

# Movie analysis of "jaws" essay sample



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## **Movie Analysis of “ Jaws” Essay Sample**

Released in 1975, Jaws was probably one of the best adventure, action, and suspense films of that era. Directed by Steven Spielberg with the following starring main cast members Roy Scheider as “ Martin Brody” (chief police officer), Richard Dreyfuss as “ Matt Hooper” (marine biologist), Robert Shaw as “ Quint” (local fisherman), Murray Hamilton as “ Larry Vaughan” (town mayor). “ Jaws” the movie, is not like any other any other fish story. The film is about a gigantic 26 foot shark that has an appetite for people; how horrifying is that? The unusual story takes place on the seashores of Amity Island. When Chief Brody uncovers the partial body of a teenage girl with shark like bites, Chief Brody contacts a shark specialist to verify if the bite was from a shark. When Matt Hooper arrives and confirms that a large shark rendered the bite, Chief Brody begins to worry of the possibility that his beach has a man-eating shark lurking around the shorelines.

Chief Brody orders the beach to close for the fourth of July. Quickly learning about the unpleasant shark attack, the mayor immediately begins to panic and is concerned. The town will undoubtedly lose money from the profitable tourists if they were to find out about any shark attacks. Chief Brody knows that he needs to successfully find and kill the shark promptly, seeks the assistance of Quint. Quint is the only individual in town that has a large enough boat capable of trapping and capturing the shark. The mayor earlier turned down Quints’ initial request of 10, 000 dollars to capture the shark but given the unyielding circumstance he has no choice, he reluctantly agrees with the request. So, Quint, his boat called “ Orca”, the police chief,

and a scientist undertakes on a dangerous mission to hopefully find and kill the enormous shark.

Experts are constantly saying that sharks do not attack people. They say mistaken identity is the only explanation for an outright attack. A shark occasionally might strike a diver if the shark assumes that the divers' black suit is a delicious seal. The film definitely gives me an eerie feeling about going diving in ocean. How can anyone forget the theme sound for Jaws? All that is needed to receive a bone chill, is 2 low thumping strokes on the keys of the piano. The unique sound alone strikes fear in everyone's mind. Many people fear sharks and how quickly one can ingest a human body. The physical reality of swimming with sharks and watching Jaws will more than likely, keep me away from the beach for a very long time.

The movie Jaws utilizes a myriad of theatrical elements. APA requires use of a single space following ending punctuation when using a word processor. The setting of this thriller movie is in the fictional town of, Amity Island, located along the coast of New England. Realistically, most of the filming was done on and up to 12 miles outside of the shores of Martha's Vineyard, an island off the coast of Massachusetts. Steven Spielberg ultimately chose this location, because of the locales' sandy and unobstructed ocean floor. This type setting was needed to re-create the overall visual impression of being way off shore and far from reaching any immediate help. The same open water setting is used consistently throughout the movie, ultimately creating the movies' continual suspense. The setting was also needed so they would have plenty of room to operate the enormous shark.

The film took place around 1974 so the costumes and dress were complimentary to the items worn during that period. The costume or actual piece of equipment that is used a few times throughout the film is the divers' bodysuit. These are used to help keep them warm in the cool waters. But how does this help them against devastating shark bites? Using these suits adds to the intensity of the film because the viewers realize that at times they are only wearing a thin layer of neoprene to protect them from the sharks.

The acting cast played their roles very realistically. The movie entails the main character Martin Brody, to be the hero as well as, the small towns' fearless sheriff. His acts of heroism are acted out several times throughout the film. Of course, he also had his boat captain and a marine biologist along for the wild ride. This plays out to be a team-like environment, in which they contributed their different individual strengths towards the common goal; hunting down the massive man-eating shark.

This film also used countless props; however, there is truly only one that needs to be discussed, and goes by the name of Jaws. This massive great-white shark was a 26 foot mechanical beast. This enormous steel gutted fish was connected to a crane arm which allowed the shark to tread just underneath the surface of the water at a rapid rate. This gives the realistic feel of the amount of power this shark has; being able to swim at such rates of speed. This adds to the fright element of movie because we all know that big animals can be intimidating. Animals that are big and fast are even scarier. Animals that are big, fast, and hungry, are a force to be reckoned with.

The film, Jaws, uses a variety of different photographic techniques. Panning was used quite often in this movie to remind the viewer that they were a long distance from the shoreline. Additionally, plenty of filming was done underwater. This allowed the audience to get a realistic feel for the surrounding environment. The brilliant underwater imagery resulted with help from the naturally dark and chilling emptiness of the foreign ocean world. A notable climatic shot is towards the end of the movie when Martin Brody lines up on eye level one more time with the massive beast and takes his final shot. The low angle, gives the audience the feel of being right in the middle of the action. In addition, according to Spielberg, much of the movie was filmed using hand held cameras as opposed to conventional Hollywood movie cameras.

The movie " Jaws" was edited by Verna Fields, " She was affectionately named " Mother Cutter" by the Jaws crew because of her ability to cut film & the way she took care of the crew." In 1976 Verna Fields won three awards: an Oscar at the Academy Awards, an Eddie at the American Cinema Editors, USA and lastly, a British Academy of Film and Television arts Awards also known as a BAFTA for " Best Film Editing". A little trivia about Verna Fields, " She was such a brilliant editor, that she was actually promoted to a studio executive at Universal. Among her many accomplishments, she is one credited with introducing two young directors to each other while at Universal, their names: George Lucas and Steven Spielberg."

In " Jaws", Steven Spielberg would only get five shots done in a day, leaving Verna Fields never having enough film to cut. Verna Fields did not receive the film until the entire movie was finished being shot. From that day

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forward Steven Spielberg and Verna Fields worked on cutting the film at Verna's home until they were finished. The editing technique that is used throughout the movie is outside/inside editing. The audience always knows where one is at throughout the film. For example when Brody, Quint, and Mr. Hooper are aboard the Orca searching for the shark, the shot starts with an overhead view of the water and off in the distance the viewer will see the shark fin pop out of the water.

The viewer will see the fin heading towards the boat more rapidly until the shark attacks the boat in trying to get to the men aboard. The viewer is always aware whether the scene takes place on beach shores or in the middle of the ocean. The splicing together of the film is done almost seamlessly. There are not many scenes where the film does not flow together perfectly. This technique is very important when viewing a film as nobody likes to watch a movie that has unnecessary pauses or glitches. "Cutting film is really very much a matter of feeling and rhythm, and a cut that is off rhythm will be disturbing and you will feel it."(Fields).

The sound and music contribute to the effectiveness of the movie by allowing us to be drawn into a scene and kept in suspense. APA requires use of a single space following ending punctuation when using a word processor.]Jaws music, and the sound that is played right before Jaws attacks is very famous. APA requires use of a single space following ending punctuation when using a word processor.]When we all here this music in the back ground we know exactly what is about to happen. APA requires use of a single space following ending punctuation when using a word processor.

That is not saying much for the suspense in the movie, in fact, the suspense is taken right out of the movie. As we sit in our seat watching this movie and this song is played we all know exactly what is about to occur. How is Jaws going to attack this time? Still to this day scares me. John Williams once again has done an outstanding job with the music in this movie, and won an academy award for the music in Jaws. " John Williams is with a doubt the most popular and widely-heard composer of music for orchestra in the world, having written the music for films such as Star Wars, Saving Private Ryan, Schindler's List, Jurassic Park, the Indiana Jones trilogy, E. T., The Extra-Terrestrial, Close Encounter, of the Third Kind, Jaws, and many more."

When I sit here and close my eyes an image comes to mind. I see Mr. Hooper diving below the boat the first time he took Chief Brody for a day at sea, and Mr. Hooper is looking below a stranded boat in the middle of the ocean. Mr. Hooper takes his flash light and is looking at a hole below the boat when suddenly a dead body comes floating out. At this point I could have jumped right out of my seat. Something else comes to mind when I close my eyes that are worse then seeing the blood and gore that was in this film and that would be the music in the back ground that we all hear right before Jaws attacks. " During the summer of 1975, North American beaches were quieter than usual. This wasn't the result of concern over the damaging rays of the sun is; nor was it due to poor weather. Beaches were poorly attended because people were scared. The specter of Jaws was enough to keep them away - providing as ringing an endorsement as a horror/thriller film could ever receive.'" I think still to this day we are still afraid of the ocean in fear that there is a " great white" out there ready to attack at any given time.

If I were writing Steven Spielberg the director of this film " Jaws" I would let him know that I was not allowed to watch this film when I was a small child. As an adult viewer of this film I can not say I would allow my five-year-old daughter to watch it. This film did receive 13 nominations and out of those 13 they won 6. Academy – 1975 Best Editing, win, Best Original Score, win, Best Sound, win, Best Picture, nominated. American film Institute – 1998, 100 Greatest American Movies, win, British Academy Awards – 1975 Best Film, Nominated. Also Directors Guild of America – 1975 Best Director, nominated, Golden Globe -1975 Best Director, nominated, Best Original Score, win Best Picture – Drama, nominated, and Best Screenplay nominated. In 2001 Jaws was also nominated once again for the Library of Congress, U. S. National Film Registry and won. Peo – 1976, Best Film, nominated.

" For a film in the 70's I can not believe how much blood and gore that was in this film. Some of the scenes did, in fact, get graphic." For example when Chief Brody was flipping through old shark attack stories they showed people with their legs cut off, chunks taken right out of the side of one guy, and just plain old mangled humans. All in all I thought the film because it was filmed in the 70's and here I sit in 2005 watching this film again almost for the first time it still scared me and I enjoy that about a movie. I also learned something from this film. I learned exactly how many different sharks there are out there in the ocean. There are Tiger sharks, Hammerheads, White Tips, Blue Mako, and The Great White. One of the most interesting things I found from this film is that fact that Jaws was this huge great white that looked so real to the eye but was just a mechanical shark.



As a team, we have come to the consensus that this film would appeal to anyone who takes a liking to movies in any of the action/thriller/suspense categories. Steven Spielberg did an excellent job orchestrating such a phenomenal task; putting together a blockbuster man-eating shark film.

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