

KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL
GCSE FILM STUDIES
STUDY BOOKLET

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Rebel Without a Cause

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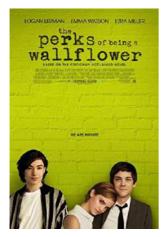
Reflections on Knowledge Organiser Tests: How do you learn?

KO Test No.	What revision strategies did you use?	Did they work well?	Why do you think that they did/didn't work?	How do you plan to revise next time?

Genre Conventions

Recap: What are some of the conventions of the following genres:

Action			
Horror			
Sci-Fi			









What are some of the conventions of the teen film genre?

Why are conventions used in genre films?

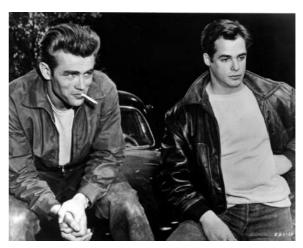
Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Character Stereotypes: Cliques – can create a sense of segregation	Groups of students such as 'jocks/cheerleaders', 'geeks/nerds', 'Loners', 'People who aren't in a clique' (often the protagonist of the film)
Mise-en- scene : Location - Houses of main characters	In Mainstream Hollywood films these often tend to be situated in affluent suburban areas of major cities. Gives the audience an insight into the home lives of the character(s).
Mise-en-scene: Location - High school	Helps to emphasise the cliques and the segregation felt by the main character(s) who does not belong to a social group. Audience can relate to this setting.
Themes: Feeling like an outcast	Not having friends, feeling invisible and ignored. Peer pressure - being tricked or pressured into doing things e.g. smoking, drinking, dangerous behaviour.
Themes: Rebellion	Teenage characters reject the notion of authority. Creates conflict with parents, teachers, police etc.
Themes: Sexuality	Another issue that teenagers can relate to. It is often the time when young people are becoming more aware of their sexuality.
Themes: Mental health	A young person struggling with mental health is a convention of some teen dramas. Anxiety and depression are some of the most common issues they face.
Props - Cigarettes, alcohol, and illegal substances	Help to link with the convention of rebellion and the 'coming of age' aspect of teen films. Many teenagers go through this stage and can therefore relate.
Characters: The love interest	A love interest for the film's protagonist is a key genre feature. It creates a sense of romance for the audience.
Characters: The best friend	A character type in nearly all teen dramas. Acts as a sidekick/advisor to the main character. 'The Helper' in Propp's character roles.
Characters: The antagonist	The 'bad guy'. Usually a rival. The antagonist causes issues for the protagonist. One of the most important characters in the film because without them there would be no issue and therefore no storyline.
Viewpoint	From the teenager's POV. Often white, male, heterosexual and privileged. Female lead roles more prominent from the 1990s onwards.

Key Areas of Focus: Genre, Narrative and Context

Social Context of Rebel Without a Cause

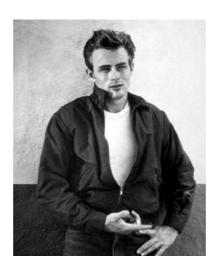
- Rebel Without a Cause was released in 1955
- The 1950s are considered the birth of the teenager and this social group had a new identity
- Young people had more money (a disposable income); products such as music, film and fashion were targeted at this group.
- They were powerful consumers and therefore a powerful 'voice' in consumerist America.





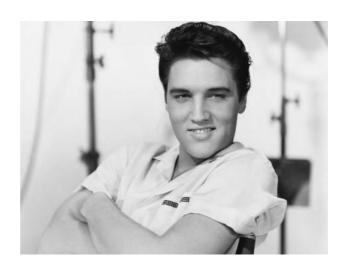
- Better education, which led them to question the world.
- It was a time of peace, so young men were not at war, a confusing era for young men who could not identify with their war time fathers and did not have a war to fight to prove themselves.
- This new social group was considered by some as threatening, unruly and out of control, the film reflected and responded to this concern.
- This film offers a sympathetic representation of teenagers, blaming the parents for their delinquency.
- The film provides a rich, but stylized (and partly out-dated) look at the world of the conformist mid-1950s from the perspective of the main adolescent male character - a troubled teen with ineffectual parents, who faces a new school environment.

Star Marketing: James Dean



- James Dean was seen as a new kind of actor (a method actor) and became an icon, and the face of a generation.
- He appeared poetic, tormented and brooding not the usual 'hero' type.
- James Dean died on 30 September, 1955, in a car accident. One month before the release of Rebel Without a Cause. He was 24.
- He was the first actor to receive a posthumous Academy Award nomination for Best Actor and remains the only actor to have had two posthumous acting nominations.
- The persona Dean projected in his movies, especially *Rebel Without a Cause*, influenced Elvis Presley.



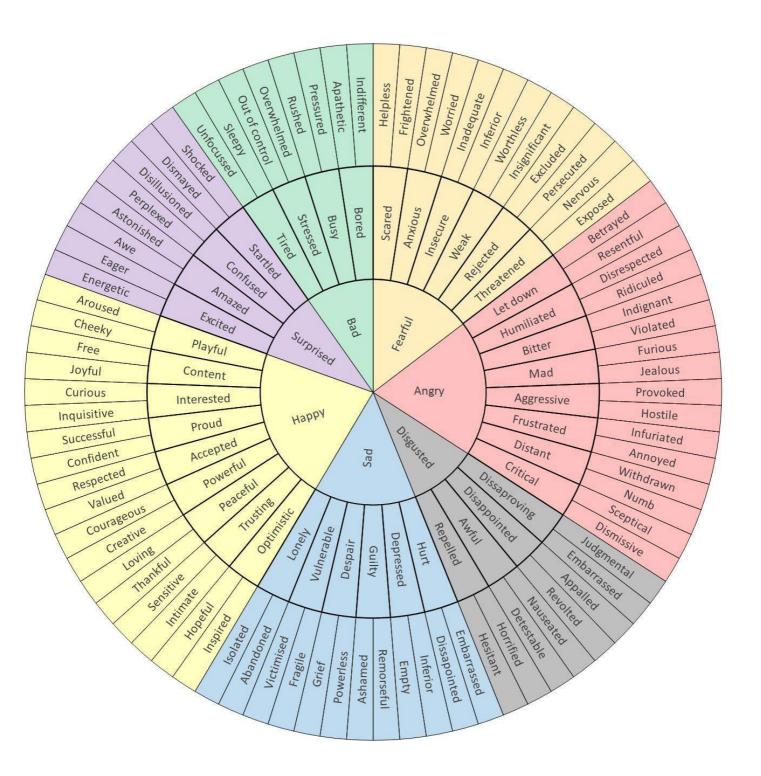


Characters

Character	Description	
Jim Stark		
Judy		
John 'Plato' Crawford		
Frank Stark		
Buzz Gunderson		

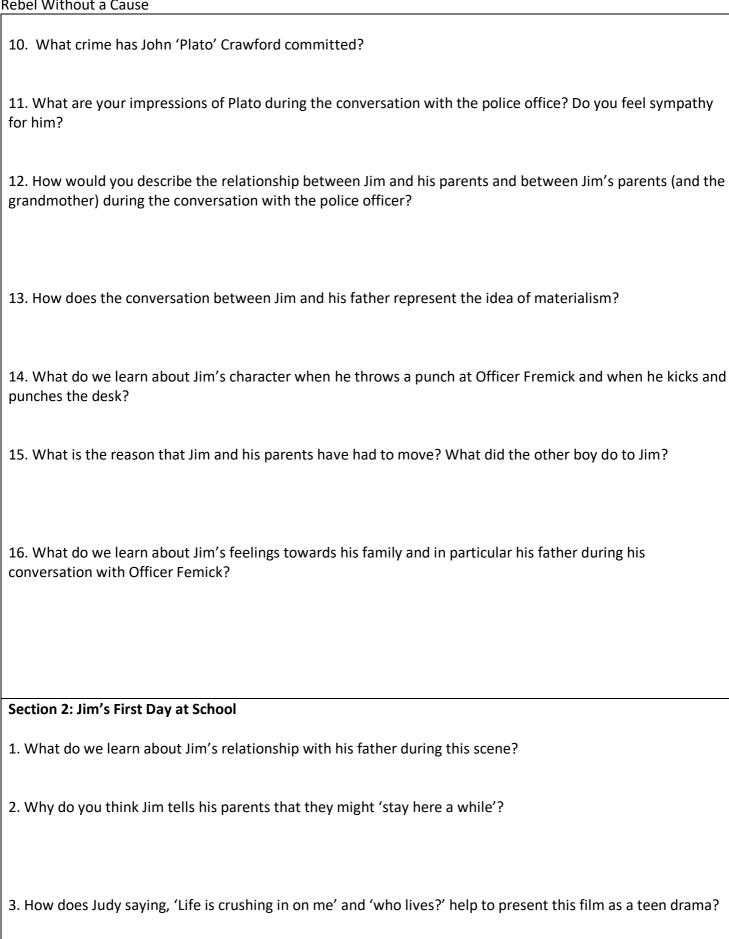
Emotion Wheel

Use this wheel to help you describe how you feel about the characters and narrative.



Viewing Questions

Section 1: The Police Station
1. Why is Jim arrested and brought to the police station?
2. Why do you think Jim is so keen to keep hold of the toy monkey with the cymbals?
3. What are your first impressions of Jim?
4. Why is Judy so upset when talking to the police officer?
5. What does the police office suggest is the reason for Judy being out late at night, having run out of her home?
6. What does it suggest about Jim when he continues to make the sound of a police siren after a police officer has told him to stop?
7. What are your impressions of Jim when he offers his jacket to Plato?
8. Why do you think Judy is so upset that it is her mother that is coming to collect her from the police station?
9. How would you describe Jim's relationship with his parents when we first see them together?



4. How do we learn that Jim is an outsider from his conversation with Judy and the arrival of 'the kids'?
5. Why is it an issue that Jim steps on the school insignia (sign)? What does it show about him?
6. What is the significance of Jim arriving late to the planetarium?
7. How do you feel about Jim when he is sat behind Judy, Buzz and the gang and when he makes the sound of a bull?
8. What representation of teenagers is presented when all the students leave the planetarium and fail to listen to the teacher?
9. Why do you think Plato hid under his chair at the end of the presentation?
10. Why do you think the gang take issue with Jim and decide to be unkind to him? How does this link to the social context and representation of teenagers?

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Saction	n 2. The Knife Eight	

Section 3: The Knife Fight
1. What does Buzz do to provoke Jim and get him to come down from the steps of the planetarium?
2. Why do you think Jim does not like being called 'chicken'?
3. How does the cinematography in this scene help to show the divide between Jim and the gang?
4. During the knife fight how does the editing help to build up the tension of the scene?
5. How does Plato start to fulfil the 'best friend' character type in this scene?
6. Buzz challenges Jim to a 'chickie-run' (drag race) later that evening. Why do you think Jim accepts the challenge?
Section 4: Disappointing Parents
1. Why do you think Jim is so angry with his father when he sees that he is cleaning up dropped food from the floor?
2. What do we learn about the relationship between Judy and her father during the scene at her house?

3. How do you feel about Judy when she is slapped by her father?
4. What does Judy's mother say is the reason for Judy's behaviour?
5. Why does Jim get so frustrated with his father when asking his advice?
Section 5: The Chickie-Run
1. Why do you think that Plato lies to Judy by telling her that Jim is his best friend?
2. Why do you think Judy asks lots of questions about Jim?
 Why do you think Judy asks lots of questions about Jim? Plato says that Jim is going to take him hunting and fishing. Why do you think he wants Jim to do this with him?

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4. Buzz says he likes Jim. Jim asks why they need to do the drag race. Buzz replies, "you got to do something, don't you?". What does this suggest about teenagers and how they were viewed and represented in the 1950s?
5. What possession of Judy's does Jim have and from where did he get it?
6. During the race, how does the editing help to create tension and excitement for the audience?
Section 6: Family Argument
1. When Jim and Plato have dropped Judy off and put Jim's car in the garage, what does Plato say to Jim and what does this tell us about him as a character?
2. When Jim is on the sofa, how does the cinematography help to place the audience in his position and represent his state of mind at this point in the film?
3. Jim tries to talk to his parents to tell them what has happened to Buzz but they interrupt him and argue with each other. How do you feel about Jim at this point? What does it show the audience about this relationship with his parents?

4. Jim wants to go to the police to tell them what happened, but his parents don't want him to. Why do you think this is and how do you feel about them at this point?
5. How do you feel about Jim at this point as he tries to stand up for what is right?
6. Why does Jim get so angry with his father in this scene? What does he want his father to do? What does
Jim do to his father?
Section 7: The Police Station
1. As Jim arrives at the police station he meets three of the gang coming out after being questioned by the police. Why is it a problem for Jim that they have seen him there?
2. How do Crunch and the others use the radio station to taunt Jim and signal that they are out to get him?

3. How does the relationship between Jim and Judy develop during their conversation? What do they have in common?
Section 8: Plato's house
1. How do you feel towards Plato when the gang attack him?
2. What possession of Plato's do they steal and why is this significant?
3. Plato finds what he thinks is a letter from his father, but it is a cheque. What does the note attached to it say? What does this tell us about Plato's relationship with his father?
Section 9: The Mansion
1. Jim and Judy pretend to be newlyweds looking for someone to buy, while Plato acts as the estate agent. Why do you think the adopt the personas of adults in a slightly light-hearted and mocking tone?
2. Plato proceeds to say that children really aren't encouraged (a good idea) and that they are so noisy and troublesome. How does this reflect the social context of the film?

Rebei Without a Cause
3. When looking at the empty swimming pool Jim says, "nobody talks to children" and Judy replies "no, they just tell them". What does this dialogue tell us about how the three characters feel they are treated by their parents?
4. What is the reason Plato gives for never having had fun when he visited the abandoned mansion on many previous occasions?
5. Do you notice anything about the way Jim, Judy and Plato are positioned when sat on and near the sofa?
6. Plato has been to see a psychiatrist when he was younger to talk about his feelings but why did his mum stop the appointments. What did she do instead and how does this make you feel about her?
7. Judy sings Plato a lullaby and sends him to sleep. What role is she fulfilling in this scene?
8. How do you feel when Judy tells Jim that she loves him?
9. What does Plato do to Crunch and how do you feel about him at this stage?

Nebel Without a Cause
10. Why do you think he is angry with Jim?
11. What does Jim tell Judy that Plato tried to make them?
Section 10: The Planetarium 1. What do we learn about Jim's character when he is talking to Plato and trying to reassure him?
2. Jim gives Plato his jacket. Why is this significant and what does it show us about the change in their relationship?
3. When Jim takes the gun from Plato, what does he do?
4. How do you feel about the ending of the film?
5. How has the relationship between Jim and his father changed at the end of the film?

Rebel Without a Cause What are the key themes in Rebel Without a Cause?

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How are these themes and the typical teen genre conventions evident in Rebel Without a Cause?

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Character Stereotypes: Cliques – can create a sense of	Groups of students such as 'jocks/cheerleaders', 'geeks/nerds',
segregation	'Loners', 'People who aren't in a clique' (often the protagonist
	of the film)
Evidence in Reb	el Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Mise-en- scene: Location - Houses of main characters	In Mainstream Hollywood films these often tend to be situated
	in affluent suburban areas of major cities. Gives the audience an insight into the home lives of the character(s).
Evidence in Re	ebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Mise-en-scene: Location - High school	Helps to emphasise the cliques and the segregation felt by the
	main character(s) who does not belong to a social group.
	Audience can relate to this setting.
Evide	ence in Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Themes: Feeling like an outcast	Not having friends, feeling invisible and ignored.
	Peer pressure - being tricked or pressured into doing things e.g.
	smoking, drinking, dangerous behaviour.
Evidence in	Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Themes: Rebellion	Teenage characters reject the notion of authority. Creates conflict with parents, teachers, police etc.
Evidence in	Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Themes: Sexuality	Another issue that teenagers can relate to. It is often the time when young people are becoming more aware of their sexuality.
	Evidence in Rebel Without a Cause

Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study

Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Themes: Mental health	A young person struggling with mental health is a convention
	of some teen dramas. Anxiety and depression are some of the
	most common issues they face.
Evidence in Rebe	l Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Props - Cigarettes, alcohol, and illegal substances	Help to link with the convention of rebellion and the 'coming of age' aspect of teen films. Many teenagers go through this stage and can therefore relate.
Evidence i	n Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Characters: The love interest	A love interest for the film's protagonist is a key genre feature. It creates a sense of romance for the audience.
Evi	idence in Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Characters: The best friend	A character type in nearly all teen dramas. Acts as a
	sidekick/advisor to the main character. 'The Helper' in Propp's
	character roles.
Evidence in Rebe	l Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Characters: The antagonist	The 'bad guy'. Usually a rival. The antagonist causes issues for
	the protagonist. One of the most important characters in the
	film because without them there would be no issue and
	therefore no storyline.
	Evidence in Rebel Without a Cause

Teen Drama Genre Conventions	Definition/Examples
Viewpoint	From the teenager's POV. Often white, male, heterosexual and privileged. Female lead roles more prominent from the 1990s onwards.
E	vidence in Rebel Without a Cause

How does Nicholas Ray use elements of film form to establish the three main characters in the opening sequence of Rebel Without a Cause?

Sound	Cinematography
	,
Editing	Mise-en-scene

Representation of youth
Binary Oppositions

In Summary:

What do we learn about the three central characters in the opening scenes?



Jim	Judy	Plato

Binary Opposition Representation

Low angle

Pan

Represented

Key Words

How does Nicholas Ray use the elements of film form to establish the three main characters in the opening sequence of Rebel Without a Cause? Guidance on how to answer the following question:

Elements of film form

Cinematography Editing Sound

Mise-en-scene

Suggested Sentence Starters

The director uses a number of devices to establish the main characters in the opening sequence...

How to write analytically

What can you see/hear?

The use of a low angle shot helps to suggest to the audience that... The dialogue in this sequence tells the audience a lot about the three central characters. An example of this is... Jim offers his jacket to Plato. This suggests that he has a kind and caring nature and makes the audience feel...

into a close-up of her face. The effect of this is... When Judy is talking, the camera slowly zooms

How does the presentation of the character

represent young people in general?

How does this make the audience feel?

Suggested structure for your response

- Brief introduction which addresses the
 - Mise-en-scene question
- Cinematography ĸ,
 - Editing
- Conclusion summarising key points in relation to the question 4

Example of analysis

Non-diegetic

Diegetic Zoom

surrounding environment. This suggests that she immediately encourages us to connect with her. In the opening sequence we see Judy before we makes the audience feel sympathy for Judy and suggests they are confused, want to be noticed hear her because she is wearing a vibrant red This is a representation of young people that wants to stand out and later, when she talks coat and this clearly separates her from the realise that is his attention she craves. This about the relationship with her father, we

Extension:

establish some of the key themes of the film? How does this opening sequence help to

and to dress in a more adult way. What does this suggest about the character (s)

How does Nicholas Ray use elements of film form to establish the three main characters in the opening sequence of Rebel Without a Cause?		

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GCSE Film Studies Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study Rebel Without a Cause		

Key Scene Analysis – Jim's First Day

Element of film	Examples in this sequence	How does the film form help to show it's a
form		teen drama?
Cinematography		
Mise-en-scene		
Wilse en seene		
Sound/Dialogue		
Editing		
0		
	Genre conventions in this	sequence

Key Scene Analysis – Knife Fight

Element of film form	Examples in this sequence	How does the film form help to show it's a teen drama?
Cinematography		
Mise-en-scene		
iviise-eii-sceile		
Cound/Dialogue		
Sound/Dialogue		
Editing		
	Genre conventions in this	sequence

Key Scene Analysis – Chicken Run

Element of film form	Examples in this sequence	How does the film form help to show it's a teen drama?
Cinematography		teen drama:
Mise-en-scene		
Sound/Dialogue		
Editing		
	Genre conventions in this	sequence

Key Scene Analysis – Family Argument

Element of film form	Examples in this sequence	How does the film form help to show it's a teen drama?
Cinematography		
Mise-en-scene		
Sound/Dialogue		
Editing		
	Genre conventions in this	sequence

Narrative Structure

Narrative Structure

There are different types of **narrative structures**. They can be grouped into two main categories:

- **Linear** a narrative told in chronological order
- **Non-linear** narrative not told in chronological order

Which type of narrative structure does *Rebel Without a Cause* follow? Explain your answer.

Classical Hollywood Three Act Structure

			Evidence from Rebel Without a Cause
	Exposition	The part of a story that introduces the characters, shows some of their interrelationships, and places them within a time and place.	
Act 1	Inciting Incident	An event that sets the plot of the film in motion . It occurs approximately halfway through the first act.	
	Plot Point (or reversal)	Thrusts the plot in a new direction, leading into a new act.	
	First Culmination	Just before the halfway point of the film where the main character seems close to achieving his or her goal/objective. Then, everything falls apart	
Act 2	Midpoint	Approximately halfway through the film where the main character reaches his/her lowest point and seems farthest from fulfilling the dramatic need or objective.	
	Plot Point (or reversal)	Thrusts the plot in a new direction, leading into a new act.	
ct 3	Second/Main Culmination	the plot reaches its maximum tension and the forces in opposition confront each other at a peak of physical or emotional action.	
Ac	Denouement	The brief period of calm at the end of a film where a state of equilibrium returns.	

GCSE Film Studies Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study Rebel Without a Cause

Parent Vs. Child

How do cinematography and mise-en-scene help to present this binary opposition throughout the film?









GCSE Film Studies Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study Rebel Without a Cause





GCSE Film Studies Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study Rebel Without a Cause









Answering exam style questions

- The exam questions for *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* are always stepped.
- The questions start off easy and require short answers, becoming increasingly more difficult and requiring more extended and detailed answers.
- There will be three questions about Rebel Without a Cause, then three questions about Ferris Bueller's Day Off and finally one question requiring you to compare both films.
- The questions will always be about **film form**, **context**, **narrative**, **genre** or a combination of these.

Example questions for 'Rebel Without a Cause'

- a. Identify **one** genre convention used in your chosen film. [1]
- b. Briefly outline why conventions are used in genre films. [4]
- d. Explore how the convention you have identified is used in one sequence from your chosen film. In your answer, refer to at least one key element of film form (e.g. cinematography, mise-en-scene, editing or sound). [10]

Let's have a go together:

a. Identify **one** genre convention used in your chosen film. [1]

Top tips:

- 1. Identify key words
- 2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
- 3. Collect you thoughts to address the question appropriately
- 4. Write a very brief response
- b. Briefly outline why conventions are used in genre films. [4]

Top tips:

- 1. Identify key words
- 2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
- 3. Collect you thoughts to address the question appropriately
- 4. Write a brief response

GCSE Film Studies Component 1, Section A: US Film Comparative Study Rebel Without a Cause

c. Explore how the convention you have identified is used in one sequence from your chosen film. In your answer, refer to at least one key element of film form (e.g. cinematography, mise-en-scene, editing or sound). [10]

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Top tips:

- 1. Identify key words
- 2. Make sure you know what the question is asking you
- 3. Collect you thoughts to address the question appropriately
- 4. Write a brief response

Explore how one genre convention is used in a sequence from Rebel Without a Cause. In your answer, refer to at least one key element of film form (e.g. cinematography, mise-en-scene, editing or sound). [10]

A Suggested Structure:

Example
'Rebel Without a Cause was released in 1955 and is often seen as one of the first films in the teen drama genre. One convention of this genre that can be seen in the knife fight sequence is conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist.'
'Throughout the sequence cinematography helps to present this convention of conflict to the audience. A medium shot is used with Jim on the right hand side of the frame and Buzz and the gang on the other. This clearly creates a separation between the two main characters and helps to show the audience that there is a divide between them. This can also be seen in the high angle shot looking down on the action. Here Jim not only looks cornered but vulnerable because of the shot type used.'
'Furthermore, the use of a low angle shot on Buzz holding a knife helps to present him as the character in control. As he is the antagonist in the film it creates more tension for the audience, who feel connected to Jim, the protagonist. The audience feels the drama in the scene and this helps them to understand the genre of the film they are watching. Low angle shots are also used when Jim and Buzz are holding knives. These shots place the audience in the centre of the action and make them feel more connected to the scene.'
In the 1950s teenagers were seen as out of control and up to no good. This is a view supported by the behaviour of Buzz and the gang in this scene who use knives to intimated Jim.

Explore how one genre convention is used in a sequence from Rebel Without a Cause. In your answer, refer to at least one key element of film form (e.g. cinematography, mise-en-scene, editing or sound). [10]		

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Narrative Structure: Correct order of events in Rebel Without a Cause

1	Jim is brought to the police station after being found drunk in the street. Judy and Plato are also at the police station. None of the characters know each other at this stage.
2	Jim is at home with his parents and grandmother on the morning of his first day at his new school. Here we can see the tension between him and his parents and between his mother and father.
3	Jim sees Judy and talks to her for the first time. It is clear that he finds her attractive and he asks if she would like a ride to school in his car. She declines tells him "I go with the kids." We then see the popular clique arrive to collect Judy.
4	Jim arrives at his new school and accidentally steps on the school insignia (logo) – this helps to portray him as an outsider to the audience. As he tries to continue up the steps into the school, Buzz, Judy and the popular kids block his path and then eventually let him through.
5	The seniors have a school trip to the planetarium at the observatory. Buzz isn't paying attention but is instead distracting his friends. Jim tries to fit in by making the noise of a bull. This backfires and he ends up with the nickname 'Touro' (Portuguese for bull).
6	Outside the planetarium the gang slash Jim's tires and provoke him into a knife fight with Buzz by calling him chicken. Jim wins the knife fight but is then challenged to a 'chicken run' by Buzz. He accepts, showing that he is keen to fit in with people.
7	Jim comes home to find his dad on the floor picking up food from the floor while wearing an apron. His dad is trying to pick up the dropped food without Jim's mum finding out. This image of his dad upsets Jim – it further suggests to him that his dad is not the man he wants him to be.
8	Jim and Buzz take part in a 'chicken run' drag race. Buzz goes over the cliff because his jacket gets caught on the car door and he cannot open it in time.
9	After Buzz's death Jim returns home to talk to his parents – he wants to confess to the police but his parents don't support him with this. Frustrated by their response Jim storms out of the house.
10	Jim goes to the police station to confess but Officer Fremick (the officer he talks to at the beginning of the film) is not there and he won't talk to anyone else. As he is leaving the station, Jim is spotted by two of Buzz's friends (Crunch and Goon). They think he's talked to the police so they decide they need to find him and silence him
11	Jim meets up with Judy and they go to an abandoned mansion to hide out. Plato works out where they are and goes to find them. He was the one who told Jim about the house earlier in the film. The three of them act out a fantasy family, with Jim as the father, Judy as the mother and Plato as the child.
12	Crunch, Goon and another boy find them at the mansion. They find Plato asleep and alone and when he wakes up they chase him through the house. Plato takes out the handgun he took from his home and shoots Crunch, then shoots at Jim and a police officer that arrives at the scene.
13	Plato runs to the observatory, which is soon surrounded by the police. Jim and Judy make it inside and Jim convinces Plato to give him the gun. Jim secretly and silently removes the bullets from the gun and then returns it to Plato.
14	As Jim, Judy and Plato step out of the observatory Plato becomes agitated by the headlights of a police car and charges forward still holding his gun. Plato is shot and killed by a police officer before Jim has the chance to tell them that he had already removed the bullets.
15	When Plato is shot he is wearing Jim's red jacket. Jim's parents think that it is Jim who has been shot. After realising Jim is unharmed, Jim's dad rushes to comfort him and promises to be a stronger father and one that his can depend on: "I'll stand up for you."