**Inquiry 1: Close Reading**

A close reading of a text can reveal things that might otherwise go unseen. What’s more, these new insights can lead to further understanding of a text as a whole. When analyzing film, oftentimes visual cues hints towards more significant themes or patterns that speak to what the film is about.

Your job is to select a scene from a film of your choosing (Best Picture nominees and winners work really well for this project, but you are welcome to work with another) and perform a close reading. From there, you will write a paper exploring what this scene and your close reading of it reveals about the film as a whole. You should write for an audience that has already seen the film—therefore, you do not need to summarize the film but rather ***analyze* and *respond* to your selected scene in order to reveal something new or different about the film for your reader**. Assume they did not watch the film closely-- illuminate things for them that they may not have noticed when they watched it. For example, you might choose to discuss a dominant color that appears throughout the movie, honing in on its use in a single scene in relation to what it represents. Perhaps you want to discuss the central message of the film as it plays out in the dialogue or actions of a specific scene.

Your paper should also be accompanied by a 200-word minimum writer’s reflection to appear before the start of your paper. Here it’s your job to reflect on this inquiry as a whole and write about what you gleaned from this unit. Some guiding questions: what has this inquiry showed you about close reading and/or interpretations of texts? What is one take-away you got from writing this paper that might help you in other classes or in life in general? What did you struggle with the most in this project, and what accounted for that struggle? How did our in-class discussions/activities influence the way you wrote your paper?

General Requirements

* Paper is at least 700 words, writer’s reflection is at least 200 words.
* Titled creatively that speaks to the original content of the piece (no “Inquiry 1” titles please!)
* Please include your writer’s reflection at the beginning.
* Written for an audience who has already seen the film, but has not watched it closely.
* At the end of your paper, please include either a link to the specific scene on YouTube/the internet or a description of when the scene starts and stops. So, for example you might write, “American Beauty 48 minutes 36 seconds to 51 minutes 02 seconds.” Give me as much information as I’ll need to review the scene myself.
* Followed directions and completed components on time.

**Rough drafts due 2/11** should be uploaded to our shared GoogleDrive folder.

**Final drafts due 2/18** should be uploaded to your private GoogleDrive folder.

Grading:

* Inquiry 1 is worth 100 points, or 10% of your overall grade
* Rough draft completion and peer response participation: 15 points
* Close reading: 75 points
* Writer’s reflection: 10 points

Some Tips

* Select a film that both interests you and that you have continual access to (you will probably have to watch it more than once).
* Many Best Picture nominees/winners are available for check out at King Library or are streaming on Netflix, but I own a lot of movies as well and would be happy to lend you a copy of your selected film if I have one.
* ACTIVELY read your film, taking notes as you watch. Noting patterns, themes, motifs, representations, etc. will help you begin to formulate an argument about the film.
* Select a scene that intrigues you or that you find to be significant. Sometimes this is indicated by the presence of a lot of notes—if you wrote a lot down during that scene it means you will have an easier time formulating an essay about it than others.
* When beginning to write your paper, start with why this scene is significant. What’s going on in this scene that makes a connection to a theme/motif/pattern relevant to the entire film?