Candidate A Commentary – Get Out

Question 2a: Categories

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

The horror genre conventions of the journey, the ominous atmosphere and the use of a villain or monster are decoded in detail. The use of tone in the film is also decoded in detail. There is insightful comment on the relationship between the convention of the ominous atmosphere and the content, regarding the use of the jump-scare as a false alarm and a hint at the truth. There is also insightful comment on the relationship between the convention of the monster and the content, regarding the symbolism of the appropriation of black culture in society. There is further insight in the comment relating to the way the 'sunken place' acts as a metaphor for how racism 'silences' black people. Each concept is exemplified with developed references to content, and there is detail in the analysis and insight throughout the comments.

Question 2b: Categories and Society and/or Institutions

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

The society factors of the historical and ongoing racism in America, and the Black Lives Matter campaign are decoded in detail. There is clear comment on the relationship between these society factors and the film. There is also insight in these comments, for example in the fact that the camera work in the opening sequence forces audiences to identify with the black character, thus achieving the film's purpose of challenging racism and relating clearly to the Trayvon Martin case. There is further insight in the comment relating the film's use of the horror genre convention of the villain to the society factor of the hidden effects of racism in America. As there is detail in the decoding of society factors, developed references to content, and clear examples of insight in the comment on the relationship between society and categories, this response gains the maximum mark available.

Candidate B Commentary – The Dark Knight

Question 2a: Categories

The candidate was awarded **8 marks.**

The use of the genre conventions of the superhero and the villain in The Dark Knight are decoded in some detail. There is a discussion of how Batman fits the conventions of the superhero, followed by comment on how the film breaks with the genre convention of the hero having special powers, and how this leads to the film attracting a wider audience. The convention of the villain is also decoded in some detail, with specific references to how the Joker fits this character type. There is comment on the unconventional use of colour for both the villain and the superhero. The unconventional unhappy ending is also decoded in some detail, with comment again relating this to the implicit purpose of drawing in a wider audience than a conventional superhero film.

Question 2b: Categories + Society and/or Institutions

The candidate was awarded **8 marks.**

The society factor of 9/11 and the threat of terrorism is decoded in some detail, with reference to how this has led to changes in the way the character of the Joker has been represented. There is reference to how the fear of terrorism has been used to make the Joker a fearful villain rather than a humorous one, as was the case in earlier versions of the Batman story. The candidate makes comment on specific examples of contemporary fear of terrorism being used to make the Joker a threatening villain in order to cause fear in the audience.

The society factor of gender roles is decoded in some detail in relation to the representation of the damsel in distress in superhero films. There is a simple comment connecting the changes in contemporary society to a shift in the representation of the damsel in distress in The Dark Knight.

The institutional factor of Nolan's use of developing technology in the form of IMAX cameras is decoded in some detail with specific reference to the car chase sequence in The Dark Knight. There is simple comment at the end of the paragraph relating the use of the IMAX cameras to making the action sequence more impressive.

Candidate C Commentary – The Conjuring

Question 2a – Categories

The candidate was awarded **9 marks.**

Genre is decoded in detail. The horror genre conventions of the scary place and the exorcism are discussed in detail, with developed reference to the basement in The Conjuring as fulfilling the convention of the scary place, and the performance of the exorcism in the basement as signalling the triumph of good over evil.

The purpose of profit is decoded in detail through reference to the horror convention of jump-scares and with reference to their use in The Conjuring. There is insightful comment on the satisfaction audiences derive from the use of jump-scares and explaining how this helps achieve the purpose of profit.

The purpose of profit is also decoded in detail through reference to the conventional horror plot and the open ending as signalling the possibility of a sequel. There is comment on the way the use of the Warrens may attract audiences who already know of them from other films, but this does not display insight.

Question 2b: Categories + Society and/or Institutions

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

The institutional factor of budget is decoded in detail through a discussion of the importance of creating a successful franchise. There is insightful comment on how this institutional need has led to the horror genre convention of the open ending, and there is developed reference to the way in which the final sequence of the film helps to set up the possibility of sequels. The candidate concludes by commenting on how this connects to the purpose of profit.

The institutional factor of ownership is decoded in detail through discussion of the producers' deal with New Line Cinema. The candidate comments insightfully on how this deal was made possible by the way that the film puts an original twist on the horror convention of the expert, and this is illustrated through developed reference to the way that this is achieved by making the Warrens the heroes. This is followed by an insightful comment on how this altered genre convention helps to make the franchise possible, and the candidate connects this to the purpose of profit.

Candidate D commentary – The Matrix

Question 1a: Audience

The candidate was awarded **9 marks**.

Three audience reactions are decoded in detail: women/feminists, conspiracy theorists, and black audiences. Each reaction is exemplified and discussed with developed references to the film. The feminist reaction is discussed in relation to the character of Trinity. There is insightful comment on how she defies gender stereotypes which would appeal to feminists; there is also comment on the differential decoding this audience would have due to her role as Neo's love interest. The reaction of conspiracy theorists is discussed in relation to the plot of the film, and there is comment on how this audience would 'delight' in the plot, and the fact that it confirms their beliefs in a mainstream film. The reaction of black audiences is discussed in relation to the character of Morpheus, and there is comment on possible positive and negative reactions to his portrayal. As there is only insightful comment on the feminist response, the candidate does is awarded 9 marks.

Question 1b: Audience and, Language and/or Representations and/or Narrative

The candidate was awarded **8 marks**.

Three of Propp's character types are decoded in detail, with developed references to the text. There are comments on how widespread audiences might react positively to Neo as the Hero, with some comment on a differential decoding from feminists. There is comment on how Agent Smith as the villain causes audiences to respond with strong dislike and engage further with the Hero's plight. Finally, there is comment on how both female and black members of the audience would react positively to seeing Morpheus fulfil both the Princess and Princess's Father character roles. Whilst there is a range of detailed discussion and comment in this response, there comments do not display insight.

Candidate E Commentary – The Sixth Sense

Question 1a: Audience

The candidate was awarded **7 marks**.

Three audience responses are decoded in some detail: male audiences' enjoyment of action; horror fans enjoying being scared; and female audiences enjoying the drama and emotion. There are brief comments on the relationship between these responses and specific examples from the film, with some reference to possible differential decoding.

Question 1b: Audience and, Language and/or Representations and/or Narrative

The candidate was awarded **8 marks**.

Representations of men and women in the film are decoded in detail. The positive representations of male characters are exemplified in detail and there is comment on how audiences would respond to this in both a positive and a negative way. There is developed exemplification of how female characters are represented in a negative way, with comment on how the female audience would respond to this.