

How to analyze a feature film

1. What was this film about?
2. Almost every feature film has a conflict of some sort. What's the major conflict in this film?
3. Who are the key characters in the film?
4. What do the various characters represent? For example:
 - Powerful or powerless
 - Rich or poor
 - In-group or out-group
 - In-the-know or clueless
5. How are these traits portrayed and/or developed throughout the film?
6. Are there symbols used in the film? If so, what are they and what do they represent?

The Satire Part

7. What type of satire is most present in this film—Horatian or Juvenalian? Note that both may be used, so be specific.
8. Who or what is the intended target of the satire? (a person, a group of people, an organization, an idea)
9. What are the most prevalent techniques of satire found in the film.

Satirical Techniques

- **Parody**—A composition that imitates the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular work, or the distinctive style of its maker, and applies the imitation to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject. Often a parody is more powerful in its influence on affairs of current importance—politics for instance—than its original composition. It is a variety of burlesque.
- **Exaggeration**—To enlarge, increase, or represent something beyond normal bounds so that it becomes ridiculous and its faults can be seen.
- **Irony**—Saying one thing and meaning another.

- **Hyperbole**—To over exaggerate the situation beyond its normal bounds, so it becomes ridiculous. Example: “I’m so hungry I could eat a horse.”
- **Incongruity**—To present things that are out of place or absurd.
- **Reversal**— To present the opposite of the normal order and/or the order of events, hierarchical order. Example: Fiona saves Shrek (women are supposed to be damsels, not men).
- **Sarcasm**— is stating the opposite of an intended meaning especially in order to sneeringly, slyly, jest or mock a person, situation or thing. Example: Saying “You’re welcome,” after the other person failed to say “Thank you.”
- **Juxtaposition**— an act or instance of placing close together or side by side, esp. for comparison or contrast. Example: Humanitarians—Brittney Spears and Mother Teresa
- **Double Entendre (pun)**—A play on words; a word or expression capable of two interpretations with one usually risqué. Example: In an episode of *The Simpsons*, when Marge was about to board a ship to Skull Island, Smithers said “I think women and seamen don’t mix.”
- **Understatement**—Like hyperbole, this is a type of exaggeration. Can be used to make a situation or idea seem less important than it really is. Example: There is a hurricane at your vacation home and there is most likely severe damage to the house. You say, "At least the plants will get watered."
- **Invective** – harsh, an abusive language directed against a person or a cause.
- **Caricature** – a person’s features may be caricatured. Caricature in art or in literature is an exaggerated representation of a character.

Your final critique

10. What did you like about the film?
11. What did you not like about the film?
12. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being best) how would you rate this film as an example of satire?