

ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)

Dir. Joe Cornish

Eduqas GCSE Film Studies
Section C: Contemporary UK film
Focus: aesthetic qualities of film



ATTACK THE BLOCK: RATIONALE AND CONTENT

ATTACK THE BLOCK is a very British film with a very distinct style. It wears its influences clear for all to see and it a triumphant mix of science fiction, urban REALNESS, violent horror film and relatable comedy. Overall, it's an incredibly accomplished debut from writer/Director Joe Cornish.

Made in the UK and funded, in part, by Film4 and the now-defunct UK Film Council, it is a film that could only have been made and set in London.

Directed by Joe Cornish, perhaps best known for his work as one half of comedy duo 'Adam & Joe', the film is set in South London and revolves around an alien invasion that is eventually thwarted by a gang of young teenagers. Released in 2011, the film was developed over a series of years, the film is a complex amalgamation of contextual ideas, driven most notably by Joe Cornish being mugged in the early 2000s. *"The first thing that happened was what opens the film: I was mugged. It was a very low-key mugging. They didn't have weapons — their weapon was their numbers. They were very young. They looked as scared as I was. But it freaked me out. It's a horrible thing to happen, because it undermines your unspoken bond of trust with society."* As a film fan growing up in the 70s and 80s, the influence of science fiction films and 'creature features' such as E.T THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (1982), CRITTERS (1986) and TREMORS (1990) also had a profound influence on Cornish.

Set in a modern-day London, the film also deals with social issues prevalent at the time, also explored in 'hoodie horror' films such as EDEN LAKE (2008), HARRY BROWN (2009) and ILL MANORS (2011). These films explore the representation of inner-city youths and gangs and portray a society that tabloids deemed to be 'Broken Britain'. This representation focused on gangs, youth-orientated crime, under-age drinking, teenage pregnancy and a lack of social mobility.

The film was not a huge success at the Box Office. Costing a reported £8million to make, boxofficemojo.com reports that it made around half of this back during its theatrical release. The film fared well with critics and with audience responses however, with Rotten Tomatoes giving the film a score of 90% based on 158 reviews, with an average rating of 7.4/10.

ATTACK THE BLOCK is now perhaps most notable for its cast, with protagonists John Boyega and Jodie Whittaker since going on to star in the STAR WARS (1977) franchise and DOCTOR WHO, respectively.

So why study ATTACK THE BLOCK? The film offers a perspective on inner-city life in London and does so in an engaging and entertaining way. The influences from other genres such as science-fiction films is clear and this itself lends the study of the film towards exploring key tropes and stylistic choices from the science fiction genre. It also has an interesting range of contexts and in studying the film, offers a rich, detailed text that informs as much as it entertains.

Characters	
Moses:	Protagonist: 'Gang' leader. A teenager. Age unknown for most of the film. Criminal as he mugs Sam. Kills the first Alien that lands and as a result is responsible for the alien invasion. Becomes the saviour by the end of the film.
Sam:	Young trainee nurse. Begins films as protagonist. Is mugged on her way home on fireworks night. Resents the young gang who mugged her but comes to work with them for the greater good.
Pest:	One of the gang members who looks up to and takes 'orders' from Moses. Is often the comedic relief in the film and offers audience some insight into life of a teenager by expressing what Moses does or cannot.
Brewis:	Zoology student stoner who comes to the Block to buy drugs. Is very much the 'fish out of water' in the situation.
Hi-Hatz:	Antagonist: feared gang member who runs the Block in terms of crime and drugs. Psychopathic, prone to violence and owner of the weed grown by Ron at the top of the Block.

Film Style	
Realistic depiction of London	
Lighting	Low-key. Light provided via ambient elements such as lamp posts, fireworks and car headlamps. Whole block is bathed in shadows.
Props	Recognisable items for teenagers; BMXs, moped, mobile phones, hoodies and caps. Fireworks and other weapons are 'realistic' in their origin.
Cinematography	Grey, dull and drab. Very reflective of typical high-rise estates. Colour palette reflects brutalist architecture and the atmosphere of social anxiety. Night-time evokes sense of criminality and hostility.
Sound	Local dialect and accents used. Sound effects of bikes, weapons, fireworks reflect recognisable aural soundtrack. Soundtrack utilises elements from hip-hop and grime.
70s influenced, classic Sci-Fi	
Lighting	Inside; corridors are generally high-key and well lit, somewhat unnaturally so. Block itself features odd spotlights and bright lights from flats that resemble lights from a spaceship. Blacklights create unusual and unsettling light in the 'weed room'.
Props	Aliens as puppets are especially unsettling and recognisable as a key sci-fi trope. Weapons are 'realistic' but weapons in general key for sci-fi, especially when establishing or creating conflict.
Cinematography	Unusual colours; bright & luminous blues, UV whites, silver & "blackest black" on the alien 'fur'. Smoke used in corridor to create tension, restrict view but also to resemble key scenes from other sci-fi films. Shots in corridors framed to resemble interior of spaceships; 'weed room' alien in design-pipes etc.
Sound	Soundtrack uses elements typical of sci-fi genre, colloquially referred to as 'beeps and boops' and these become more prominent as narrative involves the aliens more. Alien sound effects not recognisable as natural.

Institutional information	
Director:	Joe Cornish
Release:	October 27, 2011
Production company:	Film4, Studio Canal, Big Talk Pictures, UK Film Council
Country of production:	UK/France
Starring:	Jodie Whittaker, Nick Frost, John Boyega, Luke Treadaway
Genres:	Sci-fi; comedy; action; horror.
Other information:	Produced by Edgar Wright, Director of Shaun of the Dead. Joe Cornish's feature film debut.
Award nominations:	BAFTA nominated: outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer

Context:	
Set in a South London, 2011.	
Idea for film came from Joe Cornish being mugged by a teenage gang in similar setting.	
Joe Cornish was a fan of creature features and Sci-Fi films growing up, including Star Wars.	
Cornish interviewed various people in youth groups in London in order to find out what kind of weapons they would use if a real alien invasion occurred. He also used these interviews to develop the colloquial language for his characters.	
The fictional locations and surrounding areas in the film are named after British sci-fi writers.	
Film was released two months after the London riots of 2011. The representation of the working classes in the British Media has always been pejorative, but this event gave rise to iconic images which were used to demonise certain people.	
"Hoodie Horror" films such as HARRY BROWN (2009) and ILL MANORS (2012) offer a negative view of a similar setting.	

Narrative (The method and means by which you construct the events of a story into a plot)	
Narrative structure:	Linear narrative, three act structure.
Narrative viewpoint:	Teen POV, young adult POV.
Binary oppositions:	Create conflict. Key oppositions are children vs. their parents, teenagers vs. adults and young people, in particular black teenagers and young adults and police oppression/profiling.

ATTACK THE BLOCK: KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Key scenes	
The Opening Scene: (http://bit.ly/ATBK51)	As with all films, this scene establishes character and scenario. In this case, the film establishes that it's set during Bonfire Night and that our central character, for now at least, is a young trainee Nurse called Sam. It also establishes an uneasy atmosphere because of the mugging. Interesting however, it establishes the characters of the young gang but in a way that might not be fairly representative of what they're actually like, as we see later in the film as the narrative develops.
Attack on the police van: (http://bit.ly/ATBK52)	This is a great scene in the way that it uses the conventions of horror to help develop the uneasy atmosphere earlier in the film. It also raises the stakes in terms of the on-screen violence and the peril for the main characters. The scene also helps to establish a relationship between Sam and the gang, as well as utilise imagery that has interesting social context. The representation of police as authority figures here is key.
The final scene (http://bit.ly/ATBK53)	The final scene uses key generic conventions from the sci-fi and action genre films. It's also the most obvious example of Moses' redemption. The lighting is especially interesting here and key aspects of cinematography such as camera movement and the editing decision of having much of the scene in slow-motion is also an interesting choice that is worth analysing.
Preparing to kill the aliens (http://bit.ly/ATBK54)	In a film full of sci-fi imagery, few scenes are as obvious as this one. The use of the UV light as a 'body scanner' is something that has been used in sci-fi films for decades. The lighting and mise-en-scene too is cleverly manipulated to create the sense that this setting is not 'realistic' or 'Earthy' in style. It also features some interesting interactions between the characters and we get a much clearer sense of who they are as people. The way that Moses offers to be the sacrifice and how people respond to this are great examples of the themes of consequences and redemption in the film.
The gang walk through the estate (http://bit.ly/ATBK55)	Another scene which helps to see the difference between the style of the world outside the block and the style inside. The gang are initially looking at the things they stole from Sam. As they throw them away it's as if they're getting rid of 'realistic' props. The focus then becomes the alien. As the gang approach the Block the walkways and low-key lighting that cast straight-lined shadows create a strange style. It resembles the retro futuristic style of a 70s sci-fi aesthetic, with muted colours and straight lines. When walking towards the Block, the lighting takes on a strange blue-hue, reminiscent of the aliens' teeth and an unusual colour for Earth, indicating that the Block is much more of a sci-fi setting than the 'real world' outside.

Themes/issues.	
Conflict:	Seen all the way through the film, conflict is key.
Adults vs. teenagers:	This is a development from theme of conflict. Doesn't just refer to conflict however- when the gang are seen running home for supplies we see the disconnect between adults and teenagers in a variety of ways. Note how Sam, Ron, Hi-Hatz and Brewis all approach the situation differently to the teenage gang.
Authority:	Police are seen as bullies and people who will not listen. Their authority is undermined by the aliens and their tactics are seen to be unsuccessful compared to the teenagers. Younger people in the Block have no respect for the police and by extension, almost all people older than them.
Invasion:	Whilst the aliens are the most obvious example of 'invasion', this can also be seen via the police 'invading' an area they are not welcome in. Invasion of privacy into their flat is an issue for the young girls.
Consequences:	From the beginning, the film deals with the idea of actions have consequences. The mugging of Sam nearly costs Pest his life when Sam initially refuses to treat him later on. The reckless actions of the teenagers throughout the film, especially Moses, have dire and often fatal consequences.
Redemption:	Moses gains redemption for his life of crime and poor choices. Near the beginning of the film it is established that Moses is a criminal and makes bad choices. We later learn that some of this is due to his need to survival and self-preservation- he appears to be largely alone and in need of support. His reckless actions in killing the alien cause the overall, main invasion and consequently the death of his friends, but his final act and the celebration of him as a hero, serves as a great example of redemption.
Sacrifice:	The most obvious example of sacrifice is of Moses at the end of the film, but we see examples of sacrifice throughout, some of principles others of physical acts.
Links to technology timeline:	
Soundtrack	Featuring a Dolby Surround 7.1 mix, Attack the Block features dialogue, a soundtrack, score and makes wide use of digital sound production.
Colour	Perhaps unsurprisingly, colour is used throughout. Night-time scenes are handled well and some post-production work on the colour grading has been done to create the specific look of the film.
Independent studio production	Not a product of one of the larger film studios.
Widescreen, not 3D	Attack the Block is presented in a widescreen ratio of 2.35:1
Some CGI, but mostly practical effects	Most of the special effects in this film are practical, meaning the use of puppets and models, rather than CGI. Some CGI was used to help <i>augment</i> the practical work however.

ATTACK THE BLOCK: CHARACTERS



**Jodie Whittaker as
Samantha Adams**



**Jumayn Hunter as
Hi-Hatz**



**John Boyega as
Moses**



**Paige Meade as
Dimples**



**Nick Frost as
Ron**



**Franz Drameh as
Dennis**



**Luke Treadaway as
Brewis**



**Michael Ajao as
Mayhem**



**Alex Esmail as
Pest**



**Sammy Williams as
Probs**



**Leeon Jones as
Jerome**

AREAS OF ASSESSMENT FOR ATTACK THE BLOCK

ATTACK THE BLOCK is part of Section C: Contemporary UK film of your Film Studies GCSE. The specific focus of this film is on aesthetic qualities of film, or the specific 'look' and 'style' of the film.

As with all films you will study as part of your GCSE, you will need to know the key aspects of Film Language used in the film. This will help you to explore how and why the film has a specific aesthetic. The list of these is provided below. The knowledge organiser also has the key aspects of these included.

You will also need to know key contextual details of the film. These will be covered from the next page.

Together, the film language and context will allow you to analyse, evaluate and assess the film in a variety of ways, but always with a focus on the aesthetics of the film.

Cinematography, including lighting

- camera shots, including extreme close-ups, close-ups, medium shots, long shots, extreme long shots, high, low and 60° angle shots (off-centre shots), tilt and aerial shots
- camera movement, including pan, tracking, dolly and the use of Steadicam technology
- Lighting, including position and intensity
- framing created through distance, angle, level and mobility and how it directs spectator attention
- the typical meanings associated with all of the above aspects of cinematography including lighting
- how each of the above contributes to the portrayal of characters and settings
- how cinematography can combine with mise-en-scène or sound to underline meaning
- how each of the above generates spectator responses

Mise-en-scène

- settings, props, costume and make-up
- the typical meanings associated with each of the above aspects of mise-en-scène
- how mise-en-scène conventionally conveys realism
- how settings contribute to the themes and issues a film raises
- how props contribute to character and/or narrative development in the films studied
- how costume and make-up convey character
- how each of the above aspects of mise-en-scène generates spectator responses

Editing

- types of edit (cut, dissolve, fade)
- the principles of continuity editing (shot-reverse shot)
- cross-cutting
- pace of editing
- visual effects (created in post-production)
- the typical meanings associated with all of the above aspects of editing
- how continuity editing establishes relationships between characters
- how cross-cutting contributes to the portrayal of character
- how editing contributes to narrative development in the films studied
- how editing, including visual effects, generates spectator responses

Sound

- diegetic and non-diegetic sound, including ambient sound, sound effects and sound bridges
- the typical meanings associated with diegetic sound including how it contributes to character and narrative development
- the typical meanings associated with non-diegetic sound including how music motifs convey character and different types of music contribute to the narrative
- how non-diegetic sound in particular contributes to the themes and issues a film raises
- how sound, particularly music, whether diegetic or non-diegetic, generates spectator responses in the films studied.

CONTEXT

Context is the the social, political, institutional and historical background details of the film.

For **ATTACK THE BLOCK** you'll need to know details of each of these. As a reminder, the context above can be defined as:

Social: factors and details from society.

Political: details about politics that may have had an influence.

Institutional: key elements of the film industry.

Historical: anything from the past that has influenced events going forward.

The key areas of context you need to be able to recall and apply to this film are as follows:

Sci-Fi Film – Conventions, Hybrids, Narrative, Aesthetic tropes;

Joe Cornish – Influences on him as a person and as a film fan;

“Broken Britain” - representation of the young working class from British tabloids;

“Hoodie Horror” films - how they represent life for the working class and in social housing;

2011 London Riots - how it was reported, represented and it's affect on society;

Heygate Estate, Grenfell Tower and Social Housing in the UK;

Institutional Factors – UK low budget sci-fi film.

GROUP TASK

Over the next few pages you will find a series of anecdotes that each relate to a different aspect of context for the film.

Working in pairs of small groups:

- Read each anecdote.
- Cut out each one.
- On A3 paper, separate this into 4, equal size boxes as demonstrated below.
- Glue each anecdote into the relevant box.

SOCIAL CONTEXT	Context of ATTACK THE BLOCK	POLITICAL CONTEXT
HISTORICAL CONTEXT		INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

CONTEXT

- Joe Cornish
- Famous for his comedy work in presenting on TV and Radio with Adam Buxton.
- ATTACK THE BLOCK is his Directorial debut.
- Has also co-written THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN: SECRET OF THE UNICORN, with Steven Moffat and Edgar Wright, and ANT-MAN, with Wright, Adam McKay and Paul Rudd

- To also help develop the script and narrative, Joe Cornish interviewed various people in youth groups in London in order to find out what kind of weapons they would use if a real alien invasion occurred.
- He also used these interviews to develop the colloquial language for his characters, this was influenced by the film A CLOCKWORK ORANGE which also uses 'nadsat' as a dialect.
- Cornish embarked on a year-long tour of youth clubs in South London, interviewing kids there in an attempt to get inside the heads – and lingo – of his would-be characters. thing, and talked them through the story, recording everything they said.

- “It was about 10 years ago, that I had the idea for Attack The Block. The first thing that happened was what opens the film: I was mugged. It was a very low-key mugging. They didn't have weapons – their weapon was their numbers. They were very young. They looked as scared as I was. But it freaked me out. It's a horrible thing to happen, because it undermines your unspoken bond of trust with society.”
- “I loved creature features, whether it was ET, GREMLINS, CRITTERS, TREMORS or, a little bit later, PREDATOR. I loved the fact that they had outlandish things happening in quite familiar suburban environments. I used to pine for similar things to happen in Brixton and Stockwell”.

- A number of films released from 2006 onwards have been identified as dealing with the fears stirred up by the idea of Broken Britain.
- They include: ILL MANORS, HARRY BROWN, EDEN LAKE and ATTACK THE BLOCK.
- These films were also called 'Hoodie Horrors' and dealt with the negative representation of teenagers in society (Broken Britain, Hoodie Horror) especially representation of black teenagers.
- These films also explore how society treats working class people who live on estates like the one in the film.

- The sessions were incredibly rewarding for Cornish. They provided him with the phrases he sought to establish both the shorthand between his five heroes, and the authenticity of the world he was building. “It was fun to learn what all the little words mean,” he says.
- “We built ourselves a lexicon of about ten words. I thought it would be best to keep the lexicon to about ten and then use them repeatedly, so eventually by context you know what they mean.”

- “When I was mugged I thought that they looked weirdly cinematic because they looked like ninjas or bandits in a Western. The bikes they rode looked a bit like something out of ET. I started thinking about what would have happened if that mugging had been interrupted by the kind of thing that only happened in American movies when I was a kid. What if ET had actually landed at that moment in time? What if it was an aggressive ET?
- Gang movies were hugely important to me growing up and a massive influence on Attack The Block I loved THE OUTSIDER by Francis Ford Coppola and THE WARRIORS by Walter Hill.

- Broken Britain is a term which has been used in The Sun newspaper and by the Conservative Party to describe social decay in the United Kingdom.
- The term has included coverage of several supposedly interlinked issues:
- Child neglect particularly in the wake of the Baby P case and the kidnapping of Shannon Matthews
- Binge and underage drinking
- Violent, gang, knife and gun crime

- The film came out two months after the outbreak of The 2011 London Riots and must be seen in this context because the media were quick to point the blame at teenagers, especially black teenagers.
- The 2011 riots occurred between 6 and 11 August 2011, when thousands of people rioted in several London boroughs and then in cities and towns across England. The resulting chaos generated looting, arson, and mass deployment of police and resulted in the deaths of five people.

- Causes of the Riots were numerous but include:
- Poor relations with the police, social exclusion, family breakdown, government cuts, unemployment and poverty, rioting for fun, gang culture, failure of the justice system.
- The representation of those involved however was simplified by the media. Participants were branded almost exclusively as looters and as 'mindless thugs'.

- “In Eighties films anything that was a 'special effect' was usually a model or a costume or a painting or a puppet. There was something fantastic about that.
- So for Attack The Block, I wanted my creatures to be there. I don't want to talk too much about how we did them, because I like to keep a bit of mystery. But when they smash through a window, they really do smash through a window. When they attack one of the cast, they're genuinely attacking one of the cast.”

CONTEXT PART 2

- Grenfell Tower in London is a similar setting to ATTACK THE BLOCK
- Again, tower blocks representative of poverty and “asylum seekers, benefit cheats and chavs”
- Of course, not true, but the representation of the type of housing has been created and reinforced by films and media.
- Residents complained of being neglected by the council and MP's and there was allegedly lack of fire safety in the tower prior to the disaster
- Modern audience more sympathetic towards the kids in ATTACK THE BLOCK because they are protecting their community in the same way as the residents of Grenfell came together after the tragic fire.

- Institutions are all to do with the business and industry behind the films.
- Institutions are the companies who create, produce, distribute, show, market and regulate films.
- A key aspect of ATTACK THE BLOCK is the institutional information behind it.
- As it is film from Component 2: Global Film, we need to consider it as a film made in the UK, with money from the UK and not a typical ‘Hollywood’ film.
- Not all of the finance came from the UK however. StudioCanal, a French company were one of the producers of the film.

- Representative of the location of the Wyndham Estate in the film, the Heygate Estate in South London was built in 1974
- Huge towering concrete blocks that towered over smaller ones with bridges connecting them
- At the time it was representative of modern living
- As style and housing changed the look became more representative of crime, poverty and dilapidation.
- Home to more than 3,000 people, the estate was demolished between 2011 and 2014 as part of the urban regeneration of the Elephant and Castle area.

- High-budget films are associated with Hollywood, which has the cash to invest huge amounts in films, hoping they will be ‘blockbusters’ and make plenty of profit.
- The costs of making a film seem huge – but so are the profits! For example:
- AVATAR (2009) cost \$254 Million to make. But the profit was much higher - the film made a gross profit of around \$2 billion. The success of the film was partly attributed to the immense hype during the promotional period.

- Science fiction films have traditionally been made by large studios in Hollywood as only they have the money available to fund these expensive films.
- Science fiction films can be expensive because of the:
- Costly special effects; elaborate stunt work; large casts; the big spectacle and set pieces.
- Hollywood likes science fiction films as they are ‘formula films’ with familiar genre conventions - easy to sell to audiences and not risky to make.
- Science fiction films are often sold as ‘the summer blockbuster’.

- New technology has made independent and low-budget film making more possible: there is now cheap technology to create, upload, share and distribute and films (iPhones, laptops, the internet...).
- Some of the difficulties of low-budget science-fictions include the cost of big, elaborate and outdoors sets and the expensive set pieces of ‘action’ sequences.
- If successful, the actors and directors often go on to work for the big studios in Hollywood.

- Low budget films are often more unusual, innovative and risk-taking in their ideas as they do not have to please a big studio or guarantee big profits.
- They will usually have fewer action sequences, fewer special effects, or effects that can be created through CGI rather than by making expensive sets, props, employing stunt actors etc.
- They may have less famous stars, or stars who want to do something different / worthwhile.

- Big Talk Pictures, known for films including SHAUN OF THE DEAD, HOT FUZZ, AND SCOTT PILGRIM VS. THE WORLD, produced the film alongside Film4, The UK Film Council, and StudioCanal.
- It was made for \$13 Million (£8 million) and as you can see by the fact that there four production companies involved this suggests that UK films are often a lot smaller than USA films, we do not have the same amount of money over here to make big action films like AVATAR.

- The UK film industry has produced some successful sci-fi films:
- MOON, NEVER LET ME GO, SUNSHINE & THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
- However, the UK does not have the same amount of high budgets as Hollywood films however so our films are usually smaller terms of scale.
- Low budget films are often ‘Independent’ or Indie films (films without the backing of a big studio).

SUMMARISING CONTEXT

SOLO TASK

Answer the questions below:

1. How much did the film cost to make? Where do you think the costs went?
2. Who stars in the film? What else have they starred in before or since?
3. Why do you think that Joe Cornish chose South London to set the film?
4. How does the choice of setting help to reinforce the generic conventions?
5. In what way might the choice of a large housing estate help with the institutional issues of making a sci-fi film with a small budget?
6. Explain why the choice of young, black teenagers is a politically and historically interesting choice for lead characters.
7. Why did Joe Cornish decide to create this film? What historical influences drove him to create this film?
8. How does the context of this film both agree and disagree with the idea of “Broken Britain”?
9. How did the institution of Hollywood have an affect on the creation of this film?
10. Which production companies were involved? What have they made before? Why might that be relevant to what this film is about?

FILM CONVENTIONS

PAIRED TASK

Conventions are things which we expect and demand to see, or hear, from films. They are the things that happen that tell us what genre of film we're watching, what type of character we are seeing or what form of story is being told.

The conventions you need to be able to explore are:

Generic conventions: What elements of film language are used to tell the audience what genre the film belongs too?

Narrative conventions: What happens in the story to make this a typical or recognisable narrative?

Where are the conventions of a Western (cowboy) film in terms of ...

Generic conventions:	Narrative conventions:

Where are the conventions of a horror film in terms of ...

Generic conventions:	Narrative conventions:

SOLO TASK

Where are the conventions of a sci-fi film?

This video may help in adding plenty of detailed examples, especially for the generic conventions of film language.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9GiJENtc5o>

Narrative conventions

Generic conventions:			
Mise-en-scene	Cinematography	Sound	Editing

GENERIC CONVENTIONS AND HYBRIDS

SOLO TASK

Sometimes a film may feature generic or narrative conventions from more than one genre.

A hybrid film will feature a mix of two or more main genres.

Cowboys and Aliens is a classic example of this, but the genre mix can be more subtle.

Looking at the poster for Attack the Block, what genres do you think the film will feature? How can you tell this? Use the space around the poster to annotate elements on the poster that align with generic conventions of any genre.



WATCH THE FILM

Name of film / location of scene:

Focus / overall purpose of notes:

Key idea or scene 1:

Key idea or scene 2:

Key idea or scene 3:

Key idea or scene 4:

Key idea or scene 5:

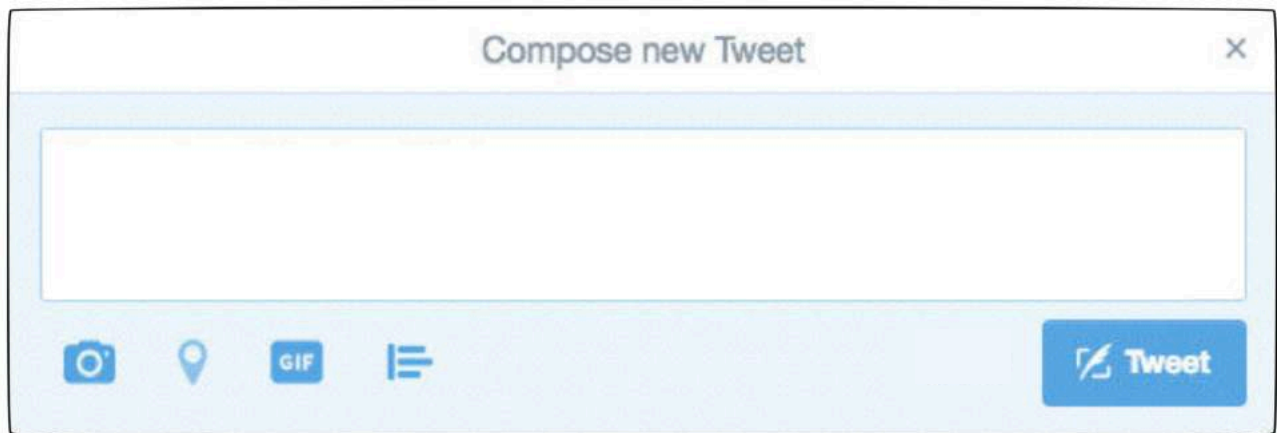
Key idea or scene 6:

TWITTER REACTIONS

SOLO TASK

Having just watched the film, use the Twitter reaction box below to record your immediate thoughts and reaction to the film. These will be useful later on when you will need to consider how the film has a range of affects on different people. To help, your teacher will collate all of the reactions in the class and give you copies of these to stick into the next page of your booklet.

Aiming to keep in the style of a tweet, try to keep your ideas relatively brief, using only the space provided.



Compose new Tweet

✕

📷 📍 GIF 📄

🔗 Tweet

TWITTER REACTIONS OF YOUR PEERS

Use the space below to glue down Twitter reactions of others.

THE CHARACTERS

SOLO TASK

Next to each picture, add the name of each character and then 3 things you know about each of them.



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-



Name:

-
-
-

THE LOCATIONS

PAIRED TASK

Below are images from 4 main locations in the film; the streets, the corridors inside the Block, inside people's homes and the "Weed Room".

For each image, describe one key event or scene that happens there. Then, describe each using as much detail as you can, using words related to cinematography or mise-en-scene.





KEY SCENE 1

SOLO TASK

Rewatch the key scene listed below. For each, complete a note sheet on the scene, using the section of the note sheet to help make specific notes on the use of film language for each.

Name of film / location of scene: The Opening Scene (http://bit.ly/ATBKS1)	
Examples of lighting:	
Examples of key colours:	
Examples of costume:	
Examples of camera movement:	
Examples of shot sizes or camera angles	
Examples of editing:	

KEY SCENE 2

Name of film / location of scene: Attack on the police van (<http://bit.ly/ATBKS2>)

Examples of hair, costume and make up:

Examples of lighting:

Examples of editing:

Examples of lighting:

Examples of shot sizes or camera angles

Examples of key colours:

KEY SCENE 3

Name of film / location of scene: The final scene (http://bit.ly/ATBKS3)	
Examples of key composition:	
Examples of key colours:	
Examples of editing:	
Examples of camera movement:	
Examples of shot sizes or camera angles:	
Examples of special effects:	

THE 'LOOK' OF ATTACK THE BLOCK - URBAN REALISM, CLASSIC SCI-FI AND HORROR

ATTACK THE BLOCK has a very distinct visual style. Filmed on location in South London and in a studio constructed to look like in a genuine housing estate, it's impossible to ignore the 'realistic' style presented on screen. In fact, in many ways the look of the film resembles some of the 'hoodie horror' films we looked at during the section on context. Films such as ILL MANORS (2011) and HARRY BROWN (2009) are set in similar locations and time periods. They also depict a gritty, urban lifestyle that is reflected in the style of the film. Colours like grey and dull browns dominate the colour palette on screen and many of the locations look to be quite run-down or at the least, uncared for. Many long shots are used to suggest a detachment from the scenes and to also perhaps suggest a CCTV style distance, watching people or crimes happen from far away. These establishing shots also help to show where the film is set clearly and allow the audience to get a clear sense of the time and place of the film, with recognisable streets, naturalistic costume and mise-en-scene that sets up the film as being very 'normal'. This style can be referred to as 'Urban Realism'.

One of the most important aspects of the look of ATTACK THE BLOCK is the building itself. The specific architecture of the Block is called 'Brutalism'. This was very popular style of architecture between 1950 and the 1970s. These buildings were very 'rugged' in their style-they were not concerned about looking comfortable or 'nice'. Instead, Brutalist buildings are usually very functional and unpretentious. This meant that surfaces were usually made of large parts of unpainted concrete and meant that key features like windows or lifts were clear to see from the outside.

Brutalist buildings, like the one featured in ATTACK THE BLOCK, are often seen as unpleasant and unwelcoming. At the same time, they're also seen as somewhat strange and have elements of a strange practical, futuristic style to them. Spaceships, housing estates and clothing that are depicted in films from the 1950s onwards had a similar style as they put the practicalities of need and function over style and form. This does make sense; for example-why design a spaceship to look intricate and exciting on the outside if it'll never be seen and make it harder to travel safer?

"Practising architect Amy Butt has researched the role of tower blocks in sci-fi films, and believes Cornish chose the locations because of the inherent space-age quality of tall buildings. In London in particular, where these blocks are located in areas which were blitz-damaged, they sit in areas surrounded by terraced houses, and have a very other-worldly presence," she says, adding that the use of an inner-city tower block as the focus of the film was 'a subversion of the normal trope of the tower as an incomprehensible and futuristic space. It's transformed into an everyday space, one that people are very comfortable in, and that they see as worth protecting from aliens.'"

<https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/culture/building-brave-new-worlds-the-architecture-of-sci-fi-movies/8673490.article>

Inside the block, ATTACK THE BLOCK has a very mixed aesthetic. Inside the production design of the interiors of the flats is again very recognisable and reminiscent of the 'Urban Realism' style. In the corridor and in "Ron's Weed Room" however, things have a much more of a classic Sci-Fi style. Genre classics such as BLADE RUNNER (1982), ALIEN (1979) and ALIENS (1986), STAR WARS (1977), 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968) and even more modern films such as EVENT HORIZON (1997) and LIFE (2017) can be seen in a variety of ways. Elements of cinematography, editing and mise-en-scene are key here, helping to make the Weed Room evoke a style of a laboratory, the corridors of the block similar to those of a spaceship and of course, the aliens evocative of classic practical effects of the 70s and 80s.

Finally, ATTACK THE BLOCK has a real edge to it. At the times the violence is shocking and brutal. Characters are set up in moments of surprise, blood and gore can be seen in several scenes and there is an inherent tension in the film created through the style of the film. As with all horror films, editing is key here, but cinematography is also vitally important in creating a style which is genuinely horrific and reminiscent of slasher horror films of the 70s and 80s.

URBAN REALISM - BRUTALIST BUILDINGS



The Alexandra Road Estate, Swiss Cottage



Brunel University



National Theatre, London



Barbican Centre & Estate



Hyde Park Flats, Sheffield



Weston Rise Estate on Pentonville Road

URBAN REALISM - BRUTALIST BUILDINGS ACTIVITIES

SOLO TASK

Below are a list of key vocabulary terms. Firstly, look up any words you're unsure of using a dictionary and note the definition.

modular

bold

utopian

exposed

ugly

concrete

basic

cold

angular

unpretentious

dramatic

muscular

posturing

exterior

PAIRED TASK

Having researched these key terms, use as many of these as possible to write down a description of **one** of the images on the previous page. Then ask your partner to guess which image it is based purely on your description. Then swap, so that the second person writes a description of one of the images on the previous page, and the first person has to guess.

PARTNER ONE DESCRIPTION:

PARTNER TWO GUESS:

CORRECT ANSWER:

PARTNER TWO DESCRIPTION:

PARTNER ONE GUESS:

CORRECT ANSWER:

URBAN REALISM, "HOODIE HORROR" FILMS AND "BROKEN BRITAIN"



Hyde Park Flats, Sheffield



Still from HARRY BROWN (2008)



Still from ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)



Still from HARRY BROWN (2008)



Still from ILL MANORS (2011)



Still from ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)



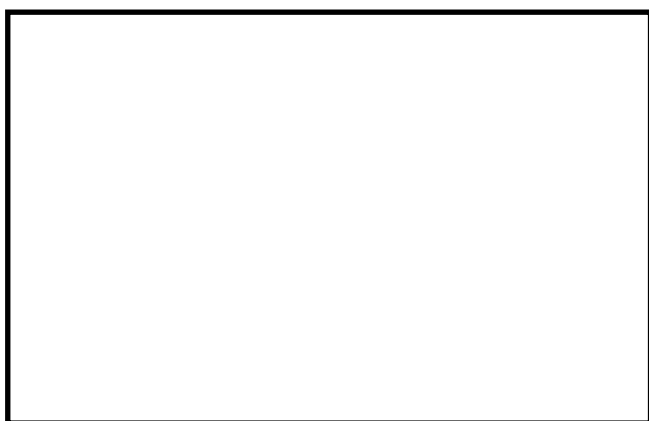
Still from ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)

URBAN REALISM - “HOODIE HORROR” FILMS AND “BROKEN BRITAIN” ACTIVITIES

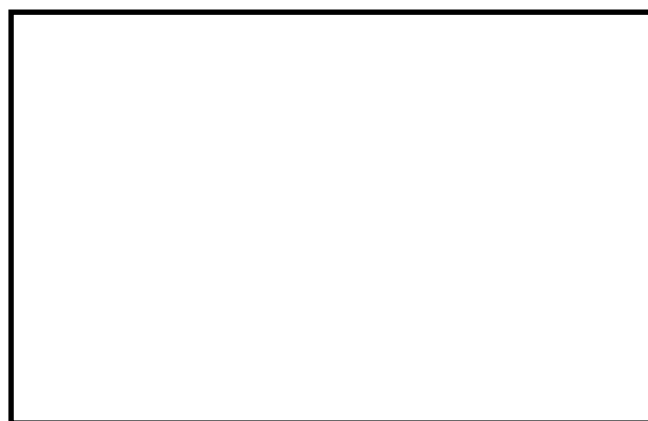
PAIRED TASK

Working with a partner, each spend a few minutes looking closely at the images above. Pay attention to composition, colour and details such as camera angles and shot sizes of the images from films.

Then, with one person *not* looking at the images, one person should describe one of the images in as much detail as possible, while the person who is not looking draws what the image is below. Then swap, so that you both have at least one go of describing and one go of drawing. The idea here is to improve the overall level detail of your description so that an audience can picture that image clearly in their head.



Person one: drawing of a scene from the previous page



Person two: drawing of a scene from the previous page

SOLO TASK

None of the screenshots from ATTACK THE BLOCK on the previous page are the exact same as the photos from real life or the screenshots from the other films.

They are similar in a number of ways however. Using the table below, try to add at least 3 examples or descriptions that mean these images are similar in some way.

Mise-en-scene	
Lighting	
Colour	
Shot size	

URBAN REALISM - THE 2011 LONDON RIOTS



Lighting

Camera angle

Shot size

Description of similar shot from AtB.



Shot size

Clothing

Performance

Description of similar shot from AtB.



Shot size

Composition

Clothing

Description of similar shot from AtB.



Performance

Camera angle

Description of similar shot from AtB.



Props

Composition

Description of similar shot from AtB.



Camera angle

Lighting

Description of similar shot from AtB.

URBAN REALISM - THE 2011 LONDON RIOTS ACTIVITIES

GROUP TASK

The London Riots of August 2011 affected more cities than just London, but it was there that the majority of the events took place and where we find some similarities with the imagery from Attack the Block. Interestingly, ATTACK THE BLOCK was released in May of 2011 so happened before the riots, showing that it wasn't influenced by the images that came from those 4 nights of rioting. Instead, what it does show is that the style of ATTACK THE BLOCK is visually accurate in representing London, young criminals, and the dramatically visual aspect of crimes.

Many of the key photographs from the riots saw people causing damage, looting and, crucially for the sake of comparison with ATTACK THE BLOCK, young people confronting authority figures. This is a key theme in ATTACK THE BLOCK and the representation of how young people dismiss or openly rebel against authority can be seen throughout the film. In some of the most striking images from the riots we see people fighting against or antagonising the police, often with the sight of fires, explosions, damage around them. We also commonly see people obscuring their faces and features using hooded tops, scarves or other items of clothing which juxtaposes with the often very aggressive posturing and sometimes open aggression towards the police.

Some scenes from ATTACK THE BLOCK feature police and many feature the characters dressed in a manner that is specifically designed to help cover up their features. As well as this, other elements of mise-en-scene are also used to ground the film in a realism by using specific props and asking the characters to perform in specific ways. The use of cinematography is also crucial; notice how many of the photos from the riots are taken from long distances to avoid the photographer being caught up directly in the events. In some instance we also see this approach taken in ATTACK THE BLOCK; the 'attack of the police van' scene for example, features many long shots, almost from the POV of the characters hiding at a safe distance. Some scenes, such as the mugging scene however, feature many close-ups and big close-ups which often make the scene feel uncomfortably 'close', thereby invoking the feeling Joe Cornish felt when being mugged.

In order to complete this activity, you'll need to be in small groups. You will also need access to the film. Aim to rewatch as much of ATTACK THE BLOCK you can, paying attention to the idea of Urban Realism, crimes and the role of the police as possible. Whilst doing so, each of you should aim to either; complete one specialised section of film language for every photo, for example clothing. OR, complete one box each. Then, work together to suggest one screenshot from ATTACK THE BOX which is aesthetically similar to that photo.

CLASSIC SCI-FI - CORRIDORS



Still from ALIENS (1986)



Still from BLADE RUNNER (1982)



Still from making of ATTACK THE BLOCK DVD.



Still from ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)

CLASSIC SCI-FI - CORRIDORS ACTIVITIES

SOLO TASK

Corridors are a vital aspect of many sci-fi films, especially those set in space and on a spaceship. There are two main reasons for this and both are applicable to ATTACK THE BLOCK.

The use of corridors on the narrative is important; it helps to trap and fundamentally restrict where a character can, or can't go. Long, narrow corridors are features which force characters to explore or take routes which, in the case of aliens, crashes or other disaster, they may not wish to travel-corridors therefore force them towards something they do not want to go near. Similarly, they restrict where a character can go if they're running away or trying to avoid something-a character cannot take a shortcut or hide easily and instead are forced to run in a direction over which they have no control. The idea of control therefore is key here; corridors restrict character control and agency.

From a production point of view, corridors are also relatively easy and cheap to create. They are smaller in size and scope to 'normal' rooms and the repetitive nature of their style means that corridors can be made to be long relatively easily. The still from the making of ATTACK THE BLOCK displays this well-notice how this corridor is essentially a door and a bare wall, but then 'repeated' for about 100 metres-production of this is, in theory, much easier than a series of larger and varied rooms. This is also easier to create using CGI. The somewhat simplistic style of a corridor can also be easier to manipulate on a cinematography level. With almost exactly the same dimensions of the corridor throughout, controlling lights, smoke and focal size is much easier than a room with many different areas, aspects and features. Of course, some films such as LIFE (2017), ALIEN COVENANT (2017) and EVENT HORIZON (1997).

Above, we can see how the likes of ALIENS (1986) and BLADE RUNNER (1982) feature corridors that don't look exactly the same as they do in ATTACK THE BLOCK, but there are clear aesthetic similarities. Answer the questions below to help explore how and why that is as well as why ATTACK THE BLOCK uses corridors.

- 1. In the screenshots from ALIENS (1986) and BLADE RUNNER (1982), both feature 3 stand-out colours; silver, teal and black. These are not colours you see in every day life. Why do you think you see these colours in these screen shots? What are they trying to suggest or tell the audience?**
2. Describe the screenshots from ALIENS (1986) and BLADE RUNNER (1982) in terms of cinematography, focusing on camera angle, shot size and overall composition.
- 3. Describe the screenshots from ATTACK THE BLOCK in terms of cinematography, focusing on camera angle, shot size and overall composition. Be sure to describe the differences between the first and second shot.**
4. With what we know about the use of corridors in sci-fi films, why do you think ATTACK THE BLOCK uses corridors in the film? Ensure your answer refers to both production and narrative.
- 5. In what way are the screenshots of the corridors from ATTACK THE BLOCK aesthetically similar to those from the other films? Why do you think the production design here is so similar to that of iconic films from this genre?**

CLASSIC SCI-FI - URBAN REALISM AS SCI-FI LOCATIONS



1a: ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)



1b: ALIENS (1986)



2a: ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)



2b: A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (1972)

CLASSIC SCI-FI - URBAN REALISM AS SCI-FI LOCATIONS

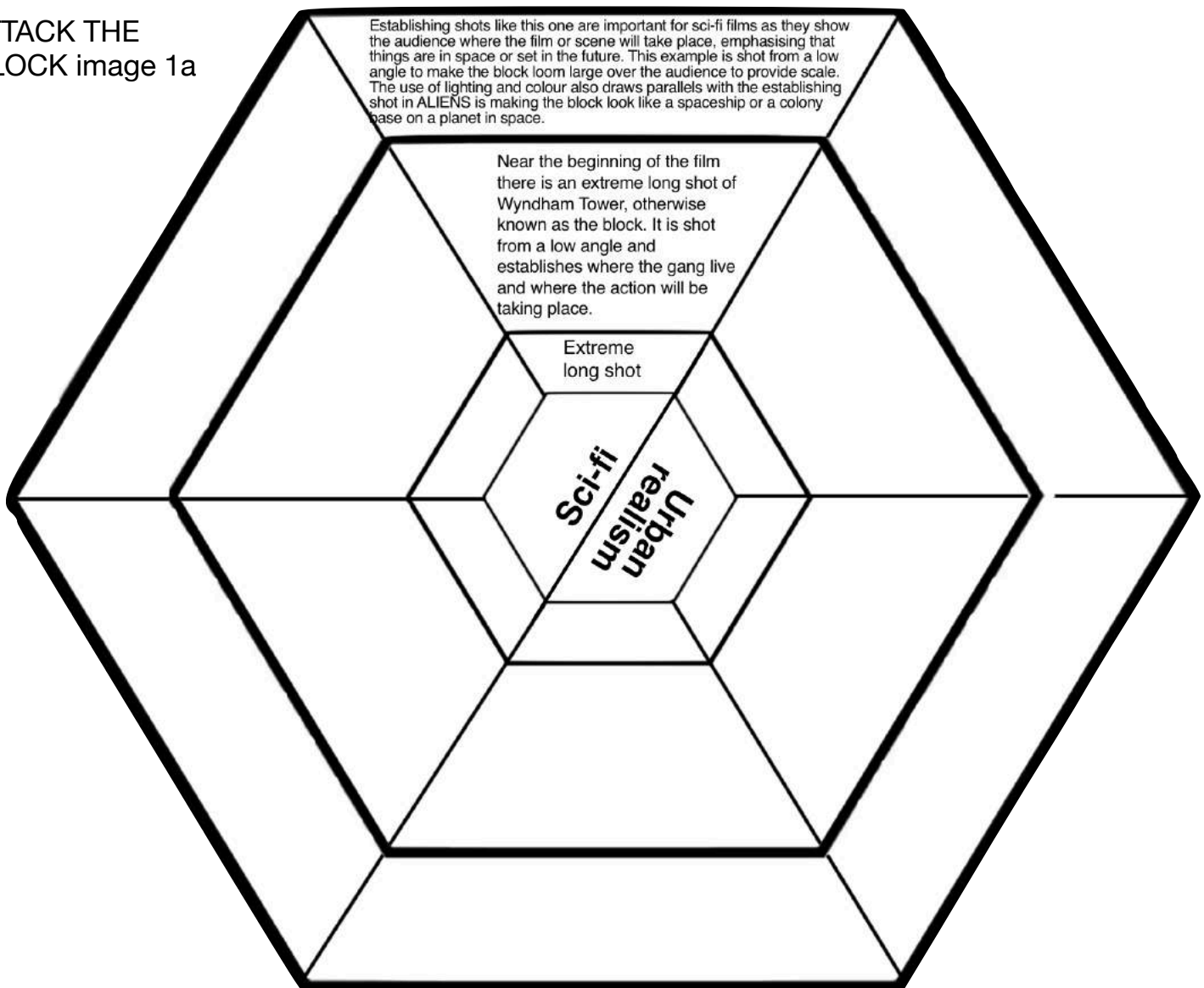
PAIRED TASK

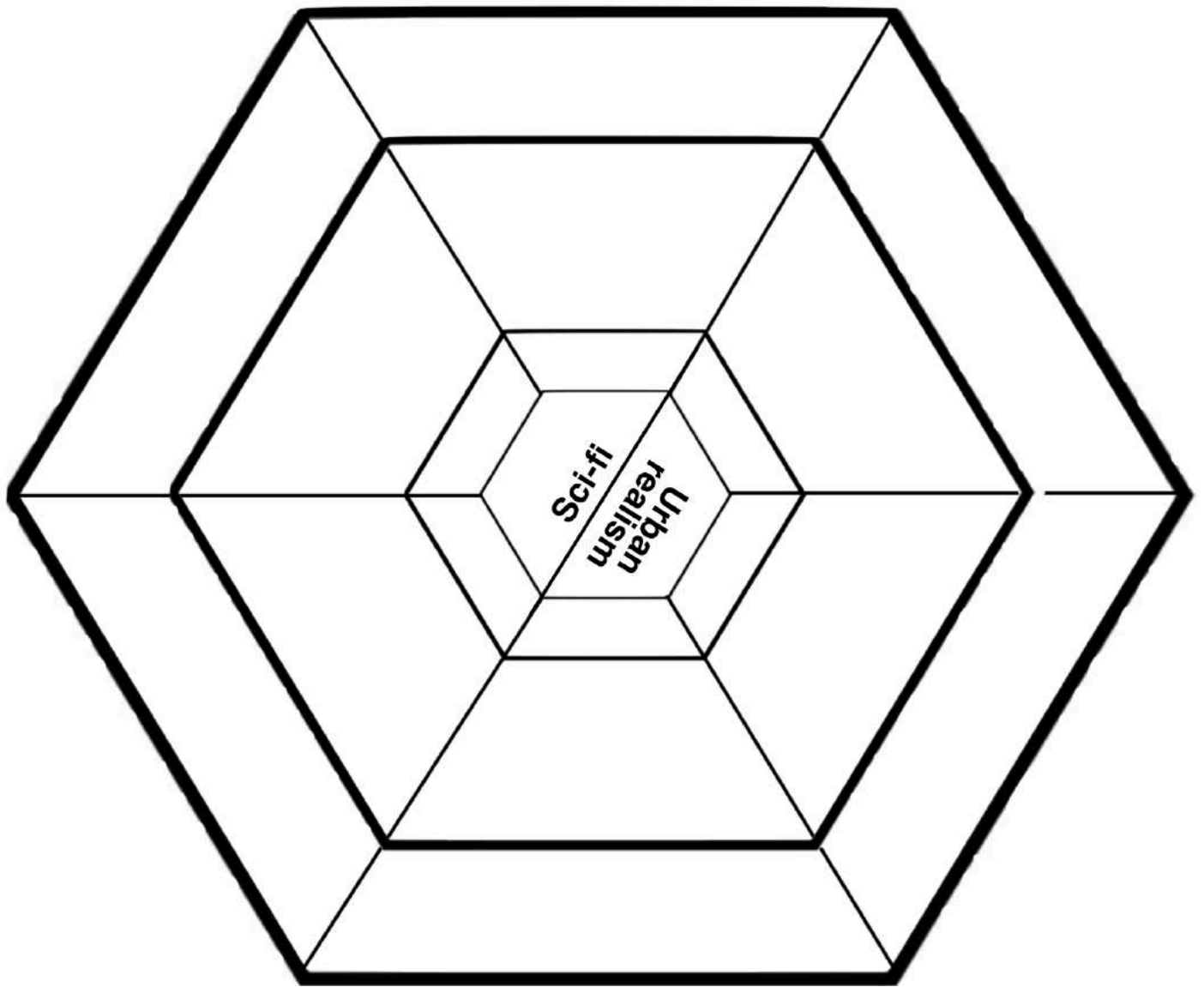
One of the interesting and unique things about ATTACK THE BLOCK is how it blends styles to create it's own aesthetic. Key to this is the use of urban realism settings which are shot to resemble a sci-fi aesthetic.

Above are 4 images, 2 from ATTACK THE BLOCK, 2 from other sci-fi films. In pairs, each take one image from AtB and it's accompanying image. Use the hexagon below and on the inner ring, add 3 examples of film language in which one of the images from AtB looks familiar and 'realistic'. Around the next 3 sections of the inner ring, add 3 more examples of sci-fi as ways in which the image looks 'sci-fi'. Then, in the next ring outwards, describe what that aspect of film language is like for this example. Finally, in the outer ring, describe *how* the example of film language looks like it is realistic or sci-fi, using the accompanying image to provide ideas and help. Then complete one more hexagon for the other ATTACK THE BLOCK image you didn't analyse.

One section has been completed below as an example. You will need to ask your teacher to photocopy and maybe enlarge the hexagons.

ATTACK THE
BLOCK image 1a





CLASSIC SCI-FI - LABORATORIES



ALIENS (1986)



BLADE RUNNER (1981)



ATTACK THE BLOCK (2011)

CLASSIC SCI-FI - LABORATORIES ACTIVITIES

PAIRED TASK

Laboratories are a key location for sci-fi films, whether set in space on a different planet, on board a spaceship or set on Earth. To help prove this, use the space below to make a list of as many many films that you can think of that features some kind of laboratory. Even better, see if you can list what scene takes place there. The first one has have been done for you and some other examples to consider include: THE MARTIAN (2015), THE THING (1982), JURASSIC PARK (1993), MOON (2009) and many others!

ALIENS (1986)	Ripley, Bishop, Burke and the Marines are searching the area for survivors, when they discover the med lab including alien specimens.
BLADE RUNNER (1981)	

SOLO TASK

Annotate the first two images on the previous page to identify the key similarities in film language. Focus on cinematography and mise-en-scene. Aim to use film language as much as possible.

SOLO TASK

Ron's "Weed Room" in ATTACK THE BLOCK is not a traditional 'laboratory' the likes of which are seen in many other sci-fi films. However, using a technical definition of the term, we can see how it applies accurately to the "Weed Room": *"a facility that provides controlled conditions in which scientific or technological research, experiments, and measurement may be performed."*

Using the image on the previous page, annotate things you can see that clearly help to define this s a laboratory in terms of film language; for example, what does it have in common with the two images above? Especially consider how the use of colours makes the scene appear aesthetically similar to the films in the genre.

GROUP TASK

Discussion point: why is this the most overtly 'sci-fi' looking setting in the film? (HINT: Consider what/who is stored in there and what this suggests for this setting)

CLASSIC SCI-FI - CHARACTERS AND IMAGERY



Shot 1



Shot 2



Shot 3



Shot 4



Shot 5



Shot 6

CLASSIC SCI-FI - CHARACTERS AND IMAGERY ACTIVITIES

SOLO TASK

Intertextuality refers to the way of using something in a film that refers to something in another film. These can be done in many different ways such as a key phrase repeated from one film to another, a characters name being similar or the same to suggest that they are similar or, as we can see on the previous page through shot style. Intersexuality is important to all genre films and is more detailed than a convention or a trope. A convention of a science fiction film might be an alien invasion, but intersexuality would take a specific moment from an iconic alien invasion and use this in some form in a new film. One of the most interesting things about intertextuality is that it is also subjective; you may not recognise the reference or even if you do, feel that it is something done as a purposeful reference. Others may not recognise that a particular moment, set-piece or shot style from another film so it may not initially appear to be an intertextual reference. The use of them however, can add an extra level of detail or interest, show a specific appreciation of other films or even use the fate of the reference as a suggestion of what is to come in the film.

In these shots on the previous page, we can see how Joe Cornish actively sought to make Pest appear in a style of Boba Fett from the Star Wars franchise, how an iconic moment from ALIEN 3 (1991) is used in ATTACK THE BLOCK in a much less threatening manner and how I think the use of the strip lighting above Moses head helps to create a physical footprint on screen that evokes memories of Ripley using the powerloader in ALIEN 2 (1986) as she prepares to go into battle.

Using the images above, annotate each, focusing on composition on the image, to create notes that help to explain how each looks similar to each other. Then use these ideas to answer the questions below.

- 1. Thinking about mise-en-scene, how does the shot of Pest resemble the shot of Boba Fett?**
2. How does lighting and shot size also help to suggest that this shot of Pest is a deliberate intertextual reference to Boba Fett?
- 3. Considering performance, lighting and colour, in what way are the shots 3 and 4 different?**
4. How does the use of shot size and composition suggest that there is an intertextual reference of shot 3 on shot 4 however?
- 5. Shot 5 and shot 6 are very different in numerous ways. Listing as many examples using film language, how are shots 5 and 6 different?**
6. The shot of Moses preparing for the final battle with the aliens in shot 6 may not be a direct intertextual reference and may just be something which looks slightly similar. List as many ways that it **does** look similar to shot 5.
7. Finally, for this question you may need to watch the scene from ALIENS (1986) which shot 5 is taken from. What is it about the narrative of shot 6 that means it could be referencing shot 5?

CLASSIC SCI-FI - CREATURE FEATURE



The alien 'suit' in rehearsals



The female alien in pre-production

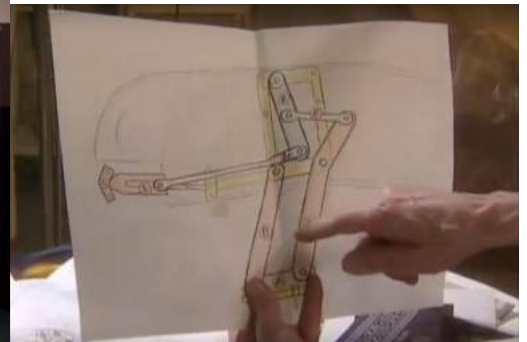


The alien mouth; an electronically controlled puppet

Examples from GREMLINS (1984) with the monsters as animatronic puppets.



Still from the making of ALIEN (1979) which shows the mechanical design of the xenomorph.



CLASSIC SCI-FI - CREATURE FEATURE ACTIVITIES

SOLO TASK

Read the information below about how *ATTACK THE BLOCK* used mostly practical effects to create the monsters. Then use the space at the bottom of the page to summarise what you have learned in no more than 4 sentences but no less than 2. Aim to include details and information from these quotes but also the context from earlier on in this booklet.

Working with effects house Spectral Motion, the filmmakers cooked up a creature suit that was inhabited by Terry Notary. Cornish called him "the best quadruped runner in the world." "We figured, get a guy in a suit, shoot it and then rub out the reflections," Cornish said, describing his eye-catching and wholly original creature design. "So, I thought of it like a graphic novel." Turns out *Attack the Block*'s aliens were inspired by Cornish's childhood pet – a black cat, which he called "a really beautiful thing. It was sitting on the kitchen table, and the sun's coming through, and ... it's like a two-dimensional shape," Cornish recalled. "You can only read its three-dimensionality when that two-dimensional shape moves, like a shadow puppet."

<https://www.wired.com/2011/03/aliens-attack-the-block-paul/>

He worked with Spectral Motion, who do the creature work for Guillermo del Toro's films. They designed this terrific costume-suit, and then we shot that, and then there's a little bit of enhancement by a company called Digital Negative, and a very brilliant European company called Fido. So the end result is a combination of practical, with a little bit of digital. But hopefully it looks unlike anything anyone's seen before."

<http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/17426/joe-cornish-interview-attack-the-block-monster-design-and-british-sci-fi-on-a-budget>

"Joe was a director who was very keen on having as many practical effects in his film, with as little CG as possible, to give the aliens a sense of tangibility. The look of those creatures, and the design of those creatures, was very much driven by Joe, too. He had very specific ideas, and a very specific notion about what these things would be like as they moved around, too."

"When we first started designing the creature suits, we would go off to a shooting stage and film the shadows of the creatures so that we could study what that looked like in various lights. Joe's conceit with his approach was that these things come from another planet, or even another dimension, and they should completely absorb all of the light around them. He thought that would make these creatures so weird and so mysterious, especially since they don't have eyes, and their teeth glow. They're almost like apes, more like these weird 'baboon' creatures."

"So, what we did is we created the creatures out of fur suits and put in the electronic elements and so on. When they shot (the film), they rotoscoped out every single aspect of those creatures so there's no contour to them whenever they're in the darkness. If you watch the movie again and you watch carefully, there isn't any reflected quality to the aliens at all, so all you see are those ferocious glowing choppers. It's a pretty great idea that he came up with."

"We were really happy to work on that film with Joe. It was filmed in London, and the production was very modest. They had a very small research team, but Cornish did an amazing job with what he did have, and he created a masterpiece. It's really amazing."

<https://dailydead.com/practical-ly-perfect-looking-back-at-attack-the-block-with-spectral-motions-mike-elizalde/>

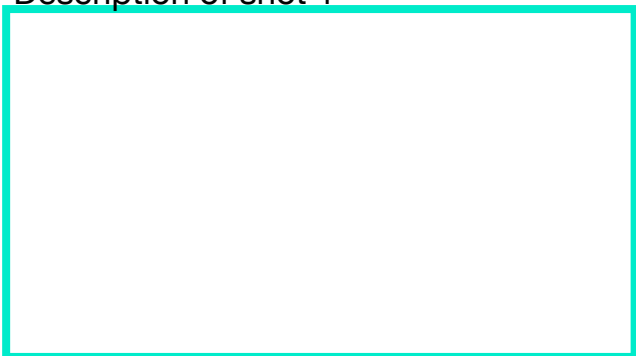
Summary:

HORROR - DEATHS, INJURIES AND SHOCKS - ACTIVITIES

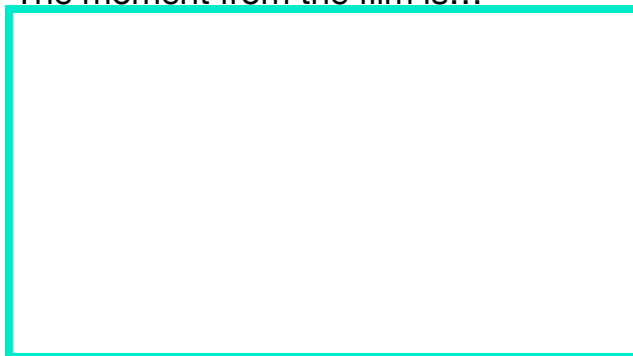
PAIRED TASK

As well as being a film which uses sci-fi imagery and is grounded in a sense of urban realism, the film also uses aspects of the horror genre to create it's atmosphere and it's visual style. With a partner (or as a class), rewatch sections of the film, looking for key moments of classic horror style. For this activity you need to find set pieces or individual shots that feature deaths, injuries or shocks in a visual way-that is to say, that you can see on screen. Working individually to begin, aim to find at least 3. When you do, use the boxes on the left hand side to describe exactly how that shot *looks* on screen, but do not give away what character is involved or what is happening in the narrative at that moment. Be VERY specific about shot size, camera angle, make up, special effects, performance, facial expression and any other elements of film language that are relevant. When you have done this, ask your partner to guess what moment this is from the film by writing it down, or if appropriate, drawing it accurately (**note to teachers here:** feel free to ask students to NOT draw this, as the imagery may not be suitable!).

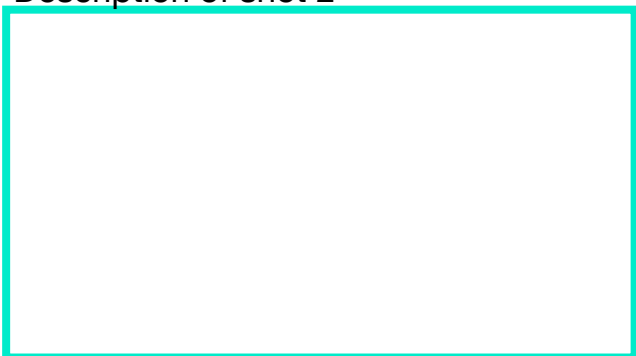
Description of shot 1



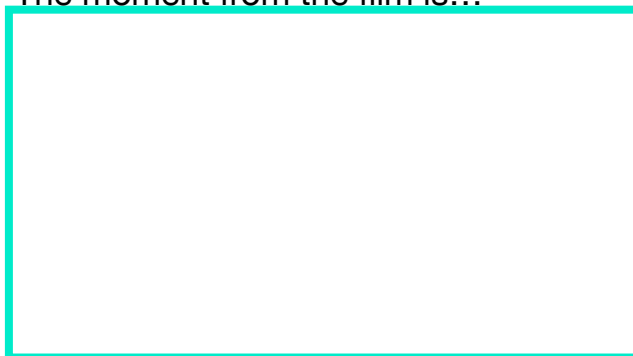
The moment from the film is...



Description of shot 2



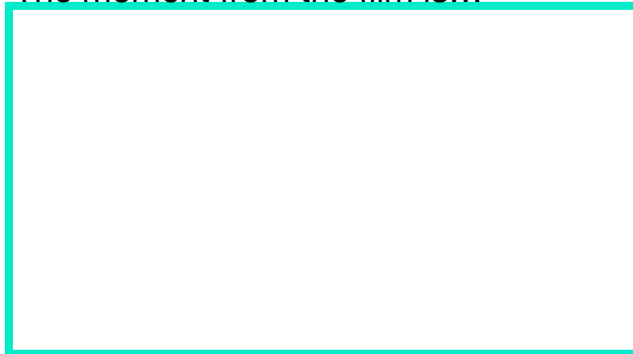
The moment from the film is...



Description of shot 3



The moment from the film is...



HORROR - EDITING FOR TENSION AND SHOCK

SOLO TASK

This section of the GCSE very much focuses on the visual, aesthetic aspect of the film and as such, does not need to cover all aspects of film language such as sound. Editing is slightly more tricky; whilst editing is concerned with assembling a series of scenes or shots into an order, the order in which they are shown, the speed at which they are shown or the way in which one shot replaces another can all contribute to the look of the film.

One of the key factors in establishing a horror style for *ATTACK THE BLOCK* is in the way that the film combines certain camera angles, shot sizes and editing techniques. Early in the film, lighting also contributes to the horror style but in some ways, the recognisable horror style comes simply from the way in which the audience are made to react by creating tension and also by breaking that tension through shock.

Below are four moments from the film which, in various ways, combine cinematography and mise-en-scene with cleverly managed editing to help achieved a style that is clearly influenced by horror films. On the next page, draw simplified versions of scene 1, 2 and one scene 3 or 4. For each, labelling each drawing using film language to explain in what way the style is reflective of horror. Use the small square to write down how long each shot is on screen for.

1. Early in the film Sam is walking home. She is alone. In what way is this a convention of the horror genre. Find a screen shot that shows she is isolated and alone and vulnerable.

2. Soon after Sam is mugged there is an explosion in a car near the gang. As Moses investigates the car he is attacked suddenly by an unsure threat. Find at least two screen shots that demonstrate that this attack happens almost instantly and that it startles the audience because of this.

3. When the gang are in Sam's flat there is a loud noise from outside. Moses goes to investigate by looking out of the peep hole. We see a POV through the peep hole. The scene cuts back to the gang and we see the tension and apprehension on their faces. The scene then cuts back to Moses as moves to look out of the peep hole again and we again see a POV shot. After a few tense seconds, an alien jumps from out of view, directly into the centre of the shot: Moses recoils in shock.

4. Later on in the film Brewis walks down a dark corridor. He seems perturbed by the lights coming on. We then switch to an over the shoulder shot as he approaches a lift. A brief shot from inside the lift shows the door covered in blood. The next shot features much more blood as well as bodies. We also see someone standing, a gun at their side. The camera slowly tilts upwards revealing that the lift is absolutely covered in blood and so is Hi-Hatz, standing in the middle of the shot, bodies at his feet.

HORROR - EDITING FOR TENSION AND SHOCK ACTIVITIES

Shot/scene 1

<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Shot/scene 2

<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Shot/scene 3 or 4

<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

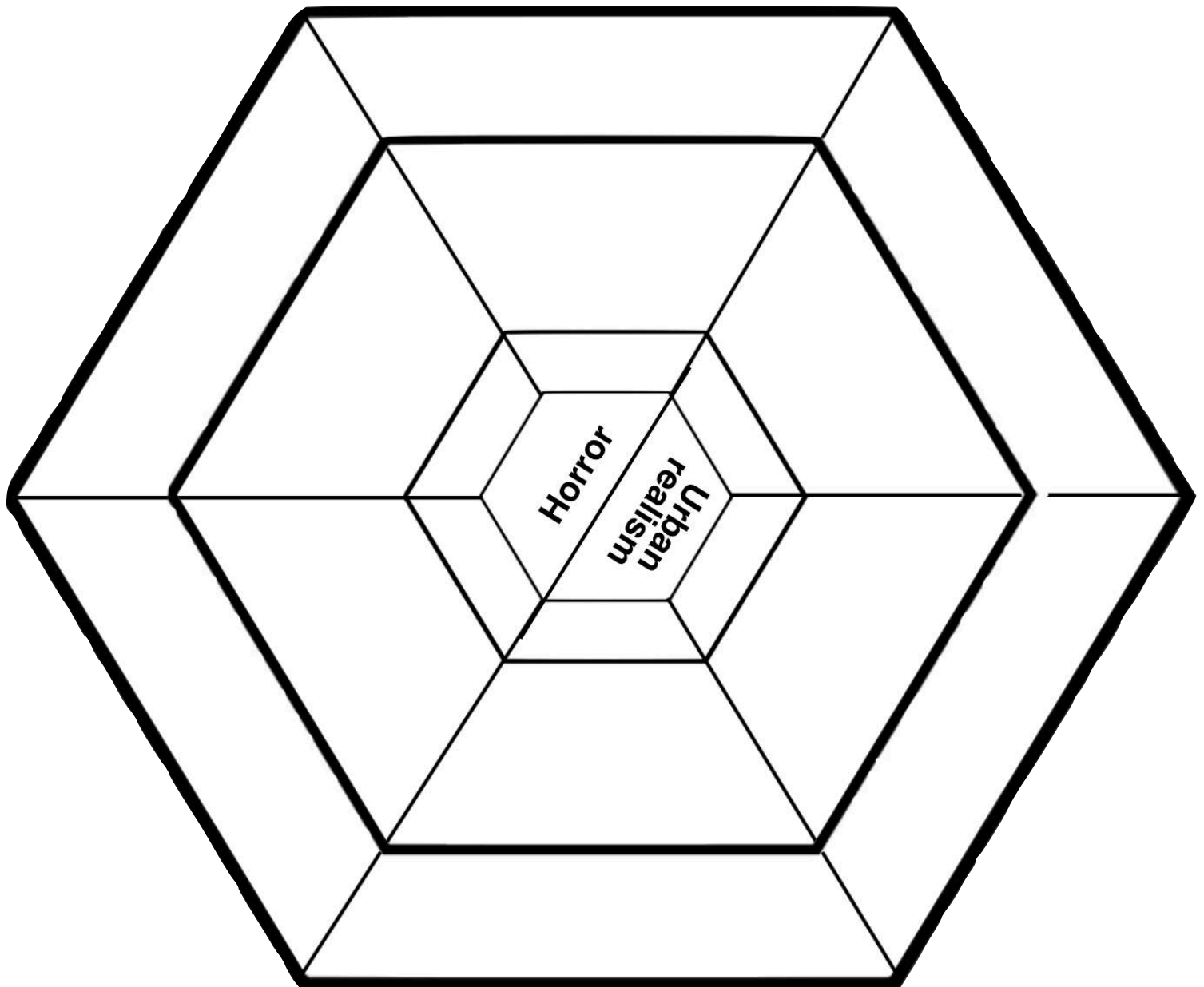
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

KEY SCENE 1: ANALYSIS OF STYLE

SOLO TASK

Having now analysed, examined and explored the film in some depth, now is the time to start focusing what you've learned onto three key scenes. For each identified key scene, use the hexagon provided to analyse a range of film language elements that help to create the style of that scene. Use the hexagon to plan and prepare a series of points to help you prepare for exam questions. In the inner ring, add 3 examples of film language in which the opening scene from AtB looks familiar and 'realistic'. Around the next 3 sections of the inner ring, add 3 more film language examples of it looking like a horror film. Then, in the next ring outwards, describe what that aspect of film language is like for this example. Finally, in the outer ring, describe *how* the example of film language looks like it is realistic or horror.

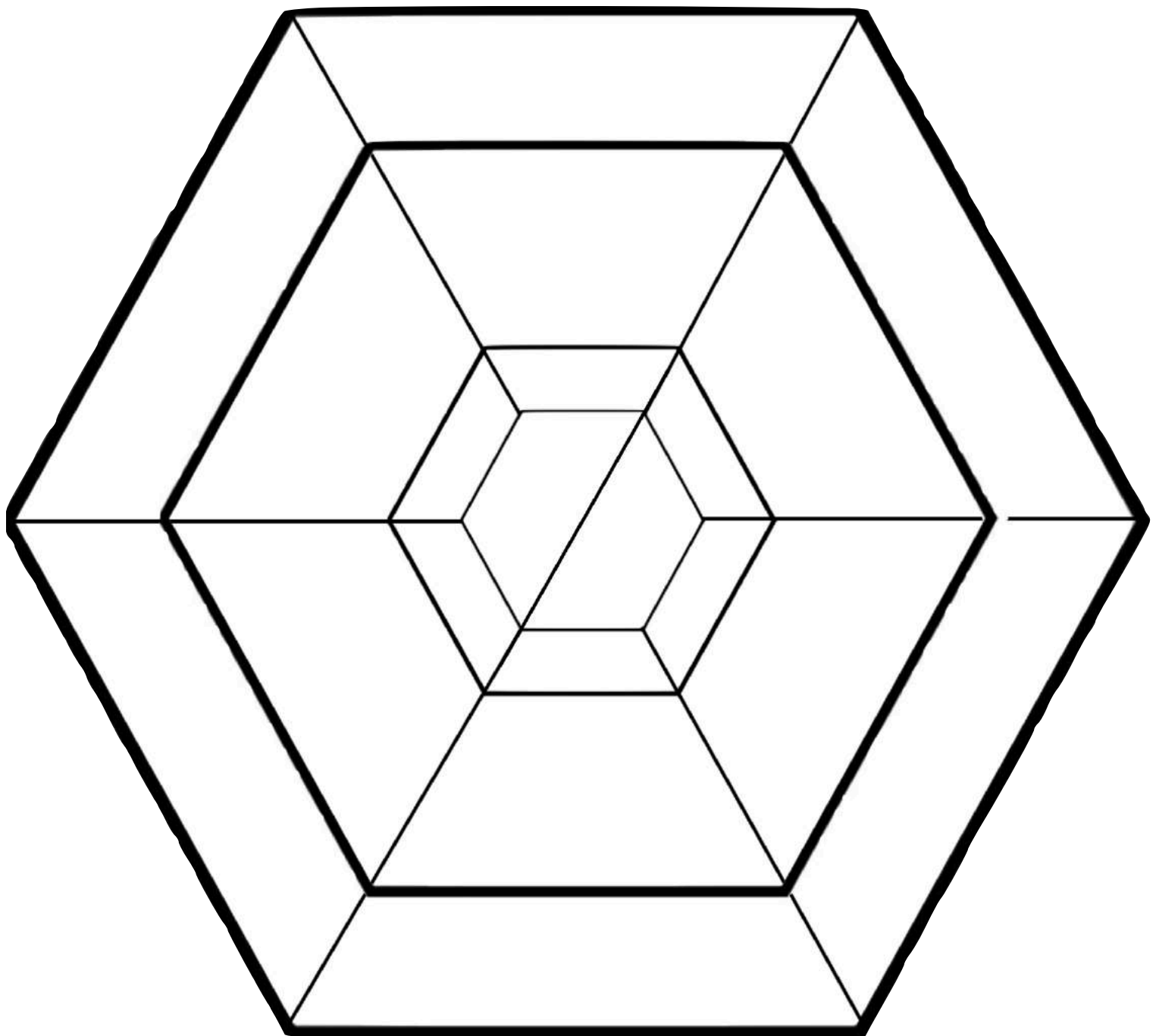
The Opening Scene (<http://bit.ly/ATBKS1>)



KEY SCENE 2: ANALYSIS OF STYLE

Use the 2 middle sections of the hexagon to write down what two styles are being used in this scene. In the inner ring, add 6 examples of film language that help to create the visual style of the 'attack on the police van' scene. Aim to give 6 different examples from different areas of film language (for example, don't choose 6 different aspects of mise-en-scene). Then, in the next ring outwards, describe what that aspect of film language is like for this example. Finally, in the outer ring, describe *how* the example of film language looks like it is a specific style.

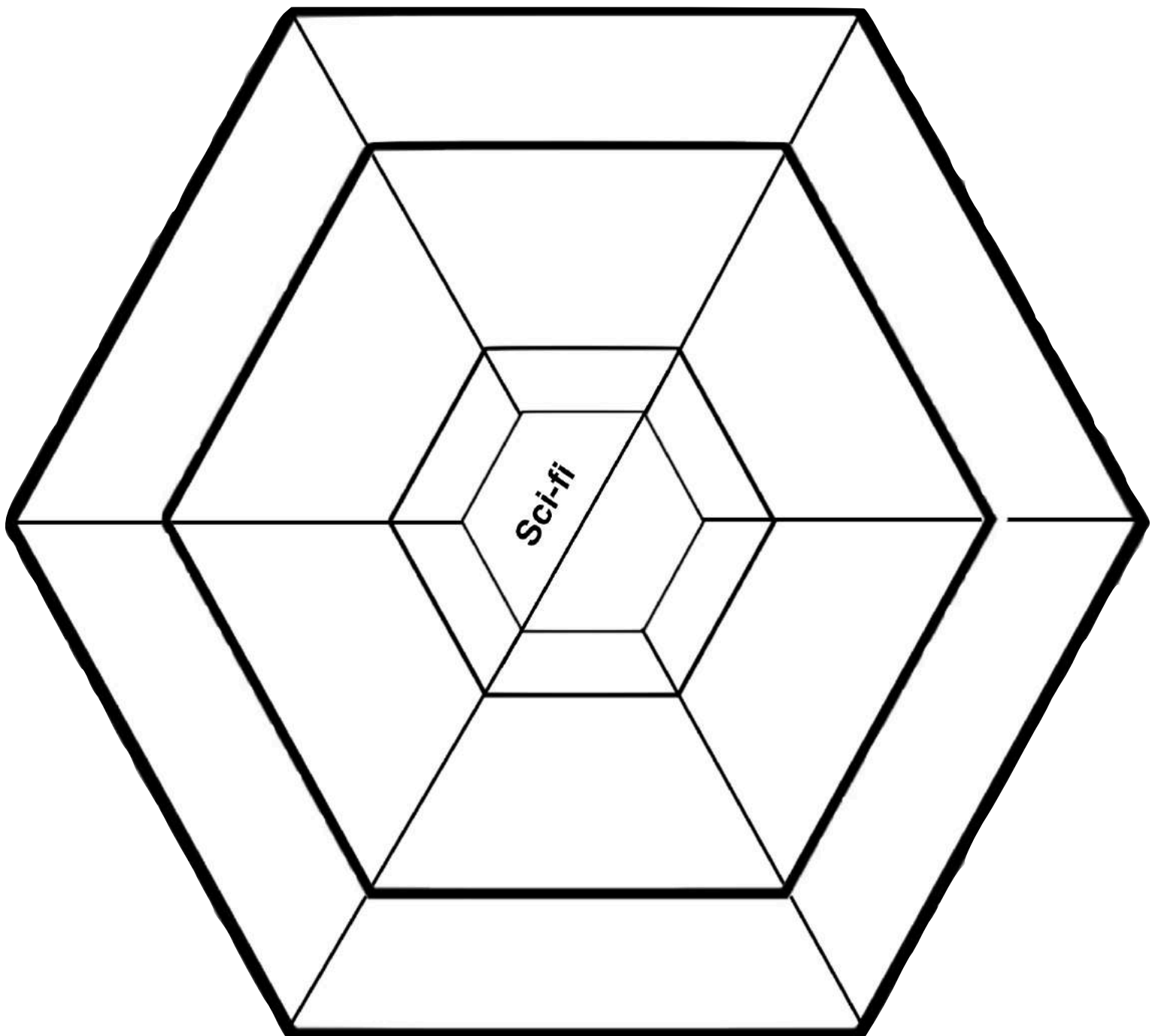
Attack on the police van scene (<http://bit.ly/ATBKS2>)



KEY SCENE 3: ANALYSIS OF STYLE

Use the 2 middle sections of the hexagon to write down what other style is being used in this scene. In the inner ring, add 6 examples of film language that help to create the visual style of the 'attack on the police van' scene. Aim to give 6 different examples from different areas of film language (for example, don't choose 6 different aspects of mise-en-scene). Then, in the next ring outwards, describe what that aspect of film language is like for this example. Finally, in the outer ring, describe *how* the example of film language looks like it is a specific style.

The final scene (<http://bit.ly/ATBKS3>)



STYLE QUESTIONS

1. List 3 different styles of visuals in the film ATTACK THE BLOCK.
2. Give 3 examples of context that have influenced these styles.
3. Name at least 3 different science fiction films that have an influence on the style of ATTACK THE BLOCK.
4. For each of the examples you've given above, list at least 3 ways that each film can be seen in any screenshot or scene from ATTACK THE BLOCK.
5. What historical events have influenced the style of ATTACK THE BLOCK?
6. Give two reasons, with explanations, as to why institutional factors may have influenced the style of ATTACK THE BLOCK.
7. Explore, with examples how a range of social and historical factors may have had an effect on the visual style of ATTACK THE BLOCK.
8. Explain how one film that Joe Cornish watched growing up may have been an influence on the style of ATTACK THE BLOCK.
9. What is the style of architecture of the block and why might it have been suitable for the genre of the film?
10. In what way does the setting of South London help to create a specific style for the film?
11. How does lighting effect audience reaction in a key scene of ATTACK THE BLOCK?
12. How does the opening scene create tension using film language?
13. What elements of film language does the opening scene use to help show that the situation is dangerous for Sam?
14. Explore how mise-en-scene is used to create a criminal gang that is recognisable in style? Even better, refer to context to help explain in further detail.
15. In what way does the scene of the aliens attacking the police van appear to be a sci-fi film? Refer to film language as much as you can.
16. How does context of the film, specifically social and historical, help influence the style of the attack on the police van scene?
17. In what way is cinematography used to make the attack on the police van scene a specific style?
18. How does the style inside and outside the block differ? Be specific here, referring to film language as much as possible.
19. Explain, in detail, the overall style of the corridors in the block.
20. Making reference to other films, in what way is the style of inside of the block influenced by the style of other science fiction films? Make reference to film language as much as possible.
21. During the final scene, in how would you describe the style?
22. What influences on the style are there from other films or genres?
23. Use film language to help explain the style of the science fiction genre.
24. The final scene outside of the block has a lot of influences that create the visual style. Explain how context and other genres of films have an influence.
25. In your opinion, what other films do you think have had the most impact and influence overall on ATTACK THE BLOCK?

EXAM QUESTIONS

Section C: Contemporary UK film (produced after 2010)

Answer question 3 on one of the following films:

- *Submarine* (Ayoade, UK, 2010)
- *Attack the Block* (Cornish, UK, 2011)
- *My Brother the Devil* (El Hosaini, UK, 2012)
- *Skyfall* (Mendes, UK, 2012)
- *Brooklyn* (Crowley, UK, 2015).

3.
 - (a) Identify **one** example of lighting used in your film. [1]
 - (b) Briefly outline what this example of lighting typically suggests. [4]
 - (c) Briefly explore how your example of lighting is used in **one** sequence. [5]
 - (d) Explore how cinematography and lighting help to create the film's 'look'. Refer to at least **one** sequence in your answer.

In your answer, you should refer to:

- camera shots and movement
- framing including lighting
- relevant aspects of mise-en-scène. [15]

[illegible]

EXAM QUESTIONS FEEDBACK / DIRT

EXTRA VIEWING / ANALYSIS

The list of extra films and YouTube channels below are by no means an exhaustive list and you will find plenty of other material from other films and channels. The list is also by no means a compulsory list-these should all be very much treated as things which can compliment your appreciation of ATTACK THE BLOCK, rather than things which must be watched. Please note as well that some of the suggested films are a difficult watch, especially ILL MANORS. It is suggested that you consult the imdb page for a film before watching, using the 'Certification' section to judge whether a film is appropriate before watching.

FILMS

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE [18] (1971) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0066921/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

BLADE RUNNER [15] (1982) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083658/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

ALIEN [15 - 2014 Director's Cut, 18 - 1986 Theatrical Release] (1979)

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0078748/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

ALIENS (1986) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0090605/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

ILL MANORS (2012) [18] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1760967/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

HARRY BROWN (2009) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1289406/?ref_=nv_sr_1

SHAUN OF THE DEAD (2004) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0365748/?ref_=nv_sr_2

GREMLINS (1984) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0087363/?ref_=nv_sr_1

MOON (2009) http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1182345/?ref_=nv_sr_1

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

EVERY FRAME A PAINTING (<https://www.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting>)

LESSONS FROM THE SCREENPLAY (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCErSSa3CaP_GJxmFpdjG9Jw)

ROCKET JUMP FILM SCHOOL (<https://www.youtube.com/user/RJFilmSchool>)

CINEFIX (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CineFix>)

NOW YOU SEE IT (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWTFGPpNQ0Ms6afXhaWDiRw/featured>)

FILM STUDIES FUNDAMENTALS (<https://www.youtube.com/c/MrMorenoMelgar>)