

**ENG 238: Short Paper**  
**#1 Prof. Connelly**

**Due: 3/10/17**– due into Blackboard by the end of the day (11:59pm) on that day.

**Length:** 3-5 pages, MLA format, double-spaced, with first page header and page numbers. You should include a works cited page, listing the film you are discussing, at the end of the paper.

By the time this assignment is due, we will have viewed several films and read a number of articles. For this paper, I would like you to perform an analysis of a film with an eye towards making an argument about a meaning, theme, or idea you see explored in the film.

As you begin, the first thing you should do, then, is select a film and figure out what you see to be a central issue the film is presenting. What this will be is up to you. Just ask yourself what you think the film is trying to present, force you to think about, or offer as an idea.. Ultimately, though, you are looking for something that you can say the film is about in one way or another.

Once you have that selected, you should then seek to isolate a scene or two that you think exemplify this. Your paper should focus on only one, or maybe two, scenes. You do not need to and should not try to talk about the whole film. Again, your focus should be on a scene that you feel is central to a main idea from the film. One way of approaching this is to think: if I could only show someone one moment from this film to get the idea of my paper across, which one would it be?

The paper, then, should be an accounting of how the film elements contribute to the meaning of the film through the scene. You should think about the elements of film form to explore the elements of film at work in the scene, and you should think about the scene's relationship to the overall narrative of the film as well. In all, you should be explicating the scene with an eye towards showing how the theme or meaning emerges from it. The theme or meaning itself should be connected with the ideas in the reading or from class.

So, your paper should follow a traditional, thesis driven essay format. You should begin with an introduction that briefly introduces the film. The intro should end with your thesis – the statement that articulates what your paper is going to say about the film and what the meaning is in relation to the reading or idea you are discussing. This should then be followed up with your body paragraphs where you explain, explore, and defend your thesis. This is done chiefly by describing moments from the film, explaining how they support the thesis, and drawing them together to form a coherent argument about the film. These paragraphs should not just be detailing the plot of the film, but explaining how these moments work. In the end, you should conclude with a paragraph that explains the significance of your paper as a way of concluding.

You should not be using outside sources, other than the film and the readings, for this