

1. Who is protagonist?
2. Conflict that drives the narrative?
3. Tone of the film (genre or feel)
4. Theme of the film
5. Are the characters relatable? Why or why not?
6. What can you take away from the film that might benefit writing your story?

Assignment questions:

- a. How does the film differ from your vision for your film? How is it similar?
- b. Why and how does the film work, or why and how does the film fail?
- c. Can you relate to the characters? If yes, which ones and why? If no, why not? What was it about what they said, how they look, how they behave, and how they were filmed that helped you form your opinion about them?

List of movies critiqued:

- 1) Lorenzo's Oil (Drama/documentary) a) This film does relate to my first movie idea, which is a drama based on true story about my disabled younger son. It is similar because Lorenzo's father was determined to cure his son from a rare disease, just as I am also determined to find a cure for my son with muscular dystrophy. b) The film definitely works because you cannot help but be engaged with the suspense when the parents relentlessly pursue the cure under great pressure and controversy. c) Yes I can relate to the characters tremendously because I am in a similar situation. I especially relate to the father because he was incredibly determined in his quest to cure his son despite all odds even contrary opinions from doctors and medical associations. He showed his love and devotion to his son by never giving up until he did find a cure. The film showed him tirelessly dedicated his time and commitment to researching for the cure.
- 2) Ex Machina (Drama/science fiction) a) This film does not relate to my film themes but it is a very intriguing science fiction film about artificial intelligence done by an internet pioneer to make a robot act with human characteristics. b) The film works because the script is excellent because the characters of the female robot interacting with the young man selected to meet her in this experiment is very engaging. c) The young man character was relatable because he showed his infatuation and vulnerability to the attractive and enticing female robot.
- 3) Love & Mercy (Drama/documentary) a) This film is somewhat similar to my film idea #2 because it is ultimately a love story. b) The film about Brian Wilson, the lead singer songwriter for the Beach Boys works because it is a close up and personal look at the trials and tribulations of a famous musician personal challenges with his mental health and how the women he loved helped him triumph over his darkness by her devotion. c) Yes, the characters were very relatable; I especially like Brian's girlfriend because although she was only dating him, she demonstrated her tenacity and intelligence to help him overcome his foes when they thought she couldn't. This is a moral about an

average person who overcomes others with money and power because their pride underestimated her intelligence hidden behind her attractive model like appearance.

- 4) *I Can't Think Straight* (Drama) a) This film relates in some ways to my film idea #2 because it is a love story. b) This film really works because it is a controversial story about two lesbian Middle-Eastern women who fall in love despite their ultra-conservative religious and cultural backgrounds and family pressures to conform. c) The women protagonist characters are relatable because they represent anyone who has had to breakthrough the pressures of social norms and both of these actresses give a convincing performance. There is a lot of emotion, passionate scenes with the two female lovers and convincing confrontations with their disapproving families to win your heart over and sympathize with their plight.
- 5) *Burden of Dreams* (Documentary) a) This story differs from my documentary film idea however it is a very intriguing and unique film by Werner Herzog, the famous German film director about his pursuit to film an opera in a boat down the Amazon River. b) The film works for me because ironically it is very entertaining when his project ends up being a catastrophe and goes on and on for over a year, he has to rehire a new film crew, actors and his boat gets stuck in the river. c) I think that Werner is a relatable character in the film because anyone who has endeavored on a project wholeheartedly with their best intentions sometimes encountered great obstacles and event to the point where it was a failover - yet I don't see this as a failure because of his enduring perseverance to strive to achieve his goal.
- 6) *The Jerky Boys* (Comedy) a) This film is a comedy like my idea #3 however it is nothing like my idea. What is probably similar is the plot of two close friends growing up and having fun and getting into mischief. b) The film works for me because it is a story of two regular guys from Brooklyn, NY trying to become successful and in their naivety end up getting involved with a mafia group in their pursuits. c) I can relate to the male characters because my guy friends and I growing up got into all kinds of mischief which sometimes when you are just trying to have fun in can get you into trouble!
- 7) *The Social Network* (Drama/documentary) a) This film is unlike my idea for a documentary however it is a very well done drama based on the true story of Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook. b) The film works for me because the plot develops very well as it develops from his days of a Harvard student to the rise of his sudden success as a young nerd entrepreneur. c) I can relate to the investor character played by Justin Timberlake, because I thought it was interesting how he portrayed a slick businessman who had the boldness to invest in an unknown venture with a nerd that did not have much business acumen and as we know ultimately became one of the best known internet sites in the world as did Mark became one of the wealthiest.
- 8) *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (Drama/Comedy) a) This film is very relatable for me in my life and hence is similar to my film idea # 2 because they are both about marriages with among different races and cultures. b) The film works brilliantly for me because it shows how true modern love breaks down all of the cultural barriers and expectations of tradition. c) The characters are very relatable and believable to me especially the groom

to be because he has to try and fit in and accept his bride to be family who does not want her to marry outside of their race and culture.

- 9) Tell them Who You Are (Documentary) a) This film is not like my documentary idea because it is about the son's story about his father, and mine is about the father's story about his son. b) The film kind of works for me because the son does do a good job of telling the story about his father by interviewing his father, Haskell Wexler, the famous film cinematographer along with other famous actors, and directors and film clips etc. throughout the film. c) Mark, his son, who directs the film is relatable because his father is very opinionated and political, which is the opposite of his son and this is actually the most interesting part of the film. I think many men such as myself can relate to having a father who was not the easiest personality to deal with growing up even to the point where there are contradicting viewpoints - this is where this documentary does suits well.
- 10) Blue Butterfly (Drama/documentary) a) This story is very much like my documentary idea #1 because it is the story of a father who takes his ill son to the Costa Rican jungle in search of a natural cure for his life threatening disease. b) The film works beautifully as the family journeys into the depths of the jungle with their guide they eventually discover that the son gets healed because he is able to release whatever it is that was causing him to become ill. c) I can relate to the father again because I am in the same situation with my son who has a rare disease and I am always searching for a cure and once even considered traveling to Brazil to have him meet John of God, a famous healer.
- 11) Mean Girls (Comedy) a) This comedy is unlike my comedy idea however it does involve life in high school for a your clickie group of girls. b) This movie works because it shows the protagonist, the new girl played by Lindsay Lohan, become a phony personality in order to be accepted by her peers - who has not fallen into that trap when they were growing up! c) Her character is very relatable because she eventually decided to become her "real self" after a series of fopahs and falling outs with all of her friends.
- 12) American Reunion (Comedy) a) This movie is similar to my comedy film idea #3 because it is a high school reunion, however it does not necessarily have a true love story element as part of its plot. b) This movie works because it is very funny as the relatable characters; i.e. Stifler, Jim and his Dad, etc continue to unfold in all of the ridiculous uncanny humor and immaturity that is still present with many of us long after graduation. c) The characters are relatable especially Jim and Stifler. Everyone grew up with a friend who was a troublemaker such as Stifler and Jim is just the shy innocent boy who always tried to get lucky with the girls and ended up with the cute girl next door.