

Name: _____

***The Hurt Locker* (2009)**
directed by Kathryn Bigelow
written by Mark Boal

The Hurt Locker is an Academy Award winning film (winning six—**Best Picture, Director, Screenplay, Film Editing, Sound Editing & Sound Mixing**). For this film, we are going to break down a few of those key awards (film elements) and what makes this film the “best.”

The class will be split. Different people will look for different things...

BEST SCREENPLAY

What are the elements of a great screenplay? A rousing plot is nice, but at the heart of a good script are round, complex characters that are developed thoroughly—that we can relate to, identify with, and look up to. Through a character’s own actions and dialogue, as well as what other characters do or say about a particular character, is **character development**.

There are only three main characters. Track their character development—their personality traits, their attitudes, why they act the way they act; write down examples of what they (or others) say or do that displays these traits/attitudes. How do they change? What is their “character arc?”

[illegible]

BEST SOUND EDITING and MIXING

The Sound Editor assembles all sounds you hear in a film—from audio effects to background noise—with the exception of its score and on-set dialogue. **The Sound Mixer** blends it all together, emphasizing certain aspects.

Throughout the film, track the effective use of sounds. When does it add to the situation, emotion, realism, and/or tension of the scene?

Scene	What I notice/why I notice
Opening	
IED in the Street	
Car at UN	
Desert Under Fire	
Body Bomb	
“Beckham’s” House (before/during/after)	
Green Zone Fire/Urban Warfare	
Iraqi Man in the Street	
Postwar: Supermarket/Home	

BEST FILM EDITING

As we have explored before, the **Film Editor** (working closely with the director) is responsible for putting all the raw footage of the film into a coherent story; s/he is responsible for pacing, as well as fluidity of transitions between shots and scenes.

Throughout the film, track the effective use of editing. When does it aid in the pacing, tension, and/or suspense of the scene?

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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT (SCREENPLAY)

Sergeant William James	Sergeant JT Sanborn	Specialist Owen Eldridge
Easy going and reckless Goes with the flow—safety not a priority Throws headset, doesn't listen to Sanborn; takes bomb suit off; won't block windows in barracks Even though is tough, is emotional—Affected by Beckham; developed relationship with him; cries in shower/breakdown; in the desert, encourages Eldridge gives up the juice to Sanborn; Supermarket—PTSD trouble fitting in after Iraq; mundane activities Adrenaline junkie—diffuses car bomb—“that was good” Bomb parts under bed—remind him of what could kill him	Careful/cautious Plays by the rules/book Doesn't like James at first, comes around Loyal Thinks about “killing” James... Wants a kid—needs purpose (not war)	Anxiety—Seeing Thompson die—blames himself Psychiatrist (Colonel) Afraid to die/make decisions In the desert—turning point—makes decision Follower—shatters his femur (goes home—hates James)

SOUND

Opening

- (explosion) Silence mixed with slo-motion ground crunch, glass breaking
- Breathing (isolated—sound POV)
- Jet sound at tense parts

IED in the Street

- Jet sound, breathing sound
- Car screech

Car at UN

- Jet sound when opens trunk
- Background—sirens, wind
- Tweeting bird

Desert Under Fire

- Bullets whizzing by
- Sniper rifle silence
- Wind/insects
- Sound delay of shot—distance
- Goats

Body Bomb

- Gross sounds/bodily fluids—fishing around in the body
- Dripping water
- Echo of foot steps
- Low hum
- Equipment/guns
- Background guy talking/chanting/singing

“Beckham’s” House (before/during/after)

- Sound of crickets
- TV/music/white noise

Green Zone Fire/Urban Warfare

- Screams (children), women praying, burning, sirens—confusion

Iraqi Man in the Street

- Quiet of post-explosion...
- Crickets

Postwar—Supermarket/Home

- Muzak—elevator music

EDITING

Opening

IED in the Street

Car at UN

Desert Under Fire

Body Bomb

“Beckham’s” House (before/during/after)

Green Zone Fire/Urban Warfare

Iraqi Man in the Street

Postwar—Supermarket/Home