

CASABLANCA

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FILM STUDY GUIDE SERIES

COMPARATIVE
STUDY
SUPPLEMENT

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**NOTES FOR THE IRISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE ENGLISH COURSE
to supplement**

***Casablanca - Student's Explorations* by Seán Conlan M.A., H. Dip. Ed.
available from Amazon/Kindle, Google Books and Apple
Books**

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE SERIES

This Study Guide has been designed with the Leaving Certificate English Syllabus in mind. Film is one option in the Comparative Study. The Guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science to all English teachers indicate that there are three stages involved for each text chosen for this section of the course:

- Stage One: Reading the whole text for the story.
- Stage Two: Re-reading key moments for study in one of the prescribed modes.
- Stage Three: Re-reading key moments for comparison in the other two prescribed modes.

For the first stage they recommend that the text should be read over a two to three week period. The teacher is advised to set assignments that will guide the student's reading and highlight features of the text. They also recommend that students should keep a Response Journal as a record of how they have engaged with the text during this reading.

The method laid out in this *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* by Seán Conlan, referred to above, facilitates Stage One of this approach. These supplementary notes facilitate Stages Two and Three.

Comparative Modes for the Leaving Certificate Examination

Higher Level

- Theme or Issue
- Cultural Context
- General Vision and Viewpoint
- Literary Genre

Ordinary Level

- Hero/Heroine/Villain
- Social Setting
- Theme
- Aspects of Story: Tension or Climax or Resolution
- Relationships

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY – SUMMARY

STAGE ONE - The important thing at this stage is to read for story. Once you have gone through the film sequence by sequence and kept your Response Journal, you have completed the first stage of the Comparative Study.

STAGE TWO - In this second stage you have to re-read key moments from *Casablanca* in a specific mode. Check the prescribed modes for your examination year. Choose one of the modes prescribed for your course. Select a number of key moments - scenes or group of scenes (a sequence) in which this mode features prominently. A maximum of five key moments should be sufficient. Re-read these moments in detail with aspects of this mode in mind. Keep notes.

Now you could write up your notes as an essay, e.g. “The Theme of Relationships in *Casablanca*”. This essay will form the basis of any work you do later with the other texts for the Comparative Study in this mode. You will then be using *Casablanca* as an **anchor text** for this mode and you will look for key moments in those texts that are **similar to** or **different from** the points you’ve made about *Casablanca* in this essay.

STAGE THREE - When you have another text completed to this second stage in another mode you can return to *Casablanca* and re-read key moments, for comparison. You should do likewise with the third text. This is the third stage in the Comparative Study and three or four key moments from the film for each mode should be more than enough. You will find that some of the key moments you have chosen will do for more than one mode. The opening and closing scenes will probably fit all purposes. You will now have notes for three comparative modes across three texts, one the anchor text and the other two for comparison.

YOUR COMPARATIVE STUDY FOLDER

You might keep a separate Comparative Study Folder for each of the three modes. You will build up a collection of notes on your study of your three texts in this mode. Each folder will have three parts:

- Part One: The Response Journal for your first text
- Part Two: Notes on the key moments from this text (the anchor text)
- Part Three: Notes on the key moments from your second text - Notes on the key moments from your third text.

There follows here a number of suggestions as to how you might re-visit *Casablanca* in the prescribed modes. Each section deals with the question: *What do I need to cover as I re-read key moments from the film in this mode?*

ORDINARY LEVEL - COMPARATIVE MODE: HERO/HEROINE/VILLAIN

Choose one of these roles for this mode e.g. 'Hero'. This term refers to the main good male character in a text - in this case Rick. Over the course of three days in December 1941 Rick's life is turned upside down by his acceptance of the letters of transit and the arrival of a woman with whom he has had a whirlwind romance a year and a half earlier in Paris. He was jilted by his lover on the day the Germans entered Paris and now hides the pain he feels. He has established himself as a stand-offish but very efficient and successful saloon-keeper in Casablanca. In Sequence 1 Ugarte uses the word cynical to describe him. Later Capt. Renault refers to his cynical shell and also accuses him of being a sentimentalist. As the story unfolds we see Rick going from a position where he says he sticks his neck out for nobody to one where Capt. Renault refers to him as a "patriot" because he sacrifices his whole way of life for the cause of freedom.

Choose three or four key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that show how Rick deals with situations that face him as he re-discovers his idealism.

Get familiar with these key moments by watching them again.

Check the notes in your Response Journal for these key moments.

Answer all the questions in *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* that deal with Rick in these key moments.

For each key moment ask yourself questions like:

What stage is Rick at as this key moment starts?

Does any change come over Rick in the course of this key moment?

What kind of a person is Rick?

Is there any change in my opinion of Rick as a result of what he says or does in this key moment?

What is motivating Rick in this key moment?

What is Rick's attitude to the other characters in this key moment?

How does Rick relate to the other characters in this key moment?

What is the attitude of the other characters to Rick in this key moment?

Imagery

For each key moment ask yourself:

How is the discourse (*mise en scène*, camera, editing and sound) used to show Rick in this key moment?

What impression of Rick does the discourse invite us to form?

Are these cinematic codes simply getting the story across or can some features be read as a metaphor, or a symbol?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. What examples of repetition can you spot in the key moments you have chosen? Do they form a pattern? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on the film audience's view of the hero?

Irony

Irony has to do with appearance and reality in language and/or action. A plot might take an ironic twist and surprise us. We might know more about a situation than characters involved in the action - dramatic irony. This can have the effect of drawing the audience into the text, almost, as it has a fuller view than a character or characters in the narrative. Both of these uses of irony happen quite a lot in *Casablanca*. Note the references to irony you made in your Response Journal for the key moments you have chosen. What effect has this on the way we view the hero in the key moments you have chosen?

**ORDINARY LEVEL - COMPARATIVE MODE:
ASPECTS OF STORY TENSION or CLIMAX or RESOLUTION**

This Comparative Mode has to do with Narrative - the telling of a story. You are being asked to examine **ONE** of the above aspects of how the story is told. So choose Tension or Climax or Resolution. You'll find that the first two aspects of story-telling are very closely linked. Resolution covers those points in a story when a problem or conflict between characters or sets of characters is solved or brought to a conclusion. This conclusion can sometimes be just a temporary one if it happens in the course of the movie. The most important resolution will probably come at the very end of the story. Traditionally a strong sense of closure is part of our story-telling culture. All the loose ends that occur in the course of the plot are tied up.

An important point for consideration in this mode is the way the film audience is being positioned by the director to take a certain view of the characters, setting and action in any particular scene. This manipulation of the film audience can be achieved by the camera and/or the soundtrack, or by other cinematic codes. You should have plenty of details of the way the director uses cinematic discourse - *mise en scène*, camera, editing and sound - in your Response Journal at this point. You should examine these cinematic codes to see what effect the director is trying to have on the film audience in each of your key moments.

What you need to do in re-reading the film in this mode is to choose a number of key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that show one of the above modes very clearly. Make a selection of two or three key moments that are very strong on **tension**, or that build up to a moment of **climax**, or that show how some problem that arises in the course of the film is sorted out (**resolution**).

Get familiar with the key moments you have chosen by watching them again to see how the tension, for example, is built up.

Consult your Response Journal and the answers you gave to the questions relating to these key moments when you watched the film through.

Answer all the questions in *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* that deal with tension in the key moments you have chosen.

For each key moment ask yourself questions like:

How does the dialogue add to the tension in this key moment?

Does the camerawork increase the tension?

Is the lighting used in a way that adds tension to this key moment?

Is the focus used in any distinctive way to add to the tension?

How does the editing contribute to the build-up of tension? Is the cutting fast or slow or varying?

Does the choreography - the movement of the characters across the set - add to the tension in this key moment?

How does the musical score add to the build-up of tension in this key moment?

When is the tension at its highest in this key moment?

Imagery

Are the cinematic codes simply getting the story across or do some features, e.g. lighting, setting,

props, position in the frame, take on extra symbolic significance in the key moments you have chosen?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. What examples of repetition can you spot in the key moments you have chosen? Do they form a pattern? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on the film audience? How does it affect the tension?

Irony

Irony has to do with appearance and reality in language and/or action. A plot might take an ironic twist and surprise us. We might know more about a situation than characters involved in the action - dramatic irony. This can have the effect of drawing the audience into the text, almost, as it has a fuller view than a character or characters in the narrative. Both of these uses of irony happen quite a lot in *Casablanca*. Note the references to irony you made in your Response Journal for the key moments you have chosen. How does it affect the tension?

ORDINARY & HIGHER LEVELS - COMPARATIVE MODE: THEME/ISSUE

Choose a theme/issue that is central to this film and to your two other texts for the Comparative Study. Prominent themes in *Casablanca* include:

Being true to oneself
Conflict
Freedom/Oppression
Imperialism
The Power of Love
Patriotism/Being Noble/Self-sacrifice
Secrets

What you need to do in re-reading the film in this mode is to choose three to five key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) which feature your theme.

Check the notes in your Response Journal for these key moments.

Get familiar with the key moments you have chosen by watching them again, answering all the questions in *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* that deal with this theme in each of the key moments you have chosen.

For each key moment ask yourself questions like:

How is the theme introduced in this key moment?
How is the theme developed in this key moment?
How does the action advance the theme in this key moment?
How does the behaviour of the characters advance the theme?

Imagery

What images are used to illustrate the theme in this key moment? Do they form a pattern over the course of the film?
Are the cinematic codes simply getting the theme across or do some aspects take on a symbolic role?
Does the positioning of the characters in the frame act as a symbol of some aspect of the theme?
What effect has the editing on the development of the theme?
How does the musical score reflect on the theme?
How are we being positioned by the director to view this theme?
How does the setting reflect on the theme in this key moment?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. Is repetition of any sort used to emphasise the theme in the key moments you have chosen? Does a pattern emerge? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on the theme's development?

**ORDINARY & HIGHER LEVELS - COMPARATIVE MODE:
(SAMPLE THEME/ISSUE): RELATIONSHIPS**

To re-read *Casablanca* in this mode you will need to choose a number of key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that feature one of the sets of relationships in the story. The last line of dialogue refers to the friendship between Capt. Renault and Rick. You could examine the relationship between these two characters and follow how they both come to find the power to act nobly and serve a cause greater than themselves. Rick's relationship with Ilsa would also be suitable for this mode. Rick's relationship with Laszlo could be viewed as a metaphor for the role of the United States in WWII - it tried to remain isolationist but eventually joined the struggle against Nazi aggression.

Choose three to five key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that feature your chosen relationship in a prominent way.

Re-read your Response Journal notes for these key moments.

Get familiar with the key moments you have chosen by watching them again, answering all the questions in *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* on the characters involved in the relationship in these key moments.

As you watch each key moment again, ask yourself questions like:

- What kind of a relationship is this?
- What drives the relationship in this key moment?
- What is motivating each party in the relationship at this point?
- What does each party want from the relationship in this key moment?
- Are there any changes in the relationship in this key moment?
- What effect has the relationship on each party in this key moment?
- What effect has the relationship on the action in this key moment?

Imagery

- Are the cinematic codes simply getting details of the relationship across or do some features e.g. costume, editing etc. take on a symbolic role in this key moment?
- How are we being positioned by the camera and/or the musical score to view this relationship?
- Do aspects of the setting work on a symbolic level in this key moment?
- Do any of the props take on a symbolic role in this key moment?
- How is the lighting used in this key moment?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. What examples of repetition can you spot in the key moments you have chosen? Do they form a pattern? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on our view of the relationship?

ORDINARY & HIGHER LEVELS - COMPARATIVE MODES: SOCIAL SETTING/CULTURAL CONTEXT

This mode refers to the world of the text:

- what kind of **people** live in this world?
- what sense of **place** is built up and how is this achieved?
- in what period of history is it set (**time**)?

To re-read the film in this mode you should choose a number of key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that feature the world of *Casablanca*. You need to examine the power structures, attitude and values, rituals and customs of the people who inhabit this world - the **ethos** of their society. All the action of this film is set in Casablanca. This city is a mirror image of all aspects of the war that engulfs Europe. The globe at the start of the film shows Europe in three shades: the bright shade stands for the Allies and for those countries that remain neutral or are unoccupied by the Nazis; the gray denotes that part of France that is being governed from Vichy, and the dark shade stands for the Nazis, their allies and the territories they have occupied.

Choose three to five key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that highlight features of the world of *Casablanca*. Examine them by asking yourself what we learn about them under various headings, e.g. structures, values, manners, morals, lifestyle, occupation, attitudes etc.

Get familiar with the key moments you have chosen by watching them again and answer all the questions in *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* that relate to the social setting/cultural context in these key moments.

Consult the notes in your Response Journal for your chosen key moments.

People

There are several groups of people in Casablanca: the Germans who are presented in an unsympathetic light as brutal aggressors; the refugees from occupied Europe who are trying to flee to the freedom of America to escape the tyranny of The Third Reich; the members of the resistance and, finally, those who take advantage of people in a cynical way, profiting from the misfortune of others. You could look at the people in Rick's world as being selfish or self-less, as serving themselves or serving a cause. Some people say they are helping others but are really lining their own pockets. Others are doing as much as they can for others. Make a list of the main characters under the headings 'self-serving' and 'serving a cause'. Does anyone cross from one group to the other in the course of the film?

For each key moment ask yourself questions like:

- What kind of people appear in this key moment?
- Who has power in this key moment?
- What is this power based on?
- How is this power used?
- What values do these people see as important?
- How do these people behave towards each other?
- Do all these people act in the same way?
- What quality of life have the people in this world?
- What is the attitude of the people in this world to Rick?
- Would you have respect for these people? Why?

Place

This film is set in Casablanca. The airport features at the beginning and at the end. Almost all the action of this film takes place in or just outside Rick's *Café Américain*. Some of the action takes place in The Blue Parrot and in Capt. Renault's office. How are these settings presented to us? How are we being invited to view them? Are there differences between the various settings? Have they anything in common?

For each key moment ask yourself questions like:

- What are the main features of this place?
- What goes on here?
- Who has power here?
- What is the atmosphere like here?
- How suitable is this place for what goes on in it?
- How are we being invited to view this world?
- Would you like to live in this kind of a world?

Time

In the key moments you have chosen what indications are there that this film is set in WWII.

Imagery

- How is the *mise en scène*, costume, camera, lighting, dialogue and editing used to get the world of the film across to us?
- How are we, the film audience, positioned by the camerawork, lighting and sound to view this world?
- Do aspects of the setting act on a symbolic level in this key moment?
- Do any of the props take on a symbolic role in this key moment?
- How is the lighting used in this key moment?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. What examples of repetition can you spot in the key moments you have chosen? Do they form a pattern? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on our view of the world of the film?

HIGHER LEVEL - COMPARATIVE MODE: LITERARY GENRE

To re-read *Casablanca* in this mode you need to concentrate on what kind of a film it is (its **genre**) and how the director manages the cinematic codes to get the story across (its **discourse**). The latter is the more important aspect for this mode.

GENRE

You should consider what genre the film represents. Is it a War Film, a Thriller, a Comedy, a Drama, a Romance, Science Fiction etc.? Think of two or three other texts like this one and compare them under such headings as: story line, plot situations, characters, setting, closure (i.e. how the story ends - a happy-ever-after ending, an open ending etc.) and narrative style (realism, romance, fantasy). How does *Casablanca* compare with the texts you have chosen? Is this film typical of just one genre or is it a mixture of genres? This film is clearly the story of Rick re-discovering a sense of the kind of person he really is. It is also a love story. In Classic Comedy lovers who have been separated in the course of the story are re-united at the end and “live happy ever after”. Is that the case in this film? Rick ends the film as a romantic hero, someone who sacrifices all he has to help others but ends up apart from those he has helped and heading off to his next adventure.

DISCOURSE

You should have plenty of details of the various aspects of the cinematic codes (*mise en scène*, camera, editing and sound) in your Response Journal at this point.

Now make your selection of four or five key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) that feature details of how *Casablanca* manages its discourse.

Re-read your Response Journal notes for these key moments.

Answer all the questions from *Casablanca - Student's Explorations* relating to the cinematic codes in the key moments you have chosen.

Narrative Structure

The narrative of *Casablanca* consists of three strands:

the main plot:	Rick, Ilsa and the letters of transit
the flashback:	Rick and Ilsa in Paris
the sub-plot:	Annina and Jan.

Very often in our stories a world is introduced at the start. Something happens to disrupt the order of this world. After various attempts order is restored. The pattern that emerges is:

Equilibrium - Disruption - Attempts at Restoration of Order - New Equilibrium.

Can this model be applied to *Casablanca*? At a crucial time in Rick's life we meet him and follow his progress as he meets situations and people that challenge him to question the type of man he has become. His journey to self-knowledge provides the narrative structure of the film. The main action of the film happens over just three days in early December 1941. The original order of Rick's new life in Casablanca is disrupted by the arrival of the letters of transit and Ilsa. In a flashback sequence we learn of the affair Rick had with her. As the story develops we see Rick losing the hard cynical shell he has built up around himself in response to the hurt he feels after being ‘jilted’ by Ilsa in Paris on the day the German army marched into the city (June 14th 1940). The film ends with the image of Rick heading into the darkness, into hiding, as he chats with Capt. Renault about going to the Free French garrison in Brazzaville. Both men seem to be intent on joining forces and helping in

the effort of resistance against the might of Nazi aggression.

Positioning of the Film Audience

Another thing to be considered in this mode is the way the film audience is positioned by the director to take a certain view of a character or of what is going on in any particular scene. This positioning of the film audience can be achieved by the camera, by the musical score on the soundtrack, or by other means e.g. fast or slow editing. An example of how the audience is positioned to take a certain view of a character is the long close-up of Ilsa as Sam plays for her. She is filmed in soft focus and lit in a way that emphasises her beauty and increases her appeal. Are we being invited to favour certain characters over others? Are some characters being shown in a bad light? How is this achieved?

Mise en scène and Camera

How are the characters presented in this sequence? What is the director's purpose in presenting them in this way? How is the camera used in this sequence? Is there a significant use of lighting effects? How is the soundtrack being used? Pay special attention to the imagery in the scenes you are re-reading. Can you come up with metaphorical readings of the sets and props in this sequence?

Humour

There are many examples of humour in the film. Humour can be found in the **characters** themselves, in their **appearance**, in their **language**, in the **situations** they find themselves in, and in **discourse** (the way the action is presented to us, e.g. editing, repetition, framing for comic effect). One such situation is when Capt. Renault says he is shocked to find gambling taking place in Rick's café only to find the croupier approaching him with his winnings!

Irony

Irony has to do with appearance and reality in language and/or action. A plot might take an ironic twist and surprise us. We might know more about a situation than characters involved in the action - dramatic irony. This can have the effect of drawing the audience into the text, almost, as it has a fuller view than a character or characters in the narrative. Both of these uses of irony happen quite a lot in *Casablanca*. Note the references to irony you made in your Response Journal for the key moments you have chosen. How is irony used in the telling of the story?

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, action, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. Look back at your Response Journal and make a note of any such examples of repetition in the key moments you have chosen. What affect has this repetition on the way we see the characters, action or theme involved? Is there a pattern in the repetition?

Closure

There is a strong tendency to closure in the story-telling of our culture. All loose ends are tied up and order is restored to the world of the story. Is the ending of this film in accordance with this convention? Is the original order restored? Has the film an open ending or are the tensions raised in the course of the narrative resolved, closed off, before the end of the story? Is the ending hopeful or despairing? Does the ending show any aspect of the film in a new light? How does the ending relate to the opening of the film? Does the ending confirm or change the opinion you've formed of any of the characters? Is the ending the final detail in a pattern that has been developing in the course of the film? Does it suggest a new order?

HIGHER LEVEL - COMPARATIVE MODE: GENERAL VISION AND VIEWPOINT

This mode can be summarised in the following way: How does the **Director** use the **Discourse** to position the **Film Audience** to take a particular **View** of certain **Values, Actions** and/or **Characters** encountered in the Text?

To re-read *Casablanca* in this mode you need to re-visit a number of key moments (i.e. scenes or sequences) concentrating on three things: the director, the text and the film audience. You need to examine the overall feeling this text leaves the audience with and how the director manages the discourse, i.e. how the director uses the cinematic codes, to inspire that feeling in the audience. To get the general vision and viewpoint you need to ask about the choices the director has made at different points in the film. What patterns have been set up? Are we, the film audience, being invited to view different characters in different ways? What aspects of the world of the text have been chosen for special emphasis? What is the purpose behind these choices? What world-view is suggested by these choices?

The Director

What you need to consider here is the general view of the director as it is implied in the text. What is the attitude of the director to the different characters in the story? How does he want the film audience to view these people? Are all the characters presented to us in the same light? Does the tone vary or is it consistent throughout the film? What purpose lies behind the particular selection of detail each scene? Does any pattern emerge? Has the film an optimistic or pessimistic feel?

The Text

To begin with you should consider what genre the film represents. On one level this film is a drama that tells a story of how a man turns bitter after a failed love affair. His old flame comes back into his life and he learns the full story of why she left him. He re-captures the love they once had but makes a noble sacrifice when he realises just how important his old love is to the work of her actual husband. The film tugs at the heartstrings of the audience. It can also be read as an allegory of the way the United States maintained an isolationist stance with regard to the war in Europe. The discourse of the time is referenced several times in the dialogue with remarks like “wise foreign policy” and “second front”.

The Film Audience

Another thing to be considered in this mode is the way the film audience is being positioned by the director to take a certain view of the characters, locations and action in any particular scene. This manipulation of the film audience can be achieved by the camera or the soundtrack or by other cinematic codes. You should have plenty of details of the way the director uses the discourse - *mise en scène*, camera, lighting, editing and sound - in your Response Journal at this point. These cinematic codes should be examined to see what effect the director is trying to have on the film audience in each of your key moments.

Now make your selection of four or five key moments (scenes or sequences) that feature this mode prominently. Introductions and exits, opening and closing sequences will be important for this mode.

Check the notes in your Response Journal for these sequences. Answer all the questions from

Casablanca - Student's Explorations relating to the General Vision and Viewpoint in these key moments.

Narrative Point of View

A story is told from a certain point of view. The narrative point of view used in this film is third person, objective. The camera stands outside the action, looking in at it. Are we being invited to favour certain characters over others? Are certain characters being shown in a bad light?

Mise en Scène and Camera

How are the characters and locations introduced and presented in this sequence? What is the director's purpose in presenting them in this way? How is the camera used in this sequence? How is the lighting used in this sequence? Can you come up with metaphorical readings of the sets and props in this sequence? Have any changes come over the setting in this sequence? Note how each character is presented as we see him/her for the last time.

Repetition

A director may repeat dialogue, actions, camera angles, music etc. for a number of reasons. What examples of repetition can you detect in this sequence? Do they form a pattern? What is the director's purpose in such repetition? What effect has it on the film audience's view of the characters and action?

Irony

Irony has to do with appearance and reality in language and/or action. A plot might take an ironic twist and surprise us. We might know more about a situation than characters involved in the action - dramatic irony. This can have the effect of drawing the audience into the text, almost, as it has a fuller view than a character or characters in the narrative. Both of these uses of irony happen quite a lot in *Casablanca*. What examples of irony can you find in this sequence? What effect has it on the film audience's view of the characters and action?

Closure

This is a very important detail in trying to assess the overall vision and viewpoint. Has the film an open ending or are the tensions raised in the course of the narrative resolved, closed off, before the end of the story? Is the ending hopeful or despairing? Does the ending show any aspect of the film in a new light? How does the ending relate to the opening of the film? Does the ending confirm or change the opinion you've formed of any of the characters? Is the ending the final detail in a pattern that has been developing in the course of the film? Is the ending symbolic?