

## A Level Film Studies - Induction

1. **Watching Films:** Could there be a nicer task for your teachers to ask you to do between now and September? One of the most important things you can do for A Level Film studies is to simply watch films and enjoy watching them. There are obvious services you can use to watch films at home. Amazon Prime Video and Netflix are pumping huge amounts of money into the creation of original TV and Film content – with Netflix fast becoming a major producer of feature films. However, neither service will give you access to all the set films we have to study or to the range of films you might be advised to watch or want to watch yourself. Have a think about signing up to one of the following services – or simply have a look at the ones that are free:



### Cinema Paradiso:



This does things the old fashioned way and is very similar to a service your parents might remember called LoveFilm. You have to sign up to them for about £5 a month and then make a list of all the films you want to watch. They'll then send the films on your list through to you on DVD by post. Once you've finished watching a film you post it back to them and they send you the next one on your list. Apart from the newest Netflix releases, they have virtually every film ever made available. It's great. <https://www.cinemaparadiso.co.uk/>

### BFI Player:

The British Film Institute's BFI Player is a streaming service that provides users with access to a huge range of films including those that are more unusual or difficult to find elsewhere. They also provide a lot of extras including commentaries on films. Some content is free; you can also subscribe to them or just use them to stream films for a fixed fee either as one off rentals or for unlimited viewing: <https://player.bfi.org.uk/>



### Mubi:



Mubi is a subscription film streaming service with a difference. Instead of giving you access to an unlimited range of films they hand pick a few films each week for their subscribers to watch – the idea being that you discover quality films, filmmakers and film movements you might not come across otherwise. £5.99 a month for students: <https://mubi.com/student>

### Talking Pictures:

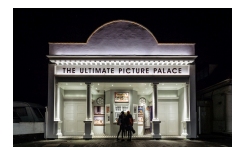
This one's completely free! Talking pictures is a TV channel run by film lovers that only shows classic films – it's a gateway to an amazing world of film. Available on Virgin 445, Freesat 306, Freeview 81, Sky 328, <https://talkingpicturestv.co.uk/>



### Going to the Cinema:

Watching films at home is fine but it doesn't compare to the experience of seeing a film in a cinema, something we've all been deprived of during the recent lockdowns. How about trying the following cinema?

- **The Ultimate Picture Palace** - The UPP is Oxford's only independent cinema and one of the oldest cinemas in the UK. We show a mix of independent, mainstream, international, and classic films all in our cosy



single-screen auditorium. Find us just off the Cowley Road in East Oxford.  
(<https://uppcinema.com/>)

- **BFI** – The British Film Institute cinema runs seasons of films that focus on key directors or film movements. It is no ordinary cinema and is well worth knowing about and visiting (<https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/>)

### TASK 1 - HISTORY OF FILM TIMELINE:

Film is only just over 100 years old, it has a pretty short history as a medium. This makes it relatively straightforward to get an understanding of its history and how it has developed. Use the "[Teach Yourself Film](#)" resource and your own research to **create a timeline that charts every decade of film history from the 1890s to the 2010s**. It should include:



- Key developments in film history: the first film ever made, the introduction of sound, the introduction of colour film etc.
- Key films from each decade
- Key directors from each decade
- Key broader historical events of each decade

### TASK 2 - MARK COUSINS - 40 DAYS TO LEARN FILM :

Mark Cousins is a renowned film historian, his two hour video lecture "40 Days to Learn Film" is accessible and does what it says on the tin: [40 Days to Learn Film on Vimeo](#)

You should be able to log onto Vimeo for free using a google email account.

Watch the little lectures and make detailed notes.

### TASK 3:

One of the films you may be studying is *Alien* directed by Ridley Scott. If it's not chosen as a set text, it's still useful to watch to get ideas/inspiration for coursework. Do some research into the film and the director. Consider the following questions:

- What type of films does Ridley Scott make?
- What is typical about his film style?

Choose one of his films to watch. What can you say about:

- The film's approach to narrative (how it tells a story.)
- Performance.
- Use of music.
- Pace of action and pace of editing.
- Your own personal opinions about the film.
- Is it typical of Hollywood films? How?

## EXTENSION TASKS:

1. Watch Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film *Psycho*. This will support your study of *Vertigo*.
2. Because of the lockdown, many academics and institutions have made excellent Film/Media courses and resources available for free, you might want to have a look at some of this and take advantage of it:



- **The 22 Rules of Storytelling** from Pixar - should be of use for screenwriting:

<https://nofilmschool.com/2013/12/pixars-22-rules-of-storytelling-free-ebook>

- **Every Frame a Painting** is a series of video essays on different aspects of film form and how they're used by filmmakers:

<https://m.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting/featured>

- **Sundance Film Festival** have made many of their (usually very expensive) online filmmaking workshops available for free - give them a look, a great opportunity:

[https://collab.sundance.org/master-classes?utm\\_source=fb&utm\\_medium=feed\\_org&utm\\_campaign=free\\_master\\_classes&fbclid=IwAR0KlcsIR5Nchvmy3UW4fPlxnOclc1JEk83KS3CpnYEkOe4wCBUvOxbdXu0](https://collab.sundance.org/master-classes?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=feed_org&utm_campaign=free_master_classes&fbclid=IwAR0KlcsIR5Nchvmy3UW4fPlxnOclc1JEk83KS3CpnYEkOe4wCBUvOxbdXu0)

**Futurelearn** have collaborated with a number of renowned institutions (including the BFI) to create a range of excellent free online Media and Film related courses, highlights below:

- **Gender Representation in the Media:**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/gender-and-the-media>

- **Introduction to Screenwriting:**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/screenwriting>

- **National Film and Television School - Explore Filmmaking: From Script to Screen:**

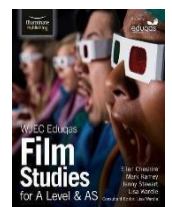
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/explore-filmmaking>

- **Film Distribution - Connecting Films With Audiences:**

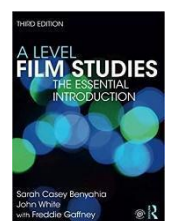
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/film-distribution>

## READING LIST:

**Film Studies:** Do you need to read lots of books to start studying Film at A Level? Not necessarily. However, if you want an introduction to the course and want to start to get a feeling for the history and conventions of film some of the following might be useful. Look out for second hand copies on Amazon or elsewhere:



- There is a useful textbook published by Illuminate Publishing that covers the course **WJEC Eduqas Film Studies for A Level & AS**. It is well worth investing in.
- The textbook ***A Level Film Studies: The Essential Introduction*** is perhaps even better, covering a wide range of film movements and periods in film history.
- There are three older textbooks that are still quite useful (and can be bought relatively cheaply secondhand on Amazon or elsewhere), ***AS Film Studies*** and ***A2 Film Studies*** by Sarah Casey Benyahia and Freddie Gaffney and ***AS Film Studies*** by Jo Harland and Nick Timmons.



- The following books are useful for getting an insight into film history and are highly recommended: [The Story of Film: A concise history of film](#) by Mark Cousins, [History of Film](#) by David Parkinson and [A Short History of Film](#) by Wheeler Winston Dixon and Gwendolyn Audrey Foster.

## Enrichment and Work Experience Opportunities:



### The BFI Future Film Academy:

The BFI (The British Film Institute) runs a fantastic range of courses run by Media and Film industry professionals for 16-19 year olds. Their main page can be found

here

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/education-research/5-19-film-education-scheme-2013-2017/bfi-film-academy-scheme/bfi-film-academy-uk-network-programme> and

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/education-research/bfi-film-academy/bfi-film-academy-specialist-residential-programme>.

They also run a range of online courses and workshops that are well worth signing up to:

### BFI Academy Labs:



FREE monthly Saturday events for 16-25 year olds -

[https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=bfilacademylabs&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context\\_id=](https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=bfilacademylabs&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id=)

### BFI Academy Scene:



Live online interviews with young filmmakers every Thursday evening. FREE for 16-25 year olds who can submit questions for the filmmakers. A great opportunity to see others' work and make connections:

[https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=scene2018&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context\\_id](https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=scene2018&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id)

These courses are either free or very cheap, give you high quality media and film production training, are next to free and would look great on your CV or UCAS application. Here's what the BFI say about their Film Academy courses: "Are you 16-19? Passionate about film? Want a career in the film industry? If so, the BFI Film Academy is for you. This course offers you the chance to be part of our future film industry."

In addition to the BFI courses and workshops there are a range of other organisations providing training and work experience in London, these include:

### Fully Focused Productions:



Fully Focused Productions is a charity that runs a range of programmes to help young people enter the film industry. They run a range of FREE online filmmaking masterclasses and sessions Follow their socials (@ukfullyfocused) for details of upcoming workshops and masterclasses on everything from sound to editing, cinematography, production and much more.

<https://www.fullyfocusedproductions.com/>

### Ravensbourne College



Ravensbourne College in Greenwich run one of the most prestigious Film and TV production courses in the country. They regularly offer a range of free production workshops to secondary school students. The links below are for last year's

courses, if they are out of date try googling “Ravensbourne College workshops”, “Ravensbourne College school workshops” or “Ravensbourne College holiday workshops”,

<https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/events/masterclasses/february-half-term-film-workshop>

[https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/information/schools-and-outreach/saturday-clubs-and-holiday-schools?fbclid=IwAR1wthSWBvrhjHzjgMkCdqEFQWfdntBWY\\_aFTFRnOYYpv4sQnp8WeEbTSMUP](https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/information/schools-and-outreach/saturday-clubs-and-holiday-schools?fbclid=IwAR1wthSWBvrhjHzjgMkCdqEFQWfdntBWY_aFTFRnOYYpv4sQnp8WeEbTSMUP)

<https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/events/saturday-club>