

Thanks for joining the marking process. I have listed below a few possible points of discussion pertaining to each of the exam questions. These are intended to be exemplary and are certainly not exhaustive. If students develop alternate readings and arguments or even contrasting ones, that is encouraged. What is key is that students pay close attention to elements of style, especially in relationship to one another; and on the basis of those observations develop critical interpretations. The module's subtitle was style *and* meaning. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

1. Students can pay attention to amongst others:

- The quadruple framing of Julianne Moore, situating her in the centre of space both two and three dimensionally: the outer wooden frame between us and her; the door frame to the kitchen; the window; the frame within the window. It may be suggested a fifth frame is provided by the yellow curtains, a suggestion not without merit in connection to the luxaflex bar and yellow table cloth, creating a further triple horizontal framing. Answers that link this – especially in combination with the dramatic lighting and heightened color scheme – with the cinema of Sirk discussed in class are encouraged. In terms of style and meaning, students can engage in discussions about *mise-en-abime*, Russian dolls, domestic imprisonment and so on, but are free to open up in other directions if they can make the argument convincing.
- The symmetrical composition drawing attention precisely to the ruptures, most obviously the empty seats on the right and in the middle, the former still pressed to the table but the other moves sideways as if used but departed; it is a dissimilarity especially notable in relation to the difference in framing left from right, the former open, seen partially but potentially endless as suggested by the lights shining through on the closet and wall, the other closed, the corner visible, the cabinet marking the enclosing wall. Students are free to link to paintings by Hopper or films by Lynch if they make the case.
- The color scheme, brightening towards the centre, from aquatic tones in the margins to a centrepiece dominated by greens and yellows, inter punctured with reds.
- The severity and direction of the lighting, turning the faces into sculptures and creating a conflicting web of shadows crossed on the carpet.
- The costume, body language and facial expressions
 - o they are dressed old-fashioned and rather precisely, and in colours that do not return elsewhere much – a light blue matching them to one another, a Bordeaux red matching the kettle (?) and bloody meat behind and in front of her (creating visual continuity between layers and yet, since they are domestic items, entrapment, a further frame);
 - o her hair strictly parted near the middle to the sides, and gelled to the extent that her hair stands up at the ends, his sideways parted;
 - o the passive postures, shoulders down, her arms limp, his tense, etc;
 - o faces are pointed downwards at the meat but also not at any direction in particular, suggesting an inward stare rather than a critical gaze, eyebrows

are raised; shadows illuminate parts of the face, each adding to the severity, making the faces seem like sculptures.

- The décor, at once completely ordered and rigid and yet with hints of dishevelment, often nature, organic matter, such as the wild flowers on the wallpaper and the lamp, as well as the pictures of bouquets and landscapes on the wall. The sense of disturbance is furthered by the state of the house, the soggy carpet in the foreground, the wallpaper beginning to fade, the kitchen sink doors half opened, the kitchen walls notably dirty, the blinds in the door worn out.

There are other points of focus, but this should give you an idea of what the students are expected to discuss. The key here and in the answers to the other questions is that students discuss such choices in *mise-en-scene* (in Gibbs' sense, for whom *mise-en-scene* encompasses what Bordwell and Thompson describe as cinematography) in terms of style and meaning: what do they see but also what readings does it encourage.

The b question is an open question.

In terms of grading, I would suggest the three strategies for a count for 25 percent each, the b question for about 15, and intro and conclusions for the additional 10.

2. Students might pay attention to:

- The distinction between Jim drinking from the bottle and his dad wearing a skirt
- The distinction between Jim standing and his dad kneeling, framed in or behind bars, often with his head weighed down underneath two dimmed lamps
- The distinction between Jim looking down and his dad looking up, which is manifested both in the initial two-shot, in which we see Jim literally towering over his dad of whom we only see the top of the head; and the subsequent reverse shots with eyeline match, Jim filmed from the waist up, vertically, his dad from slightly above and in totality, horizontally.
- The distinction between Jim as the actor, the initiator, and the dad as the reactor, the passive person. Indeed, it is Jim who enters not just the scene but dominates and moves the frames, his father a mere witness.
- Discussions of gendering are certainly encouraged
- In terms of differences with the ensuing scene, discussions can focus on the centrality of the father's screen presence, his verticality, his position at the head of the table, his dominating voice drowing out all others, his framing, early on, below two swords and sports prizes, and later in reference to the door out of the kitchen, his aggression, length, etc

In terms of grading, I would suggest a begets max 20 percent for each of the three strategies (max 60 in total), b 20 and c 20.

3. Students can think of and expand on:

- Potentially topic of discussion
- Medium shots of whole bodies vs. medium shots/medium close-ups from the waist up
- Homely bodies (casual wear, feet on couch) vs. public bodies (suits, office chairs)
- Domestic spaces with sofas and plants etc vs. office space with desks and microphones
- Organic and natural backdrop vs. city backdrop
- Daytime vs. night time
- Round shapes vs. straight lines
- Light color scheme vs. dark color scheme
- Women vs. men
- Students can further summon discussions of immediacy and liveness, intimacy and viewing practices

Question a warrants a total of 80 percent, 20 per trope; b is about 10; 10 percent for overall argument.