HISTORY AND GENRE

STUDY GUIDE

* Studios relied on *genres* because they reduced *financial risk*
* Musicals, Science Fiction, Comedy, Westerns, etc are all film genres.
* The literal meaning of *melodrama* is drama accompanied by music.
* Films like Batman and Spiderman fit the melodramatic mode because they use *conventional character types*.
* Melodramas are different from westerns because they are set within the *domestic space of family*.
* Melodrama originated in France
* The melodrama “Birth of a Nation” where the Ku Klux Klan are
portrayed as heroes, still continues to stir controversy today.
* The common *term* for a character whose identity, goals and desires are given to him by others is *everyman*.
* The introduction of *sound* in melodramas helped “melodrama” to become its own specific *genre*
* The film element of sound was the LEAST likely to adopt a melodramatic style in early sound films.
*Mutotrope* was not an early film projector, however, Black Maria, Lumiere Cameras and Kinetoscope were.
* In the era of classical Hollywood cinema, the *factory system* was where studio films could be mass-produced; where several films could be made at the same time by combining the studio resources.
* The expressionist movement was an avant-garde movement that found a niche in several art forms, including film, upon which the movement disappeared. The following represents the correct evolution of the movement between the art forms: Painting, theater, literature, architecture, and film.
* French surrealists were attracted to the cinema from the beginning of their movement because films allowed dreams to be tangibly presented.
* The purpose of Soviet montage films was to spread Communist propaganda.
* For a few years, the initial effect the invention of sound in film created a setback in the Hollywood studios.
* Independent films, labeled as such because they are produced without the help of any major studios, gained followings and audiences by entering film festivals, such as the Sundance Film Festival.
* Film in Hong Kong has found a niche with American audiences. Chinese-made comic kung-fu that mixes martial arts with action-adventure movies are popular in the United States.
* The Great Train Robbery was revolutionary because of state-of-the-art editing and cutting technique, unique camera angles, and close ups of characters expressions.
* Movie houses and nickelodeons were responsible for influencing production, marketing, exhibition, and distribution in the film industry.
* Category, type, and kind are all words that best define film genres.
* Comedy, crime, disaster, and horror are just a few types of film genres.
* The relationship between romantic comedy and social class is that classes (rich, poor, etc.) are ultimately united by the end of a romantic comedy.
* In films like “Big” and “American Pie” boys try to make a leap into *manhood* . This is *called rites of passage.*
* An example of disintegration and disorder in film is when the elite class is brought down by chaos. This humorous device can often be seen in “Marx Brothers,” and “Three Stooges” comedies.
* Comedy is usually targeted to the working class.
* Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton both used Slapstick comedy in their films.
* Screwball comedy is different from romantic comedy because it combines high and low humor in a single film.
* Film Westerns had a great influence on American culture and were able to shape Americans’ views of the old frontier by replacing actual history with myth.
* Westerns films got their start because *Dime Novels* about the Wild West were extremely popular.
* Culture is the opposite of nature in the western.
* Class is the opposite of equality in the western.
* Young males (tenderfoots) characters get educated in westerns with shooting lessons.
* The roles of women in westerns are conventional and secondary to men.
* *Cowboys vs. Indians* was a sub-genre that dominated westerns throughout their box office reign.
* Clint Eastwood and John Wayne are actors who are most associated with western films.
* Most musicals have a fantasy setting.
* 8 mile ([Eminem](http://www.eminem.com/frameset.asp?PageName=eminem)) is a movie with music but it is not considered a musical because
musical films contain numbers that rupture the narrative just for the song.
* *Chicago* is a modern film that meets the classic definition of a musical.
* Dialogue in a musical operates within the dramatic register of the Narrative.
* A *book musical* is a sub-genre that eliminates most of all narrative by stringing together unrelated musical numbers.
* Show People can be found in films such as the “Coal Miner’s Daughter, which depicts the lives of famous musical performers.
* Films like *42nd Street* that show casting, rehearsal and staged
production numbers of a show are known as Backstage Musicals.
* Both techniques of changing from color to black-and-white and changing from noise to music were commonly used to transition from narrative to musical numbers.
* Moulin Rouge, The Love Parade, and The Merry Widow are all Operettas.
* Fred Astaire & Ginger Rogers *Musicals*’ also resemble the genre of *Screwball Comedy*.
* Arthur Freed is best known for producing musicals.
* The transition between narrative and spectacle is not always clear to the audience.
* Just like *Classic Hollywood Style Films*, props in musicals weren’t just limited to set design, they also used props in their musical performances.
* Minor performers on stage during a musical number often
 function as an “audience,” reacting to the other signers.
* Film Noir means “Dark Film.”
* American Pulp Fiction was the source for most film noirs
* The Maltese Falcon is usually credited to being the first film noir.
* Low-key Lighting, High Contrast Photography, and Deep Focus Cinematography are all characteristics of film noir.
* The meaningless of Life, the futility of individual action, and the arbitrariness of social justice are all common themes of film noir.
* L.A. Confidential and Fatal Attraction are both *pseudo noirs*.( False or counterfeit)
* Aside from the look, noirs were different from earlier American films because they abandoned narrative linearity.
* Nudity, homosexuality, and profanity were all prohibited in noir.
* The psychological darkness of noir coincided with post-war America because
it reflected the cynicism of the innocence lost at war.
* Screwball comedy and Noirs films both use share, witty dialogue.
* In film noir, women posed a threat to traditional values by working in offices.
* The intent of the *femme fatale* was to destroy the male hero.
* Film noir borrows from German Expressionism by seeking to express internal psychological states externally through set design, lighting and camera angle.
* Although it is not a noir, many noirs emulate the visual style of the film Citizen Kane.
* The destabilization of sexual relationships in film noir was not atypical of the experiences of the viewing audience.
* The Auteur Theory (a director that leaves their stamp on a film)
gives primary creative credit to the director.
* The influence of film schools emerged in the 1960s.
* Easy Rider is credited with opening Hollywood’s doors to young directors.
* Steven Spielberg didn’t attend film school and dropped out of CSULB
* Roger Corman’s main role in “the film school generation” was that he gave “generation” directors their first jobs.
* Film school generation directors borrowed from anything they had seen and enjoyed.
* “The French New Wave” was a group of film critics.
* Brian DePalma (Director of Dressed to Kill) was accused of constantly emulating Hitchcock.
* The imitation of unique earlier films that lacks any trace of satire or parody is called *pastiche*.
* Martin Scorsese, a “generation” member directed the film Taxi Driver.
* Directors like Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, and Samuel Fuller were considered Hollywood’s hacks before they were hailed by French film critics
* The marketing strategy for Jaws remains the dominant model for current distribution practices for potential blockbusters.
* The anti-war movement, civil rights movement, students’ movement, and women’s liberation did not contribute to the 60’s counter-culture films.
* Voting rights were not a youth issue in the 1960s
* Hollywood of the 1960s portrayed the women’s movement by emphasizing the sexual revolution.
* In 1960s cinema, racial problems were solved by focusing on individual cases of prejudice.
* Midnight Cowboy, a counter-culture 1960’s film both made
money and won the Oscar for best picture.
* The Graduate and Who’s Afraid of Virginia Wolf are two films
 that gambled with curse words and sexual themes
* “Blaxploitation Films” were cheaply made films directed at black audiences
* MacGuffin is a term coined by Alfred Hitchcock. for documents,
 plans, secrets or whatever sets events in motion
* Montages are used in many film genres to show the passing of time,
or the process by which something is done
* War Films break some of the moral codes that dominate other genres
* The *platoon* is more likely to be the hero of a war film
* The fact that American Soldiers in the film “Saving Private Ryan” repeatedly shoot surrendering German troops makes the movie unlike other WWII motion pictures, but more typical of post-Vietnam films.
* The introduction of a woman in a combat film (GI Jane, Courage Under Fire)
 usually represents “male vulnerability.”
* In war films, soldiers often find it difficult and are unsuccessful at
 re-integrating into normal life when they return home from war.
* In Post -Vietnam War films, soldiers usually become anti-war activists. The same cannot be said about WWII films, because most Americans supported the Second World War.
* After Vietnam, the war film changed and dealt with such themes as war is hell, the government can’t be trusted, and war creates flawed and corrupted heroes
* The first film genre (Western) was defined in *1903* with films such as “*The Great Train Robbery*”
* Recurring symbolic images that carry meaning from film to film are called iconography of a genre
* A sad ending in a drama is not considered a conventional plot element
* A batch of genre films that enjoys intense popularity
and influence over a distinct period is called a cycle.
* The love triangle between the shy woman, the rough-hewn hero,
and the clean-cut villain is not a standardized convention of the early western.
* The rudimentary conventions of the genre film are characters, conflict, setting and values reaffirmed
* The gangster film usually takes place in the concrete jungle of the city in a closed system.
* A basic difference between science fiction and horror films is that
Sci-Fi appeals to the consciousness, horror to the unconscious
* An argument for remaking a film is to update it to reflect social change, to take advantage of new potential in art form and that there are new paranoias.