

Candidate evidence

National 5 Media – Assignment

You must complete all tasks.

Brief

You need to produce a trailer for a film in a genre of your choice. This trailer should not be longer than 2 minutes.

The level of finish expected is an edited film trailer.

The purpose of this trailer is to encourage people to see your (imaginary) film.

The target audience for this advert should be pupils at _____ High School although, if you wish, you could select a more specific audience within the school. The film should be suitable for an audience of 11+

SECTION 1 - PLANNING

1) Describe what you discovered during your research into **Audience**, and explain how this influenced your plans. (5 marks)

I created a survey on Microsoft Forms to find out what my target audience (ages 12 to 18) wanted to see in a horror trailer.

- 73% of people who took my survey said that they like the horror genre so I'm going to continue planning for a horror trailer. I'll do this by including intense music with sudden bangs and screams, a monster that I've decided will be unseen to keep it mysterious, cool and dark colours and have a protagonist that's scared but determined of which are all often seen in and identified with the horror genre.
- I'm going to try to make my trailer mysterious and creepy by not giving too many plot points away as well as setting up enigmas for the viewer that they want answers to. For example, I'm going to do a shot of the main character running away from something, frightened, down a dark corridor, leaving the audience with questions like – What is he running from? Where is he running to? I'm doing this because my survey showed that 9 of the 15 people like tension and mystery in the horror genre.
- 8 of the 15 people in the survey said that they don't like jump scares or excessive use of gore so I decided that I'm not going to use any jump scares at all and will try to limit the amount of blood, the most seen being a close up of blood in someone's hands and/or a tracking shot of blood flowing down a surface.
- I've decided that I'm going to inject some humour into the trailer as half of the people said their favourite Horror films were like 'Shaun Of The Dead' and 'Attack The Block' because they were able to balance horror and comedy. I'm going to do this by having a character who is a good friend of the protagonist that thinks the protagonist is going crazy and makes fun of him with various jokes.

2) Describe what you discovered during your research into internal and/or institutional factors, and explain how this influenced your plans. (5 marks)

- One Internal Institutional factor is equipment. A decent camera to record on is costing at least one hundred pound each day. Therefore, at a £0 budget, I've just got to use what I've got so I'm going to film my trailer on my phone which I know how to use well. My phone can shoot in 4K but filming on my phone will limit the amount of night time shots I'll do as smartphones don't handle low light well when recording and I don't have the right resources to do professional lighting. Shooting in 4K will affect the stability of the videos compared to if I shoot in 1080p so I'm going to use a tripod (which I already have) to ensure stability and good quality for the footage. Having footage on my phone also means that it will be easier to transfer footage to computers or other devices for editing.
- Another External Institutional factor is ratings. I would like to make a trailer at the 12A rating so that most people can see it and I can still include the threatening plots/ideas normally seen in the horror genre. This means that "There may be moderate violence but it should not dwell on detail" according to the BBFC website. This means that I can't show any injury in close up or have blood spurting out of someone while they scream in pain, instead implying violence/gore with the sight of blood in someone's hands or blood on the floor. The BBFC website also says that "There may be moderate bad language" in a 12A trailer. This means that there can't be any frequent uses of words like 'f*ck' but instead some use of more tame language.
- A third External Institutional factor is health and safety. I looked at the 'Health and Safety Executive' website and on the Film, TV and broadcasting page, it says "take the time to systematically look at your activities, decide what hazards they present, assess the risk of people being exposed to these hazards, find ways to either eliminate or control them." This means that in scenes where there is a risk of someone getting injured or something getting broken, I need to plan in advance to avoid these situations. For example, in the scene where I have my main character running from 'something' down a corridor, I'll need to make sure the floor isn't slippery and make sure there is no objects in the way to avoid any accidents.

3) Describe what you discovered during your research into a key aspect from **Categories, Language, Narrative or Representations** and explain how this influenced your plans. (5 marks) - choose 1 key aspect.

I analysed the trailer for the horror/drama film 'Midsommar' which came out in 2019.

Language

The trailer uses eerie music from the start of the trailer, setting up the horror tone and unsettling the audience. I plan on using similar music in seemingly normal scenes - for example, at the start of the trailer, I'm just going to have my character in his house doing everyday things yet the music contrasts this to tell the audience that something is going on and it is not something good.

Voiceover is also used in the trailer (It even sometimes goes from voiceover to the footage of the character saying the dialogue) to tell the audience plot points, for example, "I invited Dani to come to Sweden...You know what she's been going through" and "Christian says you've got this special week planned...It's sort of a crazy festival...Special ceremonies and dressing up." This has influenced me to do the same thing as it allows you to show shots that may be at completely different points in the film to the dialogue but you can give your audience these two different things at once, meaning the trailer doesn't drag. In one scene, I'm going to have the main character arguing with his friend with the dialogue "You're going crazy" in voiceover and then the footage of the main character replying angrily, disagreeing with his friend.

About 50 seconds into the 'Midsommar' trailer, there is an upside down shot of a banner for the festival. This further suggests this isn't just any festival and disorients the audience. I also plan on using certain shots that suggest things aren't normal, like push-ins on characters which will increase the tension. A specific example of one of these shots is on the main character in front of a computer with his head in his hands, the camera pushing in, showing his increasing anger then he suddenly breaks and smashes his hands down on the desk.

4) Describe what you discovered during your research into a second key aspect from **Categories, Language, Narrative or Representations** and explain how this influenced your plans. (5 marks) - choose 1 key aspect.

Categories - Genre Conventions

Screams are played near the end of the 'Midsommar' trailer which is a convention used in the horror genre that indicates fear or that someone is in pain. This has influenced me to use a scream sound effect at the end of my trailer as I think it's a good way to leave the audience with a chilling feeling.

There is a fairly dark shot of Dani looking into a mirror with a person behind her and when she turns around, they are gone. This has become somewhat of a cliché in horror but it is used to surprise the audience and set up a feeling of mystery. I plan on doing something alike in my trailer to hint at the 'monster' where we see the main character looking up the stairs in his house (it's similarly quite dark) and something black passes the camera.

There is a shot of someone's feet lifting off of the ground suggesting that something paranormal is happening. Paranormal activity is used a lot in horror because the mystery of it all (the fact that you don't see the entity and you don't know much about it) scares audiences. This has influenced me to have a shot where a creaky door slowly opens, seemingly by itself to indicate something paranormal and it keeps things mysterious.

Throughout the trailer, there are quick cuts to different creepy shots, just giving the audience glimpses (for example, the cut open bear). In horror, this quick style of editing is used a lot to keep things mysterious and leaves the audience with questions – enigmas. I plan on doing the same, quick-edited glimpses of unordinary things to keep the audience guessing and wondering, encouraging them to want to see the final product.

SECTION 2 - DEVELOPMENT

You need to select and identify five examples from your developed content that you think best demonstrates your ability to create impact or convey connotations. You should describe the techniques or codes used to make each example, and explain the intended impact or connotations of these. The explanation may be in general terms, or linked to audience, purpose or anything else that is relevant.

You should also evaluate where you were successful and what you could have done better.

Example 1 (0:01 – 0:13)

(a) In the first shot where we see the protagonist, the audience shouldn't really know what to think of him as they could interpret it with the character being good or evil. In the shot, he is slowly walking towards the camera looking at something we don't see, creating an enigma (What is he doing? What is he looking at? etc.) I made sure when doing this scene to walk slowly and tried to have a serious/disturbed facial expression to tell the audience that he is approaching something unhuman and to build tension. In this shot I used red lighting to make the shot look dark and to signify that this is horror as it's a colour seen a lot in the genre. This created a growing shadow behind the character, creating a menacing and evil tone to the shot. The colour red signifies an idea of violence/fear in the character which is intended to unsettle the audience. In terms of sound, I used a 'pulse bass' sound effect, that's slightly reminiscent of the sci-fi genre, in the background. This communicates that something unnatural or out of this world is happening – adding to the mystery of the scene.

(b) When doing the lighting for this scene, I made sure to place a red light below the character that created this shadow that grows behind him as he walks, which I felt added a cool and creepy aesthetic to the shot. It also fits in well with the horror genre as shadows and darkness are a common feature. Although, the problem with shooting in low light areas is that the footage ends up pretty pixelated so if I had a bigger budget, I would have gotten a camera that can handle low light better to improve the overall quality of the shot.

Example 2 (0:16 – 0:31)

(a) The first shot of this section is a medium shot of the protagonist which tells us a bit more about the character and puts the audience more on his side - painting him as more of a victim as he sits in school, clearly disturbed by something. Having the shot be a medium shot and not a close up also allows to establish the setting of the school, letting the audience get to know a bit more about his age/situation. For the shot of him running, I made it quite dark to keep a mysterious feeling while also fitting in with the horror genre. The camera follows the character to indicate that he is being chased by something which sets up questions for the audience (What is he running from? Where is he running to?) As it cuts to the shot of his friend talking, I decided to mute the dialogue and keep the music playing to show that the protagonist isn't listening. The next cut to him is zoomed in further to emphasise his serious emotion and how he is zoned out from the world, with other things on his mind.

(b) I originally wanted to have the dialogue of the friend included in the trailer as it added comedy which I found out people liked in horror when doing my survey, but without good equipment for recording sound, it didn't work which may have lost interest of audiences who like a mix of genres. However I do really like how the running shot came out as I was able to use my friend's stabilizer, giving the shot a really cool effect of the character being chased by something. This will have a good effect on a horror audience as it suggests some type of monster/villain which is a common feature of the horror genre.

Example 3 (0:34 – 0:35)

(a) The shot of someone holding a knife is a close up on the object. This only allows us to see the knife and not much else, keeping the scene mysterious as we don't really know where this character is or their intentions. The prop of the knife suggests violence/danger, seen often in the horror genre, as it could be something the character is using to attack someone or defend them self with. We can visibly see the character's hand holding the knife, slightly shaking, suggesting that they're nervous and/or doesn't want to do what they're about to do. The clip is seen for less than a second before cutting away, giving enough time for the audience to realise what they're seeing but not enough time to get a sense of the bigger picture, making them curious and want to see the eventual project. The light on the character has a yellowish tint to it, suggesting that it's not daylight and therefore takes place at night time. Night time is another common feature of the horror genre as the lack of light keeps things eerie.

(b) One thing that could have been better about this clip is the lighting as it's a bit brighter than what I'd want it to be but if I had made the room darker, the footage became pixelated. I also didn't have much choice when it came to lighting equipment so I had to use what was in the room. This is another scene where if I had a bigger budget, it would have been good to have a camera that can handle low light well or maybe even some better lighting equipment. However, I do like the framing of the shot as I think it's quite effective at not revealing much about where the character is and what they're doing but you can clearly see the knife which indicates there will be violence in the film, attracting horror audiences as that is another common feature of the genre.

Example 4 (0:39 – 0:40)

(a) This shot is of the character cleaning blood off of the knife in the sink. It elaborates on the last shot including the knife, feeding the audience a little bit more information but leaving them with far more questions (Whose blood is that? Has somebody been killed?) The repetition of seeing the knife helps build tension due to the mystery still surrounding the situation. It is at a high angle which immerses the audience into the scene, as if they're standing beside the character with the knife (the height of the shot is the same as the character's point of view, just from a different angle) All of the colour in the shot is pretty dull like black, grey and white, so the blood stands out from the shot, locking the audience's attention and alerting them of danger/violence with the colour red. This clip is also seen for less than a second before cutting away, communicating to the audience that this is the character's memories of what has happened and again making the audience curious and want to see the full film.

(b) The fake blood that I used for this shot looked quite orange on camera and even after darkening the clip, it still looked too bright so it would have been good to have used darker fake blood. I think the colour (red - blood and black - costume) is quite effective as it is repeated in the costume/setting of the next shot where the character sits at a table, further indicating that this is what is on his mind.