

GCE A LEVEL



WJEC Eduqas GCE A LEVEL in  
FILM STUDIES

COMPONENT 2

La Jetée (Marker, Korea, 1962)

ANALYSIS SHEET FOR EVALUATIVE  
COMMENTARY



**La Jetée (Marker, Korea, 1962) - Analysis Sheet for Evaluative Commentary**

**Part 1: Brief Reference**

What did you like about the film?	What didn't you like?
What ideas could you use? Narrative or style?	What ideas won't you use? Why?

**Part 2: In-Depth Study - Narrative**

Narrative Feature	Example	Your own example
<b>Establishing protagonist</b> - what information do we find out? How is it conveyed?	Introduced only in narration - first in third person as "a man marked by an image"; then in first person -memory of incident at the airport. We don't see him until the first experiment is shown. This shows how core the act of remembering is to his identity - indeed we find out very little about him (he remains nameless) apart from his 'remembering' (even when he is travelling in time).	
<b>Establishing other characters</b> - what information do we find out? How is it conveyed?	The Woman is the first person we see ("the only image to survive the war") - and she is defined only by the fact the narrator remembers her. Feminist critics may comment on the fact she barely seems to exist outside the experiences of the narrator and her growing belief in him.	
<b>Establishing location (time and place)</b> - what information do we find out? How is it conveyed?	We are told immediately that the location is Paris. The bombed out wreckage of the city (real WW2 images) don't immediately establish that this is the future until the narrator mentions radiation. The underground location beneath the Palais de Chaillot is shown by intercut images of broken cherubs and other sculptures.	

<p><b>Creating Enigmas</b> - what are they? How are they created?</p>	<p>The image the narrator obsesses over is the central enigma: who is the man he witnesses dying? How does he die? Who is the woman? The still images and voiceover powerfully evoke the nature of memory.</p>	<p>What other questions are posed throughout the narrative?</p>
<p><b>Narrative binary oppositions</b></p>	<p>The 'Living Present' vs Past/Future. As the film progresses, what constitutes the 'present' (for the protagonist) seems to shift from his dystopian subterranean society to the 'past' of pre-apocalypse Paris. This is conveyed by the faster rhythm of the montage and the sequence (18:00-18:49) where the images almost become like traditional cinema.</p>	
<p><b>Crisis</b> - how was this conveyed?</p>	<p>Is it the first experiment? The moment the man spots the woman from the airport? Or is it when the future society offers him the chance to escape to the future?</p>	<p>What do you think is the crisis point? How does this affect the rest of the narrative?</p>
<p><b>Resolution</b> - is it closed or open narrative?</p>	<p>The narrative is closed - but it is also in a loop: the narrator is both the dying man <i>and</i> the child watching the scene. This 'time paradox' has inspired films as diverse as <i>The Terminator</i> and <i>Looper</i> (as well as <i>12 Monkeys</i> which is almost a remake).</p>	<p>What do you think about the end? Is it closed - or endlessly circular?</p>

**Part 3: Meaning and Effect**

<p><b>What did you think was the intention of the filmmaker(s)? Intellectual message? Emotional response?</b>          Everyone is trapped in their time - they cannot escape it, even through memory. It is also about concept of photography and cinema itself, trying to 'freeze' time with images despite time always being in motion.</p>	<p><b>How was this achieved?</b>          The use of photomontage separates each frame of the story into a frozen image - even though these are joined together using traditional narrative film techniques such as voiceover, dissolves, fades and music. As the man begins to 'live' more and more in the 'past' with his lover, the space between these frames speeds up to resemble 'motion picture' speed at one point. The stuffed animals in the museum are also 'frozen' in a single moment.  <b>Your own idea:</b></p>
<p><b>Aesthetic binary oppositions</b>          The use of still photo images are combined with traditional narrative cinematic techniques that bring them 'to life'... until the moment around 18:00 when they flow together.</p>	<p><b>Effect of these oppositions?</b>          Shows the intensity of emotion the narrator feels with his lover: like he is finally 'living' in moving time rather than a series of frozen, separated moments.</p>

**Inspirations** - what ideas did this film give you for your own short film?

<p><b>Establishing characters, setting, plot, theme</b></p>	<p><b>Creating enigmas</b></p>
<p><b>Narrative structure (non-/linear? Open/closed ending?)</b></p>	<p><b>Striking use of technical features</b></p>