

# Movies and Their Uses

(arranged alphabetically by movie title)

This is a list of some titles that might be helpful for illustrating a point or two about close reading. Some entries below explain which parts of the movie you should look for, but even those that don't specify "the last ten minutes" or "the opening credits" or "the part right after the mud scene" still should not be used in their entirety. Use PARTS of these movies, or of any movie, to illustrate a particular point... and then move on.

## 300

foreshadowing, POV, suspense, protag/antag, symbolism, mythology, allusion

## The Abyss

Freytag's Pyramid (sort of in reverse because the character is in the most peril when he is at the deepest place in the ocean)

## Breakfast Club

characterization, suspense, irony

## Chronicles of Narnia

allegory, symbolism, setting, character, archetypes

## Cinema Paradiso

flashback, coming of age, characterization, setting

## Day After Tomorrow

rising water=rising action, suspense, etc.

## Dead Poets' Society

characterization, apostrophe ("O Captain! My Captain!"), compare the learning that happens in the classroom to the learning that happens in their secret society,

Don't overlook the power of these exhilarating scenes in which kids are REALLY learning, learning REAL things.

## Diary of Anne Frank (1959)—opening scenes, filmed in Anne's actual house in Amsterdam

Show how small it is and cramped it was.

Show what it was like for Otto to return, how old he is, his transformation from sc. 1 - sc. 2.

**suspenseful scenes within (enemy planes flying over, soldiers inside house)**

Freytag's Pyramid and suspense/climax sections

## Excalibur

After they become covered in mud, they ride away in the rain and are cleansed.

It's a powerful scene, and it would be perfect for teaching

symbolism, archetypes, mythology

## Facing the Giants

characterization, suspense, climax

## Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Puzzles at the end would be good to show Freytag's Pyramid and suspense/climax bits.

## I Am Legend

setting, compare to very different novella on which it is based or previous film "Omega Man"

## Jaws

suspense (that music!)

## Joe vs. Volcano—gloom and boredom of the opening scenes

dystopia

**Jumanji/Zathura**

Freytag's Pyramid and suspense/climax bits, foreshadowing

**Juno**

characterization

**A Knight's Tale**

theme

**Matrix**

elements of dystopia

**Napoleon Dynamite**

characterization

**Natural**

characterization, light as symbol

**Phantom of the Opera**

suspense, characterization, foreshadowing

**Pleasantville**

dystopia, characterization, setting, great comparison to *The Giver* and the lack of color...

**Pride and Prejudice**

characterization, setting, irony

**Princess Bride**

archetypes (esp. rule of three), characterization, irony, POV

**Remember the Titans**

Compare coach's locker room speech to The Gettysburg Address.

**Schindler's List/Swing Kids**

Schindler's ghetto liquidation and Swing Kids' programming in class

**Snow White/Matrix**

- Last 8 minutes of "Snow White" compare with "The Matrix" when Neo dies and girl kisses him.
- Also, use "Matrix" fight scene in subway, when newspaper rolls through like a tumbleweed.
- "Matrix" wise man gives Neo a choice of red pill or blue hole and alludes to the "rabbit hole." archetype, symbolism, allegory, allusion

**Spider Man 3 (and other superhero movies, probably)**

internal conflict

**Star Wars episode 4—first ten minutes**

Freytag's Pyramid and suspense/climax sections

**Star Wars episode 3—at very end)**

Compare the rebuilding of Anakin to any Frankenstein movie.

**Steel Magnolias**

characterization (esp. at Truvy's place), setting, symbolism of title

**Truman Show**

dystopia, characterization, setting, POV, irony (esp. dramatic)

**Village**

dystopia, protagonist/antagonist and how difficult it is sometimes to identify which is which