



# VIDEO GUIDE

## *A Generic Guide for Video Viewing\**

### VOCABULARY FOR VIDEO ANALYSIS

#### **cinematographer**

the person responsible for the operation of cameras; the cinematographer helps coordinate lights, color, camera movements, and the composition (how people and objects are arranged) of a scene

#### **director**

the person who (along with the producer) approves the screenplay, costumes, and set designs, as well as picks actors and sets up the production schedule; the director's most important function is to guide the actual shooting, deciding how scenes should be read and filmed

#### **producer**

the person who picks a story, arranges for finances, sets the budget, recruits a director, and supervises the total production; in many cases the producer also has a say in script content, cast selection, costume and set design, and ad campaigns

#### **screenwriter or scriptwriter**

the writer who creates or adapts a work for a movie

### PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What problems might a screenwriter have in adapting this work to a movie format?
2. If the original story is set in the past, should the screenwriter attempt to update it or leave it in its original time and place? Explain your choice.
3. Will the producer need a large budget for costumes and special effects for this story to be effectively told on film? Why or why not?
4. Which scene(s) do you think will be the most challenging for the director? For the cinematographer? Why?
5. What aspects of this story might dictate whether black-and-white film should be used or color?
6. Does the author provide sufficient information about the time and place of the original story? Or must the screenwriter invent or infer these facts? Explain.

7. Whom would you select to play the major roles in a movie version of this work? Explain your choices.
8. What actors would you select for the minor parts? Why?

### DURING VIEWING

Most school schedules do not allow 90-160 minutes of unbroken time for a film to be shown from beginning to end. Therefore, you should carefully consider how you wish to break the viewing.

It is strongly suggested that you begin each day's viewing with a recap of what has been seen up to that point. In this way students who were absent can be kept abreast of the action. This likewise permits you to reinforce important moments, dialogue, and plot developments in the video which may differ from the original work. This discussion period also offers you the opportunity to alert students to special scenes in that day's viewing.

### FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### **Setting**

1. What do the costumes reveal about the characters? In your opinion, do those costumes add to or detract from the movie? Explain.
2. What details help establish the time and place?
3. Does the choice of color complement the mood which the author of the work attempted to create? After viewing the film, which do you think would be more effective: black-and-white or color film? Explain.
4. Did you prefer imagining the scenes as you read the work or viewing the settings in the film? Why?
5. How did the director of the film cue you when a time change had occurred? Was this method effective? Explain.

#### **Character**

1. Were the characters in this video more believable and real for you than the characters in the book? Why or why not? Did they change as the story progressed, or did they remain static? Was this true to the original story? Explain your answer.
2. Could you tell what the actors were thinking and feeling? If so, how? If not, what improvements could you suggest to the actors or filmmakers?
3. What qualities did the protagonist(s) possess? In which scenes were these qualities most evident?
4. How did you react to the antagonist(s)? What aspects of the movie caused you to react that way?

\*Please note that not all the information, questions, or suggested activities in this guide may be appropriate for every film.

5. Which minor character was most important to the movie plot? Why? Was this character less or more important in the book? Explain.
6. Which character differed most dramatically from the way you imagined him or her in the original work? Why do you think that character was changed in the movie version? Do you like or dislike the change? Explain.

### Plot

1. Which events were most effective in the video version of the story? Which events were most effective in the printed version of the story? How do you account for any differences?
2. Was the sequence of events any different in the movie and printed versions? Do you think the filmmakers' decisions about sequencing were wise? Why or why not?
3. What events did the movie alter or omit? Why might these changes have been made?
4. What was the climax of the movie? How did the director, cinematographer, and actors contribute in making this the high point of the film? How well did the filmmakers handle other challenging scenes?
5. How did the writer and director change the speed (or the pacing) at which the plot of the original work unfolded? Did these changes improve or harm the plot? Explain.

### Theme

1. How effectively did the makers of this film employ the author's symbols to convey theme? Were any symbols introduced? Explain.
2. What messages did you get from the video version? Do you think those are the messages the author of the original work intended? Explain.
3. What other titles can you think of that would capture the theme of the movie? Do you prefer any of those titles to the movie title? To the book title, if it is different from the film title? Why or why not?
4. What scenes in the movie summed up the theme most effectively? How did the lighting, setting, camera shots, and acting contribute to the impact of the theme in those scenes?

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### Research and Writing

1. Read a review of the film that was written at the time the film was produced. Compare and contrast your reactions to the film with those of the reviewer. Attach a copy of the review to your own analysis.

2. Find information about one of the actors in the film and write a short biography of him or her. Discuss how the actor's role and craftsmanship in this production compares to the actor's other work.
3. Do some research to discover if the time period of the original work was presented authentically and realistically in the movie. Write a report analyzing how well the filmmakers did with those details. Also analyze how any changes affected the impact of the original work.
4. Research the kinds of music used in the video (artists, musical style, symbolic significance). Then explain how the musical score enhanced or detracted from your appreciation of characters or events.

### Art

1. Create an advertisement for the video of this literary classic. Depict a scene which is both representative of the film and which is likely to attract an audience to the movie.
2. Design three costumes appropriate for either the hero or heroine of this video. Indicate the scenes in which the costumes would be worn.
3. Create a collage using symbols from the movie that seemed important to the screenwriter and director.
4. Create a drawing or painting to express the main mood of this movie.

### Drama

1. Play charades using characters, places, or events from the video.
2. Choose a scene from the film. Adapt or change the scene as you think best and act it out in front of your classmates.
3. Evaluate the acting in the film. Decide which scenes were most effectively acted and why. Then rerun particular scenes and critique technique again. Discuss your findings with the class.
4. Select one significant scene from the book omitted from the film. Act out the scene in front of the class. Then ask the audience what the scene adds to the movie.