

# Preparing for your

## HL COMPARATIVE STUDY

### *A guide to planning, researching and creating your Film Comparative Study*

#### STEPS for this TASK:

1. **Brainstorm** topics and ideas
  - a. What are your favorite films? Film scenes? film characters? film directors, etc.? Create a mind map or any other brainstorm of these.
  - b. Look at these ideas and look for connections and similarities. Consider genre, production team, style, or cultural context.
2. **Brainstorm** about why you're HLing in IB Film
  - a. What interests you most about film?
  - b. What types of films do you enjoy watching?
3. **Brainstorm** possible films for the task. You must select TWO films from contrasting cultural contexts.
4. **Brainstorm and justify** different areas of FILM FOCUS that you could research, study, and analyze for the films on your list.
5. **Brainstorm and justify** the CULTURAL CONTEXTS stand out to you for the films on your list.
6. **Consolidate your brainstorming** -- identify films, areas of film focus, and cultural contexts that stand out in your brainstorming.
7. **Develop** at least three different RESEARCH QUESTION topics for your study.
8. **Conduct** preliminary research on these questions as a means to assess which is the strongest for you to develop into a Comparative study.
9. **Create a** bibliography of your films and preliminary research
10. Prepare this planning document and your bibliography to share with me in your Comparative Study Inquiry Conference.

#### Comparative Study task components

For this assessment task, each student identifies, selects and researches each of the following **task components**.

1. One area of **film focus**.
2. Two films for comparison from within the chosen area of **film focus**, one of which originates from a contrasting time (historical) or space (geographical) to the personal context of the student, and the other film identified for comparison must arise from a contrasting **cultural context** to the first film. Students are required to select films they have not previously studied in depth. The selected films cannot come from the prescribed list of film texts provided for the textual analysis assessment task and, once selected, the films cannot be used by the student in any other assessment task for the DP film course or the extended essay.
3. A clearly defined topic for a recorded multimedia comparative study, which links both the selected films and the identified area of **film focus**. Each student should invest time in researching, developing and honing their topic (which in most cases is likely to be expressed in the form of a research question) to ensure it is clear, focused and concise, in order to provide them with the maximum potential for success in this task. The topic should seek to enrich the student's understanding of the chosen area of film focus and should avoid a plot-driven approach to comparison.

## 1. FILM Choices List

<p>Which films are you considering for your Comparative Study? List as many as you wish below as part of an initial brainstorm. Remember that you must select <u>TWO</u> films from contrasting cultural contexts for this task.</p> <p>e.g. CITIZEN KANE</p>	<p>Year, Country and Director of the film.</p> <p>e.g. 1941, USA, Dir: Orson Welles</p>

*Add more rows if you need to!*

## 2. Areas of FILM FOCUS

<p>Film Focus Possibility - identify the broad focus area and then add specifics (e.g. "THEORY - Auteur theory" or "GENRE - Horror"). Develop at least THREE options...you can create more by adding more rows.</p>	<p>Justification for this Film Focus. Be as specific as possible.</p>

## 3. Chosen CULTURAL CONTEXT

For this assessment task, "cultural context" involves consideration of some of the following factors, some of which may be blended (such as socio-economic factors).

Economic	Geographical	Historical	Institutional
Political	Social	Technological	

[Here are some details and questions](#) about the possible cultural contexts you can choose for this task.

<p>Identify at least TWO Cultural Context possibilities for your chosen films.</p>	<p>Justification for this Cultural Context. Be as specific as possible.</p>

## 4. RESEARCH QUESTION Possibilities

Consolidate your thoughts above and develop at least **THREE** different research question possibilities. More are possible by adding additional rows to the table below. FYI these will be shared with the full class for discussion of strengths and weaknesses.

Your Chosen Area of Film Focus	Topic for Comparative Study (written as a research question)

## 5. Final Decisions

Using your topic options in the table above, select **ONE** to be your final topic for this Comparative Study task. NOTE: There are examples from the IB of what this should look like below this table.

Your Chosen Area of Film Focus	Film 1	Film 2	Contrasting Cultural Context	Topic for Comparative Study practice task (written as a research question)

## 6. Developing Your Topic

Develop 3-5 main arguments that can be made about your topic based on your research question and chosen film focus.	Brainstorm how you could support these arguments within your video essay.

## 7. Selecting Supporting Evidence (Primary)

Identify at least 15 scenes from your chosen films that will help support the arguments you have outlined above. Screen clip a frame from each scene below.	Write notes about how this scene helps support your argument. (These notes will help form your voice over narration.)



## Examples of possible task components (from the IB)

The table below outlines some examples of possible **task components** that students could feasibly consider for this assessment task. These examples are for guidance only and are neither prescriptive nor restrictive.

Area of film focus	Film 1	Film 2	Possible topic for comparative study
Film movement: German expressionism	<i>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> (1920)	<i>Edward Scissorhands</i> (1990)	How and with what effect are specific film elements of German expressionism used within a chosen contemporary film?
Film movement: French New Wave	<i>Breathless</i> (1960)	<i>Badlands</i> (1973)	The influence of the French New Wave on New Hollywood's use of innovative film elements in its representation of youth and violence.
Film genre and film style: Black comedy	<i>No. 3</i> (1997)	<i>The Big Lebowski</i> (1998)	To what extent do "black comedy" films differ according to cultural context?
Film theory: Soviet montage	<i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (1925)	<i>Koyaanisqatsi</i> (1982)	To what extent are specific features of Soviet montage theory faithfully employed in a contemporary experimental film?