

# [‘sleepy hollow’ and ‘edward scissor hands’ essay](https://assignbuster.com/sleepy-hollow-and-edward-scissor-hands-essay/)

Sleepy Hollow and Edward Scissor Hands are both created by director Tim Burton, who has recently directed the film Big Fish. The two films were made back in the last millennium, Edward Scissor Hands in 1990 and Sleepy Hollow in 1999. Both films include the girls favourite Mr.

Johnny Depp, also Sleepy Hollow includes the legends of film Christopher Walken, Christopher Lee and Michael Gambon and it stars the beautiful Christina Ricci. Edward Scissor Hands cast includes Winona Rider and Diane weist, amongst other minor stars that do not match the far more superior cast of Sleepy Hollow (Although this does not show a difference in class between the films). Narrative, the plot/story, is important in both films as it helps explain the movie and helps you to follow the film, genre however is different it is the category the film belongs to for example horror or sci-fi. These films both fall under the category of fantasy/horror, which has the conventions of having unbelievable characters and events plus scariness and some blood e.

g. a man with scissors for hands and a man with his head chopped off. Lighting in both films tends to be very dark and eerie, however Edward Scissor Hands has a very colourful town full of bright houses. Also we see some lighting on an evil looking pumpkin which again is a very evil and dangerous type of lighting, this shot alone sets the genre perfectly as a pumpkin is the stereotypical image of evil and is made worse with blood splattered on it. These dark colours create a very dark genre. However the town in Edward Scissor Hands is very bright which may suggest it has a black centre and that all is not as happy and nice as it seems (which is true when we see the big dark mansion on top of the hill on the border of the town).

Both films are mostly dark using colours like blacks, greys and very strong (blood) reds. Edward Scissor Hands also uses bright colours for the towns that are a total contrast to the big mansion where Edward is found by Peggy, together these bright and dark colours give the feeling of something not being right as there is something that doesn’t feel right about the colours and gives the impression of that the town is trying to hide something. The colours convey a spooky, unrealistic genre (fantasy) with the contrasting colours of blacks and blood reds (horror) it seems like a battle between good and evil. Dialogue in the opening five minutes of Sleepy Hollow is quite a high rate as oppose to Edward Scissor Hands where dialogue is not used as much and is more music based, in both films most dialogue in the opening five minutes are left to Johnny Depp but also small parts given to other actors including Christopher Lee.

Eerie music helps set the scene in both films, both are very creepy and sometimes spine chilling along with the images accompanying them, on the other hand Edward Scissor Hands has a more gentle fairytale like music but this is still very eerie. Most if not all the sound in the films is diagetic dialogue wise, however there is background music that is non-diagetic in the opening scenes of Edward Scissor Hands and plenty of sound bridges with horses and carts naying and trotting in Sleepy Hollow. All the backing music tends to be parallel and matching with the genre of the films (apart from the one I mentioned), all these points help to determine narrative and genre as the music tends to build up in a suspenseful way giving the clue to the film being creepy and not very cheerful. It’s a very good tool to use (backing music) as it helps with the story and determines what’s going to be exciting and what’s not, this all points to signs of a good film and a very exciting one. In these two films many types of shots are used for example point of view shot, long shot, low angle shot etc.

They also use movement for things like panning shots and crane shots, in Edward Scissor Hands we see a very effective point of view shot when “ the Avon lady” looks into her wing-mirror and sees the dark and scary mansion in a point of view shot. This is very effective as it makes you feel you’re inside the movie and get more feeling for the character and story. Another good type of shot and movement is in Sleepy Hollow when we see the drop red liquid (which has connotations of blood) we get an extreme close up of this red liquid and then we see that it is in fact wax to seal a letter. This early shot of the red liquid sets the genre and narrative perfectly as it gives us the horror feel due to the red wax we see, this tells us its going to be a horror genre and we later see the more fantasy side to the film as goes to investigate a very mysterious murder case in an evil fairytale like village. In Edward Scissor Hands that one shot I described previously shows genre and narrative and how it changes the mood in one split second, from happy to mysterious and unbelievable but scary at the same time.

Sleepy Hollow sets genre and narrative in the way that it uses extreme close ups, also using angles and shots which make us jump to assumptions about what’s happened without actually showing or telling us. The editing plays a big part in this as it in Sleepy Hollow cuts to another angle or another position so that violence is just out of the screen, therefore we can only guess what has happened in the murder or even if there has been a murder this way we are left not knowing the story until we here it later on in the film. Edward Scissor Hands has no violence on the level of Sleepy Hollow and the editing is very straightforward and lets the narrative/story flow freely through without us having to guess like sleepy hollow. Mise en-scene (costume, setting etc) is a big contribution to genre and narrative for instance if we didn’t use costume and props we wouldn’t know what era the film is set. Sleepy Hollow uses early guns, swords and horses therefore its set in the olden days (1700’s), Edward Scissor Hands has cars, machinery and modern clothes so we know it is in modern time early 90’s to be exact.

Even facial expression tells a lot like surprise or horror, body language also slumped, up right or relaxed tells a lot about the situation and story. They all convey genre and narrative through every part of mise en-scene like props e. g. fake blood and evil pumpkin in sleepy hollow gives the idea of horror and fantasy. The one main prop setting narrative is Edward’s Scissors and with out them it would just be Edward Hands (which for me doesn’t sound so appealing), things that you take for granted in films are very significant if really look closely enough at things you would usually question or even take notice of. In conclusion I think that genre and narrative is set in the two films through all these things, you can’t put it down to one shot, person or prop although they are all part of what it takes to set genre and narrative.

It comes down to sound (background music and dialogue), camera angles and shots(extreme close up or crane shots), mise en-scene(costumes, props or setting), lighting and colour(night/day, dark/bright). Because without just one of these things some films could be totally different, for example if Sleepy Hollow wasn’t set in the 1700’s the film would look weird with horses and funny clothes in the year 2000. Each aspect plays its part and each is as important as the others in the establishing of genre and narrative.