

Analysis of opening scene in "witness" essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Analysis of opening scene in “ Witness” Essay Sample

This opening scene is a crucial one that shows the audience how Rachel and Samuel came to be in a train station being a witness to a murder.

The first shot we see is that of a screen covered two thirds the way up of wheat and a blue sky above, there is a flute playing in the background, the use of these techniques highlights the fact that this is a peaceful, happy and serene place. The first we see of the Amish is a mid shot of them coming out of the grass which represents them being a part of nature.

The opening scene that introduces the Amish highlights their sense of harmony with nature. The long shot of the wheat is depicted in earthy tones of green and grey, this shot stays on screen for a long time which highlights its significance. The Amish emerge in a mid shot from the wheat the camera tracks them moving from right to left, wearing their normal attire of black clothing. When we see them for the first time coming through the wheat they are bunched together, this gives the feeling that these people value community spirit and have a strong bond with people in their community.

When we first hear the emphasised sound of the horse and cart trotting along and then see it in the third shot we are seduced into believing that this film is set in the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

However, in a long shot of the horse and cart we see that there are side mirrors and in the next shot there is a close up of the wheels that also reveal the red reflective lights on the side of the cart. So we are led to believe that the film is set in the past until the subtitle of “ Pennsylvania 1984” comes up

on screen. In a latter shot the horse and cart is juxtaposed with a semi trailer and this links back to the theme of civilisation versus nature. The sounds of both these vehicles are contrasted in this shot and link to the people that use them. The horse and cart is a continuous slow moving sound that is quite peaceful whereas the sound and speed of the gas pumping semi is harsh and impatient which also reflects the people that drive them.