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Student Example

Response to a film with alternative ideology

Run Lola Run is an exciting film that slides between many different genres. It is a computer game, a thriller, a love story and a video clip. It is a true 'post-modern pastiche'. Lola, as a representation of a contemporary young woman, is athletic (yes, another slim, good-looking film star—but not the passive sex-kitten type), of startling appearance (her red hair is to-die-for, she has a strong, determined face and a sexy, sweat-soaked top). She lives an unemployed student-style life with her boyfriend Manni. Lola's parents are well-heeled and she believes her father might spot her 100 000 marks on her immediate request. So Lola chooses to wear her urban workout gear as a statement about herself, not out of economic necessity. But despite this rebellious streak in her nature she is a very engaging and attractive character. She loves Manni loyally and in each of the three alternative endings she risks her own life and safety to save him. She is undeterred by the disinterest of her mother who cannot be distracted from her phone chit-chat to take any interest in her daughter's life or death problems. Lola hopes to get help from her father, but he is too embroiled with his mistress to really engage with her problems. So she defies authority and fate in her attempts to generate the cash her errant boyfriend needs to save his life. Lola is a positive representation of young women because of her loyalty and self-empowered independence. At last a woman who can run to the rescue of her prince—er man!

Student identifies genre

Recognises stereotype

Uses appropriate slang as part of a discourse

Identifies values embodied in a character

ACTIVITY

Reading the ideologies of a range of films

Using two or more feature films as your focus texts write an essay in which you explore the different ideologies underpinning the representations on offer. Indicate which ones you find acceptable and explain the reading practices you have used to come to that response.



Textual Reading Practices

‘Students draw on a wide range of textual and contextual evidence to generate and validate interpretations.’

Viewing Outcome, Processes and Strategies, Level 7

One range of reading practices that will help you demonstrate this indicator of the viewing outcomes is those that examine the place of the text in the world. There are four dimensions to this. They are called: intratextuality, intertextuality, circumtextuality and extratextuality.

Intratextuality

Intratextuality comes from the Latin ‘intra’ meaning inside and ‘texere’ meaning weave. So the word means ‘what is inside the fabric of the text’. This dimension of your reading practices explores what is inside the text. Ask these questions about the text:

- What is inside the text?
- What representations are offered?
- How is the text constructed?
- How does it position viewers?
- What ideas and values are we invited to embrace?

You are already familiar with these questions in your study of print texts and you will be able to apply your skills in reading print texts to reading the intratextuality of feature films. One challenge that films present is that you cannot easily turn back the pages to find the evidence you need for your answers to these questions. It is always good practice to use the following process when you are dealing with film or TV or radio:

- make sure you have a personal copy of the text so that you can review it at your leisure
- watch/listen to the whole text to enjoy it the first time you view it/listen to it
- watch/listen to it again with a notebook in hand and make notes about important details; record quotes word for word—this may take a few replays to achieve
- use these notes and your initial responses to the text to help you write your review/response to the text.

Student Example

Intratextuality of *Run Lola Run*

Run Lola Run is one of few films that provide us with multiple endings. The structure of the film is clearly one of the important aspects of its construction. We read each new ending in terms of the ones that have come before. This intratextuality gives the film coherence and the order in which these alternative endings are presented influences the way we read them. Had the first ending been presented last it would change the entire feel of the film and audiences would be more disturbed by such a fatal conclusion.

Inside a film text

Narrative elements:

- plot
- setting
- characters
- conflict
- narrative structure
- symbolism

Film language

Technical:

- camera position, distance and movement
- framing and focus
- lighting
- shot duration and montage
- special effects
- editing

Symbolic:

- setting
- costume
- make-up and appearance
- props

Audio:

- music
- speech and dialogue
- sound effects

Written:

- titles
- captions
- notes and letters
- signs
- credits

