terms with examples from "Chicken a la Carte". Below are some suggestions:

Term	Meaning	Example from the short film
Close-up	A type of shot that is taken from very near and displays the most detail. It tightly frames a person or an object and does not include the broader scene. Moving in from a longer and wider shot to a close-up is a common type of zooming.	The camera zooms in for a close-up of the KFC signboard (00.34-00.35)
Dolly/tracking shot	A continuous shot in which the camera moves alongside or parallel to its subject, often used to follow a subject	The camera follows the movement of the man on a tricycle

	while it is in motion (e.g. a walking person or a moving vehicle	from his back (2:20-2:25) & (3:22-3:27)
Diegetic sound	Actual sound made by characters and objects in the story (e.g. characters talking)	The background noise in the restaurant
Non-diegetic sound	Sound which comes from a source outside the story space (e.g. mood music, narrator's commentary, sounds added for dramatic effects) and plays a key role in creating the atmosphere and mood of the film	The song "Let Me Tell Their Story", which arouses the viewers' sympathy

It should be noted that film terms should only be introduced in context or with clear examples and students' readiness should be taken into consideration. Memorisation of a long list of technical terms is not encouraged, as stated in the *Literature in English Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6)*.

Teaching Suggestions to Cater for Learner Diversity

Assigning students to work on different aspects
Teachers may, according to students' ability levels and interests, assign them to work on one of the three aspects (i.e. literary, dramatic and cinematic aspects). For example, the less advanced students could be assigned to look at the literary aspect, which is more on the content and messages of the clip, whereas the more advanced students could be assigned to look at the cinematic aspect, which focusses more on identifying the audio-visual and technical elements, and explain how they create effects in the film.

Students taking up different roles can form groups to share their observations, as well as conduct discussion to enrich one another's ideas. The mixed-ability grouping facilitates peer learning and provides opportunities for stronger students to support less advanced students in developing a more complex and thorough analysis of the film. The sharing of findings on different aspects also prepares students for writing a more comprehensive analysis. After the lesson, students could be encouraged to do further research and reading on the film outside class.

Suggested points on the three aspects of the film:

Aspects	Points/Observations
Literary Aspect	➤ The story is set in two polar worlds (the affluent city and the impoverished rural areas) of the Philippines. A sharp contrast is created between lives of people in the city and the rural areas. The beginning scenes are set in the fast food restaurant to show city dwellers' abundance and wastage of food, while the final scenes are set in the decaying slum area to show the underprivileged families' shortage of food and how they relish and treasure every bit of the leftover by the city dwellers. ➤ The laughter and excitement of the slum children in some scenes present an irony (i.e. incongruity and contradiction between what is expected and what actually occurs). The children are overjoyed to see the leftover and dash to the trash. The family even say a prayer to thank God for such treats. Their gratitude for food is a stark contrast to the city dwellers' disregard for food. ➤ The key characters in this film are the underprivileged family. The man who brings refuse food home from the fast food restaurant in the city is the character that takes the audience into the filmic space (i.e. to travel between the two worlds with him). The man supports kids in his village and his family with leftover food from the garbage bins of fast food restaurants. He brings home the leftover, which is the treasure and source of joy to all the children. ➤ The spectators enter the narrative following the movement of the two girl characters at the beginning and then switch to the man when he enters the story. ➤ The film draws our attention to the magnitude of hunger and poverty in the world (25,000 of people die every day due to hunger and malnutrition.), as well as the plight of a forgotten portion of society - people who live on the refuse to survive. ➤ The mood of the film is both sad and hopeful. The song "Let Me Tell Their Story" arouses our sympathy for the underprivileged people, but the smiles and joy on the children's faces remind us of the hope, positivity and spirituality that never leave these people. The film is

	therefore heart-rending, touching and inspiring. ➤ The film adopts a very realist and documentary style.
Dramatic Aspect	➤ The way the characters dress (e.g. the trendy clothes of the girls in the city and the shabby worn-out clothes of the kids in the rural areas) shows their different socio-economic backgrounds and reflects the wealth gap between people in the city and the rural areas. ➤ In the film, very limited speeches and dialogue are used to tell the story, except in the opening restaurant scenes where the young girls place order for the food. ➤ The rest of the film relies on the body movements and facial expressions of the characters. The absence of speech and reliance on facial expressions and actions enhance the emotional appeal of the film, making it all the more heart-rending and poignant. The shots showing the overjoyed faces of the kids and how they dive excitedly into the bin for the leftover are emotionally gripping and overwhelming. Their contented look with the undesirable food is an irony, as described in the lyrics of the theme song "Let Me Tell Their Story" – "How can someone's laughter bring me close to tears".
Cinematic Aspect	➤ The film is very realist in style. The camera movement is unsteady, similar to how a documentary is filmed with a handheld camera, making the spectators feel they are with the characters. Spectators seem to be shown the actual daily life of the people in poverty and the characters do not look like they are acting. ➤ The film uses the contrast of night and day, darkness and light to show the differences between the two worlds (e.g. the affluent city and the poverty-stricken countryside). ➤ The close-up of the neon signboards and the dazzling light of the restaurant in the beginning scenes show the sensational bombardment of city life and the proliferation of chained fast food restaurants. ➤ Music is effectively used to contrast the two worlds. The fast-paced drumming sound is used when featuring the city girls in the fast food restaurants, mystical and spiritual music is used when the man enters the scene to pick out leftover at

| | the back kitchen. The soundtrack "Let Me Tell Their Story" played in the later part of the film when the man takes the leftover to his home village is moving and sad, which enhances the mood of the film created by the camera work all along. |
| | ➢ The song "Let Me Tell Their Story" also serves as a voice-over from a narrator/onlooker/observer. The lyrics seem to suggest that the singer observes the sad stories of the poor repeating every day but people do not care or learn any lessons about the poverty and hunger problem. The singer, who acts almost like a witness of the sufferers, expresses pity and endless sadness towards the situation. |

As the theme song is central to the message of the short film, teachers might like to go through the lyrics below with the students and discuss the meaning of the song.

Chicken a la Carte   by Ferdinand Dimadura

Let me tell their story
That no one else can hear
How can someone's laughter
Bring me close to tears

And you'll never know
'Cause you're never there
After what we've seen
Can we close our eyes again

Let me tell you their story
You won't think it's true
I have not forgotten
So I'm sharing it with you

For all the things we know
What have we really learned
Though I close my eyes
The images remain
And their story begins again

Part 2

"My Shoes" by Nima Raoofi

A. Viewing and Note-taking

"My Shoes"

https://goo.gl/ymM3U

1. Scan the QR Code on the left with a mobile device or access Nima Raoofi's short film "**My Shoes**" online with the URL provided.

2. Watch the short film once to understand its message and main ideas.

3. Watch the short film again focusing on the set of questions (Question Set 1 or 2) as assigned by your teacher. Answer the questions by jotting down some points and your observations.

| Set 1	
1. When and where is this short film set?	
2. Who are the main characters in this short film? Briefly describe them.	
3. What do you notice about the costumes and make-up of the characters?	
4. Comment on the ending of the short film.	

5.	Choose two memorable shots from the short film and identify the position of the camera in them (i.e. Is the camera put far away/near/high up/down below?).	
6.	Does the film tell the story and appeal to your emotions effectively? What makes the 3-minute short film powerful?	

Set 2		
7.	What is the main plot of the film?	
8.	What is the theme or main message of the short film?	
9.	Are there any objects/images with a symbolic meaning in this short film?	
10.	Which is the most striking part in this short film?	
11.	Identify the sounds you hear in the film.	
12.	Explain how music is used to create the mood and effect with two examples from the film.	

B. Discussion and Information Exchange

After finishing Section A, pair up with a classmate answering another set of questions. Share your answers with each other.

Review the questions above, which can be grouped under the three different aspects of film analysis. Work together with your partner to classify the questions into the respective categories. Some examples have been provided.

e.g. 1
Literary aspects
(about the story)

Short Films

e.g. 3
Dramatic
aspects
(about acting)

e.g. 11
Cinematic
aspects
(about camera
and sound
effects)
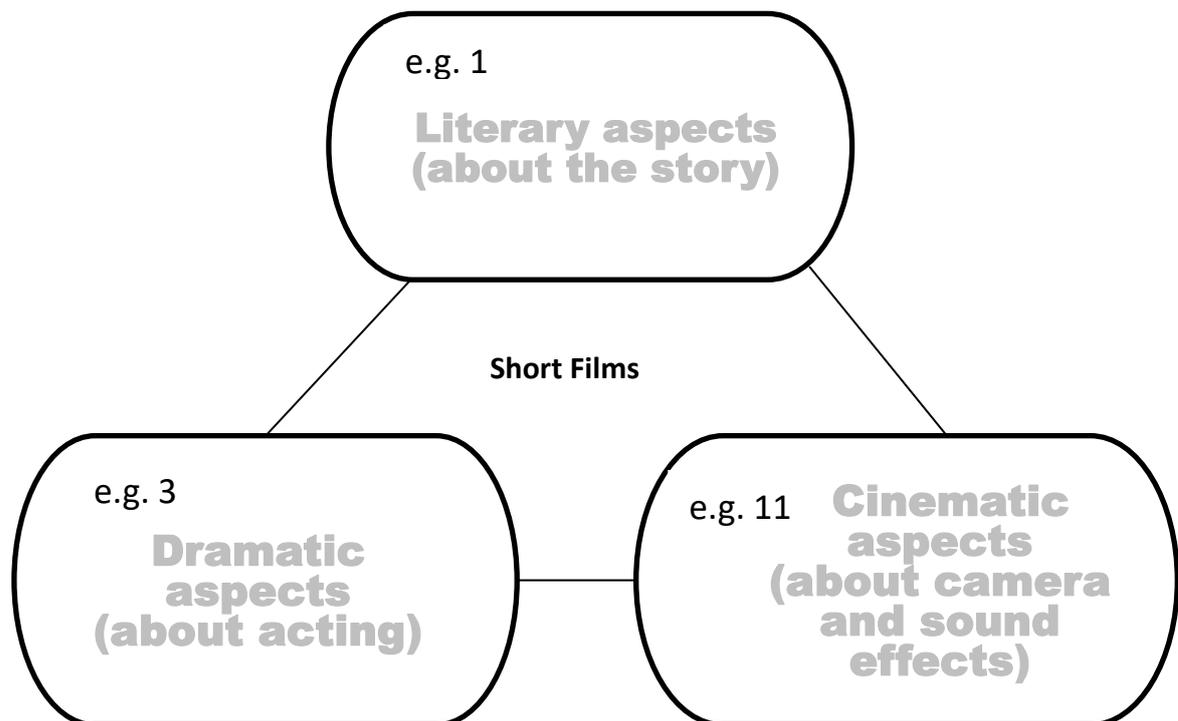
C. Close Analysis of Selected Aspects and Scenes

(I)   Dramatic Aspects: Costumes and Acting

The way the characters look (e.g. appearance, make-up and hairdo) and dress (i.e. **costumes**) reflects their **personalities, socio-economic status,** as well as **cultural and historical backgrounds** (particularly in period drama). Characters also express themselves through facial expressions, body movements, speeches/dialogues, which are all parts of the **acting**.

1. Look at two shots from "My Shoes" below. Describe the two characters' costumes and acting. Share your answers with your classmates.

Describe his **appearance** and **costumes**
e.g. fluffy hair
What do these features tell you about his socio-economic/family background?
What is he doing in this shot? Who is he speaking to and what is his speech about?
What does his speech tell you about his personality and feelings?

Describe his **facial expressions**
e.g. eyes gazing far away
What do his facial expressions tell you about his personality and feelings?

ⓘ Some films rely more on acting (facial expressions, body movements) than speeches or dialogues, but they can be very effective in presenting deep feelings and appealing to audience's emotions.

(II)   Cinematic Aspects: Music and Sound Effects

Sounds in film can be classified into two categories:

✧ **Diegetic sounds** refer to the actual sounds from what is happening in the film. They include :
  ➢ voices of characters
  ➢ sounds made by objects or actions in the story
  ➢ music represented as coming from instruments in the story space

✧ **Non-diegetic sounds** refer to sounds coming from a source outside the story space. It includes:
  ➢ the narrator's commentary or voice-over
  ➢ sound effects added for dramatic effects
  ➢ mood music (e.g. film scores and sound tracks)

Non-diegetic and diegetic sounds are equally important in a film, since diegetic sounds are about what the characters hear and non-diegetic sounds are about what the audience should feel. The interplay between the diegetic and non-diegetic sounds can advance the story and create different moods and effects (e.g. ambiguity in horror films, surprise in comedies).

Of all the non-diegetic sounds, music plays an important role in creating dramatic moments in a film. Music can perform various functions, including:

✧ Arousing the audience's emotions (e.g. fear, shock, pity)
✧ Establishing the setting (e.g. using jazz music to provide the aural backdrop for a film set in the 20th century America)
✧ Building up the mood and setting the tone of the story (e.g. slapstick humour in physical comedies with comic violence, horror in thrillers, romance in romantic comedies)
✧ Influencing the audience's perception of time (e.g. altering the tempo of music to make a 30 second waiting scene painfully long) and space (e.g. using full orchestra music to suggest spatial largeness)
✧ Facilitating editing (e.g. cutting the scenes according to the rhythm of music) and connecting scenes together (e.g. softening harsh scene changes with music)
✧ Creating contradictions and parodies (e.g. unexpected music in a romantic scene to show the instability beneath the surface)
✧ Enhancing plot relationship and linking up the plot (e.g. assigning a leitmotif to a main character with the music recurring in all scenes involving him)

The following are some adjectives that help you describe the music and sound effects in films:

Aspects	Adjectives
Genre	classical (e.g. Baroque, Romantic), avant-garde, experimental, contemporary (e.g. Jazz, Rock), popular, folk/country
Instrumentation	orchestra, solo, piano, violin, percussion, guitar, acoustic, electronic
Melody	lyrical, lilting, melodious, repetitive, catchy/memorable, disjointed/fragmented, constantly changing, soft, muted, subdued, ghostly, delicate, loud, intense, powerful, thundering, dramatic, sentimental, relaxed, tense, suspenseful, light-hearted, serious, religious, sad, reflective
Tone	dark, light, warm, resonant, velvety, harsh, rough, shrill, piercing, ethereal, breathy, crackling, noisy
Tempo	fast, quick, lively, spirited, hurried, rapid, speedy, frantic, moderate, steady, relaxed, slow
Harmony	clashing, harmonic, harmonious, discordant, dissonant, cacophonous
Mood	epic, tragic, romantic, comical, triumphant, foreboding, ominous, eerie, scary

Changes in rhythm and dynamics of music in films can be expressed with the following verbs:

✧ The music <u>accelerates/speeds up/gathers momentum/hastens</u> (gets fast) when …
✧ The music <u>decelerates/slows down/loses momentum/slackens</u> (gets slow) when …
✧ The music <u>fades in/fades out</u> (gets increasingly loud/soft) when…
✧ The music <u>softens/wanes/recedes/decreases in volume</u> (gets soft) when …
✧ The music <u>surges/increases in volume/is amplified</u> (gets loud) when …

2. List the diegetic and non-diegetic sounds you hear in the film "My Shoes".

Diegetic sounds	

Non-diegetic sounds	
	25

3. Select two memorable excerpts from the film. Describe how music is used in the selected scenes and explain the functions and effects.

Brief descriptions of the chosen footage	What and how music is used	Functions and effects

<div align="center">**(III)   Cinematic Aspects: Camera Shots**</div>

In the discussion of camera shots, the following three factors are considered:

➢ Length of shots
➢ Camera angles
➢ Camera movements

This section will deal with the three factors one by one.

<div align="center">(i)   <u>Length of Shots</u></div>

Camera shots are described based on the length of the shots and the amount of space contained within a frame (which are usually decided by how far the camera is from the subject). Camera shots are used in all forms of visual texts (e.g. photos, postcards and advertisements) for different purposes and effects. They help present the setting, characters and themes and can shape meaning in a film.

Camera shots commonly used in films are identified and briefly explained below:

extreme long up	**long/wide/full**	**medium**	**close-up**	**extreme close-**
far	(distance of the camera)			near
small	(size of objects)			BIG
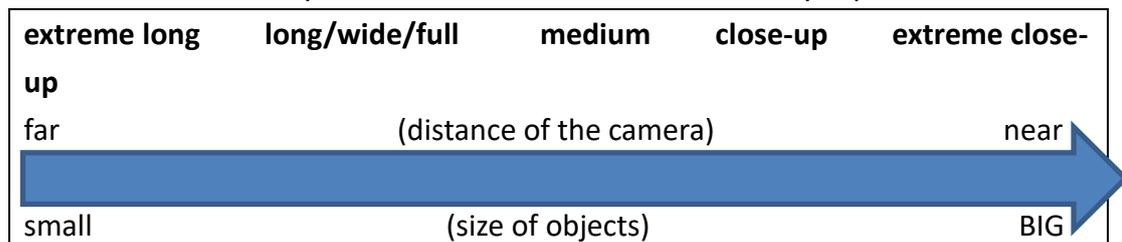
✧ An **extreme long shot** (also known as an **establishing shot**) contains a large amount of landscape. It is often used at the beginning of a film/scene to show the background and setting. An extreme wide shot is also useful for capturing actions that are very spread out (e.g. in a war movie to show the scale of the warfare).

✧ A **long shot (**sometimes known as **a wide shot)** contains landscape but gives the viewer a more specific idea of setting. A long shot may show the viewer the building where the action will take place.

✧ A **full shot** shows the subject fully. It offers a complete view of the character(s) from head to toe, allowing the viewer to see the whole body and costumes clearly. A full shot may also help demonstrate the relationship between characters through showing their physical positioning in the frame.

✧ A **medium shot** (sometimes known as a mid shot or social shot) shows a character/characters from the waist up. The viewer can see the faces and interaction between characters more clearly. A medium shot shows part of the subject in greater detail but still allows the viewer to feel as if they were looking at the whole subject. It is commonly used when the characters are speaking without intense emotions and concentration (e.g. when TV news presenters are providing information or talk show hosts are greeting audience and introducing the interview subjects).

✧ A **close-up** (sometimes known as a personal shot) is taken at a very short distance from the subject and permits a close and detailed view of an object or a character. A close-up shows a character's face only and can capture the character's facial expressions clearly. It often helps arouse the audience's empathy for the character.

✧ An **extreme close-up** focuses on one part of a character's face or an object. It helps express strong emotions, create an intense mood and provoke the viewer's feelings. This kind of shots is also commonly used in horror films to arouse fear.

4. Look at the following shots from "My Shoes". Identify the type of camera shots used in each shot and explain the effects created.

Shots	Descriptions
	_____ is used to _____ _____. *(what you see in the scene)* The shot _____ _____ _____ _____. *(the suggested meaning and/or effects created)*

	_____ is used to _____ _____. *(what you see in the scene)* The shot _____ _____ _____ _____. *(the suggested meaning and/or effects created)*
	_____ is used to _____ _____. *(what you see in the scene)* The shot _____ _____ _____ _____. *(the suggested meaning and/or effects created)*
	_____ is used to _____ _____. (what you see in the scene) The shot _____ _____ _____ _____. (the suggested meaning and/or effects created)

<center>(ii)   <u>Camera Angles</u></center>

Camera angles are decided by the positions where the camera is placed. They are used to give emotional information to viewers, manipulate their perspectives and guide their judgment about the character(s) or object(s) in the shots. Extreme camera angles are often adopted for shots loaded with symbolic meaning to draw viewers' attention.

Camera angles commonly used in films are identified and briefly explained below:

bird's eye view	high-angle	eye-level	low-angle

⟹ (arrow pointing right)

Up   (position of the camera)
Down
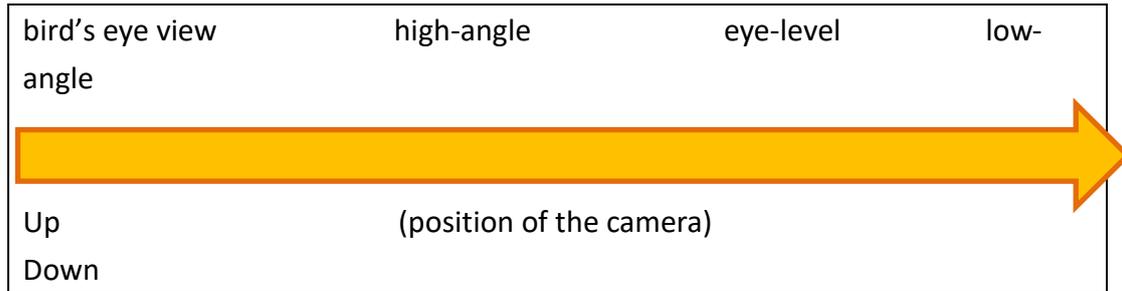
✧   A **bird's-eye view** shot (also known as an aerial shot) provides an elevated view of an object from directly above, as if seen from the perspective of a bird in flight. A bird's eye view is adopted for floor plans and maps (similar to what one sees in Google map). When used in films, it shows a scene from a very unnatural and strange angle, with the audience in a bird's eye (high above) position, looking down on the characters' action. Characters may look insignificant, ant-like (as if they were part of a wider scheme of things). It is sometimes used to create a sense of helplessness.

✧   A **high-angle** shot is not as extreme and unnatural as a bird's eye view, but it is also taken from a camera positioned above the action. The object(s) and character(s) often get swallowed up by their setting and become part of a wider picture. High-angle shots can make the objects in the frame appear small, short and less significant. It can be used to create a sense of vulnerability when applied with a particular mood and setting.

✧   An **eye-level** shot is the most natural and neutral shot with the camera positioned at the subject's height. It is called an eye-level shot because if the character is looking at the lens, he/she does not need to look up or down. Eye-level shots are most common in films as they put the audience on an equal footing with the character(s) and allow the viewer to feel comfortable with them. Eye-level shots provide the most "real-world" view and show subjects in the way the audience would expect to see them in real life.

<center>29</center>

✧ A **low-angle** shot is taken with the camera placed in a position below and pointing upward at the subject. Contrary to the high-angle shot which makes people look weak and submissive, a low angle shot makes the subject looks big and powerful. It is sometimes used to suggest dominance and aggression.

5. Look at the following shots from "My Shoes". Identify the camera angles used and explain the effects created.

Shots	Descriptions
	_____ is used to _____ _____ _____ _____
	_____ is used to _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
	_____ is used to _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ is used to

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(iii)   Camera Movements

Camera movements serve many different functions in films. They can alter the relationship between the subject and the camera frame, shape the viewer's perspective of space and time, control the delivery of narrative information and create expressive effects. As the camera frame orients the viewer's within the mise-en-scène, camera movements create the illusion of the viewer's journeying through the world of the narrative and support the advancement of the story.

Types of camera movements are distinguished by direction and the equipment used to achieve motion. Camera movements commonly used in films are identified and briefly explained below:

- A **pan** is a camera movement in which the camera scans a scene left and right on a horizontal axis. This swivelling camera movement is often used to give the viewer a panoramic view of the setting to help establish a scene.

- A **tilt** is a camera movement in which the camera scans a scene up and down on a vertical axis. This is similar to nodding one's head up and down.

Panning and tilting are two most basic camera movements. Both involve the rotation of the camera while it is attached to a fixed stand.

- A **dolly/tracking shot** involves the camera travelling forward, backward, from side to side, diagonally or in a circle generally following a moving figure/object. A dolly involving motion left or right is also known as a **trucking shot**. A dolly is often created with the camera mounted on a moving vehicle (e.g. a cart or even a shopping trolley) and moving alongside the action. Complicated dolly shots involve a track being laid on set for the camera to follow, hence the name "tracking". While a pan or a tilt reveals what one might see when standing still and rotating one's head, a dolly/tracking shot provides the impression of actually advancing into space. A dolly shot can give the viewer a detailed tour of a situation. It is also an effective way to portray movement and the journey of a character.

- A **pedestal shot** (or a ped movement) means moving the camera vertically with respect to the subject. This is often referred to as "pedding" the camera up or down. A ped is different from a tilt. The camera tilts the angle of view up and

down in the same position in a tilt, but the whole camera is moving, not just the angle of view, in a ped movement.

✧ A **crane shot** (also known as a boom or jib shot) is like the dolly shot in the air taken with a camera mounted on a crane or jib. The crane enables the camera to move very high and then swoop back down to the ground. Crane shots are most frequently used to show the actions from above, or to signify the end of a scene/film.

✧ A **zoom** is technically not a camera movement as it does not require the camera itself to move at all. Zooming means altering the focal length of the lens to give the illusion of moving closer to or further away from the action. While zooming is effectively magnifying a part of the image, moving the camera creates a difference in perspective — background objects appear to change in relation to foreground objects. Zooming can be used to add interest to a shot, for example, a quick zoon can add energy to a fast-paced action film. It can also be used in combination with dollying to create a dolly zoom (i.e. the camera angle is pulled away from a subject while the lens zooms in, or vice versa, to keep the subject the same size in the frame throughout) that can cause an unsettling effect and undermine normal visual perception.

6. Watch the three excerpts from "My Shoes". Describe the camera movement in each and the purpose(s) /effect(s) achieved.

Duration	Camera movement and the purpose(s)/effect(s)
0:13-0:25	
0:33-0:38	
0:57-1:03	

(IV)   Cinematic Aspects: Editing

Editing is the coordination of one shot with the next shot. It serves the following main purposes:

✧   It controls the speed at which events move along and the duration of a shot, thus also the pace and mood of the film. In general, the longer the shot duration, the slower the pace of the film.

✧   It determines the order and amount of information the viewer receives about the plot and narrative. Some editing gives the viewer access to bits of information important to subsequent events while some withhold information to surprise the audience.

✧   It manipulates the viewer's feeling towards the events and characters. For example, showing a couple talking in a two-shot may create more intimate feelings than showing their conversation in a shot reserve shot.

Editing is an attempt to establish connection and meaningful relationships between shots. Below are four kinds of relationships considered by the editor in the editing process:

✧   **Graphic** relations between shots – This is most obvious in a "graphic match", where an editor links two visually similar shots that show different things together. For example, in the film *Aliens* (James Cameron, 1986), the curve of a character's face is matched with the curve of the Earth's surface. Graphic editing invites the comparison of pictorial qualities from shot to shot.

✧   **Rhythmic** relations between shots – This is common in music videos, where shots are often "cut to the beat," with the rhythm of the music determining the timing of the edits.

✧   **Spatial** relations between shots – This is often seen when two points in space are juxtaposed through editing to imply some kind of relationship between the two shots/scenes.

✧   **Temporal** relations between shots – This is most common in narrative filmmaking, where editing allows the filmmaker to control the flow of the story as it moves forward or backward in time.

The following are two major editing styles and conventions:

✧   **Continuity editing** (also known as classical editing) aims at hiding (or at least

minimising) the shift from one cut to the next, making the edit as unnoticeable as possible to create a seamless chain of events. Commercial films (e.g. Hollywood cinema) tend to adopt continuity editing to present a smoother narrative transition and create a logical flow that enables the viewer to suspend disbelief and follow easily.

✧ **Montage editing** (also known as the Soviet montage or Kuleshov effect) highlights the power of editing to alter the perception of the subject. Montage editing usually involves the splicing together of a series of shots filmed out of sequence in different times and places. It is characterised by jumbled narratives, abrupt cuts and the juxtaposition and joining together of seemingly unrelated shots. Contrary to continuity editing, montage editing makes the cut conspicuous and noticeable, thus serving to remind the audience that the film is a fictive space rather than a representation of reality. Montage editing solicits the viewer's intellectual participation as the viewer has to play an active role in piecing the shots together to work out the meaning of the film.

Below are some common film editing terms and techniques:
✧ **Fades** – darkening gradually the end of a shot to black (i.e. a fade-out) or lightening a shot from black (i.e. a fade-in)
✧ **Dissolves** – superimposing the end of Shot A and the beginning of Shot B to allow the disappearing image to linger
✧ **Wipes** – Shot B replacing Shot A by means of a boundary line moving quickly across the screen
✧ **Cuts** – the most common edit involving splicing together two shots.
   Cuts can be broken down further into different types, for example:
   ➢ A **jump cut** is a sudden and often jarring cut from one shot to another (usually involving two sequential shots of the same subject taken from slightly different camera positions) to create the effect of jumping forward in time. This kind of shots communicates the passing of time abruptly compared to other editing techniques like a dissolve.
   ➢ A **cross-cut** is the cutting between actions in two different locations that are occurring simultaneously to draw parallels or contrasts between them.
   ➢ A **match cut** carries over visual or audio elements from one shot to another to make the edit natural and invisible. Match cuts help establish a logical flow and maintain temporal and spatial continuity between disparate shots. It is a technique commonly used in continuity editing to present a smoother narrative transition.

There are three main types of match cuts:

- A **graphic match** uses a visual element (such as a shape of an object) in one shot and carries it over to another shot. A typical example is the opening scene of Martin Scorsese's *Hugo* (2011), in which the ticking part of the clock is transformed into the streets of Paris. The circular clock centre and straight bars that stretch out in the first shot gradually turn into the round turnabout and straight streets of the city in the next, creating a graphic match.

- A **match on action cut (also known as "cutting on action")** refers to cutting from one shot to another that matches the action in the previous shot. The movement of the character(s) of object(s) is carried over from one shot to the next. For example, a shot showing a man walking up to a door and searching for his keys is cut to a shot of the door opening from the other side.

- A **sound bridge** uses an audio and sound element from one shot and carries it over to the next shot. For example, in Paul Haggis' *Crash* (2004), the door slamming sound is used to connect the stories of two different characters. When the door slams in one scene, it wakes up the character in the next scene.

➤ A **shot reverse shot** is another editing technique commonly used for editing dialogue sequences. In a **shot reverse shot**, one character is shown facing one direction in the first shot and another character is shown facing the opposite direction in the next shot. Since the characters are shown facing in opposite directions, the viewer assumes that they are looking at, talking and responding to each other.

7. Choose two segments from "My Shoes". Identify the editing techniques used and the purpose(s)/effect(s) achieved:

Duration	Editing techniques used and the purpose(s)/effect(s) achieved

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

8. Which editing style does "My Shoes" adopt – continuity editing or montage editing? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART 2 – TEACHER'S NOTES

A. Viewing and Note-taking

Short films are good for introducing basic viewing skills as they are often condensed and concise. Their short length also facilitates re-playing for a focused examination and detailed analysis. The film chosen for this activity lasts for only three minutes. Teachers may play it in class or ask students to view it at home.

Two sets of questions are provided for students in this activity. Before viewing the short film, teachers can assign half the class to work on Set 1 questions and the other half to work on Set 2 questions. Alternatively, teachers can ask students to form pairs and decide with their partners which set of questions they each will work on.

Remind students that:
➢ More critical, analytical and reflective viewing is expected in this task, which is different from viewing for leisure and entertainment.
➢ They should read the questions before viewing and give more attention to the details in the viewing process with the questions in mind.
➢ They may focus on understanding the content of the film in the first viewing and then the audio-visual effects and cinematic techniques in the second viewing.
➢ Only brief notes and key words are required for the answers, mainly to facilitate oral sharing in class.

Teaching Suggestions to Cater for Learner Diversity

Supporting the less advanced students
Teachers may put students in groups of four and assign each student to be responsible for three questions only.

Where necessary, the table used in Section C of Part 1 for note-taking can be re-used to help students focus on different aspects of the film in each viewing.

What happens in the clip (Focus in the first viewing)	Audio-visual effects (Focus in the second viewing)
●	●

●	●

Students can then complete the questions assigned based on their memory and notes.

Alternatively, students could be asked to focus on the story and arrange the following sentences into a logical plot sequence after the first viewing:

No.	Events
6	The poor boy wishes that he could be the other boy.
9	The grandmother approaches with a wheelchair.
4	The two boys meet and they sit at the opposite ends of the bench.
8	With the new body, the rich boy is overjoyed, laughing and running around in the park.
2	The poor boy wanders back and forth in the park.
1	A poor boy who wears a pair of torn sneakers is teased by his peers in a park.
7	His wish is somehow granted. The poor boy switches his body with the rich one.
3	A rich boy with a pair of new sneakers sits on the bench.
10	The poor boy learns of his physical condition and cries.
5	The poor boy is filled with jealousy. He walks away.

They will then be asked to note the audio visual effects that go with each stage of the plot in the second viewing.

As this activity mainly serves as a warm-up to provide opportunities for students to view critically and share their responses to the film with their peers, detailed answers to the questions are not expected. Students will be guided to explore different aspects of this film in greater detail through the remaining activities and they will gradually develop responses of greater complexity.

Below are some suggested answers to the two sets of questions. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

Set 1	
1. When and where is this short film set?	In a park (outdoors) at daytime

| 2.	Who are the main characters in this short film? Briefly describe them.	Two boys – one wearing worn-out shoes (portrayed as with lower socio-economic status), while the other wearing brand new shoes (portrayed as from an affluent family)
3.	What do you notice about the costumes and make-up of the characters?	The way the two boys dress, especially the shoes they wear, highlights their difference in socio-economic status and family background. The costumes help establish a sharp contrast between the two characters.
4.	Comment on the ending of the short film.	The ending is unpredictable and surprising. There is a twist as the poor boy and the audience have never expected the cheerful boy with new shoes to be paralysed.
5.	Choose two memorable shots from the short film and identify the position of the camera in them (i.e. Is the camera put far away/near/high up/down below?).	Any reasonable answers describing the people/things in the shots and positions of the camera, for example: ➢ The scene with the rich boy smiling contentedly on the bench – a close-up is used to show his happy face beaming under the sunlight. ➢ The scene with the poor boy chanting "I want to be like him!" – an extreme close-up is used to focus on his eyes and to highlight his fervent wish and strong desire.
6.	Does the film tell the story and appeal to your emotions effectively? What makes the 3-minute short film powerful?	Any reasonable answers, for example: ➢ The twist – surprise ending ➢ The use of music ➢ The message (i.e. never judge others by their appearance and count your own blessings) ➢ The clever use of symbolism – the two boys are literally and metaphorically in each other's shoes in the story

Set 2

7.	What is the main plot of the film?	The boy wearing the worn-out shoes is teased by his peers and very upset. He sees a boy with a brand new pair of shoes and is filled with envy and bitterness. He wishes he could be the wealthy boy wearing nice trainers. However, when his wish comes true, he realises that the boy is paralysed and is filled with regret.
8.	What is the theme or main message of the short film?	Theme: Contentment, appearance vs reality, gratitude/thankfulness Message: ➢ Don't judge a book by its cover. Appearance can be deceptive. ➢ Count our blessings – Be thankful for what we have instead of envying others for what they have.
9.	Are there any objects/images with symbolic meanings in this short film?	➢ The title "My Shoes" carries a hidden meaning. When the boys switch their roles and wear each other's shoes, they are in each other's shoes both literally and metaphorically. The poor boy begins to experience life in the rich boy's position, see things in a different perspective and realises the stark truth. ➢ The feather from the flying bird that floats in the air may be another image with a symbolic meaning, suggesting the lightness of being and bringing out the poor boy's aloofness and lack of attachment (no sense of belonging).
10.	Which is the most striking part in this short film?	Any reasonable answers, for example: ➢ The magical moment when the boy's wish comes true – it is exciting to see the two characters switch their roles. ➢ The ending – it is a shocking realisation for the boy and a surprise for the audience.

11. Identify the sounds you hear in the film.	People teasing and laughing, birds' chirping, footsteps, water flowing in the stream under the bridge, sound of the big bird flapping wings, the frantic cry of the boy (in wild excitement), background music (piano)
12. Explain how music is used to create the mood and effect with two examples from the film.	Any reasonable answers, for example: ➢ Slow piano music is used as the background music in the opening scenes to create a sad mood that matches the boy's dejected heart. ➢ The pace of the music goes fast when the story reaches its climax (i.e. when the poor boy's wish is granted and the two boys switch their roles) to build excitement and the audience's anticipation.

B. Discussion and Information Exchange

Teachers pair up students working on different sets of questions and allow 10 minutes for them to share their answers. As they are sharing, teachers can circulate around the class to look at and listen to students' answers to gauge their level of understanding. Allow students some time to categorise the questions into three aspects of film analysis.

e.g. **1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10**
Literary aspects (about the story)

Short Films

e.g. **3, 6**
Dramatic aspects (about acting)

e.g. **5, 6, 11, 12**
Cinematic aspects (about use of camera and sound effects)
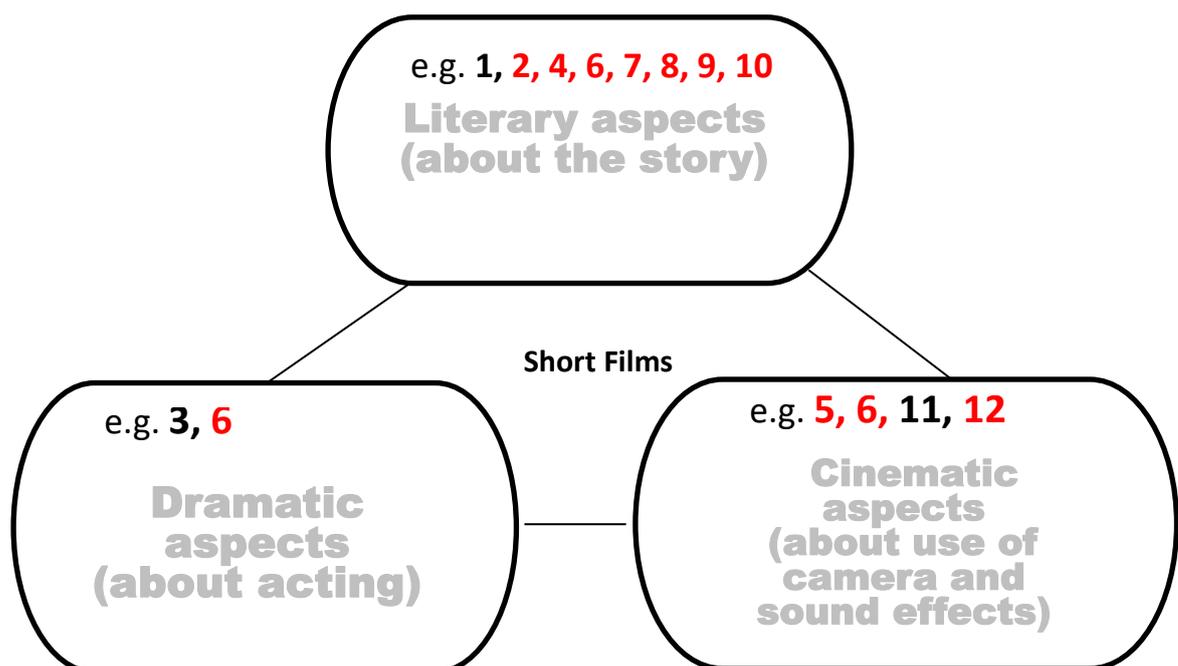
Go through the answers to the two sets of questions and the categorisation diagram with students. Invite some students to share their answers with the class and provide feedback where appropriate. Question 6 in Set 1 encourages students to consider all the aspects in an integrative manner to evaluate the aesthetic achievements and literary merits of a film. Teachers can provide more opportunities for students to express their personal responses in class regarding this item.

C. Close Analysis of Selected Aspects and Scenes

As most students find the literary aspects of a film quite manageable with the experience gained from studying other literary genres, the focus of this part is on the dramatic and cinematic aspects. Basic concepts and terms for discussing cinematic techniques are to be introduced to students in the context of the chosen short film. Given that a single film, particularly a short one like "My Shoes", can only feature a limited range of cinematic techniques, students are encouraged to extend their viewing experience beyond this to films of different directors, genres and subgenres, as well as films from different periods in film history to broaden their repertoire of film knowledge. However, the notes and exercises can guide beginners to develop basic knowledge and understanding about the genre systematically, which lays a solid foundation for them to analyse a longer film or the set film in the Literature in English curriculum.

(I)   Dramatic Aspects: Costumes and Acting

The purpose of the activity is to heighten students' awareness of the roles costumes and acting play in a film and enhance their ability to describe these in words.

Explain to students that in a film, characters are presented through:
* appearance (e.g. make-up, hairdo)
* costumes
* acting (facial expressions, body movements, speeches and dialogues)

The above can tell us about characters' personalities, cultural and socio-economic background.

Ask students to complete Question 1 to describe the appearance, costumes and facial expressions of the two characters in "My Shoes". Provide students with language support if they have difficulty describing the characters' appearance (e.g. messy fluffy hair, worn-out clothes and shoes), facial expressions (e.g. frowning, grinning), feelings (e.g. anxious, content, upset, dejected, bitter, jealous) and personalities (e.g. optimistic).

Below are some suggested answers to **Question 1**. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

1.   Look at two shots from "My Shoes" below. Describe the two characters' costumes and acting. Share your answers with your classmates.

Describe his **appearance** and **costumes**
e.g. fluffy hair, shabby clothes, worn-out shoes used as hand puppets, bare feet
What do these features tell you about his socio-economic/family background?
They show that the boy is probably from a poor family that cannot afford to buy new shoes and decent clothes for him.
What is he doing in this shot? Who is he speaking to and what is his speech

	about?
	He is using his worn-out shoes as puppets to complain about the unfairness in life. He questions why somebody can have nice new shoes but not him. He expresses envy and his wish to be the rich boy.
	What does his speech tell you about his personality and feelings?
	His speech is full of bitterness, envy and resentment. It shows us that he is discontent and dissatisfied with his life.

	Describe his **facial expressions**
	e.g. *eyes gazing far away*, clean and neat clothes, a bright satisfying smile, soft shiny hair, a contented look
	What do his facial expressions tell you about his personality and feelings?
	He looks friendly, optimistic, positive and cheerful. He seems to be satisfied with his life and enjoying his time alone.

(II) Cinematic Aspects: Music and Sound Effects

The purpose of the activity is to help students understand the significance of music in a film and enable them to describe music used in a film.

Teachers can play the film "My Shoes" again and mute it to ask students what is missing and lost in the viewing experience. Guide students to discuss the role music plays in a film. Most students should be able to come up with general points such as:

- arousing audience's emotions
- building up the mood and atmosphere of the film
- enriching the image
- facilitating plot development

Extend students' knowledge by going through the definition of diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, as well as the functions music performed, on the handouts. For students who are interested to delve deeper into the role of music in film-making, teachers may refer to the following website, which offers a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the different functions of film music:

What is the function of film music? | Robin Hoffmann
www.robin-hoffmann.com/tutorials/guide-to-working-with-a-film-composer/12-what-is-the-function-of-film-music/

As the power and effects of music are best illustrated with live examples, show students the following Youtube video, which demonstrates how music can alter a scene psychologically by setting different tones/moods with the boat scene from *Pirates of the Caribbean* (starring Johnny Depp):

How Music Can Change a Film
www.youtube.com/watch?v=rn9V0cN4NWs

Go through the list of adjectives and verbs that help describe film music with students. To deepen students' understanding and provide opportunities for application, teachers may:

➢ play some movie scores/sound tracks/themes songs from films, invite students to describe the music and guess the genre of the film
➢ show some footages or film clips and ask students to describe the change in music used and explain the reasons for the change in relation to the plot development,

tone and mood of the scene, etc.

Teaching Suggestions to Cater for Learner Diversity

Teachers can reduce or increase the number of vocabulary items to be introduced depending on students' ability. If students are ready for learning more adjectives that describe music, ask them to expand the list by looking for more words through online research. The following website can be introduced to students:

Words for Music

www.words-to-use.com/words/music/

Challenging more advanced students

Teachers can challenge students with an extension activity:

1. Play the following YouTube video, which features a good collection of movie scores from 30 famous films (e.g. *A Space Odyssey*, *Love Story*, *James Bond* movies, *Star Wars*):

    The 30 Most Famous Film Scores

    www.youtube.com/watch?v=0di9tiulb4Q

2. Pause after each track to ask students to jot down a few adjectives to describe the music and complete the template below:

Track	Adjectives to describe the music	Adjectives to describe the mood/feelings created	Film genre (e.g. comedy, horror, thriller, sci-fi, fantasy, war, romance)
1			
2			
3			

Before students do Questions 2-3, teachers may play "My Shoes" again with the screen off to ensure students focus solely on the music and events. Ask students to jot down sounds they hear and recall the events in the film as they listen. Signal to students when the tempo and pace of music change to check if they can remember what

happens at that moment. In doing so, students will realise how the change in music corresponds to the development of the plot.

When teachers provide feedback on students' answers to Questions 2 and 3, the focus should be on whether students can describe the music and discuss its change and effects with appropriate vocabulary. Where necessary, guide students to use sample sentence structures to explain the effects of the music in Question 3, for example:

➢ The music creates a sense of [feeling nouns].
➢ The music imparts a feeling of [feeling nouns] to the scene.

Below are the suggested answers to **Questions 2** and **3**:

2. List the diegetic and non-diegetic sounds you hear in the film "My Shoes".

*Diegetic sounds	People teasing and laughing, birds' chirping, footsteps, water flowing in the stream, sound of the big bird flapping wings, the frantic cry of the boy (in wild excitement)
Non-diegetic sounds	background music (piano)

* **Note:** Teachers may tell students that despite being considered on-location sounds, most diegetic sounds made by people (e.g. footsteps) and props (gunshots) in the scene we hear in films are not recorded on location, but are added in the post production stage. The on location shooting and recording focusses mainly on the characters' speeches and dialogues.

3. Select two memorable excerpts from the film. Describe how music is used in the selected scenes and explain the functions and effects.

Brief descriptions of the chosen footage	What and how music is used	Functions and effects
The opening scene with the close-up on a pair of worn-out shoes, followed by a tilt-up to show the boy sitting on the bench with a long face. (0:05-0:25)	Slow and sentimental piano music is used.	Music is used to set the sad tone of the story, bring out the loneliness of the boy and portray him as a dejected outcast wanting his peers' acceptance.
The scene when the	The music starts to surge	The change in pace and

two boys switch their roles after the poor boy's wish has come true. (2:29-2:37)	and gather momentum at the moment when the boy's wish is granted. The tempo/pace of the music has also changed from slow to fast.	mood of the music signifies a magical moment and a sudden change, which is also the climax of the story. The fast music creates excitement and an uplifting mood, which helps build the viewer's anticipation and provides a stark contrast with the painful realisation and poignant ending.

(III)   Cinematic Aspects: Camera Shots ‧

Explain to students the following three factors to be considered in the discussion of camera shots:

➢ Length of shots
➢ Camera angles
➢ Camera movements

To develop students' understanding of cinematography progressively, the three factors are dealt with one by one as three separate items. In reality, the three elements are intertwined in film making and often considered holistically. For example, as the camera moves, the camera angles and the length of the shots (or the amount of space contained within a frame) are also altered. Teachers might like to follow the approach and sequence adopted in this set of materials to introduce basic concepts and terminology of camera shots to students. When students have acquired basic understanding and mastered the language to discuss film shots, teachers can encourage them to apply the knowledge integratively to analyse selected scenes from the set film in the syllabus or their own-choice film for the portfolio.

<center>(i)   <u>Length of Camera Shots</u></center>

The purpose of the section is to enable students to identify and describe shots of varying lengths in a film.

Go through the notes to introduce the basic types of camera shots to students. Remind students that in addition to the five levels listed on the handouts, there may be finer distinctions. For example, a medium close-up is half way between a medium shot and a close-up, which shows the face more clearly without getting uncomfortably close.

To deepen students' understanding of different shot lengths before they complete the exercise, teachers may:
➢ show film images with different shot lengths to illustrate the concept
➢ ask students to search for images of different shot lengths from the Internet (They can simply do so by typing "close-up shot" and select "image" for search engines like "Google" or "Yahoo")
➢ ask students to use cell phones to take photos of different shot lengths and show them in class

Below are some suggested answers to **Question 4**. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

4.   Look at the following shots from "My Shoes". Identify the type of camera shots used in each shot and explain the effects created:

Shots	Descriptions
	<u>An extreme wide/long shot</u> is used to show <u>the boy walking to a tree to lean under it.</u> The shot <u>shows the vast outdoor setting and the boy's relatively marginal position in the scene, which matches his feelings of unimportance and abandonment as well as his sense of inferiority.</u>

	A long shot is used to show the two boys gazing at each other on the bench. The shot helps establish the two boys as polar opposites and highlight the huge gap between them, as the two boys are each seated at one end of the bench.
	A medium close-up is used to show the boy in deep thought and his displeasure. The shot draws the audience's attention to the boy's facial expressions and state of mind.
	An extreme close-up is used to show the boy closing his eyes to make a wish. The shot captures the fine details of the boy's face and accentuates his intense feelings and emotions.

(ii)   Camera Angles

The purpose of the section is to enable students to identify and describe shots taken from different camera angles in a film.

Go through the notes to introduce different kinds of camera angles to students. Remind students that in addition to the four generally used terms to describe camera angles, there may be finer and more precise descriptions (e.g. over the shoulder, over the head shot). If students can master the four types of camera angles listed on the handouts, teachers may introduce one more term to them:

> **Dutch angle** (also known as German angle or Dutch tilt) is a camera shot in which the camera angle is deliberately slanted to one side. The oblique and canted angle can be used to create dramatic effects and portray unease, confusion and disorientation (e.g. madness, intoxication).

To deepen students' understanding of different camera angles before they complete the exercise, teachers may:
➢ show film images with different camera angles to illustrate the concept
➢ ask students to search online for images taken from different camera angles (They can simply do so by typing "high-angle shot" and select "image" for search engines like "Google" or "Yahoo")
➢ ask students to use their smart phones to take photos from different camera angles and show them in class

Below are some suggested answers to **Question 5**. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

5.   Look at the following shots from "My Shoes". Identify the camera angles used and explain the effects it creates.

Shots	Descriptions
	An eye-level shot is used to allow the audience to look straight on the boy in a comfortable and natural way. The shot presents the subject in a more neutral and objective manner with little visual distortion and emotional manipulation.

	An over the shoulder shot is used to highlight how the shoes are imbued with life and used as puppet characters for the boy to express his pent-up feelings. The camera angle allows us to see clearly how the boy speaks in the roles of the puppet characters and synchronises the movement of the "puppets' mouths" with his worn-out shoes.
	A high-angle shot is used to show the boy is focusing his attention on the other boy's new shoes. This high-angle shot is used as a point-of-view shot to suggest a view from the poor boy's perspective.
	A low-angle shot is used to show the poor boy as being hostile and unfriendly and somewhat threatening, staring at the other boys' legs and shoes. The camera angle helps capture the boy's silent aggression.

(iii)   Camera Movements

The purpose of the section is to enable students to identify and describe different kinds of camera movements used in the film-making process.

Go through the notes to introduce different kinds of camera moves to students. Remind students that the six types of camera moves listed on the handouts are the basic ones. Sometimes, a combination of camera moves are used simultaneously (e.g. pedding while panning, dollying and zooming at the same time [also known as a zolly]).

To help students talk about how the camera moves in different shots, it may be necessary to introduce the verb form of these moves as well:

Nouns	Verbs
A pan	The camera pans across the room.
A tilt	The camera tilts up/down to show the person from head to toe.
A   dolly/tracking shot
A trucking shot	The camera tracks a soccer player running through the shadows while kicking the ball.
The camera dollies/trucks to the right as flowers sway in the breeze.
A pedestal shot	The camera peds down to capture the contours of the man's body.
A crane shot	The camera cranes up to slowly reveal an almost endless expanse of wounded and dying soldiers.
A zoom	The camera zooms in to show two people sitting by the side of a river.

To deepen students' understanding of different camera moves before they complete the exercise, teachers may:
➢   show film excerpts with different camera moves to illustrate the concept
➢   play a short scene from a film, mute it and ask the students to call out the camera movement they can spot as they are watching the scene
➢   ask students to make short videos with their smart phones to demonstrate the use of different camera moves

Below are some suggested answers to **Question 6**. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

6.   Watch the three excerpts from "My Shoes". Describe the camera movement in each and the purpose(s)/effect(s) achieved.

Duration	Camera movement and the purpose(s)/effect(s)
0:13-0:25	The camera tilts up to move away from a close-up on the worn-out shoes to reveal the owner of the shoes. The camera movement not only draws our attention to the boy's long face, but also explains the reason why he is feeling so.
0:33-0:38	A dolly/tracking shot is used to follow the movement of the boy, first focusing on his feet, and then to his upper body. The dolly shot gives the audience a three-dimensional feeling of moving through space with the character.
0:57-1:03	The camera peds down to capture the movement of the falling feather. The camera movement not only shows the lightness of the feather in the air, but also helps link up the two main characters with an object (i.e. the feather from the bird flying over the poor boy eventually falls on the smiley boy) and smooth out the narrative transition.

To enrich knowledge on camera movement, teachers may refer to the following website, which provides a comprehensive analysis of different camera moves:

Camera Movement
www.filmreference.com/encyclopedia/Academy-Awards-Crime-Films/Camera-Movement.html

For students who wish to know more about the topic of camera movements, teachers may recommend the following YouTube video clips to them:

Videos	Descriptions
Camera Movement www.youtube.com/watch?v=45e1XuA-oLY	The video explains different kinds of camera moves (e.g. a tilt, a pan, a dolly/truck movement) with extracts from films. It also shows the equipment or methods used to create the camera movements.
Camera Movement Tutorial: How to Create Emotion	The video explains how different camera moves (e.g. craning

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_P3oxjnFr0c	up/down, a quick pan) can create different feelings and emotions (e.g. fear, tension, uneasiness, surprise, shock, a sense of loss and abandonment) in a film.

Extended Learning Activities

To help students consolidate their knowledge about camera shots, teachers might play one of the following clips in class as a recap after covering the three sub-sections on camera shot lengths, angles and movements:

Video Clips	Descriptions
Basic Camera Shots for Filmmaking www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICcE72RwEyc	The filmmaker illustrates with a girl's face how different camera shots, angles and movement can be used to tell a story in the absence of any speech or dialogue. Cinematic terms are displayed to help students identify the relevant shots and understand the concepts.
Camera Angles with Zach King www.youtube.com/watch?v=tD63b6Z-Tr0	Different camera shots, angles and moves are illustrated with examples from films and on-location shooting. The speaker in the video provides explanations with a mix of theory and action.

Useful references

For students who wish to explore the topic of camera shots further on their own. Teachers can recommend the following websites to them:

Websites	Descriptions
Camera Angles - Mediaknowall www.mediaknowall.com/camangles.html	The website provides clear descriptions, explanations and examples on different camera shots, angles and moves.
Media College – Shot Types www.mediacollege.com/video/shots/	The website offers clear explanations on different camera shots and film terms with examples. It also provides a search function for students to enter film terms that they wish to know more about.

(IV)   Cinematic Aspects: Editing

The purpose of the section is to enable students to identify and describe the basic editing in a film.

Editing describes the relationship between shots and the process by which they are combined. It is essential to the creation of narrative space and to the establishment of narrative time. Editing is a huge topic that can be too technical and complicated for students. The handouts serve to simplify concepts of editing to suit students' cognitive level. Teachers should exercise their professional judgement to draw a line between cinema studies and the study of a film in the Literature in English curriculum. While a better understanding of film concepts can sharpen students' critical eye and awareness of details of the film they study, it is not necessary for students to memorise the definitions of these concepts and use technical terms to talk about film production.

Teachers can go through the notes on (1) the purposes of editing, (2) the relationships between shots established by editing, (3) two major editing styles and (4) major editing techniques with students.

To enhance students' understanding, the following YouTube videos can be used to explain complex editing terms and concepts:

Concepts	Videos	Descriptions
Editing styles	**Continuity and Montage** www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHutAjyyfCw	The story of two characters is presented first with the use of continuity editing and then montage editing to illustrate the difference between the two editing styles.
Match-cuts	**Match-cuts in Film Editing** www.youtube.com/watch?v=EI28XrjtcMI	Three types of match cuts are explained in simple language and illustrated with examples from famous films.
Cross-cuts Jump cuts Fade in/out Dissolve	**Cut and Transition 101** www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAH0MoAv2CI	The video provides good examples to illustrate a number of editing techniques.

"Cuts" are a particularly broad area in editing. The types of cuts listed on the notes (e.g. jump cuts, cross-cuts, match cuts) are the most obvious ones but are by no means exhaustive. Teachers and students may come across many other terms (e.g. cut-away, cut-in) that describe cuts. Teachers should note that definitions and judgements on the types of cuts may vary from person to person, subject to one's interpretations on the relationship and transition between shots. The emphasis of teaching should be put on describing the transition between shots in relation to the meaning of the film/scene(s), rather than the correct identification of editing techniques. Similarly, while different kinds of match-cuts are explained in simple language in this section, students are not expected to identify all these in a film as this level of detail are not expected in their film analysis. For the average learner, describing the editing in simple sentences (e.g. **The shot showing …[descriptions of the 1ˢᵗ shot]… is cut to another shot that features …[descriptions of the 2ⁿᵈ shot]…, which highlights …[the effects of the edit]…**) would suffice in their essays and the portfolios.

For students who wish to explore the topic of editing in greater depth, teachers may recommend the following online resources to them:

**EDITING	College Film & Media Studies** collegefilmandmediastudies.com/editing/	The webpage provides detailed explanation of the graphic, rhythmic, spatial and temporal relationship between shots and the editing techniques that exemplify each. Clips from famous films are used to illustrate the concepts.
Breaking Down the 180-Degree Rule www.youtube.com/watch?v=HinUychY3sE	The video explains the "the 180 degree rule", which is useful for understanding how editing techniques such as cutting on action and shot reverse shots work. The video shows why the 180 degree action line is usually followed to maintain consistent directions of actors and actions in scenes with edited shots.

Below are the suggested answers to **Questions 7** and **8**. Any other reasonable answers should be accepted.

7. Choose two segments from "My Shoes". Identify the editing techniques used and the purpose(s)/effect(s) achieved:

Duration	Editing techniques used and the purpose(s)/effect(s) achieved
1:28-1:31	Shot reserve shots are used to show the two boys' reaction and attitude to each other. They exchange glances and study each other on the bench. The camera switches between their perspectives/points of view to show their interaction.
2:30-2:38	Cross-cutting is used to show the actions of the boys alternately (i.e. one sitting on the bench contentedly and the other running and yelling excitedly under a tree) after their role reversal. The cross-cuts show the two characters' actions in two locations in parallel, inviting us to draw connection and contrasts between them, as well as paving way for the surprise ending.

8. Which editing style does "My Shoes" adopt – continuity editing or montage editing? Explain your answer.
   Continuity editing is adopted in "My Shoes" to create spatio-temporal consistency and a logical coherence between events. The film unfolds the story of the two boys in a chronological and realist manner. The editing mainly serves to facilitate the smooth narration and transition of time and space.

Conclusion

As in the study of any literary genres, understanding "what is presented" comes before analysing "how it is presented". In the Literature in English curriculum and assessment, any analysis on the cinematography (e.g. the use of music and sound effects, shot lengths, camera angles and movements, editing techniques, use of lighting and colours) must be grounded in the context of the story. Students must fully comprehend the plot and message of the film before they analyse how the cinematic techniques contribute to thematic conveyance and evaluate the effectiveness and achievement of the film.

The tasks suggested in this set of materials are mainly noticing activities to build students' film knowledge and analysis skills. The questions can easily be adapted for use with other short films or excerpts from longer films. For teachers who wish to provide students with more opportunities for application and practice, the following short films can be considered for use when designing follow-up/extended learning activities:

Short Films	Synopses
Passing (directed by Jolie Hales) www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pg_1Pn9YcKg	The five-minute short film tells the story of how Rob, a grumpy old man, sees his marriage in a different light upon watching a customer in a flower shop.
Too Shy (directed by Ryan Hutchins) www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3vzWIU-gsg	The eight-minute short film is about how a boy is too shy to confess his love for a girl. The story is told with the use of flashbacks and flash-forwards and other editing techniques to facilitate narrative, spatial and temporal transitions.
The Other Pair (directed by Sarah Rozik) www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ECzPpeDOOA	The four-minute short film is said to be based a true event in Mahatma Gandhi's life. Various editing and filmic techniques are used to capture a brief encounter between two boys and present an act of kindness.

References

Barsam, Richard, and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Bordwell, David, and Kristine Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2009.

Lewis, John. *Essential Cinema: An Introduction to Film Analysis*. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2013.

Monaco, James. *How to Read a Film: Movies, Media and Beyond*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Nelmes, Jill, ed. *An Introduction to Film Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Sikov, Ed. *Film Studies: An Introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.