

# Free online course: film critique sheet #1 movie review example

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



## **Genre: Suspense**

Director: Alfred Hitchcock

Stars: James Stewart, Kim Novak

Objective Analysis: (give a few examples and provide text to support your examples)

Visual component (such as the art direction, camera angles and movement, cinematography, lighting, visual style, etc.):

Hitchcock's visual style is tense and scary, with great use of focus and top-down shots to get the feeling of Jimmy Stewart's "vertigo." The visual style of the opening sequence is dreamlike and unsettling, as is the dream sequence he has halfway through the movie. It really gives the feeling of losing your grip on reality.

2. Editing component ( like the pacing, rhythm, transitions, etc.):

The pacing of the movie is great, as Hitchcock uses cutting between Stewart and the people he investigates to make links between them and make him look obsessed. Also, the vertigo sequences are made all the more tense because of the strange transitions between watching Stewart and being in his head.

## **Audio component (like the soundtrack, ambient sound, dialogue, etc.):**

The Bernard Hermann soundtrack is very scary and matches the fear that Stewart has when he experiences vertigo. The dialogue is also very easy to follow but filled with meaning, like when Stewart is working out the investigation.

**Narrative component (such as the plot, characters, acting, setting, pace, symbolism, etc.):**

I liked that the film is split into two distinct halves - one with Stewart chasing after Madeline, and the other with Stewart chasing after Judy. Stewart's character of Scottie is also interesting, as we see his obsession and his need to find some sort of way to overcome his fear of heights.

**Subjective analysis: (this is for you to state your point of view)**

Discuss your favorite visual component or scene and WHY?

My favorite visual component is the dolly zoom that Hitchcock uses to show Stewart's vertigo - the combined feeling of pulling out and pushing in on the ground makes us feel like we are falling so well.

**Discuss your favorite sound component or line of dialogue and WHY?**

I think my favorite sound component is Bernard Hermann's opening theme in the credits sequence - it is very addictive to listen to, and yet has a feeling of tension and suspense in the strings and percussion.

**Discuss your shortcoming of the film and WHY ?**

It is hard to have a shortcoming for such a brilliant film, but if I absolutely had to pick something I would have a happier ending for James Stewart than losing both the women he loves. Even though he deserves it, I have such sympathy for him that I would want him to be okay at the end.

## **Genre: Romance**

Director: Clint Eastwood

Stars: Clint Eastwood, Meryl Streep

Objective Analysis: (give a few examples and provide text to support your examples)

Visual component (such as the art direction, camera angles and movement, cinematography, lighting, visual style, etc.):

The movie looks very stately and considered, with very little camera movement or a sense of visual flair. The camera likes to capture the house as something very claustrophobic, with the walls seeming to close in on the characters based on how they are framed.

### **Editing component (like the pacing, rhythm, transitions, etc.):**

The editing is very straightforward and styled to fit the dialogue and performances. Shots cut to whatever character is speaking, or meaningfully away from them when we want to see another character's reaction.

3. Audio component (like the soundtrack, ambient sound, dialogue, etc.):

The music is very quiet and contemplative, very piano-heavy, especially as the characters think about their past and regrets. The dialogue is also very writerly, with characters speaking in direct but meaningful sentences that give the actors a lot to work with.

Narrative component (such as the plot, characters, acting, setting, pace, symbolism, etc.):

The plot is mostly centered around the characters' relationships, and luckily the skilled cast takes a naturalistic, realistic approach to the dialogue. The

characters and scenes feel real, and the film's rural setting opens up the landscape to explore these issues of loneliness and emptiness in their lives.

Subjective analysis: (this is for you to state your point of view)

Discuss your favorite visual component or scene and WHY?

I like the scene near the end when Meryl Streep and Clint Eastwood confront each other in the rain, as the rain perfectly matches the sadness of their mood.

Discuss your favorite sound component or line of dialogue and WHY?

When Eastwood says, " I don't want to need you, 'cause I can't have you," it is a perfect summary of the movie's plot about two people who love each other but need to give each other up for the good of their families and lives. It is a bittersweet sentiment that makes the movie more dramatic.

3. Discuss your shortcoming of the film and WHY ?

If anything, I would say that the movie could have stood to carry more visual flair. As it stands, it is a bit more conventional than I would have liked. Also, the use of voiceover gets a little much at times, as Streep says what she must be feeling over letting us see it in her performance.