

Educational material

Mordros



CLASS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: 3rd grade

TEACHING AREA: Culture and media

TEACHING UNIT: *Mordros*

CLASS TYPE: Analysis of a short fiction film

DURATION OF A TEACHING UNIT: 45 minutes

MORDROS

Noah Berridge and Yuli Freed, United Kingdom, 2025

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. Do you like the sea? Do you like swimming?
2. What are some of the dangers at sea?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch a short film *Mordros* produced by Noah Berridge and Yuli Freed from the United Kingdom. The film won the Grand Prix and the Best Cinematography Award at Four River Film Festival in Karlovac, Croatia.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. Pay attention to the kinds of shots used.
2. What is the camera movement like?
3. How is the relationship between the characters visually portrayed?

WATCHING THE FILM

STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS

What do you think of this film? Be sure to provide arguments for your impressions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM

1. How does the film start? What can we see and hear?

The film starts with its name (white letters on a dark background), followed by a caption that explains the meaning of the word *mordros*. Over these two shots we can hear the sound of the sea and waves.

2. What is the purpose of that caption?

It introduces the main motif: the power of the sea.

3. What comes next?

A shot of the sea filmed from the air (with a drone), then an extreme close-up of Jack's face and a close-up of him gazing thoughtfully out at the open sea.

4. How is the character of Keegan introduced?

He is introduced in a full shot as he walks toward Jack.

5. How are the power and beauty of nature depicted?

They are depicted primarily through wide shots and extreme wide shots.

6. Where does the action take place?

The action takes place entirely in the exterior, amidst the beautiful, untouched nature of seaside cliffs.

7. Who are the characters? What connects them?

The characters are young men connected by a passion for swimming.

8. How is the scene of them swimming shown?

We see them preparing their gear in extreme close-ups (for example, an extreme close-up of a hand zipping up a wetsuit); handheld camera films them diving into the sea, then we see a shot of a large wave, an underwater shot, and a slow-motion shot of them swimming.

9. What is the *mise-en-scène*/blocking like at the beginning of the film?

The boys are mostly filmed in a two-shot, which suggests their closeness, mutual understanding, and camaraderie.

10. Describe what Keegan and Jack are like.

Keegan wants to prove himself to both himself and his father; he's sad that his friend is leaving town and he's, in a way, left to fend for himself because his father is an alcoholic, which forces him to live with his grandmother, compare himself to his father and decide to take risks and swim in impossible conditions, a choice that ultimately leads to his death. Jack is more mature, aware of the dangers they face, and is leaving town to go to university.

11. How is the passage of time shown in the film?

First it's shown in two shots after the friends split up. In the first shot we see a sunset, and in the second shot we see a rapid movement of clouds which go completely dark. The second time we see three shots showing darkness, followed by a fade-out.

12. What kinds of shots are the characters often in, especially when talking?

When they talk, the characters are often in close-ups or medium close-ups.

13. What does Keegan look at when they're in nature?

He often looks at seagulls, which symbolize freedom to him.

14. What do we call the types of shots in which the viewer looks through the character's eyes?

We call them subjective shots.

15. How does the *mise-en-scène* change on the last day when Jack expresses his concern?

The boys are no longer in two-shots while talking, instead they each have their own shot, suggesting that they disagree about going swimming in bad weather.

16. What is the camera movement like when Keegan runs towards the sea, with Jack behind him?

Dynamic hand-held camera tries to convey the atmosphere of chaos and speed with which Keegan made his decision in which Jack couldn't stop him.

17. What kind of shots follow after Keegan enters the sea? What do we hear?

We see shots of the raging sea which show its destructive power and the danger Keegan got himself into. The sound consists of non-diegetic instrumental music that adds to the atmosphere.

18. What interrupts the shots of the sea?

The shots of Jack anxiously walking towards the other bay.

19. How do we learn of Keegan's fate?

Through a shot of a helicopter flying over the sea searching for him.

20. What do we see after that shot?

A static shot of the sea and two cliffs, while the sea is calm, which means that the storm has passed.

21. How does the film end?

The film ends with a close-up of Jack looking up at the sky, followed by a shot of a seagull, which means that it's Jack's subjective shot. Then there's a close-up of him again, and in the final shot of the film, Jack goes swimming.

22. What is the sound like in the film?

All the elements of sound are present in the film, namely speech, non-diegetic music and noises (for example, the noise of waves or the noise of the helicopter).

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.