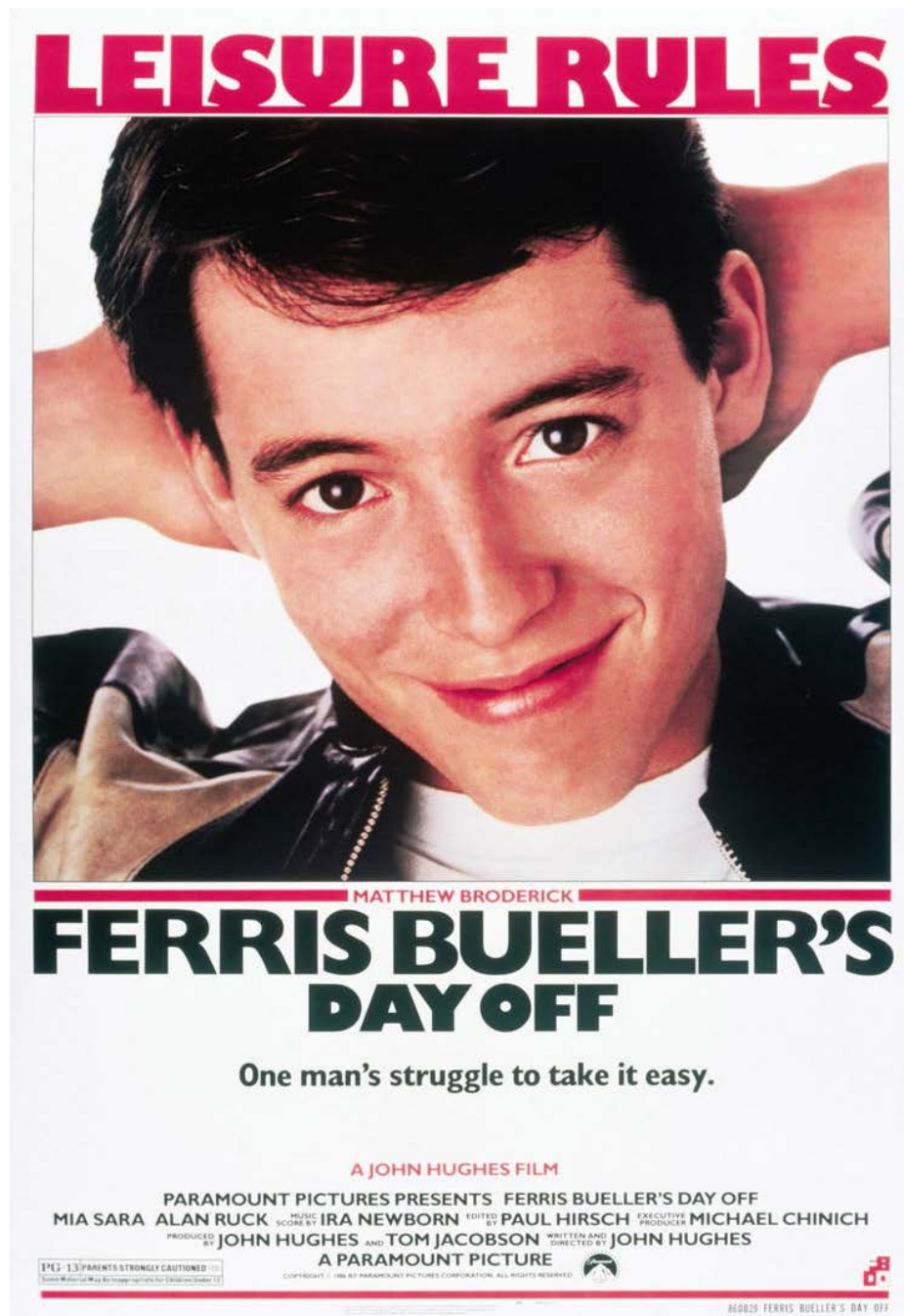# FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF (1986)

Eduqas GCSE Film Studies
Component 1: Key Developments in US Film
Section A: US film comparative study

CONTEXT REQUIREMENTS

Context is the vitally important information relating to the making of the film and the issues and environment surrounding the making of the film. We examine context in terms of the social, political, institutional and historical background details of the film. For FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF these are especially important given that the film was made during the 1950s, a period of dramatic change in the USA. In order to truly appreciate how much the world was changing and how FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF had such a cultural impact, you should ensure that you study and learn about the context of the film.

As a reminder, the context we'll be studying can be defined as:

Social: aspects of society and its structure reflected in the film. For example, consider who holds the power? Who is oppressed? Are characters treated or defined by their class? Do we see social hierarchy and structures at all and if so, how are they reflected in the film and how do they affect the characters? ?

Cultural: aspects of culture – ways of living, beliefs and values of groups of people – reflected in the film. For example, what do we see in the film or know about the time the film was made in terms of religions and religious practises, clothing, aspects of culture and the arts? Are there references that a modern audience may not appreciate or understand because it's tied into the culture of the time?

Political: the way political issues, when relevant to the film chosen, are reflected in a film. For example, is there a key political event depicted or implied? Consider world leaders such as Presidents and Prime Ministers and the choices they made that may be reflected in, or that affect the film. Perhaps political decisions made before the film are seen in the film in some manner.

Institutional: how films are funded, how the level of production budget affects the kind of film made and the main stages of film production. For example, which companies produced the film? Where did the budget come from? Where was the film made? Why there? Significant people involved in the making of the film and is it part of a wider franchise, studio system or production company? If so, how does this affect it?

Historical: aspects of the society and culture at the time when films are made and, where relevant and when they are set. For example, is the time the film was made or set in significant? Was there a key event around the time the film was made or set? How might that have affected the film or the making of the film?

Technological: the technologies reflected in a film's production and, in some cases, in its narrative. For example, think mise-en-scene (props) here: how can we see technology (or the lack of) in the film? Does this help to date the film? Also consider the production of the film: does the film use any specific technology in the production (3D cameras, widescreen, HDR, colour, CGI etc.)?

The basic areas of context you need to be able to recall and apply to this film are listed on your Knowledge Organiser on previous pages but much more is provided on the next few pages. Where possible, aim to include as much context as is relevant to help explain your ideas and explore how the film has been made.

FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF CONTEXT - SOLO TASK

As you watch the film, tick when/if that context is seen in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF. The institutional aspects will be obvious, so these can be ticked off beforehand. This may be easier to do after your initial viewing however so this can be done at your own discretion.

☐ Released in 1986 and with a relatively cheap budget of $5.8m, FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF was written by John Hughes and was a huge success at the box office, taking approximately $70million at the US Box Office.

☐ John Hughes was a very respected film maker who wrote films about the lives of young people such at THE BREAKFAST CLUB, WEIRD SCIENCE, UNCLE BUCK AND HOME ALONE.

☐ Hughes said the film was his "love letter" to Chicago: "I really wanted to capture as much of Chicago as I could. Not just in the architecture and landscape, but the spirit."

☐ The creation of the film was quite quick: Hughes wrote the screenplay in less than a week. filming took place between September and November in 1985 and the film was released in June 1986.

☐ Much of the movie was shot on location in Chicago. This allowed Hughes to showcase his love for the city and some of his favourite parts of the city including the Art Institute of Chicago, Wrigley Field Baseball stadium and Sears Tower.

☐ Arguably the most iconic use of Chicago though is the Von Steuben Parade, a German-American celebration through the heart of the city, which Ferris becomes a vital part of.

☐ Actors who were considered for the role of Ferris included Jim Carrey, John Cusack, Tom Cruise and Michael J. Fox. The role of Ferris Bueller went to Matthew Broderick.

☐ Alan Ruck was 29 when he played the role of Cameron Fyre who, in the film, was supposed to be 18.

☐ Chicago is also important in reflecting the time and the struggle of suburban teens in the mid-80s, who were drawn to a large city but as high-school leavers, perhaps weren't quite ready to grow up and leave the family home in the suburbs.

☐ Set in 1986, the film reflects a key point in American history and the changing role of teenagers. Growing up in the late 70s, Ferris would have experienced a very idealistic and innocent upbringing. His obsession with experiencing 'life' and ignoring rules reflect this.

☐ The end of the 70s was a turbulent time for America in many ways, but by the mid 80s America was experiencing an economic boom under the Presidency of Ronald Reagan.

☐ Ferris' life and experiences reflect the good mood at the time in America. Ferris' parents are well off and his home and bedroom reflects this. Cameron too, is a character who reflects the wealth and prosperity of the time.

☐ The President at the time, Ronald Reagan, was a Republican who believed strongly in personal freedom and the idea of a 'small' Government. Ferris reflects this in his disregard for rules and his desire for freedom.

☐ Arguably, Ferris' selfish and arrogant behaviour is also symptomatic of the time when the desire for personal prosperity was put before all else.

☐ This was also a time for optimism and a dawn of a new age in politics and security; since the late 40s America and Russia had been involved with the Cold War but also engaged in nuclear proliferation. The 80s saw a thawing of tensions however and for the first time in 40 years, the threat of nuclear armageddon disappeared.

☐ Teenagers in 1980s America lived in a prosperous time and with nuclear disarmament underway, teenagers instead found fears and trauma in other aspects of their lives. In many teen films in the 80s, the adolescents found themselves questioning what their futures were, where they fit in with modern society and how to meet their parents' expectations.

☐ The collapse of the Soviet Union was symbolic of communist countries around the world 'failing'. The rise and increased success of capitalism however made Western countries such as America become the model states for others around the world, increasing confidence and prosperity in the USA.

☐ NASA launched the Space Shuttle in 1981 and in turn ushered in a new era of space travel and optimism. The world began to seem even smaller than before and that the long-promised future of space travel was on the horizon.

☐ CDs were introduced in 1982. The technology was a significant improvement over vinyl records of the past, and promised a future of perfect sound quality and portable music.

☐ Personal computers experienced an explosive growth in the 80s, with computers like the IBM PC, the Commodore 64 and the Apple Macintosh.

☐ In 1984, the first mobile phone was available for the mass-market. Whilst this technological first occurred after FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF was produced and released, it nonetheless demonstrates how the decade was host to technological advancements and change that altered human behaviour forever.

☐ MTV (music television) launched in 1981, playing popular music videos with 'video jockeys' (VJs) rather than traditional DJs who were traditionally used on the radio. The channel quickly became a hit and became a cultural phenomenon, with artists seeking to produce ever-more exciting, original and expensive videos in order to be featured on the channel.

☐ New Wave music, which emerged in the 1970s, developed in the 1980s to become a mainstream genre of music that also spawned other popular genres such as synth-pop. The popularity of the genre was driven by MTV, especially given that synth-pop classic Video Killed the Radio Star by The Bugles, was the first video played on the channel.

☐ Synth-pop and new wave music used modern variations of traditional instruments, with drum machines and synthesisers producing modern and almost futuristic sounding music, the likes of which had never been heard before.

☐ During the film, we see the idea of excess, success and wealth being something to aim for. The pinnacle of this is the Ferrari 1961 250GT California-it symbolises the desire for wealth at the time as well as the thing that everyone in the film wants more above all else.

☐ Ronald Reagan, who became president in 1981, was a conservative who campaigned with the slogan: "Let's Make America Great Again." His and his supporters desire was to make America a much more traditional and wholesome country based on an idealistic version of the 1950s.

☐ The 1980s saw a slew of successful teen films such as THE BREAKFAST CLUB, SIXTEEN CANDLES, RISKY BUSINESS, HEATHERS, SAY ANYTHING and even genre hybrids, like the horror-inflected TEEN WOLF and THE LOST BOYS, were hugely successful and remain audience favourites to this day.

☐ By the 1980s, the concept of the teenager was cemented in the American culture. Teen films depicting life of a teenager reflected and enhanced the idea of who and what teens did. People of this specific age, born between the late 60s and 70s, later became known as Generation X-people who followed the 'Baby Boomers' and preceded 'Millenials'.

☐ With Communism essentially failing throughout the world, American prosperity on the rise and the dawn of many new technologies, confidence and optimism in America was sky high. For an entire generation, life was good and seemed like it could only get better.

☐ The 'good times' feeling that existed through the 80s in America is still felt today- culture often romanticises the time and references it in style and tone in many films and TV shows. TV programs like STRANGER THINGS and BLACK MIRROR, films such as SUPER 8, ATOMIC BLONDE and THOR: RAGNAROK are heavily influenced by the style , mood and atmosphere of the 1980s.

☐ As seen in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, the role of women in society was rapidly changing. Women were now often not homemakers and stay-at-home-mums, and instead often worked and were as carving successful and powerful careers.

CONTEXT
GROUP TASK
Read the context. Label the margin of each with the *initial* of each TYPE of context in the left hand margin. A brief reminder that context can be split into the distinct areas of:

Social: aspects of society and its structure reflected in the film. For example, consider who holds the power? Who is oppressed? Are characters treated or defined by their class? Do we see social hierarchy and structures at all and if so, how are they reflected in the film and how do they affect the characters? ?

Cultural: aspects of culture – ways of living, beliefs and values of groups
of people – reflected in the film. For example, what do we see in the film or know about the time the film was made in terms of religions and religious practises, clothing, aspects of culture and the arts? Are there references that a modern audience may not appreciate or understand because it's tied into the culture of the time?

Political: the way political issues, when relevant to the film chosen, are
reflected in a film. For example, is there a key political event depicted or implied? Consider world leaders such as Presidents and Prime Ministers and the choices they made that may be reflected in, or that affect the film. Perhaps political decisions made before the film are seen in the film in some manner.

Institutional: how films are funded, how the level of production budget
affects the kind of film made and the main stages of film production. For example, which companies produced the film? Where did the budget come from? Where was the film made? Why there? Significant people involved in the making of the film and is it part of a wider franchise, studio system or production company? If so, how does this affect it?

Historical: aspects of the society and culture at the time when films are
made and, where relevant and when they are set. For example, is the time the film was made or set in significant? Was there a key event around the time the film was made or set? How might that have affected the film or the making of the film?

Technological: the technologies reflected in a film's production and, in
some cases, in its narrative. For example, think mise-en-scene (props) here: how can we see technology (or the lack of) in the film? Does this help to date the film? Also consider the production of the film: does the film use any specific technology in the production (3D cameras, widescreen, HDR, colour, CGI etc.)?

FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF CONTEXT ASSESSMENT

PAIRED TASK

Answer the questions below, using the information about context above to help.

1. When was the film released?

2. **What were some of the main political issue during the 1980s?**

3. How did the political mood at the time affect films being made in the 1980s?

4. **Families began to change during the 1980s. List 3 ways that things changed for families and the roles of people within families.**

5. The 1980s are often viewed nostalgically. What does this mean?

6. **Give at least 3 examples of how 80s culture is now seen in a nostalgic way.**

7. Give at least 3 examples of cultural context that show that teenagers in the 80s lived in a positive and 'easy' time.

8. **Referring to at least 3 examples of context, in what way was life in the 1980s optimistic about the future?**

9. Why do you think that teenagers in the 1980s were often troubled and suffering personal conflict and trauma?

10. **In your opinion and referring to details of context and the narrative of the film, why was the use of Chicago important?**

11. How does the wealth of Ferris family and his desire for a car reflect teenagers of the 1980s?

12. **Explain how the rapidly improving technology of the time may have affected teenagers in the 1980s.**

13. Explain how the cutting-edge technology of the time has made the films of the 80s looked dated compared to many other decades.

14. **Why do you think that the film remains as popular than ever, despite the context ageing the film? Give at least 3 key reasons of context to help support your ideas.**

15. Overall, summarise what you have learned about the context of the film and create a long sentence that explains the context of the film, referring to a variety of examples from different aspects of context.

THE POSTER
SOLO TASK

You may have seen the film by now and this may affect your answers and ideas here, but whether you have or haven't seen the film, here is one of the posters used to market the film. Use the space around it and annotate the image. For every aspect of the poster consider two things; what can we see (the explicit details) and then what does each thing *suggest* (the implicit suggestion)? To include detailed annotations, consider the context of the film, especially America in the 1980s to help explain some of the design choices made as well as considering why the poster is much cleaner and lacking in detail/information than many other posters.
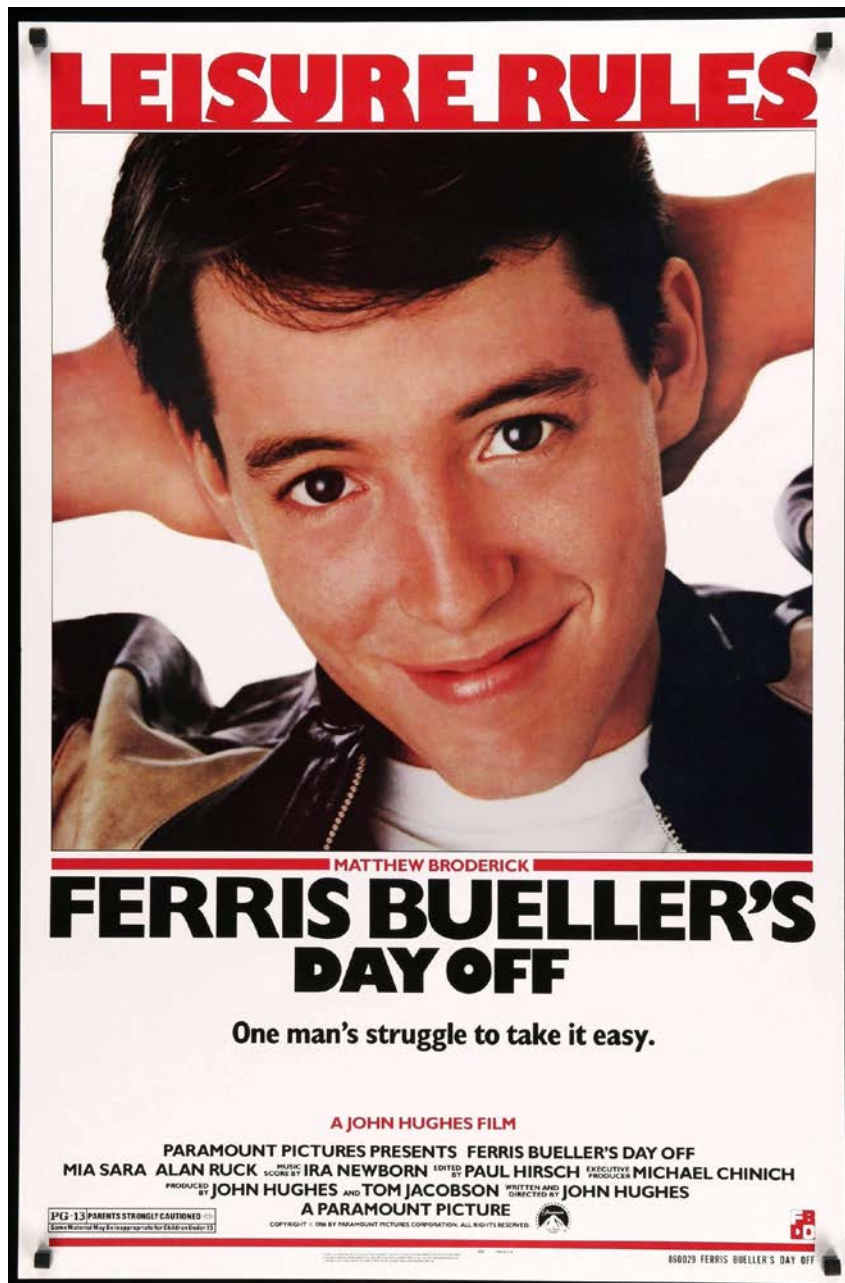
THE POSTERS
SOLO TASK

Below is a poster created for the international market and quite different to the poster on the previous page. As with the poster on the previous page, annotate this one to explore some of the main ideas and themes behind the design of this poster. Consider two things; what can we see (the explicit details) and then what does each thing suggest (the implicit suggestion)? To include detailed annotations, consider why this poster was not used as the main way to advertise the film in America and how it represents both Ferris Bueller as a character and teenagers in general.
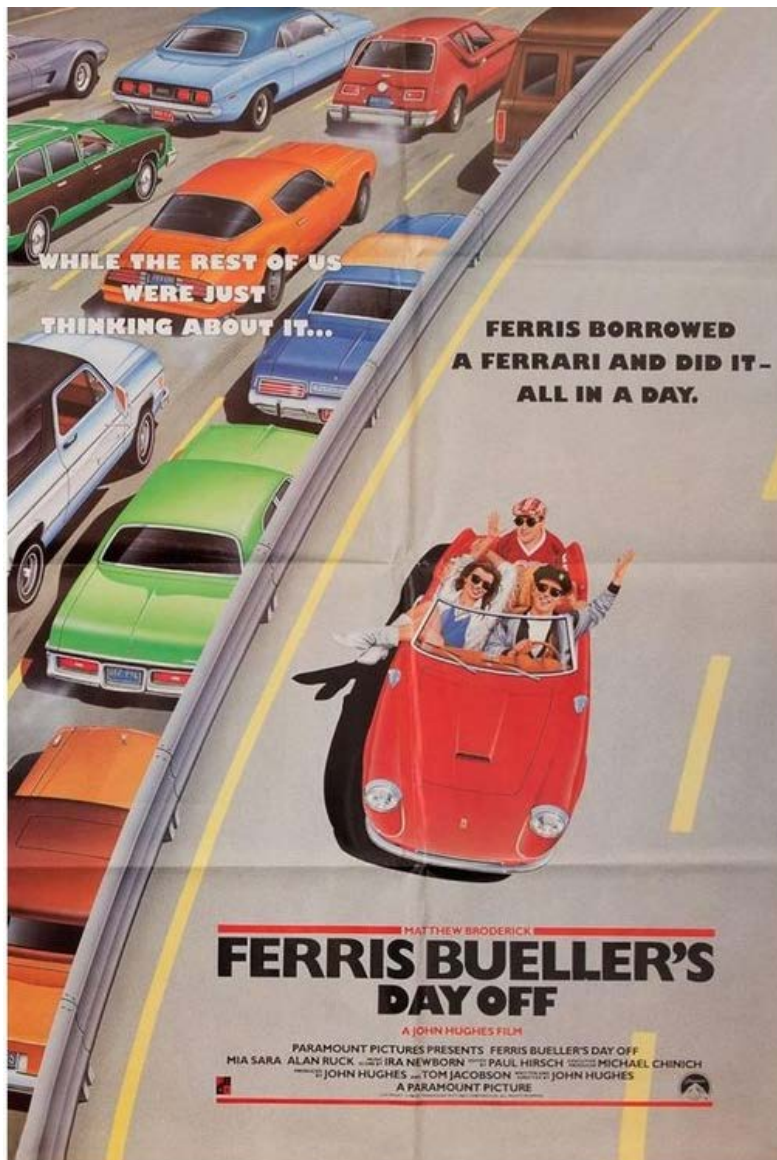
WATCH THE FILM
SOLO TASK - CORNELL NOTES EXPLANATION

If you haven't already, now it's time to watch the film!

Use the note sheet below to make notes either on your first or second watch. The note sheet is specifically designed to allow you to focus on the film, but make brief notes on the left hand side; your teacher may instruct you as to when a key scene starts or finishes or they may leave that up to you.

When you have finished watching, use the space on the right hand side to write more detailed notes. These notes may be the expanded versions of your notes on the left, or about something more specific which you've been asked to write about. If unsure, make notes specifically on the characters and how they look, what they do and why you think they act in certain ways at certain times.

The space on the left has space for specific elements of film language that you need to look at and make notes on. Be specific in describing where/when you see this element of film language being used.

On the right hand side is a larger space. Use this to write a detailed explanation of how the scene looks, using film language and your notes on the left hand side.

Finally, the space at the bottom is for you to add any additional notes, instructions from your teacher or feedback from teacher, peers or yourself.

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:	

WATCH THE FILM
SOLO TASK - CORNELL NOTES

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. HOWEVER, given that the focus of this film is to compare it to a film you have not yet seen, aim to describe what you think the film is like compared to a modern day film.

Compose new Tweet ✕

140 Tweet

TWITTER REACTIONS

GROUP TASK-COLLECT REACTIONS

Next: read the reactions of others (or indeed, discuss with them) based on their Twitter reactions. When looking at the reactions of others, look closely at the opinion of other people and, perhaps ore importantly, WHY they felt how they did. For example, did people feel the same about the film as you or someone else? Was there one thing that stood out as being especially interesting or badly done? Was there one thing that everyone disliked? How did the film look or feel different to something we've already seen? As much as possible, use film language, focusing on cinematography and mise-en-scene. Perhaps consider institutional context as well as issues of representation.

Overall, most people...

...because...

The things people really liked were...

Things that seemed a little different to more modern films were...

People who disliked the film didn't like...

CHARACTERS

SOLO TASK

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

Ferris Bueller

-
-
-

Cameron Frye

-
-
-

Sloane Peterson
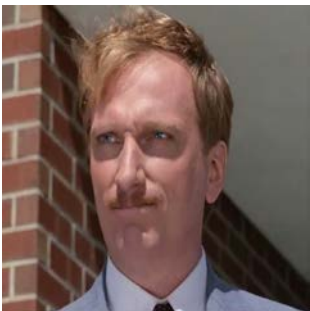
-
-
-

Jeanie Butler

-
-
-

Katie Bueller

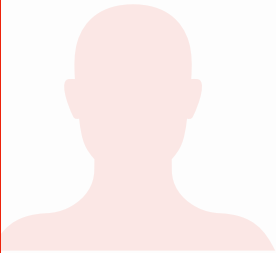-
-
-

Tom Bueller

-
-
-

Ed Rooney

-
-
-
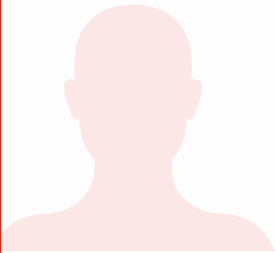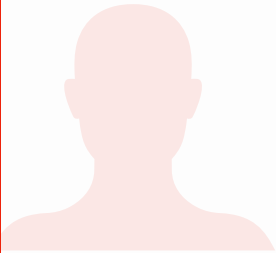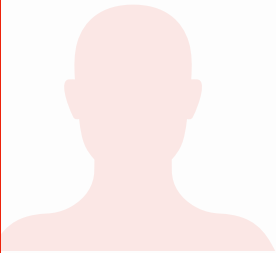
Grace

-
-
-

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

PAIRED TASK

Using film language, describe the characters in the film. In each box, describe the different aspects of film language . Write the character name, or draw a picture of them in the left hand side box then add as much detail as possible for each film language element as possible.

	Hair & make-up	Costume	Performance	Props

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

SOLO TASK

Time to take your descriptions of characters using film language and turn these into a summary of who each character is. Aim to keep this brief but detailed-concise but comprehensive. Ideally, no more that 2 sentences. Be sure to refer to key aspects of film language. You may want to do this for more that just these 3 characters below so a spare has been left blank as well. If adding another, aim to choose someone who is significantly different to the characters already selected for you.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION
GROUP TASK

In order to test how detailed your description of the characters are, read out a description to a group but DO NOT read out the characters name and DO NOT include any details that makes it too obvious. Something like "is in a relationship with Sloane" is too easy to guess.
The first person who recognises the person by the description then reads one of theirs.
If no one guesses, tell the group who it is and then ask the group what else you could have described to make the description accurate.

Continue with the same process until everyone has read out a description.

REPRESENTATION

Every time we watch a film, we are not seeing a **reality** but instead someone's **version** of something that they wish to **portray** to an audience. Representation therefore refers to the *construction* of 'reality' and especially *how* that representation has been **constructed**, referring to **film language** as often as possible. A key thing to consider in terms of representation is the idea the the person or place we see on screen may be the only example of that person or place; therefore, this is the representation of the version we have on **screen**. For example, this might be the first time you have seen **America in the 1980s** and for that reason, it creates a certain image or idea of what these places and times are about. Representation then, is very important as it provides an idea of what some people or places are like, depending on how the **filmmakers** choose them to be on screen and as a result, how the audience **feels** about those people or places.

Representation involves three main stages; **identify** who or what is being represented, then **how** they are being represented (broadly speaking, whether this is a **positive** or **negative** representation) and finally *how* does the film **create** that specific representation using film language.

For this exam, you may need to focus on the representation of, as a minimum, how the film represents **teenagers** and **adults**, especially those who have, or don't have, authority

As well as this, it's important to be able to **explain** and **explore** how representation can create, and play with, the idea of **stereotypes**. A stereotype is a commonly- held image of a person or group, based on an **overly**-**simplified** or believed appearance or behaviour. The key here is the idea that a stereotype is a form of representation but isn't especially new, detailed or even **accurate** in some cases.

For example, Ferris can be said to represent some teenagers in America in the 1980s. He also represents **Generation X**, the demographic following the Baby Boomers and preceding the Millennials. However, the way in which these representations are slightly stereotypical; he doesn't like school, doesn't get on with his sister, wears clothes that his parents would not and uses language that is very different to adults. The film *could* have taken a slightly different approach and had Ferris wear the formal suit and tie that he wears to collect Sloane all of the way through and attend school that day, but instead, the film uses the stereotype of a young **rebel** who and takes part in **dangerous** and **risky** activities. To this end, he is a stereotype.

Over the next few pages a series of activities will explore the characters in terms of their representation. There are also some activities that will ask you to explore how stereotypes are created and whether you feel like any of the character in the film are stereotypes and why this might have been done by the film makers.

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION

PAIRED TASK

Representation involves three main stages; identify who or what is being represented, then *how* they are being represented (broadly speaking, whether this is a positive or negative representation) and finally *how* does the film create that specific representation using film language.

Below are images of some of the main characters from the film. Three have been left blank for you to add more characters of your own choice. For each character label who you think they represent in the real world, or who you think the filmmakers want them to represent.

To do this, think about who that person is and what they do. Then apply this to a wider group of people in the real world, away from the film.

For example, Ferris is a character who is young man who lives in Chicago in America. This means that he represents teenagers/young men in America. However, as a young, white adult who has wealthy parents who care for him, he doesn't represent *all* young men in America-some other young men in this film represent other types of teenagers and therefore you need to be careful that you aren't *too* specific in explaining who or what each character represents. If a description of a character doesn't represent many people in the real world, if at all, the description is too *narrow* and isn't a true representation.

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

Gender:

Age:

Background (if known):

Other personal details:

Positive or negative representation:

Key examples of film language:

Overall, this character represents:

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION
GROUP WORK

On the next page are images of each of the main characters in the film. Follow the instructions below to analyse who the characters in the film represent in the 'real' world. The images provided are only a guide-consider what the characters are like throughout the film, not just how they appear in these images.

You may find this easier if you print out this page so that you can cut the images out and group them, or you could colour code them by group, draw circles around certain groups or just label with a pen. To give you an idea about how each could look, the first one has been done for you below.

1. First of all, write their name on each character.

2. Then, write which group they belong to; teenagers, parents or authority figures.

3. Next, using descriptions of film language (and not referring to dialogue the characters use or examples of narrative they are involved with) try to explain WHY they fit into that group.

4. Finally, considering the details learned about context and using the words at the bottom of this page as examples, label who you think each character represents and explain how we see that being reflected on the screen.

teenagers

adults

authority figures

young men

well-off

young women

1. Ferris Bueller
2. Teenager
3. Dresses quite formally. Style is very individual. Cynical explains his thoughts directly to audience.
4. Ferris represents teenagers, rebels and the middle/upper-middle classes who were affluent in the 80s. He is the embodiment of entitlement and the mise-en-scene reflects his nature as a child of the capitalist system.

middle-class

rebels

children of baby boomers

affluent parents

young people

leaders
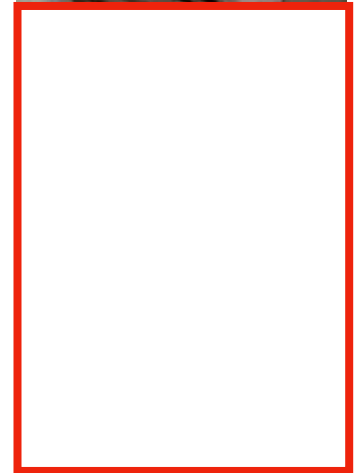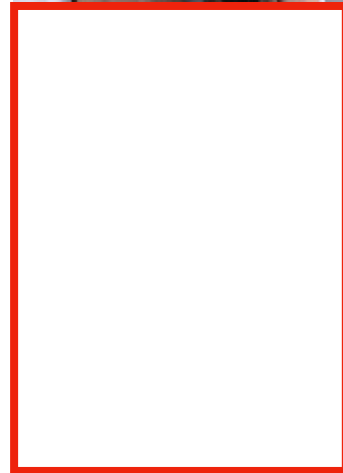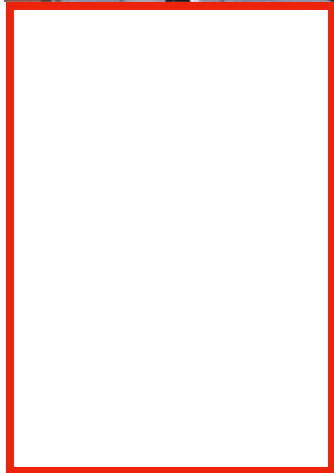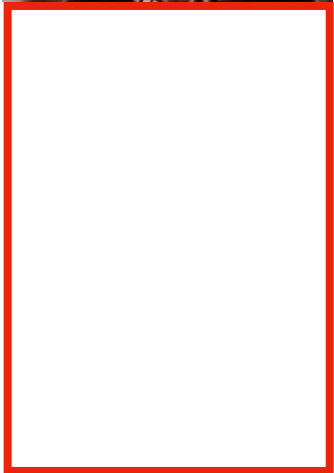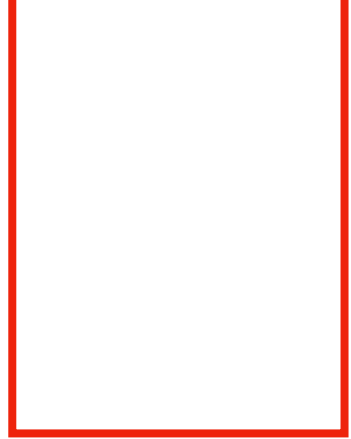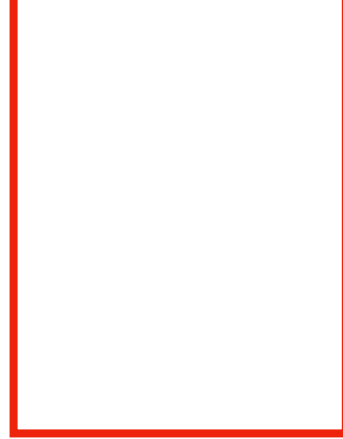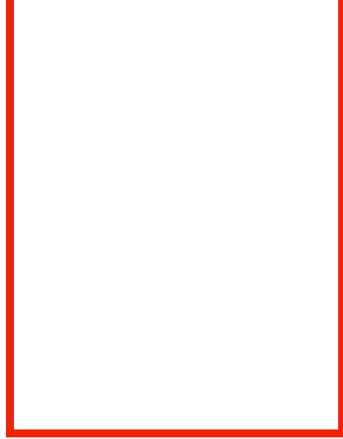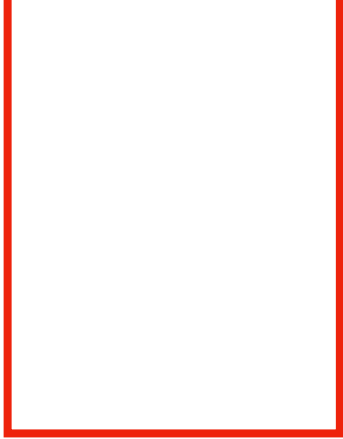
CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION
PAIRED TASK

Consider the images and the key scenes they represent. Discussing your ideas with a partner and then noting down ideas, analyse how representation is created in the key scenes below. Your ideas and notes will be needed for the questions later.

KEY SCENE 1
Re-watch from 00:01 to 05:47

KEY SCENE 2
Re-watch from 25:56 to 28:32

KEY SCENE 3
Re-watch from 1:00:29 to 1:05:31
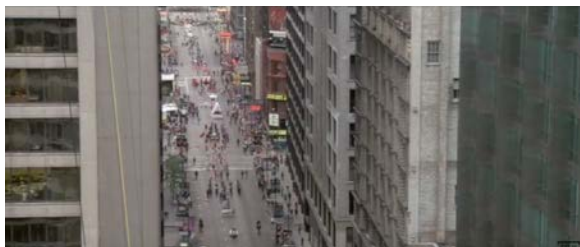
CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION
SOLO TASK

Overall, who do each of the main characters represent?
Use your ideas and notes from previous tasks to create a summary for each of the characters provided below. Then, answer the questions on representation to check your knowledge on representation.

Overall, Ferris Bueller represents…

The troubled teen Cameron Frye represents…
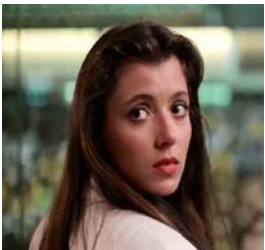
Sloane, one of the few female characters in the film who has more than a few lines of dialogue, represents…

Katie Bueller, Ferris' mum represents quite a progressive character in the 1980s by representing…

Whilst not in the film much, Tom Bueller, Ferris' father represents…
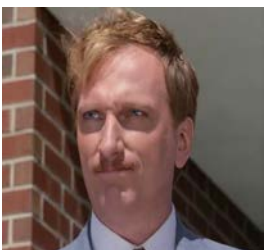
Whilst quite a comedic and one-dimensional character, Ed Rooney represents..

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION
SOLO TASK

Where do we see characters being represented the most clearly in the film? Use the space below to list the people who are represented in this film and where we see this in the film, referring to key scenes and moments to help explain how characters are represented throughout the film

Where we see this representation in the film											
Characters who represent them in the film											
Who is represented in the real world											

CHARACTERS
PAIRED TASK

Over the next few pages are images of the main characters. It is again important to remember that the characters we see on screen are *constructions* of characters- the job of the filmmakers is to choose costumes, create hair and then actors are asked to perform in their roles in a specific way. This is done as the filmmakers try to make us, the audience, think or react in a specific way. Because of this, we need to analyse how and why each of these character have been created the way that they have. On the left hand side are spaces are describe and write down your examples of different aspects of film language related to the appearance of each character. These are the **explicit** details of the characters. On the right hand side you are to explore what each of these elements is trying to suggest-these are the **implicit** ideas. Some examples have been completed for the first character, Jim, below but aim to add more. Where possible, aim to add 9 different explicit ideas and to do so, consider a wide range of different film language elements, concentrating on cinematography and mise-en-scene.

Explicit details	**Implicit ideas**
1.Full suit	1. Grown up
2.Tie	2. Wants to be taken seriously
3.Blocking the door	3. Has to force Cameron/friends to stay
4.Isolated	4. Lonely
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	

Explicit details

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Implicit ideas

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Explicit details

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Implicit ideas

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Explicit details

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Implicit ideas

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Explicit details

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Implicit ideas

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

CHARACTERS AND REPRESENTATION
SOLO TASK
Answer the questions on representation below to check your knowledge on representation.

1. In your own words, what is representation?

2. **Name the groups of people you think this film represents.**

3. Starting with the most positive, rank the groups you listed for question 2 from most positive to least positive representation.

4. **Overall, how would you describe the representation of teenagers in this film?**

5. Referring to film language and at least 1 key scene, explain how the representation of teenagers is created.

6. **Considering details of context, try to explain how contextual details affected the representation of teenagers that the filmmakers have created.**

7. Teenagers are not all represented in the same way in this film. Referring to at least 2 teenage different characters, explain how these teens are represented as being different.

8. Overall, would you suggest that the representation of teenagers is positive or negative in this film? Referring to at least 2 key scenes to help prove your ideas, explain in detail analysing how this representation is created.

9. **Overall, how would you describe the representation of adults in this film.**

10. Referring to film language and at least 1 key scene, explain how the representation of adults is created.

11. **Considering details of context, try to explain how contextual details affected the representation of adults that the filmmakers have created.**

12. Referring to film language as much as possible, explain how teenagers and adults are represented as being different. Refer to at least one key scene.

13. **Overall, summarise what you have learned about the representation of people in this film.**

TEENAGERS AND COSTUME

Ferris' personality can be seen in numerous ways, but none more evident than in his costume. Consider the information over the next few pages and then analyse the screenshots that do not yet have a written commentary underneath.

This shot, from quite early in the film, helps to establish Ferris' attitude and how he sees the day ahead. To Ferris, this day is a holiday and he has no worries about skipping school. We can obviously see that Ferris is wearing shorts here, but the style of them, combined with Ferris' performance and the mise-en-scene in general, show just how relaxed he is. The loud print on his shorts is very typical of the 80s and helps to show that, rather than just a plain sports shorts, Ferris thinks of this as a holiday. The cocktail, the sun-lounger and the pose all show that he is as relaxed as if he was on holiday.

Slightly later we see more of Ferris looking relaxed; whilst he's now dressed he's still wearing a classic 'Hawaiian' style print which is synonymous with being on holiday. His pose is again relaxed and carefree-he is almost lying down again. He is now wearing trousers, but interestingly, they are 'slacks', or 'grown-up' trousers. This helps to suggest that not only is he happy to be at school today, but that he wants to be older and is too mature for school. The props and overall mise-en-scene reflect how well-off Ferris is.

Ferris soon progresses from trousers to full suit, including shirt and tie. Ferris spends part of his morning explaining, to the audience, how he finds high school to be a waste of time and this costume helps to highlight that he feels as though he is 'better' than school. His maturity means that he feels like an adult and as a result, dressing like one and driving a car allows him to act out his desires.

After Ferris has 'rescued' Sloane from school and convinced Cameron to come along, Ferris can be himself-carefree, reckless and rebellious.The hat, specifically a beret, is synonymous with rebellion and is perhaps most recognisably worn by the revolutionary icon Che Guevara. The sunglasses emphasise his relaxed nature and that the weather is warm and sunny-helping to again emphasis that this is going to be a great, enjoyable day, like a holiday. Ferris' body language here also helps to show his rebellious nature-the car is expensive and crucially, not his. Taking his hands off the wheel allows him to seem excited but also rebellious and quite selfish in how he treats the possessions of others.

TEENAGERS
SOLO TASK

The teenagers in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are represented quite positively. Early in the film they are bored by their lesson on economics, but seem to care a great deal about Ferris, even though some have never heard of him. The teenagers donate to charity and ask Jeanie how Ferris is doing, some even speak to Ferris on the phone and wish him well. In some respects, teenagers are represented much more positively than the adults who often seem selfish and mean. In this respect, the teenagers are shown as being mature, selfless and mature. There is a lack of rebellion from many of them, and this is also reflected in their costume and the overall mise-en-scene.

Look closely at the images below and, writing in the boxes, analyse how teenagers are represented referring to costume predominantly but any other relevant examples of film language to do so. Remember to explain the **explicit** details of what you can see and then analyse the **implicit** suggestion of what it is trying to suggest to the audience. Use the images and analysis from the previous pages, as well as below, to give you an idea of what to include.

Ferris is on the phone to strangers who go to his school. He is essentially explaining how ill he is and the shot here allows us to see that they are interested in what Ferris is saying despite not knowing him. It helps to show how teenagers are quite selfless and mature in this film. The teenagers all point their body in the direction of the phone showing that they're keen to be involved and speak to Ferris. They look happy and calm, with relaxed body language and happy facial expressions. Their costume reveals little here but does help to emphasise how mature many of these characters are by wearing shirts and jumpers. A 'letterman' jacket is worn by the character to the right, highlighting a key interest for many teenagers in high school and the clothes are clean, tidy and worn without any alterations; this all contributes to a look that is sensible, mature and welcoming, reflecting how the teenagers in the film are represented. Even the characters in the background are sensible dressed and friendly looking, carrying their school books which also help to how seriously they take their education.

ADULTS AND COSTUME

The adults in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are represented in broadly negative ways. At the very least, they can be described as being naive. They are however, clearly established as being different from Ferris and the other teenagers and, to an extent, somewhat modern and progressive compared with parents of the past. As with most films, costume helps to create this representation. Read the commentary below each image and then analyse the images on the next page to show what you have learned and understand about representation of adults.

One of the first occasions that we see Ferris' parents is from Ferris' POV. Whilst the camera angle makes it clear that they hold the power in this scene, their performance shows that they are sympathetic to Ferris. Crucially, we see that they are both wearing modern business clothes. This establishes that both parents work and in powerful jobs-the lack of obvious uniform here represents management/formal jobs that require smart clothing. That Ferris' mother Katie is wearing this type of clothing is a progressive statement-that in the 80s, women not only went to work, but were successful and high-powered.

Look at the size of that office! Tom Bueller's office is huge-he's clearly a well-paid and powerful person. What is interesting to see is his laid-back body language and his pink shirt-both of these would not be the traditional style of a high-powered businessman or indeed of a traditionally stern father figure. Instead, we see a man who is comfortable in himself and his environment but perhaps too comfortable-he barely seems concerned with Ferris and trusts his son too much given what Ferris is up to now and how many days he's had off.

As with Ferris' father, his nemesis at school is in an office-drawing a nice contrast with what Ferris wants when he is older. This office however is much smaller that Tom Bueller's and the window is covered by a blind making a much less inviting place to work. Crucially though, Ed Rooney is wearing his suit with the top button of his shirt done up. This creates the impression that he is much more formal and stern than Ferris' father and because of this is very much an authority figure unlike his father.

ADULTS
SOLO TASK

As explored on the previous page, adults in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are represented generally negatively; Ferris' parents are seen as naive and clueless and others are seen as elitist, over-bearing and untrustworthy. Throughout the film overall, adults are seen as being completely different to Ferris and examples of who he does not want to be when he grows up and this causes conflict throughout.

Look closely at the images below and, writing in the boxes, analyse how adults are represented, referring to costume predominantly but also include any other relevant examples of film language. Remember to explain the **explicit** detail and information of what you can see and then analyse the **implicit** suggestion of what it is trying to suggest to the audience. Use the images, commentary and analysis from the previous pages to give you an idea of what to include.

Ferris' father is too busy chatting business and financial opportunities to notice that not only was his cab taken from him, but that it was taken by his son, Ferris Bueller. This suggests that he puts his work and success first, with everything else coming after. This is reflected in the body language, shot size and his suit. The colour of the suit is not only drab and grey, but similar in colours to the others he is meeting, suggesting that they're all very similar and therefore, as adults, all quite selfish and dull. The long shot size allows Ferris and the others to come into the shot later, given the space that becomes available. By positioning Tom and the other men centrally in the frame, it draws our attention to them, allowing the teenagers to pop into the shot in a moment without drawing a lot of attention to them. This all combines to represent the adults and certainly Tom, as naive to what is around them and selfishly motivated-they're too busy talking business to see anyone else in this scene.

RELATIONSHIPS

Many of the characters in the film seems to be involved in, or want to be a part of, a relationship. Whilst the most obvious examples of relationship in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are romantic in nature, we also see friendships, family relationships and people who long for a relationship of some kind. The connections in these relationships are driven by desires of various reasons, with each character motivated by personal reasons (some of which are affected by contextual reasons) but many of these drive conflict in the film, even if just for one scene. Cameron for example, may not openly suggest so, but his anger and worry over his father suggests that he would like a better relationship with him. Jeanie's attraction to the "Boy in the Police Station" shows she is keen she is to find a boyfriend but this gets in the way of what her mother wants. Ferris too, despite being in a loving relationship with Sloane, wants to develop this and get married.

PAIRED TASK

Below are some character names and to the right, a range of desires in terms of relationships. Match up the characters with their desires either by drawing lines and connecting them or by printing, cutting and sticking.

Ferris	**A loving and open-minded partner who doesn't concern herself too much with the future.**
Sloane	**A loving couple who don't communicate much but are concerned for Ferris.**
Cameron	**Suffering from crippling anxiety, he wants to get on better with his father.**
Mr. Rooney	**A fun-loving teenager who wants to be older, including being married.**
Ferris' parents	**A strict disciplinarian who wants someone to work with who is as efficient as he is.**

Next, think of a scene or an extended moment when the characters make their desires clear. Aim to describe it in a sentence.

Finally, describe, referring to context, *why* you think each character is wants that specific relationship. One has been done for you as an example.

Ferris		
Sloane	A loving and open-minded partner who doesn't concern herself too much with the future.	During the scene at the stock exchange, Ferris awkwardly and causally proposes to Sloane suggesting they get married today. She laughs at the idea and plays it down. Whilst this shows how impulsive Ferris is, it also shows how rationale, mature and sensible Slaone is. Her attitude reflects a more modern approach to love and dating. In decades past, marrying young would have been much more regular and acceptable, but by the 80s people were already starting to wait longer and were wanting to enjoy an increasingly improving and prosperous standard of living.
Cameron		
Mr Rooney		

RELATIONSHIPS

How does film language show us what relationships are like in this film?
How does film language show what friendships are like compared to family ones?
Rank these screenshots in terms of comfort for the teenagers.
Then, analyse each image. Sum up relationship in one or two words and then use film language to describe in detail how that relationship is made clear.

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

Relationship/s:

Rank:

Analysis:

40

RELATIONSHIPS: FAMILY & FRIENDSHIPS

Referring to your ideas above, analyse the screenshots in detail by referring to film language by finishing off the sentences that have been started for you. Consider how does film language show us what relationships are like in this film and how does film language show what friendships are like compared to family ones?

Near the beginning of the film, Ferris is trying to convince his parents that his is sick. We see this shot almost as a POV shot from Ferris' view and the use of the low-angle shot shows that this parent have control…

because…

The positioning of the parents suggests that

In this classic image from the film, Ferris, Sloane and Cameron are at a museum and looking at art. Whilst they are mocking those around them with the way that they are standing, the composition of the image with where they are each standing reveals a lot about their relationship….

During the art gallery montage, we see a cutaway with Sloane and Ferris in front of a stained-glass window. The window is the main focus here, given that the shape, size and colour of it dominate the scene. However, it also allows us to see the young couple almost in silhouette and we can see that they are…

During the parade scene, we see a few moments with Cameron and Sloane. This use of the medium close shot is interesting, especially as they're walking in the opposite direction of where the crowd is looking suggests that they…

In particular, this shot helps to show how Cameron…

Finally, the facial expressions and overall performance suggests that their relationship…

RELATIONSHIPS

As with REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, there can be said to be 3 main groups who are recognisable in the film; teenagers, authority figures and parents. Each of these are connected in a variety of ways, but can broadly be linked as:

1. **teenagers** who generally don't respect authority figures;
2. **authority figures** who generally don't respect parents or trust teenagers and
3. **parents** who generally are respectful and encouraging of teenagers, but not fully trusting of them.

Of course, these relationships are more complex than this (what about those adults that *aren't* in positions of authority in the film?), so the relationships above are just a starting point. Often, the way that a group of people treat each other and the reason *why* their relationships are like they are, is because they reflect contextual issues.

For example:

1. Teenagers were distrustful of authority figures and leaders because of the past. Parents and Grandparents had caused wars and presided over the Cold War. Teenagers, now richer than ever and living in a rapidly-shrinking world, saw a future for themselves that was much more positive and comfortable than their elders.

2. We see throughout FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF that authority figures do not fully trust or respect parents. This could be because those in positions of power and authority felt that parents, such as Ferris' were too focused on their own careers, making money and personal happiness to fully look after and understand what their children were really like.

3. Parents of teenagers in the 1980s would have grown up in a time when they themselves would have been recognised as teenagers. In this way, we see Ferris' parents being quite understanding and sympathetic, perhaps aware of what their children are going through. Of course, the rapidly changing world in the 1980s means that parents would likely have felt out of touch to some extent and not fully appreciate the world in which their children lived. As a result, we still see parents distrusting their teenagers and their motivations.

TASK:

Re-read the above commentary on the main relationships in the film related to context. Use the space below to describe an example of a key scene from each of these relationships and then explain how we see this relationship in the scene via use of film language.

1.

2.

3.

CHARACTERS, STYLE & CONTEXT

As we watch a film, the representation of the characters can not only provide a window into what the film thinks of people in the real world, but can also show us what people were like at the time of making a film. Society is constantly changing and evolving; what was once accepted and tolerated 100, 50 or even 10 years ago may not be accepted in todays society. Public opinion changes, political decisions adapt and culturally speaking, things evolve and move on. The world in which Ferris Bueller lives is one that is not recognisable as being very modern, but instead now feels and looks 'old' or in some cases, 'vintage'. Certainly through mise-en-scene we see a style that is recognisable but but one that is very much of it's time-the film just looks like the 1980s! As a result, the characters reflect a time period so may use different language, dress differently and have different attitudes towards others. Therefore, the representation of people, such as teenagers, may be different to that of today.

Using the table below, consider how different the characters of 1986 and FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are compared to today. You'll be doing so by referring to film language as much as possible, so refer to your previous notes on the narrative and characters as much as possible to help.

	THEN	NOW
Teenagers		
Adults		
Teachers		
People in authority (police, security etc)		
Cars		
Clothes		
Technology		
Language		

CHARACTERS & CONTEXT

Having considered the style and the context of the narrative and characters in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, it's time to apply these to ideas to some questions.

First of all, create a summary below. Using your notes from the previous page, finish the sentences below by creating a brief summary in each of the boxes below about the world of FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF and the world of today for a modern, contemporary audience. Then, answer the questions below to apply what you've learned to exam-style questions.

Overall, 1986 and the world of FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF could be described as…

Whereas, in contrast, the modern world could be described as being…

1. How would you describe the clothing and overall style of teenagers in 1986?

2. **What adjectives would you use to describe the props and adjectives in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF and 1986?**

3. In what ways would you say there is some similarity in costume, make up and hair between 1986 and today?

4. **Overall, teenagers in 1986 might be described how? Give some examples of key scenes or moments in the film that are effective examples of this.**

5. The relationship between teenagers and adults in 1986 is…

6. **Some examples of scenes or key moments where teenagers and adults are interacting are…**

7. Overall, teenage men in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF are…Give some examples of characters including their names to help justify your ideas.

8. **In 1986 in general and in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, women could be described as…**

9. Give at least one example of a woman who is dominated b others in a key scene and describe using film language.

10. **Give an example of a young character who does may not control their own destiny and describe how this is seen in the film. OR give an example of a young character who may decide to try control their own destiny by the end of the film and describe how this is seen in the film.**

GENRE AND GENERIC CONVENTION

Genre is one way of categorising and identifying film by the category or the style of the film.

Category of style
These categories can be defined as **generic convention**, or the "things" which keep popping up in different films in the same genre. These things can be varied and cover a wide range of ideas. For example, in an action film the generic conventions are likely to be explosions, guns, chases and a clear villain. In romantic comedies, the generic conventions will include romance, dates gone wrong and a happy ending, whereas in a western you'll see generic conventions of horses, six-shooter guns, a shoot-out and the film to be set in the American West.

Style of film
By style, we refer to creative selections in choosing specific examples of film language. One way that a film can fit into a genre is to have the same recognisable style across a range of films. In horror films for example, we're expecting to see lots of low-key lighting, close-ups of people as they scream and of course, special effects of blood and violence. In science fiction films, we'd expect to see props of weapons that don't exist, vivid high-key lighting of non signs or costumes and editing that is purposefully slow.

Why stick to genres?
Genres are important for film companies and audiences for a variety of reasons. First of all, audiences like genres as it allows them to identify a type of film they enjoy and then watch others in the same style. This makes choosing a film to watch easier and also to compare-if the films are similar, then comparisons are easier and fairer to make. In this way, it's also easier for film companies-if they know that films in a certain genre are successful, they know types of films to make and also know what to include in them.

What's the reason for using generic conventions?
Conventions then are important in signposting what genre a film belongs to. If you watch a genre of film you like, you would expect to see key aspects or conventions being used, otherwise you would feel shortchanged and let down. Film companies also know what they need to include in their films then to keep the audiences happy.

FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF is a teenage comedy film. What does this mean?
One of the definitions of *comedy* is "a ludicrous or farcical event or series of events".
Other definitions of comedy as a genre include "the genre of dramatic literature dealing with the comic or with the serious in a light or satirical manner" and "a drama of light and amusing characters and typically with a happy ending". These are fit FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF nicely, especially when we consider the definition of drama as examined in the study guide on REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE.
If we use these definitions as a guide then, FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF features dramatic moments and scene but featuring light and amusing characters and a happy ending. Key then, is being able to find examples from the film to help prove that this is the case.

PAIRED TASK

The first table below asks you to consider the key aspects of the genres viewed in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF. Either as you watch, or after a viewing of the film, include explanations of a scene that suits these generic conventions and then, in as much detail possible, describe using film language.

This second table is more focused on the generic narrative elements of the film. Complete the first

GENERIC CONVENTION	KEY SCENE/MOMENT	FILM LANGUAGE IN THAT KEY SCENE/MOMENT
Comedy		
Drama (conflict)		
Happiness		
Excitement		

column by adding examples of key scenes or moments where that narrative convention is seen and then, in the column to the right, try to describe that scene using as much film language as possible.

COMEDY AND GENERIC CONVENTION

NARRATIVE CONVENTIONS	KEY SCENE/MOMENT	FILM LANGUAGE IN THAT KEY SCENE/MOMENT
Becoming an adult		
The teenage POV		
Rebellion		
Conflict between adults and teenagers		
Conformity		
Learning a lesson (not a literal classroom lesson!)		

As explored previously, most films can be said to be *dramatic,* and are often filled with *drama*. However, FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF features a wide range of comedic moments and ludicrous events. However, there are other genres that can be said in the film if we view the film as a series of generic conventions.

SOLO TASK:

Below are a series of screenshots from the film. For each, note what genre is on show. Aim to use film language to help identify and explore the generic conventions on display.

If unsure, consider these genres as *possible* examples: spy film, musical, horror film, racing film

Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

Genre: Film language that creates that genre:

48

DEFINITION: COMEDY AND SATIRE

Overall then, FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF is a comedy, including elements of the idea of *satire*. Satire can be defined as "*using humour to exaggerate other people's stupidity*". In this way, in the film we see a **satirical** version of school, the one thing that Ferris openly dislikes and **rebels** against. The overly-boring teacher delivering a lecture on economics to bored students and Mr. Rooney's absurdly relentless pursuit of one student are both **exaggerated** and over-the-top **representations** of real teachers. In his (failed) pursuit of Ferris', Mr. Rooney is made to look **absurd** and therefore highlights how and why Ferris may resent school and teachers.

SOLO TASK

Rewatch the key scene below. Explain the audience reaction in the **POINT** box, then give examples of the film language in the scene in the **EVIDENCE** box and then explain how the evidence creates that reaction in the **COMMENT** box. Finally, write a short paragraph for each that collects the ideas into one summarised paragraph.

Scene starts:
51:00

ED ROONEY TRIES TO BREAK INTO THE BUELLER HOUSE

Scene ends:
54:35

(POINT) AUDIENCE REACTION	(EVIDENCE) FILM LANGUAGE	(COMMENT) FILM LANGUAGE

Overall analysis of how this scene is comedic:

DEFINITION: TEEN FILM

A teen film is broadly defined as being focused on the lives of young adults and teenagers and also aimed at the same group of people. These films feature the interests, hobbies and ambitions of teenagers and young adults and feature thematic ideas such as coming of age, rebellion, peer pressure, attempting to fit in, love, conflict with parents and. alienation. However, whist these themes are serious subjects, teen films often present in a glossy, trivial manner where the stakes for the characters are often relatively minor.

SOLO TASK

Rewatch the key scene below. Explain the audience reaction in the **POINT** box, then give examples of the film language in the scene in the **EVIDENCE** box and then explain how the evidence creates that reaction in the **COMMENT** box. Finally, write a short paragraph for each that collects the ideas into one summarised paragraph.

Scene starts: 28:35

FERRIS BORROWS THE FERRARI AND THEY HEAD TO

Scene ends: 34:13

(POINT) AUDIENCE REACTION	(EVIDENCE) FILM LANGUAGE	(COMMENT) FILM LANGUAGE

Overall analysis of how this scene is a teen film:

NARRATIVE

FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF is a fairly traditional film in its use of narrative structure. In many ways the narrative neatly suits either the classic 3 or 5 Act Structures, depending on which you wish to apply.

You may have already spent some time covering narrative structures but if not, the definitions and activities below will be a useful help.

DEFINITION: 3 ACT STRUCTURE

The *three-act structure* is a way of examining narrative fiction that divides a story into three parts or acts. These 3 acts are often called the **Setup**, the **Confrontation** and the **Resolution**.

FIRST ACT: THE SETUP or BEGINNING

The first act is usually used for *exposition*-another way of describing how important information such as main character names, locations and background details are explained to the audience. We also find that later in the first act, an on-screen incident occurs which forces the protagonist to deal with this new situation. This is known as the *inciting incident*. This is where the first act ends; the protagonist has to set off on a quest or deal with something that ensures their life will never be the same again.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

What exposition is given in the setup of FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF?

What is the *inciting incident* in the first act of FERRIS BUELLER'S DY OFF?

SECOND ACT: RISING ACTION or THE MIDDLE

The second act, also referred to as Rising Action, shows the protagonist's attempt to resolve the problem from the Inciting Incident. Often protagonists are unable to easily resolve their problems is because they do not yet have the skills or emotional development required to deal with the forces that confront them. The middle of the film then usually has the protagonist learning new skills but also learn about themselves. This is referred to as *character development* or a *character arc*. This usually cannot be achieved alone so the protagonist often will require help from mentors and other characters. Of course, it may be worth considering whether FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF suits a traditional second act-does Ferris change? Many would argue not and it's for this reason that many would say that Ferris is an unlikeable character-he is motivated by selfish reasons and does

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

What skills or emotional change does Ferris have to learn?

What does the Ferris learn about himself and others during the rising action?

scene or sequence in which the main problems of the story are brought to their most intense point,

often through action or an intense meeting. The inciting incident is finally dealt with in some way, with the protagonist and other characters having changed and developed in some way.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK:

List the ways that the protagonist in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF changes.

List the ways that Cameron in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF changes.

Re-watch the climax of the film. Describe what happens in the main story and explain if and how it resolves the inciting incident.

Describe the narrative of the climax referring to film language as much as possible to help describe what happens.
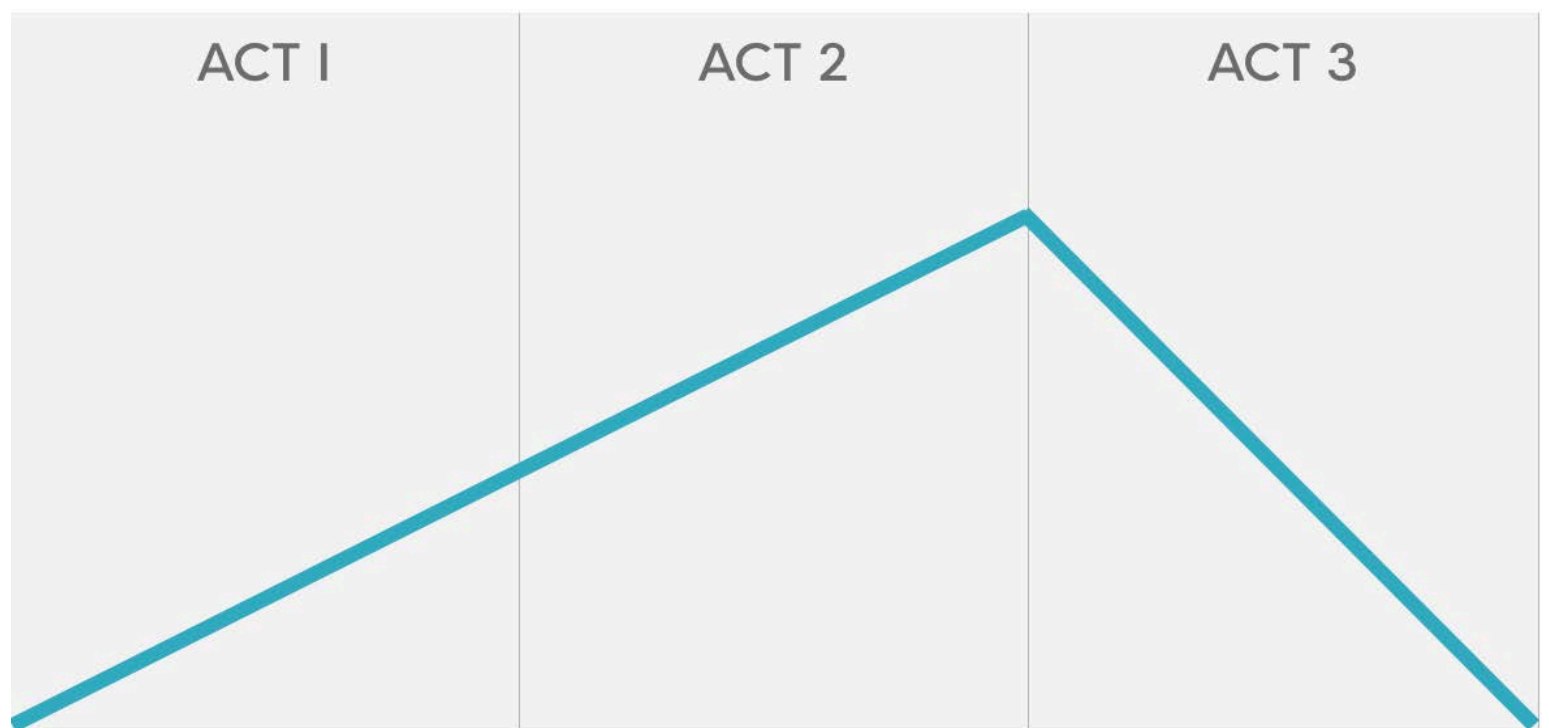
SOLO TASK:

In the spaces of the Act boxes, label each act with the key plot points from FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF that fit into that Act.

ACT I	ACT 2	ACT 3

DEFINITION: 5 ACT STRUCTURE

The **5 Act structure** is a slightly different way of examining narrative fiction that divides a story into five parts or acts. The German playwright and novelist **Gustav Freytag** wrote the definitive study of the 5-act dramatic structure, in which he laid out what has come to be known as Freytag's Pyramid. Under Freytag's pyramid, the plot of a story consists of five parts: **Exposition**, **Rising Action**, **Climax**, **Falling Action**, and **Resolution**.

ACT 1: EXPOSITION

Here, the audience learns the setting (the time and the place) and who the protagonist and other main characters are. A conflict or inciting incident is introduced to propel the main story.

ACT 2: RISING ACTION

Here the protagonist is on a journey, quest or is aiming to achieve something set up by the inciting incident in Act 1. The action of this act leads the audience to the climax in Act 3. Complications or problems will arise and the protagonist will encounter obstacles which they can only overcome by learning new skills or developing as a person.

ACT 3. CLIMAX

This is the turning point of the film. A big moment of action or a big decision will usually occur here. This does NOT have to be in the middle of the plot however, and the climax is usually accompanied by the highest amount of suspense and/or tension.

ACT4: FALLING ACTION

This is the opposite of Rising Action, in that the Falling Action will see the story is coming to an end in some way. Unknown details or plot twists may be revealed but the goal of the protagonist is wrapped up at this point.

ACT 5: RESOLUTION

This is the final outcome of the narrative. Often a lesson is learned or a significant change has happened which is thought about and considered at this stage.

SOLO TASK:

In the spaces of the Act boxes, label each act with the key plot points from FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF that fit into that Act.
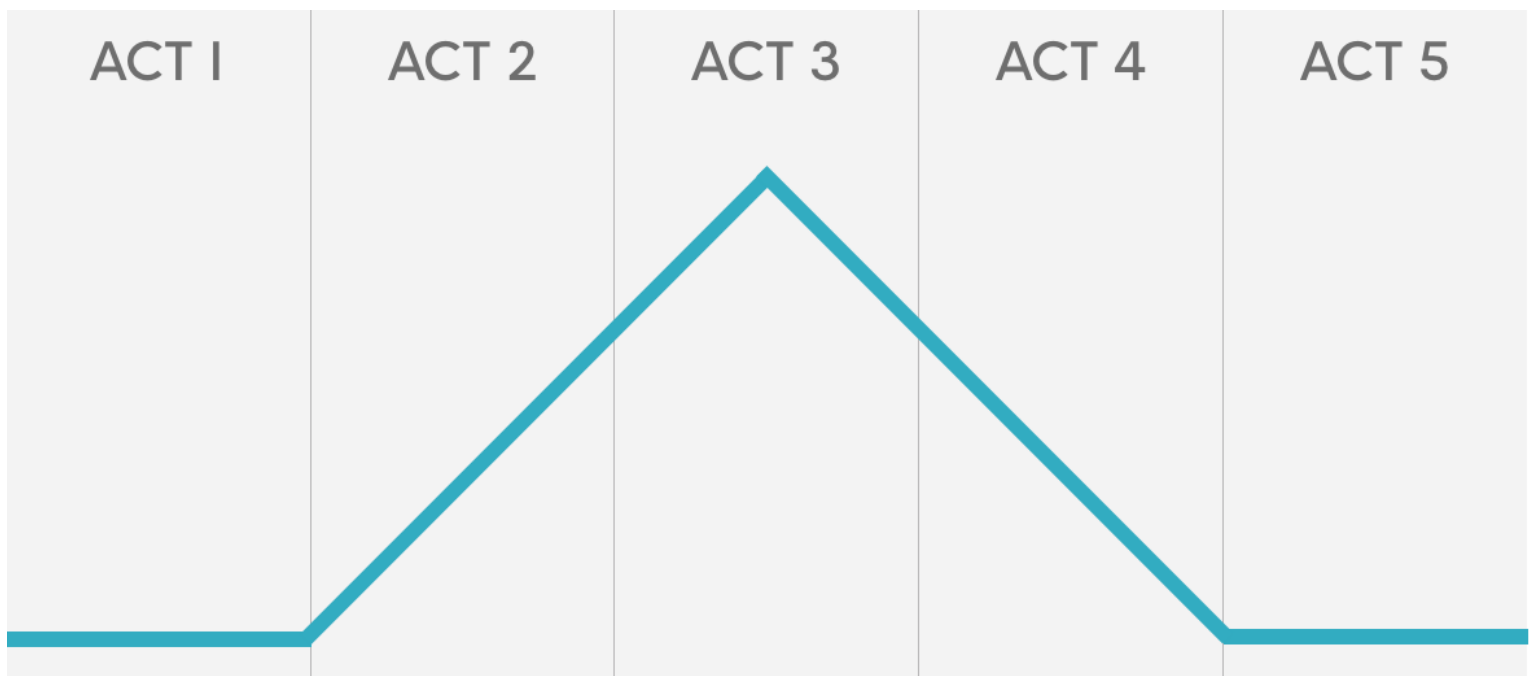
SOLO TASK:

Answer the 5 questions related to the 5 Act Structure. These will be needed to help you summarise the narrative in the film.

ACT 1: What is the general time and place the film takes part in? What happens in the opening scene?

ACT 2: What does our protagonist need or want to do in the first few scenes of the film? What stops him from doing this?

ACT 3: Here, the protagonist usually changes. Does Ferris begin to change? If so, what key moment sparks our protagonist into change? If we don't see an obvious change in Ferris do we see it from anyone else? If so, when?

ACT 4: What do we eventually learn about the protagonist or some of his friends? How does that affect what the main character is trying to do?

ACT 5: What significant change**s** take place at the end of the film? Do they all occur with our protagonist?

PAIRED TASK:

Consider the overall narrative in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF. Try to summarise by thinking of **one key scene** for each of the Acts from the 5 Act Structure but this time, include key aspects of film language.

Act	Key scene description
1. Exposition	
2. Rising Action	
3. Climax	
4. Falling Action	
5. Resolution	

THEMES AND ISSUES
DEFINITION

Before we consider the specific **themes & issues** of FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, it may be useful to consider the difference between *story types* and **themes**. Story types are, as the name suggest, the types of stories you may see in a film. These are generally the genres or the generic conventions you see in a film that you see in more than just this film. Themes however, are what the underlying message, or 'big idea' is behind the story. In other words, what the director, producer, actors, scriptwriter or anyone involved in the creative choices in the film are trying to say about the world. This belief, or idea, is universal in nature, meaning that it can be applied to almost anyone in any place in the world.

Trying to work out what themes (we can also refer to them as issues-the two words here are interchangeable) a film has can be quite tricky, but here are a few ways.

- First of all, think about what does the film have to say about the '**human experience**' or, what it means or is like to be **human**?
- Consider less of "what is the film about" and more of "what is the *point* of the film?" and "what is it trying to tell us?"
- Finally, consider these possible ideas in two main ways; major themes and minor themes. **Major themes** are the 'big' important ideas we see throughout the film. **Minor themes** are the smaller ideas-perhaps only 'showing up' in a scene or two or only relevant to one or two of the characters.

Having done that, now it's time to see if we can identify some major themes in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF. Major themes can generally be separated into 3 main areas; feelings, relationships and social structures. Films may have ideas and things it wants to say or suggest and these 3 areas will generally cover most major themes. Of course, there will be many others, but these are a good place to start.

SOLO TASK
Watch FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF. As you do, see if you can spot any of the themes below across the whole film, not just in one moment or in one character. Highlight each you identify, but aim to highlight only a small number and try not to do so until you've finished watching the film.

Feelings	Relationships	Social Structures
love	weakness	justice
fear	convenience	responsibility
hate	fatherhood	altruism
nervousness	power	crime
joy	friendship	discrimination
empathy	honesty	rebellion
embarrassment	motherhood	leadership
excitement	loyalty	selfishness
anger	lying	equality

THEMES & ISSUES

PAIRED TASK

Looking at the themes you identified in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, now it's time to link these to which parts of the narrative they are most visible in.

Below are a series of screencaps that represent key parts of the film. For each one, write down underneath what each image represents in terms of the narrative and, as much as possible a major or minor theme that is seen in each. You should find quite quickly that you are repeating the themes you identify, but this is fine and will help with the next task.

You will notice the screenshots are not in order. This will also allow you to practice recalling the narrative and you can do this in two ways; by numbering these screenshots so that they follow the order in the film, or by printing off and cutting out and re-organising so that they are in the correct order.

Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:
Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:
Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:

Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:
Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:
Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:

Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:
Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:	Minor theme:
Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:	Major theme:

KNOWLEDGE CHECK: GENRE, NARRATIVE & THEME

SOLO TASK

Answer the questions below.

1. What is the main genre in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF?

2. **What OTHER genres of film do we see in the film?**

3. Give examples of at two key scenes where we see the main genre in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF .

4. **Describes a key scene from the film using film language that shows the main genre of the film..**

5. In your own words, describe what a 3 Act structure is.

6. **Explain what happens in a key scene for each of the 3 Acts in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, referring to film language for each Act.**

7. In your own words, describe what a 5 Act structure is.

8. **Explain what happens in a key scene for each of the 5 Acts in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, referring to film language for each Act.**

9. **In your own opinion, and be providing details of why, explain whether you think a 3 or 5 act summary suits FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF the best.**

10. **In your own words, describe what a theme or issue is.**

11. Give examples of some of the major themes in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF.

12. **Give examples of some of the MINOR themes in FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF.**

13. What scenes are good examples of some of the major themes in the film? Describe them by referring to important aspects of film language.

14. **What scenes are good examples of some of the minor themes in the film? Describe them by referring to important aspects of film language.**

15. Overall, explain, using film language, which key scene from the film is the most effective at giving an example of the main genre, theme and narrative structure for FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF.

KEY SCENE ANALYSIS
SOLO TASK

Having now ana[...] is the time to start focusing [...] To do this, w[...]cene and then analyse the [...]

One app[...]m language [...] **[...]MENT** on ho[...] All t[...]

T[...]

The scene establishes that Ferris is an intelligent, witty, well-off teenager who we should immediately warm to. After he has convinced his parents that he is ill, the lighting warms up & reflects that not only is it a warm day, but it also makes the house seem bright and comfortable. The fast-paced soundtrack that is used at one point emphasises that the scene is enjoyable and that the mood is happy & upbeat. The mise-en-scene fills Ferris' room with expensive equipment and the cinematography shows that Ferris is the most important person/object.

The mise-en-scene in Ferris' room shows a lot of expensive items. Lighting is bright and high-key. Soundtrack is fast-paced and up-lifting. Camera angles and shot sizes make Ferris prominent.

Ferris is wealthy and witty

The opening sce[...] [...]volving Ferris Ferris' 'fourth wal[...] [...]esperately racing monologue. [...] [...]d his parents. The The scene runs from [...] [...]om 1:29.26 to 1:36.28 . A version of the scene[...] [...]iewed viewed here: [...] [...]//youtu.be/XgyN_kr1Bb

KEY SCENE 1

KEY SCENE 2

The whole scene is brightly light using high-key lighting. This allows the audience to see everyone clearly and create a happy response and atmosphere for the scene. It reflects the mood of Ferris and eventually the whole city. This also reflects the optimism that capitalist America had in the 1980s, especially in major cities such as Chicago. During the second song, the happy nature of the song is reflected in Ferris' confident performance and the fast-paced editing which uses lots of jump cuts to create a montage style effect that allows us to see how Ferris and the whole city is enjoying themselves.

Editing is quite fast-paced and matches the quick nature of the second song. Bright, high-key lighting and the performance of the crowd as well as Ferris shows that everyone in enjoying themselves.

Ferris is enjoying his day off.

The final scene, of Ferris running home, is an entertaining scene that still features sustained tension. As Ferris races home to beat his parents there, the soundtrack is fast paced but still uplifting, reflecting the comedic nature of the scene. The use of match-on action helps to reinforce that Ferris is constantly moving from one road, house or garden to another and the quick pace of the editing emphasises how quickly Ferris is travelling, complimenting the soundtrack as well. The extreme close-up of Ferris' eyes, glaring and squinting at Jeanie who does the same, so a determination in his face that then emphasises his actions throughout the scene.

The soundtrack is fast-paced and upbeat. The editing uses match-on action and also creates a montage. Camera angles such as extreme close-up reveals Ferris' determination to get home before Jeanie.

Ferris is rushing to get home & worried that he's going to be caught out.

BLANK HEXAGON

By writing about six different points, covering dozens of examples film language for 3 different Key Scenes, you're covering a lot of the film and this in turn is great practice for your GCSE film exams. You may want to practise analysing other scenes though, so use the blank hexagon below for this.
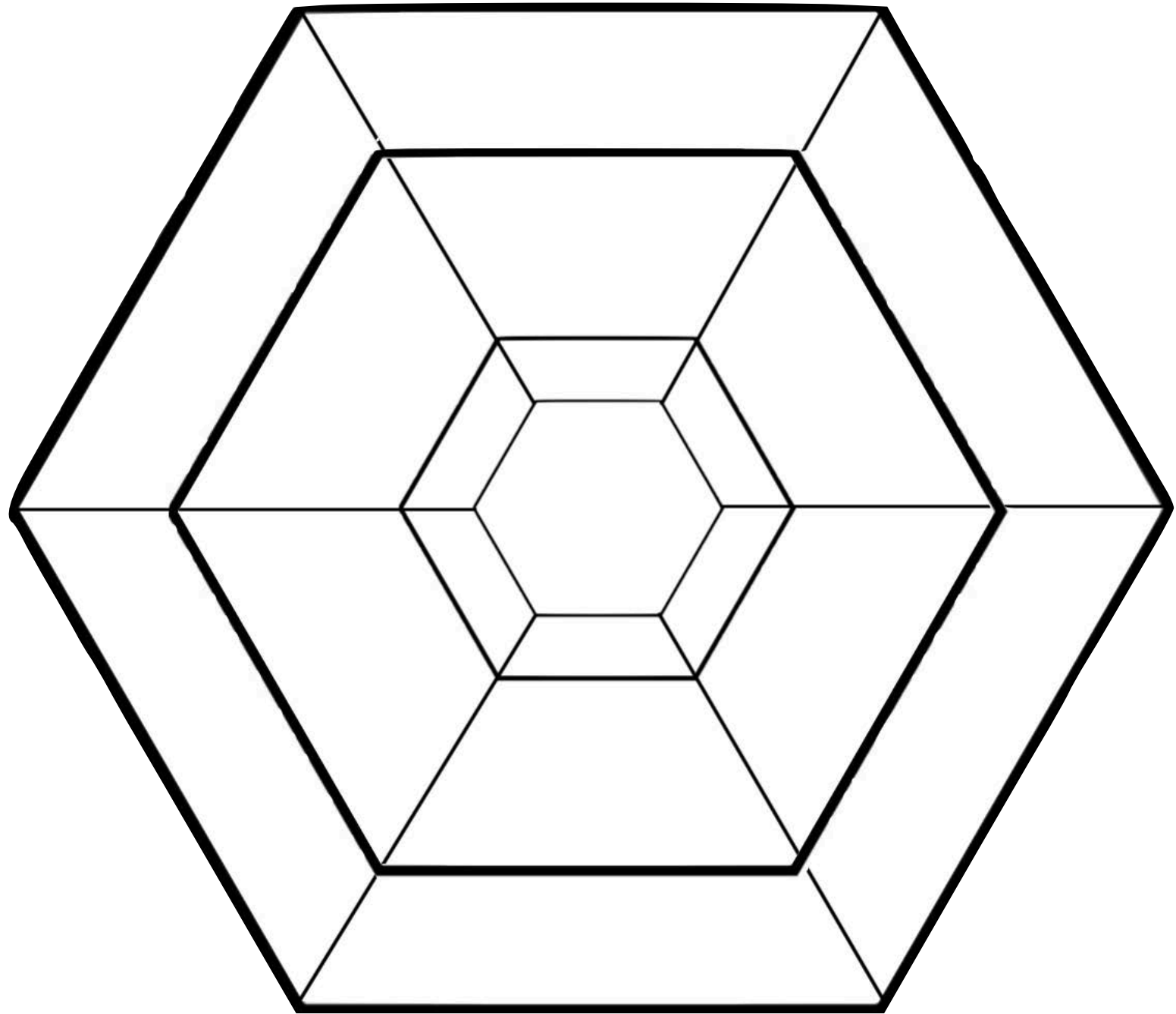
KEY SCENE ANALYSIS

Now that you've completed the hexagons for each key scene, you can now take those notes and, as a minimum, simply turn those into detailed analysis of each scene. By working from the inside outwards, you could simply copy one segment for the point, then the evidence and then the comment. this would then create a detailed examination of the explicit features of the scene and then a detailed analysis of the implicit ideas for each scene.

By writing about six different examples of film language you're covering a lot of possible exam questions and this in turn is great practice for you GCSE film exams, though you may need more than space than is below, so a blank copy is provided as well.

KEY SCENE 1:

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

In the opening scene we learn that Ferris is wealthy and witty. The mise-en-scene in Ferris' room shows a lot of expensive items, the lighting is bright and high-key. The soundtrack used in parts of the scene is fast-paced and up-lifting and a variety of camera angles and shot sizes make Ferris prominent. The scene establishes that Ferris is an intelligent, witty, well-off teenager who we should immediately warm to. After he has convinced his parents that he is ill, the lighting warms up & reflects that not only is it a warm day, but it also makes the house seem bright and comfortable. The fast-paced soundtrack that is used at one point emphasises that the scene is enjoyable and that the mood is happy & upbeat. The mise-en-scene fills Ferris' room with expensive equipment and the cinematography shows that Ferris is the most important person/object in the scenes he is in.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE 2:

POINT | **EVIDENCE** | **COMMENT**

During the parade scene later in the film, the audience can clearly see that Ferris is enjoying his day off. In this scene, the editing is quite fast-paced and matches the quick nature of the second song, Twist and Shout. Bright, high-key lighting combined with the energetic performance of the crowd, as well as Ferris singing and dancing, shows that everyone is enjoying themselves. The whole scene is brightly light using high-key lighting. This allows the audience to see everyone clearly and create a happy response and atmosphere for the scene. It reflects the mood of Ferris and eventually the whole city. This also reflects the optimism that capitalist America had in the 1980s, especially in major cities such as Chicago. During the second song, the happy nature of the song is reflected in Ferris' confident performance and the fast-paced editing which uses lots of jump cuts to create a montage style effect that allows us to see how Ferris and the whole city is enjoying themselves.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE 3:

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT

In the final scene, Ferris is rushing to get home & worried that he's going to be caught out. Throughout the scene the soundtrack is fast-paced and upbeat. The editing uses match-on action and also creates a montage and camera angles and shot sizes such as extreme close-up reveals Ferris' determination to get home before Jeanie. This final scene, of Ferris running home, is an entertaining scene that still features sustained tension. As Ferris races home to beat his parents there, the soundtrack is fast paced and uplifting, reflecting the comedic nature of the scene. The use of match-on action helps to reinforce that Ferris is constantly moving from one road, house or garden to another and the quick pace of the editing emphasises how quickly Ferris is travelling also complimenting the soundtrack. The extreme close-up of Ferris' eyes, glaring and squinting at Jeanie who does the same at Ferris, shows a determination in his face that then emphasises his actions throughout the scene.

COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

KEY SCENE   :

POINT | EVIDENCE | COMMENT
COMPLETE YOUR OWN ANALYSIS BELOW:

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 FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF rather than things which must be watched. Please note as well that some of the suggested films may be a difficult watch or may not be suitable for all viewers. 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

THE BREAKFAST CLUB [15] (1985) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088847/?ref_=tt_rec_tt

SIXTEEN CANDLES [15] (1984) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088128/?ref_=tt_rec_tt

PRETTY IN PINK [15] (1986) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0091790/?ref_=tt_rec_tt

WEIRD SCIENCE [15] (1985) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0090305/?ref_=tt_rec_tt

CLUELESS [12A] (1995) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0112697/?ref_=nv_sr_1

ST. ELMO'S FIRE [15] (1985) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0090060/?ref_=nv_sr_1

EASY A [15] (2010) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1282140/?ref_=tt_rec_tti

THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN [15] (2015) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1878870/?ref_=nv_sr_2

10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU [12A] (1999)
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0147800/?ref_=tt_rec_tti

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

SCREEN PRISM (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVjsbqKtxkLt7bal4NWRjJQ)

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)