

Film Studies

Welcome to A Level Film Studies. These are just a few things you can do to start thinking about films analytically before you begin the course next month:

1. Watch the short *Inside Cinema* films on the BBC iPlayer <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07f7m9q>
Some of the films are about common technical devices used in films, others explore genres or character types – they are a quick and easy way to expand your film knowledge. It's worth making a note of interesting films they use clips from and watching them.



2. Watch short films.

Short films are a really useful tool when you're studying film. Directors often start their career by making short films and it's interesting to see if the characteristics that make their work distinctive can be seen in these early pieces. Have a look at the very short and rather strange *Doodlebug*, directed by Christopher Nolan in 1997; if you've seen any other Nolan films (which include *Tenet*, *Inception*, *Dunkirk* and the *Batman* films) can you see any links between this film and his features. You've probably come across films by Taika Waititi, *What We Do in the Shadows*, *Hunt for The Wilderpeople*, *JoJo Rabbit* and *Thor: Ragnarok*, (which I think is definitely a top 5 Marvel film – but that's a debate for another time). Watch *Two Cars, One Night*, a short film he made in 2004, before any of those features, and think about the way the film uses colour – what does it suggest about the characters and the world they live in?

Did you know there are Oscars for short films? Last year the award for best animated short went to *Hair Love*. Watch it and consider how it tells the story without using dialogue (almost). How do we understand what is going on?

As part of your coursework for A Level Film Studies you have to write a screenplay for a short film. Because of their length short films have to have very focussed stories that can develop and interest the audience quickly. *Cautionary Tales* (2018) and *Hello, Again* (2015) are based on simple, familiar ideas and scenarios. Watch them and think about how these are developed into films.

These are links to the films on YouTube but you can find them (and lots of other shorts) just by googling:

- *Doodlebug*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfBwOdsHaWI>
- *Two Cars, One Night*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFmbIO_JTH0
- *Hair Love*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNw8V_Fkw28
- *Cautionary Tales*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEsoDFBdQeU>
- *Hello, Again*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h21uXo1_lz4

Bring your notes to the second lesson