

Educational material

Lucid



CLASS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: 3rd grade

TEACHING AREA: Culture and media

TEACHING UNIT: *Lucid*

CLASS TYPE: Analysis of a short freestyle film

DURATION OF A TEACHING UNIT: 45 minutes

LUCID

Technical High School Bugojno, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2023

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. When you're going through a difficult period, do you keep it to yourself or do you talk to other people? Who do you turn to most often?
2. There is a famous saying "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." What do you think about this? Do you think that difficult moments shape us as people? How?
3. If you were to express an important story from your childhood in some artistic way – what art form would you choose to do it and why?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch a short film *Lucid* produced by Technical High School Bugojno from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author of the film is Enes Prijić.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. Pay attention to the beginning and the end of the film. What do we see and hear?
2. Which two basic natural elements appear? What is their symbolic meaning?
3. Who is narrating? At what point do we hear the main character's diegetic voice? Why in that particular moment?
4. What is the cinematography in the film like and how does it contribute to the film's atmosphere?
5. What visual medium is used within the film's plot? Which contrast is emphasized with it?
6. Think about what type of film this is. Is this a fiction film, a documentary, an experimental film, or something else?

WATCHING THE FILM

EXPRESSION OF STUDENT IMPRESSIONS

Did you like this film? Why?

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM

1. How does the film begin?

The main character is floating in water, the angle is extremely low and the camera moves downwards (tracking or handheld camera). The narrator counts out loud ("one, two, three...", it seems like multiple voices), and then a cut leads to a shot of the main character suddenly waking up in bed, shot from an extreme high angle. There are no opening credits, the name of the film appears at the end of the film.

2. How does the narration start and what do we see in the following shots?

The narrator begins the story about the meaninglessness of his life and about his parents who have been fighting for as long as he can remember. At the same time, soft music of a plucked string instrument begins. We see an extreme wide shot of the Moon in the night sky, and then some extreme close-ups (locking the door, the faucet leaking water, and then the character's eyes) over which we hear the argument. This is followed by a close-up of his face floating in the water, and then some extreme close-ups of his eye and a globe.

3. What is the cinematography in the film like and how does it contribute to the film's atmosphere?

The film is extremely dark, in mostly grey, black and dim tones, which is reflected in the costumes, production design and lighting. Some shots are completely dark, and some are shot in silhouette (opening a photo album, the protagonist throwing himself on the floor in front of the curtain). In the exterior scenes, the weather is rainy (when he returns from school) or very cloudy (when his mother leaves for the bus).

4. How are the parents' arguments portrayed?

We can only hear them, the voices are off camera, and we don't ever see the father in the film. We can connect this to the methods of creating a feeling of fear and unease in genres such as thriller and horror, because if we can only hear something, it's much scarier than what we see. This fact is further emphasized in the scene in which the protagonist looks through the keyhole. In some other film, after that shot, there would probably be a subjective shot of what he sees, but here it's intentionally absent. At the same time, this is the moment when he learns that his mother is going to leave.

5. What visual medium appears in the film? Which contrast is emphasized with it?

We see childhood photos containing happy memories and the smiling protagonist, which is in contrast with his state of mind depicted in the film. The photos are also a sign of the past, of moments "frozen" in memory that will never happen again.

6. Apart from the beginning of the film, where else do we see an extreme high angle appear?

Near the end of the film, when the protagonist lies on the carpet, surrounded by photographs.

7. What kinds of shots are used in the scene of him returning home from school?

He is in a wide shot as he walks down the street, when he approaches the camera he is in a medium close-up, and the next two shots of him approaching the door are also medium close-ups (apart from unlocking the gate).

8. In what kind of shot is the protagonist when he falls to his knees in his room?

In a full shot because we see his whole body, as well as a part of his surroundings.

(Students should be reminded that the kinds of shots are usually determined according to the human figure, and we take into account the entire person – regardless of whether they're standing, lying, crouching, kneeling, etc.)

9. Which basic natural elements appear as symbols?

Water (floating in water, a tap, rain) and fire (a lighter). Water can symbolize life, but also drowning, and the protagonist explicitly speaks of fire as something that can destroy (should we burn photographs), but fire is also a symbol of life, passion, the spark within us, the desire to exist.

10. Although the film mostly features dim and dark tones, what colour appears as a motif?

The colour blue (the classroom walls, the walls of the room, the carpet, the t-shirt in the photo), which can be associated with water, and if we consider the photo, the blue t-shirt can also signify childhood, losing carefreeness, etc. The only colours that stand out as a contrast are red (the teacher) and orange (the curtain in the classroom).

11. How many actresses play the role of a mother?

She is played by two actresses, one in the scene of getting on a bus, and the other who we hear in arguments. (Students should be instructed to always pay attention to the closing credits, which, in addition to being an integral part of the film and it being important to watch them to the end, also contain interesting production details about the shooting/creating the film.)

12. How are the beginning and the end of the film connected?

The composition is circular because the film begins and ends with a repetitive countdown ("one, two, three...") and in the last shot, the extreme close-up of the protagonist's eyes from the first scene is repeated.

13. What does the name of the film mean?

The term *lucid* refers to lucid dreaming, to dreams that seem real or seem like we can consciously act in them, like we're aware that we're dreaming. For the protagonist, this means he wants to escape from such a reality, he hopes that everything is just a dream. Lucidity is also an intellectual trait, because it refers to someone who is extremely self-aware and aware of the world around them, and someone who reasons clearly, shrewdly, and insightfully.

14. The film was screened at the Four River Film Festival in the freestyle category. What would you say what type of film this was?

(For discussing with students and open interpretation.)

It can be said that this is a fiction film. However, due to the strong, seemingly autobiographical or confessional approach, we can also call it a documentary. The overall stylistic expression also enters the sphere of experimental film, video art, etc.

EVALUATION

- monitoring student activities while watching a film
- checking the understanding of the film by asking questions
- teaching sheet (quiz)

THE TEACHING SHEET (QUIZ) is available on the Film Education website.