

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE



KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL
GCSE FILM STUDIES
STUDY BOOKLET

GCSE Film Studies
Component 2, Section A: Global English Language Film
Slumdog Millionaire

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Predictions

What are the connotations of the word “slum”?

What are the connotations of the word “dog”?

Connotation: the
implied meaning of
the words

What are the connotations of the word “millionaire”

Prediction 1: What do you think the film might be about, based on the title alone?

Prediction 2: What do we learn from film posters?

Annotate the posters, identifying hints and clues that indicate what the film is about.



What do you think the film might be about now?

How is this similar/different to your first prediction?

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Prediction 3: The Trailer

Watch the trailer twice. What additional clues are there about what happens in 'Slumdog Millionaire'?

Context

Context is everything that surrounds a film which influences what is made and how it is made.

Discussion: *Is it important to understand the contexts of a text?*

Reasons that it is important to understand contexts

Reasons that don't need to understand context

Different types of context:

Match up the different contexts and what they mean:

social context

how films are funded, how the level of production

cultural context

budget affects the kind of film made and the main stages of film production

historical context

the technologies reflected in a film's production and, in some cases, in its narrative

political context

aspects of culture – ways of living, beliefs and values of groups of people – reflected in the film

technological context

aspects of the society and culture at the time when films are made and, where relevant, when they are set

institutional context

aspects of society and its structure reflected in the film

the way political issues, when relevant to the film chosen, are reflected in a film

Social Context: aspects of society and its structure reflected in the film

‘Slumdog Millionaire’ is set in **Mumbai, India**. Watch the video and answer the following questions.

1. Why is Mumbai classified as a ‘megacity’?
2. What was Mumbai called before 1995?
3. Why did they change it?

Some of the film is set in one of the slums in Mumbai called **Dharavi**. Watch the videos and read the information on the Powerpoint to help you write down information about what Dharavi is like.

Cultural Context: aspects of culture – ways of living, beliefs and values of groups of people – reflected in the film

Who Wants to be a Millionaire? Analysis

What is the USP (Unique Selling Point) of WWTBAM?
Format: What does the contestant have to do to win £1 million pounds? Do we want the contestant to win or lose? Why? How does this format appeal to the audience?
Music: Describe the music. Consider: pace, volume, pitch and instruments. How is the music used to create tension?
Set: Describe the set. Consider: materials used; colours; positioning of contestant, host and audience. How is the set used to create tension and a sense of jeopardy?
Lighting: Describe the lighting. How is lighting used to create tension?
160 countries now air their own versions of the franchise. What are the conditions the originators place on the production?

Viewing Notes

Chapter 1: One Question Away

1. Some of the opening scene is set in the 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?' studio.
Where do you think the rest of it is set?
2. What effect does cutting between two different times and places have on you?
3. What questions do you have at the end of this scene?

Chapter 2: Tell Me How You Cheated

1. What do you think Jamal is being accused of?
2. How do we feel about Jamal when he is being tortured in this scene?
3. How is Jamal represented when he replies "The answers"?

Chapter 3: Children of the Slums

1. What is your view of the slum based on how it is represented in this scene?
2. How do think this scene might be related to the previous scenes?

Chapter 4: Superstar!

1. What moments of comedy are evident in this scene?
2. How do you feel about Jamal in this scene?
3. How do you feel about Salim?
4. How does the flashback to the cesspit scene link to what is happening on 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?'

Chapter 5: India's National Emblem

1. How do we feel about the Police Inspector and Sergeant?
2. How does this affect how we feel about Jamal?

Chapter 6: Bow and Arrow

1. How is Salim and Jamal's life irrevocably altered in this scene?
2. How does this scene link to the question asked by Kumar at the start of this scene?
3. What does Jamal blame for the awful occurrence in this scene?

Chapter 7: Orphaned and Homeless

1. How do Salim and Jamal's reactions to Latika differ?
2. How does this affect your views of the brothers?

Chapter 8: A Bloody Saint

1. How do you feel when you see the children scavenging on the rubbish dump?

2. What is your view of Maman in this scene?

Chapter 9: Little Beggars

1. What are the children expected to do?

2. How does Salim's role develop in this scene?

3. How does this alter your views about him?

4. Are there any moments of comedy in this scene? Describe them.

Chapter 10: Run!

1. What does Maman do in this scene?

2. How does this alter how we feel about him?

3. a. What does Salim do in this scene that surprises us?

b. What does this show us about Salim?

4. a. What does Salim do in this scene which we expect, based on previous scenes?

b. How do feel about him by the end of the scene?

Chapter 11: Riding the Rails

1. How does this scene provide relief from the previous scene?

Chapter 12: Is this heaven?

1. How does the India shown to the tourists compare with 'the real India' Jamal tells the Americans about?
2. How do the America tourists show 'the real America'?

Chapter 13: Ben Franklin

1. Why did Jamal come back to Mumbai?
2. What does that show about him?

Chapter 14: The Unlucky One

1. How does Jamal's meeting with Arvind make you feel?

Chapter 15: On His Knees

1. Where is this scene set?
2. Who is the conflict between in this scene?
3. Compare how we feel about Salim and Maman in this scene.

Chapter 16: My Enemy's Enemy

1. How is Jamal presented as chivalrous in this scene?
2. Salim goes to find Javeed. What does this show about his ambitions?

Chapter 17: The Man with the Gun

1. Compare how Salim and Jamal's feelings towards Latika are presented in this scene. What motivates them?

Chapter 18: Friends and Family

1. What is Jamal's job now?
2. How is Jamal represented in this scene? Consider his answers to the trainer at the start and his resourcefulness in locating his brother.
3. Which recognisable aspects of Britishness are featured in this scene?

Chapter 19: The Old Slum

1. How has the slum changed?
2. How does this link to the social context of the film?
3. Jamal is angry in this scene.
 - a. How is the extremity of this anger shown?
 - b. Jamal contains his anger. How does this affect your view of him?
4. Salim describes himself as "at the centre of the centre" of business in India. How does this affect your view of him?

Chapter 20: Why Are You Here?

1. Salim gets his gun ready, then prays. What is your view of Salim here?
2. How is the contrast between rich and poor shown in this scene?
3. How have the feelings between Jamal and Latika evolved?
4. How has Latika changed?
5. Has Jamal changed or is he still the same?

Chapter 21: You Could Lose Everything

1. Why do you think Jamal continues to keep playing, despite knowing that he could 'lose everything'?

Chapter 22: So Close

1. How do we feel about Jamal in this scene?
2. How do we feel about Latika in this scene?
3. How do we feel about Salim in this scene?
4. How does this scene accelerate the action in order to build towards the climax of the film?

Chapter 23: The Answer Is B.

1. What does Kumar do in the toilets at the start of this scene?
2. How does this alter what you think of Kumar?
3. Why do you think Jamal doesn't take Kumar's suggestion?
4. How do you feel about Kumar at the end of this scene?

Chapter 24: Please Forgive Me

1. Why did Jamal go on 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire'?
2. What does Salim do in this scene that you didn't expect?
3. How does this change how you feel about Salim?

Chapter 25: We Love You, Jamal!

1. Why do think all of the crowds 'love' Jamal?
2. How do you feel as Jamal and Latika battle to get to the studio?
3. How is **cross-cutting** used to emphasise this?

Chapter 26: The Third Musketeer

1. Why does Jamal play, even though he doesn't know the answer. Consider why he went on the show.
2. How do you feel when Latika answers the phone?
3. What does Salim do in this scene to emphasise how his character has changed throughout the film?
4. How do you feel about Salim's death?
5. How do you feel about Kumar as he encourages Jamal to celebrate?

Chapter 27: It Is Written

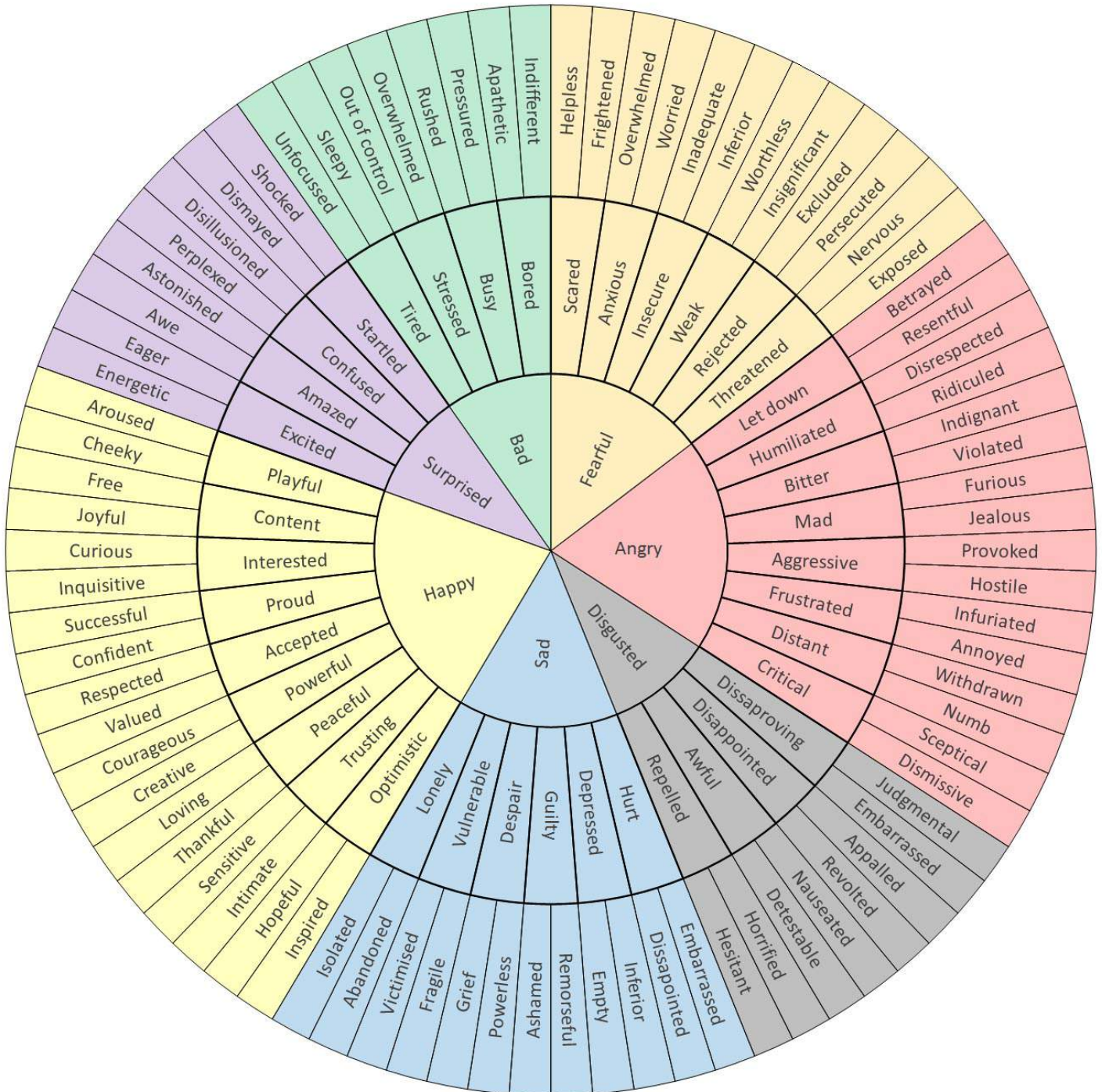
1. How does this scene contrast to the end of the last scene? Is it what you would expect?
2. How do you feel as this scene builds up to the climax?
3. Boyle includes a montage of flashbacks from throughout the film in this final scene. How does this add to the build up?
4. What is the final **resolution**?

Chapter 28: End Titles

1. How does the Bollywood dance sequence at the conclusion of the film make you feel?

Emotion Wheel

Use this wheel to help you describe how you feel about the characters and narrative.



Narrative

STORY

PLOT

NARRATIVE

Narrative Structure

There are different types of **narrative structures**. They can be grouped into two main categories:

- **Linear** – a narrative told in chronological order
- **Non-linear** – narrative not told in chronological order

Which type of narrative structure does *Slumdog Millionaire* follow? Explain your answer.

There are further sub-categories of **narrative structures**. Assess to what extent *Slumdog Millionaire* would fit into these categories:

- **Episodic** – a narrative that has clearly separated sections
- **Circular narrative** – a narrative that starts at the end then goes back in time to return to this point later on

What is your view on the **narrative structures** used by Boyle to present *Slumdog Millionaire*?

Narrative Time and Space

***What is drama but life with all the dull bits cut out?* Alfred Hitchcock**

Ellipsis -

1. How are you drawn into the narrative?
2. What do you learn about the characters and their situation?
3. Are there any examples of ellipsis? If so, what has been left out and why?

Narrative Viewpoint

From whose viewpoint do we experience the narrative of *Slumdog Millionaire*?

How is this achieved in the opening sequence?

Barthes - Action and Enigma Codes

Enigma codes are questions or puzzles posed that encourage the audience to become curious about what will happen in the film, moving the narrative along.

Identify an **enigma code** in *Slumdog Millionaire*, explaining how it makes the audience curious about what will happen later in the film.

Action codes are when the use of a prop suggests a particular action to the audience.

Describe an **action code** in *Slumdog Millionaire*, explaining how a prop suggests a particular action to the audience.

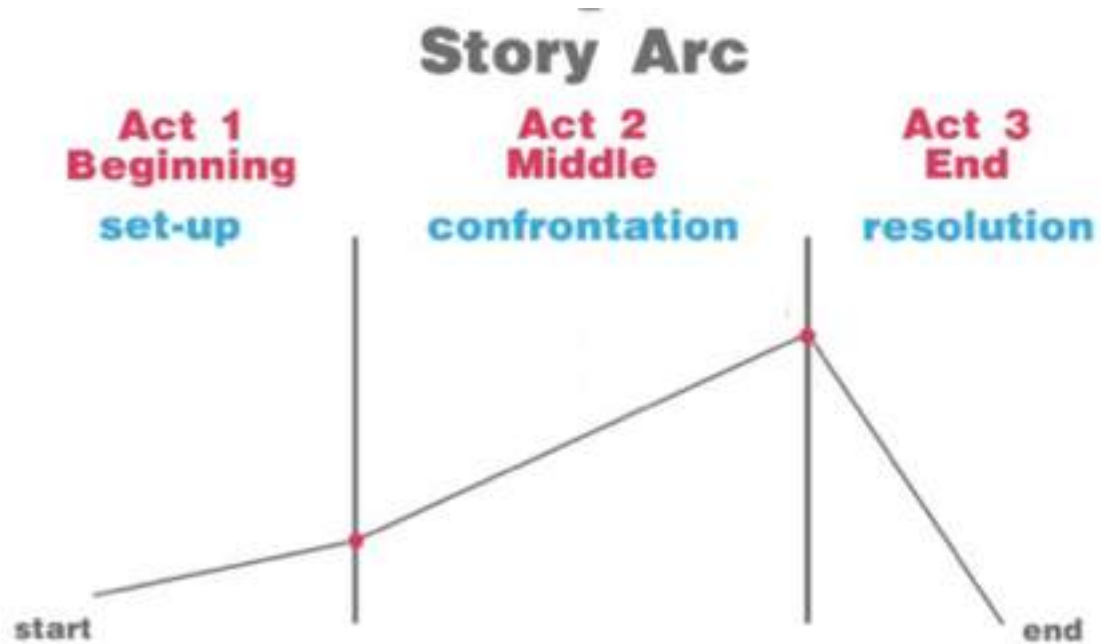
Levi-Strauss – Binary Oppositions

Conflict is based around the **binary opposites** and these are the central **climax** of a narrative structure.

Binary opposites in *Slumdog Millionaire* include:

- Jamal &
 - poverty &
 - happiness &
 - India &
 - Realism &
-
- Choose one example of **binary opposition** and explain how it contributes to conflict and ultimately the central climax in the narrative.

Classical Hollywood Three Act Structure



Act 1	Exposition	The part of a story that introduces the characters , shows some of their interrelationships , and places them within a time and place .	
	Inciting Incident	An event that sets the plot of the film in motion . It occurs approximately halfway through the first act.	
	Plot Point (or reversal)	Thrusts the plot in a new direction , leading into a new act.	
Act 2	First Culmination	Just before the halfway point of the film where the main character seems close to achieving his or her goal/objective . Then, everything falls apart	
	Midpoint	Approximately halfway through the film where the main character reaches his/her lowest point and seems farthest from fulfilling the dramatic need or objective.	
	Plot Point (or reversal)	Thrusts the plot in a new direction , leading into a new act.	
Act 3	Second/Main Culmination	the plot reaches its maximum tension and the forces in opposition confront each other at a peak of physical or emotional action .	
	Denouement	The brief period of calm at the end of a film where a state of equilibrium returns.	

Propp - Characters

Theory originated in the 1920s and referred to Russian Folk Stories, but can equally be applied to films. Although at the time these roles were strictly gendered, now they can refer to any gender.

Role	Narrative function
Hero	is on a quest to fulfill a mission to save the princess. The audience wants the hero to succeed.
Villain	plots against the main character to stop him fulfilling his mission.
False Hero	is jealous of the hero, plots against them and takes false credit for the hero's achievements.
Princess	is the hero's love interest but they cannot be married until the villain is defeated.
Princess' father	gives the hero his task and exposes the False Hero.
Dispatcher	is a character who informs the hero or heroine of some emergency or need and sends them on their quest.
Helper	helps the main character during their quest.
Donor	prepares the Hero for the challenges ahead

Try to apply Propp's character types to *Slumdog Millionaire*. They may fit into more than one category.

Character	Propp's character roles
Jamal	
Salim	
Latika	
Maman	
Javeed	
Kumar	
Police Inspector	

- Do the characters fit neatly into Propp's categories?
- Do you think the audience would like this or not? Why?

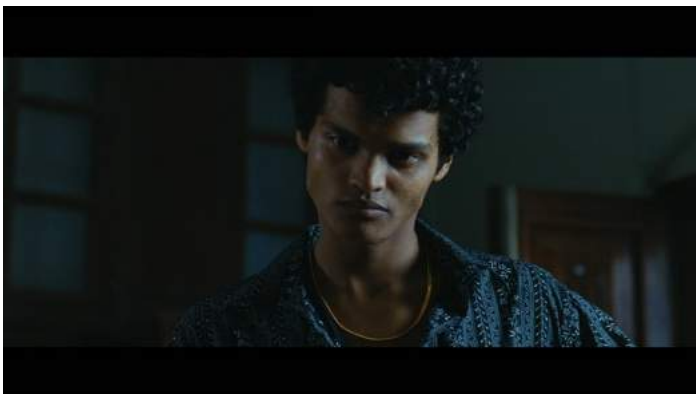
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Character analysis: Jamal



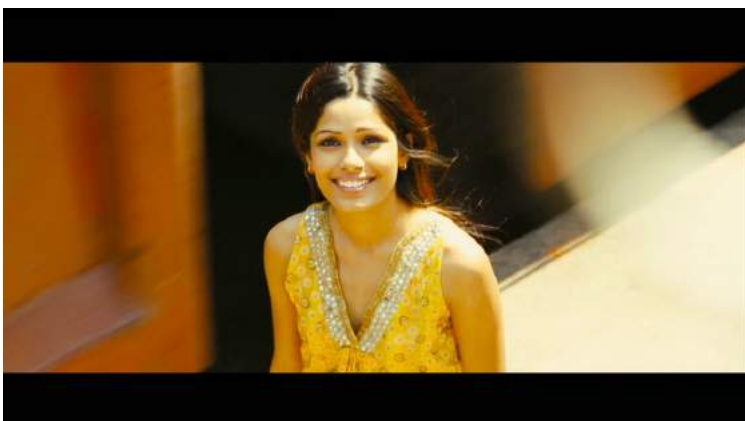
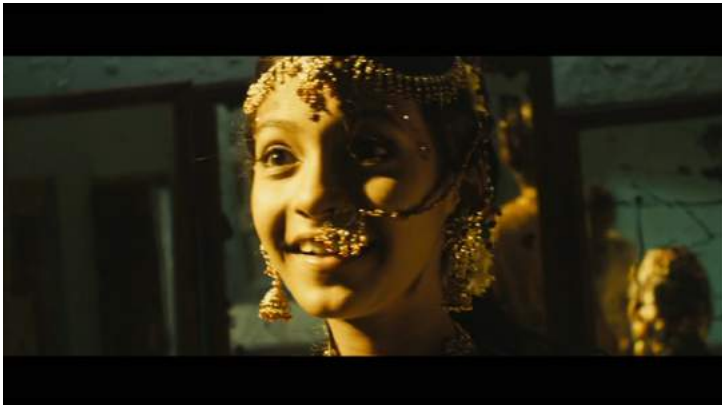
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Character analysis: Salim



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Character analysis: Latika



More Cultural Context

- How does the film draw on and makes reference to the traditions of Bollywood?
- Why did they include Hindi as well as English dialogue?
- Do you think the partial use of Hindi helps or hinders a sense of realism?

Controversy

Controversy 1: Casting

- Casting – Dev Patel (British) was cast as an antithesis to the traditional Bollywood male (strong/handsome/hero) from his role on C4 TV show *Skins*
- Some praised the casting for going against the traditional Bollywood representations. Some criticised the casting of a Brit rather than an Indian lead.
- What do you think?

Controversy 2: Ghetto Picaresque

This Oscar-bound urban fantasy comes with a Twist

DOUG SAUNDERS

LONDON

MARCH 27, 2017 FEBRUARY 14, 2009

It goes like this: The ragged but reflective young orphan, born into an urban hell of stench and adventure and violence, loses his one source of protection and falls into the hands of a child-crime-gang master, who happens to be a dreadful ethnic stereotype.

The boy gathers the wit and cleverness to escape and joins a much-tougher young companion on a whirlwind tour that reveals hard truths: He falls back into crime, catches a woman's eye, struggles to stay ahead of the law, witnesses a terrible act of violence and, finally, is freed into unimaginable wealth through a profoundly unlikely stroke of chance.

In 1838, when Charles Dickens told the story, it marked the birth of an exciting new form of social-commentary drama - let's call it the ghetto picaresque. Now, 170 years later, his countryman Danny Boyle may become a winner at next week's Academy Awards for telling exactly the same tale in almost exactly the same way, but shifting the location slightly.

Bethnal Green, meet the Dharavi slum; *Oliver Twist*, meet *Slumdog Millionaire*.

What has made this genre so enduringly successful is not the melodramatic account of a young person's rise from squalor and poverty to something more elevated. That story had been doing great box office for centuries - including such hits as *Cinderella*, *Moses*, *Moll Flanders* and *Jesus Christ*.

What Dickens introduced was a new character - the slum itself. The East London shantytowns of Clerkenwell and Bethnal Green loom so large in *Oliver Twist* that they serve as the novel's main antagonist, throwing all manner of spectres and challenges at the hapless Oliver. At the end, while Oliver is fixed and catalogued, the slum remains a blank-faced mystery.

Danny Boyle's Mumbai, which at the story's outset has not yet been robbed of its name Bombay, is similarly compelling, similarly menacing, similarly inscrutable. It appears as a vast and gorgeous figure, responsible for most of the film's plot twists.

I've spent plenty of time in the Azadnagar and Dharavi slums, which the director has used interchangeably as the film's setting, and he captures them very well, with their combined population of more than a million, their near-total lack of sanitation, their extraordinary range of industry and creative activity, their witty and engaged populations, their many rootless children and their unimaginable density of 18,000 people per acre.

At the end of the movie, just like at the end of *Oliver Twist*, you're left wondering not what happens to our boys - we've had enough of them - but what happens to the slum.

We know something must happen to the slum, transforming it just as the boys are transformed by their experience. Both stories play a game with us that is characteristic of the genre: They treat the slum as a sort of urban flypaper that seems to catch all those who have failed in life. They're able to pull off this trick by erasing the parentage of the protagonists, so the boys seem to have been dumped here.

- What issues might some audiences have with this genre?

- What is your view on the genre?

Controversy 3: Payment of cast and crew

- For their work on Slumdog, according to London's *Daily Telegraph*, Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail (youngest Salim) was paid £1,700 and Rubina Ali (youngest Latika) £500.
- At the end of filming for the movie, both of the child actors continued to live in makeshift shacks in the illegal slums of Bandra.
- Authorities in India have conducted an investigation and have found no evidence to support the charges made by the British tabloids

Does your understanding of the three controversial issues we have looked at alter your opinion of 'Slumdog Millionaire'? Give reasons for your answer.

Key Scene 1: The Opening Sequence

There are three **narrative strands** in the opening sequence.



The Interrogation Scene

Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

Money

1. What are the main differences between these shots that indicate **temporal** and **spatial shifts**?

2. What is the effect of this **parallel editing** on the audience?

Propp: Character Roles

3. Which of **Propp's character roles** would you assign to the Jamal based on the opening sequence alone?

4. Which of **Propp's character roles** would you assign to the Sergeant based on the opening sequence alone?

5. Which of **Propp's character roles** would you assign to the Kumar based on the opening sequence alone?

Barthes: Enigma Codes

5. Make a list of the **enigma codes** in the opening sequence:

6.. What is the effect of the **enigma codes** on the audience?

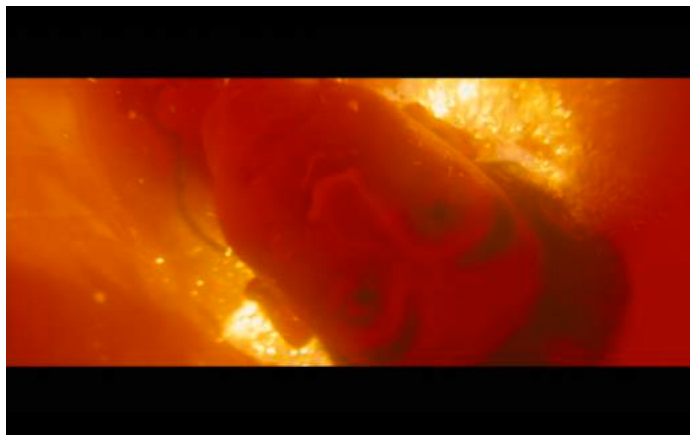
Narrative Strand 1: The Interrogation Scene

6. What is the effect of the yellow **colour palette** in the Interrogation scene on the audience?

7. What do we learn about the social context in the interrogation scenes?

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Analyse the use of **mise-en-scene** and **cinematography** in these key shots.

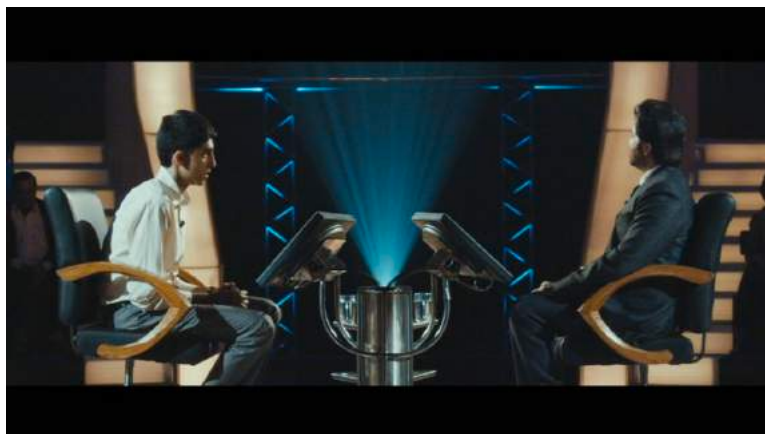
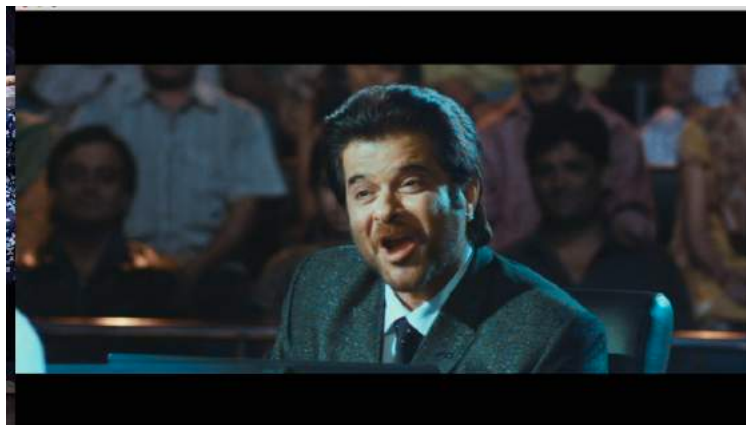


Narrative Strand 2: Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

8. What is the effect of the blue and purple **colour palette** in the 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?' scene on the audience?
9. What do we learn about the social context in the 'Who Want to be a Millionaire' scene? Focus on the **dialogue**.

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Analyse the use of **mise-en-scene** and **cinematography** in these key shots.

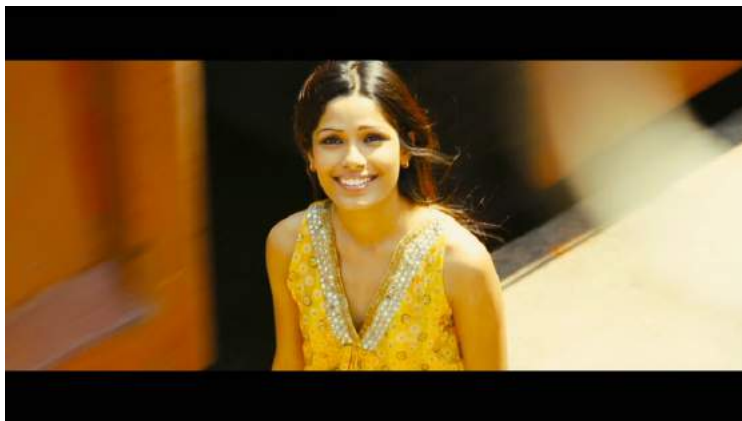


Narrative Strand 3: Money

1. This strand is more difficult to link to the others. Why is that?
2. If you had not seen the rest of the film, whose hand would you assume it was? Why?
3. How does the film suggest that money is a corrupting influence?
4. Does this potential 'first reading' alter how you feel about the protagonist?

The Final Shot

What **enigma codes** are presented in this final shot of the sequence?



Answering exam style questions

- The exam questions for the *Slumdog*, *Attack the Block* and *Wadjda* are always stepped.
- The *Slumdog* questions will always be about **film form**, **context**, **narrative** or a combination of these.
- The questions start off easy and require short answers, coming increasingly more difficult and requiring more extended and detailed answers.

Example questions for 'Slumdog'

- (a) What do you understand by the social context of a film? [2]
- (b) Briefly describe the main social context of your chosen film. [3]
- (c) Explore how the narrative of your chosen film reflects its social context.
- how key characters reflect the social context
 - how the social context is built into the narrative
 - at least one example from the film's narrative which demonstrates its social context [10]

Let's have a go together:

- (a) What do you understand by the social context of a film? [2]

Top tips:

1. Identify key words
2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
3. Collect your thoughts to address the question appropriately
4. Write a brief response

- (b) Briefly describe the main social context of your chosen film. [3]

Top tips:

1. Identify key words
2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
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(c) Explore how the narrative of your chosen film reflects its social context.

Notes:

- how key characters reflect the social context
- how the social context is built into the narrative
- at least one example from the film's narrative which demonstrates its social context [10]

Now let's write it together

(c) Explore how the narrative of your chosen film reflects its social context.

Notes:

- how key characters reflect the social context

- Top tips:
1. Identify key words
 2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
 3. Use shorter questions as a starting point
 4. Make very brief notes on each bullet point
 5. Write an extended response which uses specific examples from a key scene

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- how the social context is built into the narrative

- at least one example from the film's narrative which demonstrates its social context [10]

Key Scene 2: O Saya

Analyse the **mise-en-scene** and **cinematography** in the following screen shots.

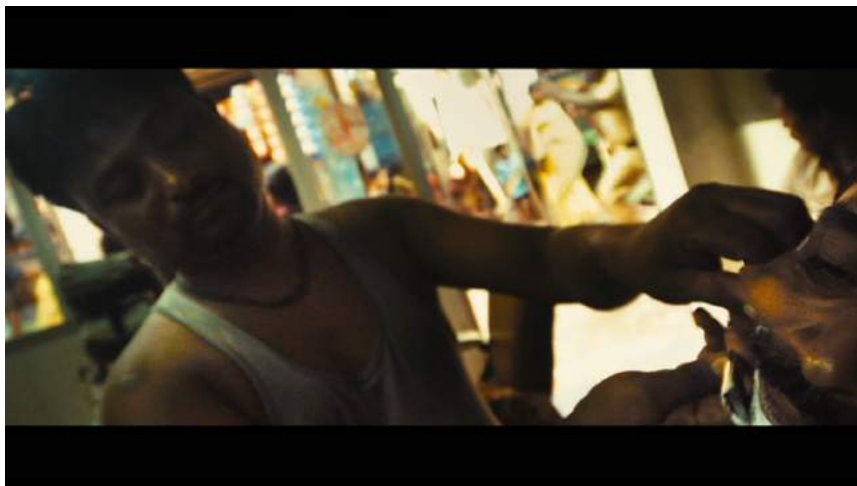
Explore what we learn about **characters**, **social context** and **narrative**.



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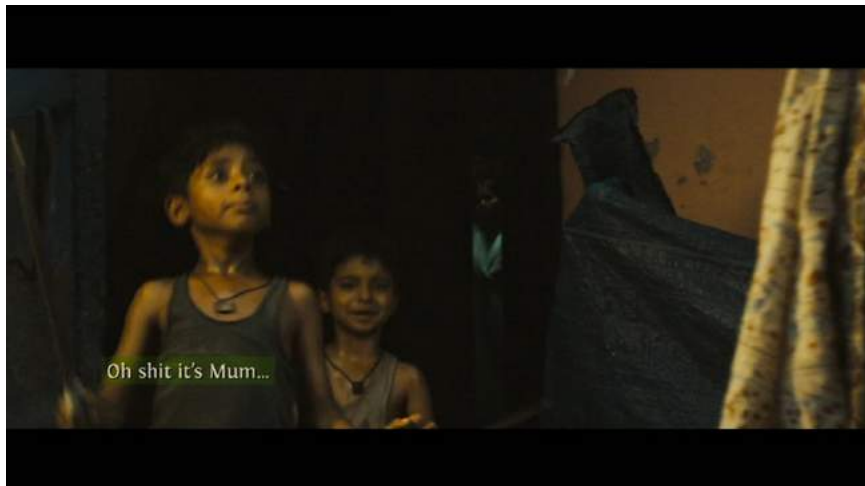
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O Saya: Analysis

Narrative: What is revealed about the relationship between Salim and Jamal introduced in this sequence?			
Dialogue	Costume	Mise-en-scene	
Sum up the relationship between Jamal and Salim in less than 20 words.			
Context: How is the contrast between rich and poor in Mumbai presented?			
Costume	Mise-en-scene	Dialogue	Cinematography

Sound - Music: How does the music contribute to the sequence?

Key information about 'O Saya' track:

How the do the lyrics relate to the visuals?

Lyrics:

O, saya
 O, saya

They can't touch me, we break off
 Run so fast they can't even touch me
 Been that gypsy
 Touch me, I'll show you gypsy my zig zag
 quickly

Pick up that pack on my journey
 Don't suddenly start to follow me
 I am in a luck, some days they suck
 When we live by the buck, we get for the family

One day I wanna be a star
 So I get to hang in a bar
 I'll go to Vegas with the playas
 Just to forget my scars

Ek, do, teen, char, panch, cheh, saath
 Aat, nau, das, gyarah, barah, terah

Describe the genre/s of music. How does type of music used affect our view of India?

Street shops have made me shift
 Like a ninja with speed I am nifty
 I hope I live till I am fifty
 See my city go from gritty to pretty

O, saya
 O, saya

Don't start to follow me
 To hang in a bar
 I wanna be a star
 Pick up that pack on my journey
 Don't start to follow me
 Wanna be a star

O, saya
 Pick up that pack on my journey
 O, saya
 Start to follow me
 O, saya

Ek, do, teen, char, panch, cheh, saath
 Aat, nau, das, gyarah, barah, terah

Describe how the music sound. Consider the instruments, melody, pitch and tempo.

What are the effects of how the music sounds?

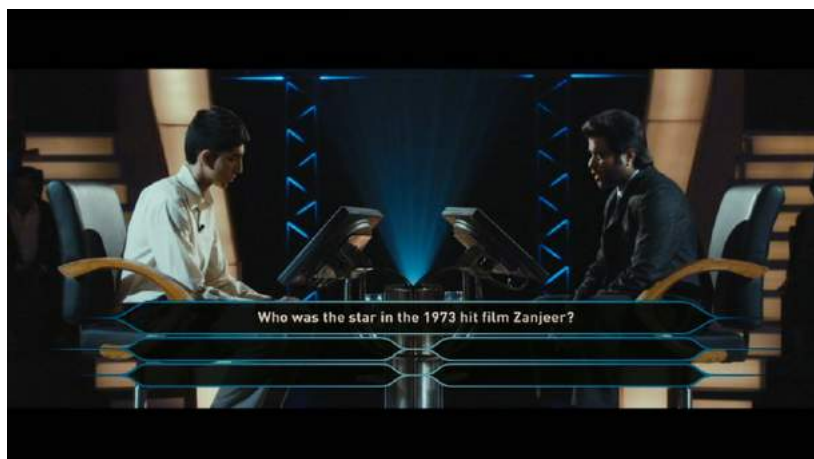
Sound - Dialogue Does the Hindi used here (in conjunction with subtitles) add to the realism of the film? Or does it highlight that it later switched to English?

Cinematography	Final Questions
How was the use of cameras innovative?	This was originally going to be the opening sequence of 'Slumdog Millionaire'. In your opinion, which sequence makes the better opening and why?
Why was it necessary to be innovative?	Boyle has said that this is "probably my favourite part of the film". Why do you think he likes it?
What were the additional benefits of this innovation?	What is your favourite part of the film and why?

Key Sequence 3: Cesspit Sequence

Analyse the **mise-en-scene** and **cinematography** in the following screen shots.

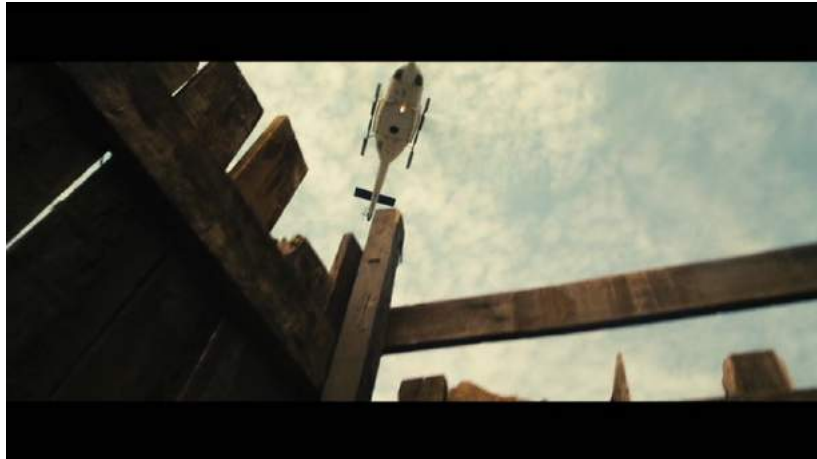
Explore what we learn about **characters**, **social context** and **narrative**.



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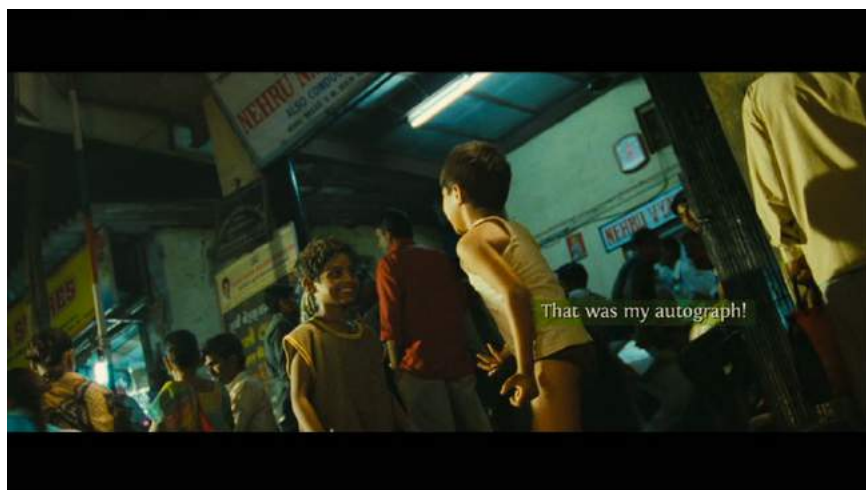
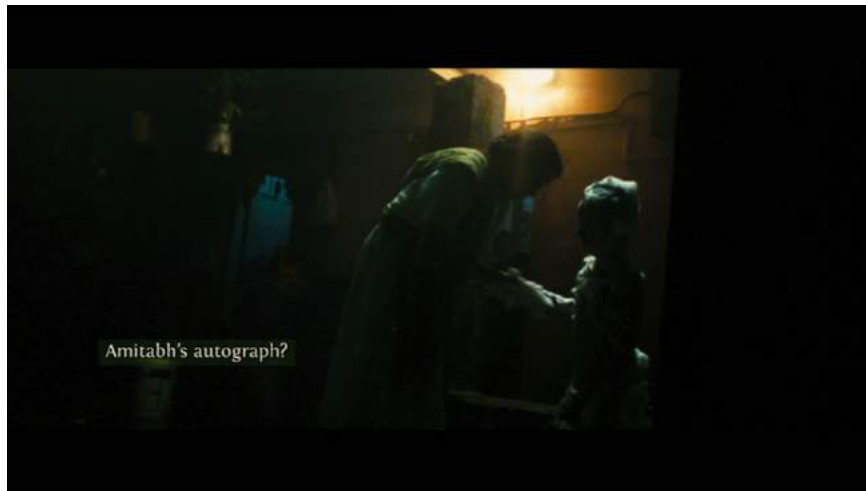
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Analysis of Cesspit Sequence

1. How does this scene indicate the start of the unique narrative structure?
What is the structure?

2. What does Salim's occupation as an 'outhouse attendant' tell us about his character?

3. Consider the comic parts of the scene, such as Jamal's comment that "it is a shy one" and when he jumps into the faeces. What is your opinion of this?
Give reasons for your answer.

- a. Comic scenes help us relate to the characters more and therefore be more empathetic with their plight
- b. Scenes that show disturbing and dangerous scenes, such as a child covered in faeces, should not be presented in a humorous way, as it is disrespectful to the real-life slum dwellers.
- c. Somewhere in between.

4.a. Why does Salim lock Jamal in the outhouse?

b. What does this show us about Salim?

5. a. Why does Jamal jump into the faeces?

b. What does this show us about Indian society?

6. a. What does Salim do with the autograph?

b. What does this show about Salim?

c. How does this foreshadow what will happen in the rest of the film?

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