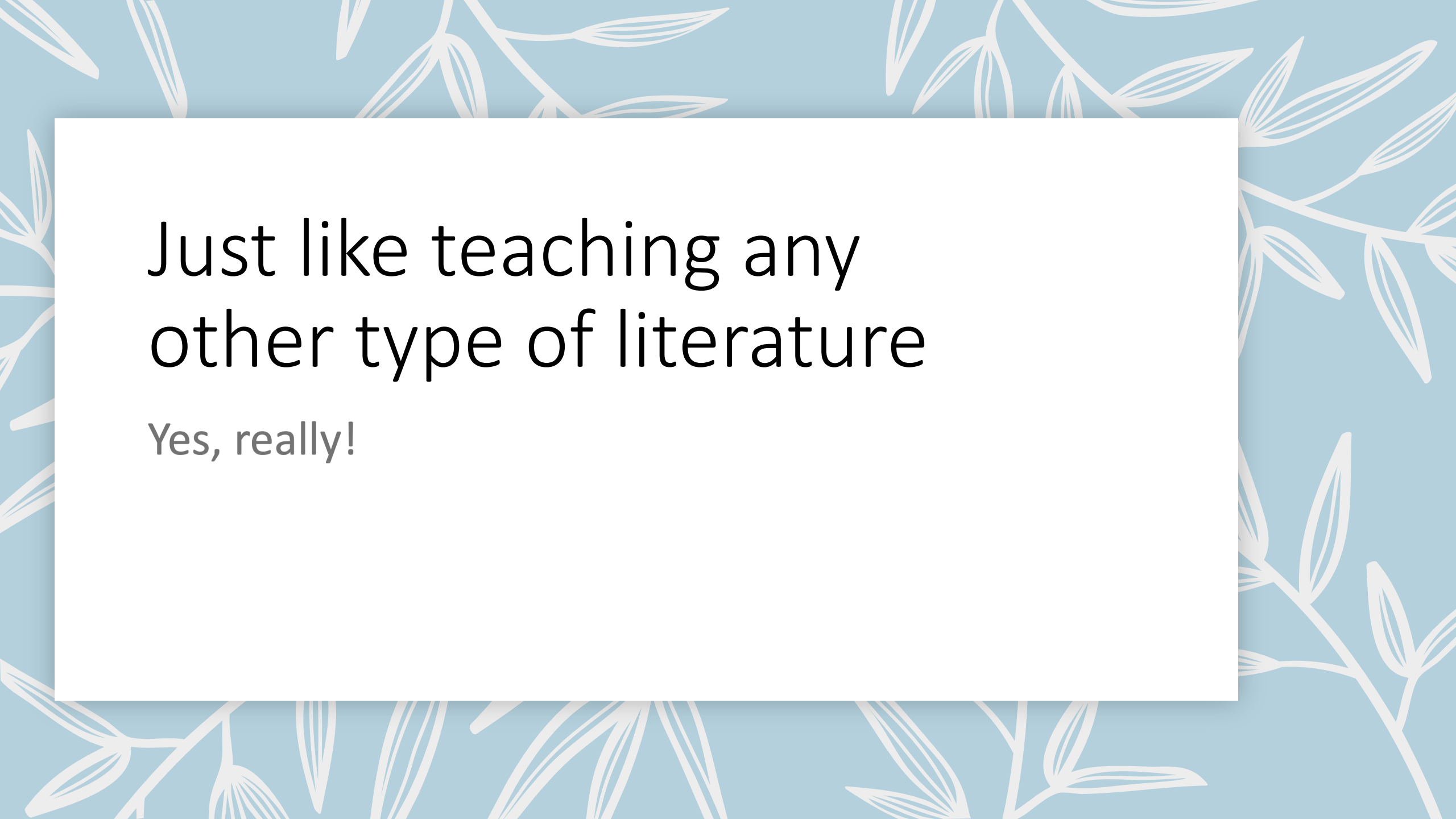# Teaching Film for Paper 2

National 5 and Higher

Just like teaching any other type of literature

Yes, really!

Teaching a novel

- No micro-analysis
- Focus on key incidents
- Follow the text chronologically
- *characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, theme, ideas, description.*

Teaching a Film

- No focus on individual shots - deal with them in a 'bundle'
- Focus on key scenes
- Follow the scene chronologically
- *Characterisation, mise en scene, camera/sound/editing/special effects, key sequence, plot, dialogue*
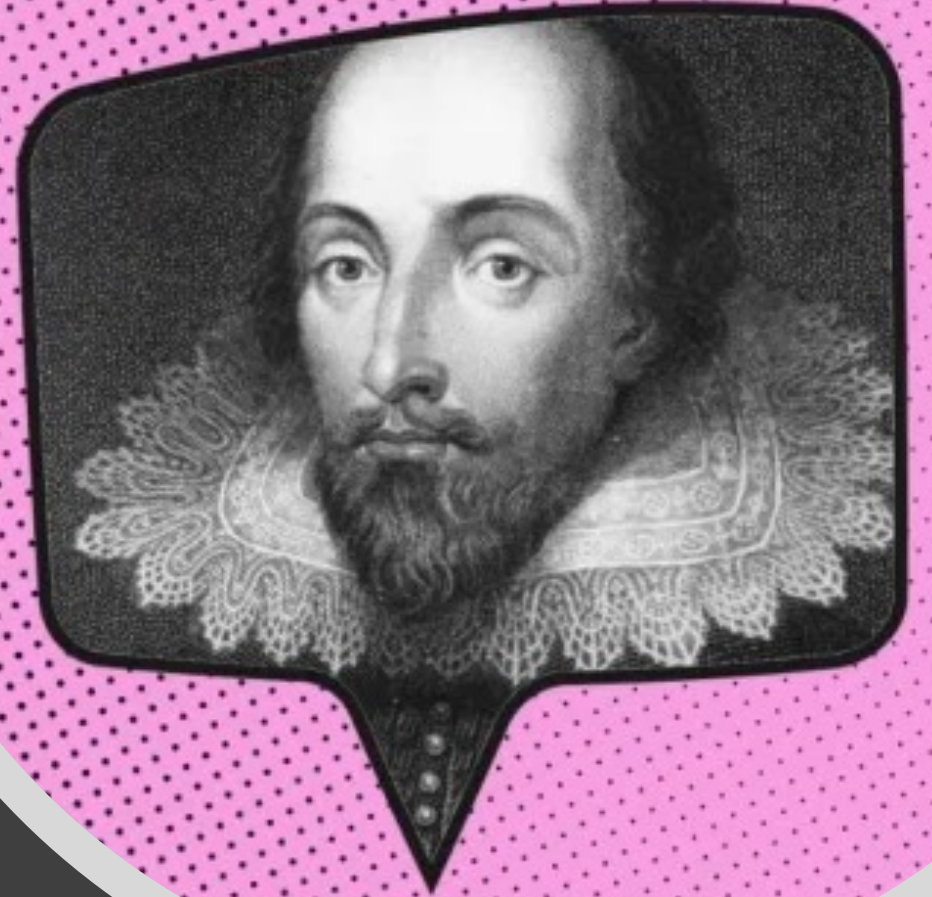
Romeo + Juliet: National 5

- Taught as part of a Shakespeare unit
- Companion to the literature
- Focus on opening sequences (initially)

Media Techniques

Types of Shot

Background

- Pre-teaching about Shakespeare's life and work
  - Research task
  - close reading about him and his life
- Pre-teaching the prologue and the play
  - Approaching film scenes as we got to them in the play

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet
Prologue

equal

The Capulets & the Montagues

Two households, both alike in dignity,

Verona - setting

In fair Verona, where we lay our scene

Disorder – between anyone

From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,

The blood of the citizens in civil war makes the hands of a civilized (well-mannered) people unclean.

Fated for misfortune

Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes

Their fortunes were marred by the influence of the stars

A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;

(fate)

Whose misadventured piteous overthrows

The misfortunes of Romeo & Juliet and their death of leads to the end of their parents' feud

Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.

Destined for death

The fearful passage of their death-marked love,

And the continuance of their parents' rage,

Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,

Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;

Business; concern

The which if you with patient ears attend,

Fail to mention

What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

PROLOGUE.

TWO Houſholds, both alike in Dignity,
    In fair Verona, (where we lay our Scene)
From ancient Grudge break to new mutiny;
    Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of theſe two foes,
    A pair of ſtar-croſt lovers take their life;
Whoſe miſ-adventur'd piteous Overthrows
    Do, with their death, bury their Parents' ſtrife.
The fearful paſſage of their death-mark'd love,
    And the continuance of their Parents' rage,
Which but their childrens' End nought could remove,
    Is now the two hours' traffick of our ſtage:
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here ſhall miſs, our Toil ſhall ſtrive to mend.

A 3   Dramatis

Teaching the techniques

- Terminology
- Model examples
- Pair/ group quiz
- Individual identification
- Pair/group analysis

The Prologue: TV news report

- How does Baz Luhrmann create an effective prologue? (Part 1)

- **Describe what happens**
  - i.e., TV monitor getting closer with words of the prologue spoken by a TV anchor woman.

- **Why this is engaging to a modern audience?**
  - Modern, contemporary, a medium with which we are familiar.

- **What do you see?:**
  - Starts with a retro T.V screen showing Png the news reporter telling of the feuds and civil unrest.
  - Small screen as the camera slowly zooms in on the TV reporter and TV.

- **What do you hear?:**
  - The sound of retro television 'buzz' and flicking channels can be heard. The reporter's voice is stern, sensible and strong.

In pairs or in groups, look at the techniques you have identified. Explain WHY these techniques have been used.

Applying the techniques

- The Prologue – use of camera, mise en scene and sound to create a modern opening.

- Essay style – topic sentence, point, evidence, analysis, link to the question.

The first key scene is the prologue and many techniques are used to create an effective opening. To grab the audience's attention, the film begins with an extreme long shot of a TV and a news reporter reciting the prologue. Luhrmann did this because all important current events are on the news in this modern day. It is very important that he do this because a modern audience will immediately relate to it, understand it and know that something serious is about to be said. The actual TV grabs your attention successfully because it is set against a black back drop so there is nothing else to look at. The TV also gradually zooms in closer to hold the audience's attention. While the news reporter is saying the prologue, a broken ring appears beside her in a graphic. The ring symbolizes a broken relationship/ marriage which hints to the audience about what the film is about. This all gives a serious start to the film, indicating the seriousness of what is to come.

In Fair Verona…

The prologue is then repeated by a man's voice. This is to make sure the audience understands so they can follow the rest of the film. This is also like a modern-day trailer, which is the modern-day equivalent of a prologue.

Voice over is a familiar part of our lives - more so than the traditional prologue.

- Look at the image.
  - What do you hear?
  - How are the shots edited?
  - Explain what you see.
- Discuss what you think is suggested by what you see and hear.

The towers are also taller than the statue of Jesus and the rest of the city. This suggests they think they're bigger than God. The statue looks like it's trying to keep the peace between the two families.
Because the statue is smaller than the towers, it looks like peace-keeping is unsuccessful.

The use of the Coca Cola sign style and skyscrapers sets us in the modern day USA instead of Shakespearean England. Skyscrapers and advertising suggest the importance of money to this society too.

The other signposts are in Shakespearean language, creating a fictional world.

Music is highly charged and dramatic operatic music - love, betrayal and DEATH! feuding etc all appear as facets of opera. High tension and drama are features of opera.

Pacing of shots is very fast at times to show the high drama and excitement the director wants us to see.

The towers instantly show the audience that the two families are important as they are taller than the rest of the city. Montague tower is slightly taller and nicer looking.
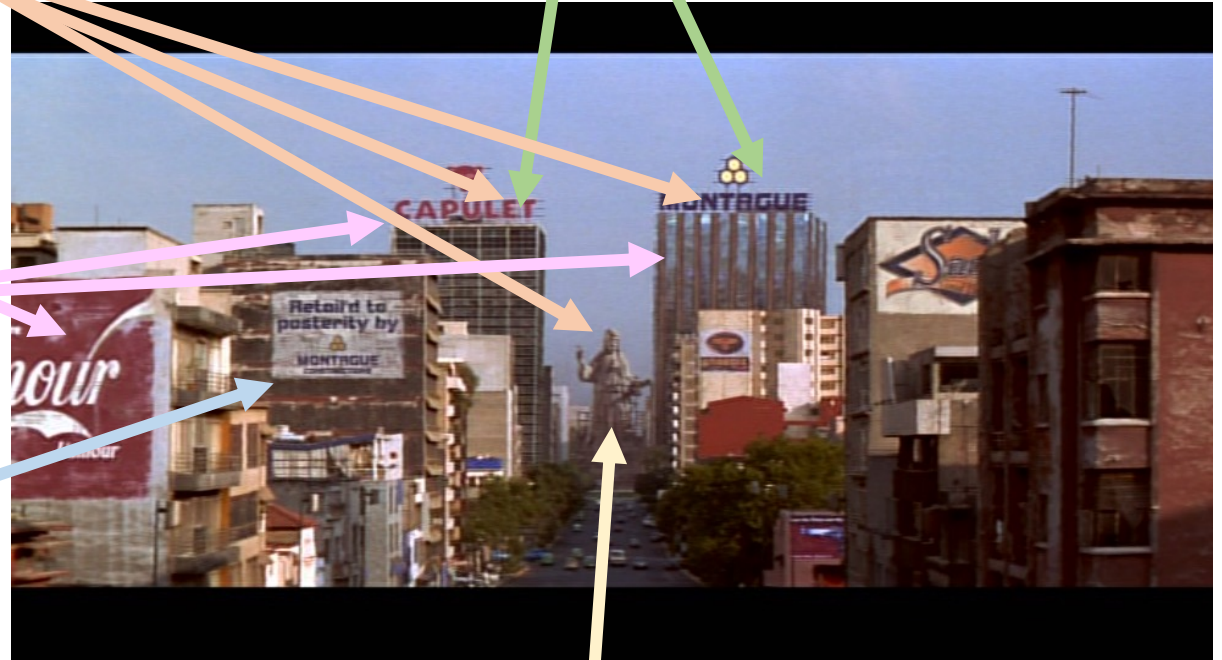
Religious iconography used - shows division between the two families and how they are more dominant than religion. This is a recurring motif throughout the film.

The opening effectively establishes the setting - Verona Beach, a fictional location - a 'young' vibrant type of place much like Venice Beach in Miami. It is dominated by the two families (conflict) and by the Amour sign (love).

The Petrol (Gas) Station Scene

The gas station scene is important as it sets the scene for the rest of film – it has to grab the audience and because of this there is a lot of action and visual techniques.

The setting of a petrol station lets the audience know that something dramatic will happen. It is a flammable and volatile environment.

The camera zooms in on these signs.

Explain how each image helps create a dramatic start to the opening scene. What is suggested by the words on each sign.
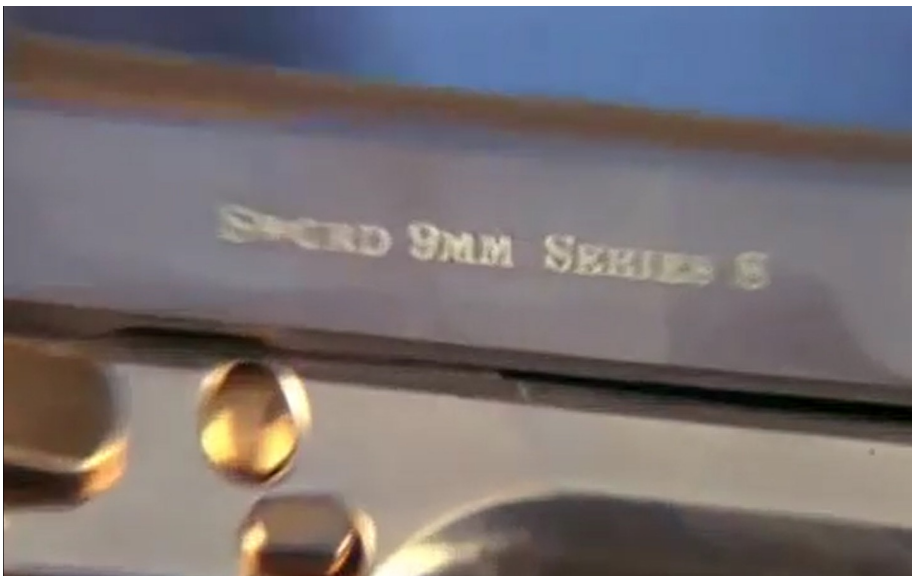
Extreme close up

- Focuses on a small detail of a person's face to show emotion.

- Focuses on a small detail of an object to create a character.

- Focuses on a small detail of an object to support meaning/ add clues or important information.

Activity:
- Explain why each of these shots has been used.
- What sound effects come along with these?
- Pick one of the examples and then explain WHAT IMPACT the shot has.

Cowboy Shot

- The Cowboy Shot frames the subject from roughly mid-thighs up.

- It's called a "cowboy shot" because it is used in Westerns to frame a gunslinger's gun or holster on his hip.

Task: look at this shot:
- the movement of the **camera**
- the use of **sound**
- his **costume**
- the **close up** shots of him. Look at what comes before and after this shot.

Explain what you learn about Tybalt from these details.

Example paragraph:

Topic sentence

Point

Evidence

Analysis

Link to question

An important key scene in the film is the petrol station fight scene. Luhrmann has uses non-diegetic sound techniques to help an audience distinguish between the rival families. The music in the soundtrack is fun and carefree for the Montague boys with the boisterous rap song 'the boys, the boys' being associated with them. This makes them seem wild and fun, carefree. The audience is supposed to identify more with these boys. The Capulets have a totally different sound: their song is like the soundtrack to an old western and it creates a menacing tone, which helps an audience understand them. Tybalt also is given sound effects like spurs when he walks, showing he is like and old fashioned gunfighter. Both types of music establish the characters well at the start of the film.

The use of mise en scene also helps establish a lot about the characters. Their costumes are modern so they fit in with this day and are used to show the audience the difference in personalities. The Capulets are dressed in black leathers, religious attire and they have slick black hair. This is to give the audience the impression that they are sleek and dangerous. The Montagues are dressed in open Hawaiian shirts and shorts which again reflects their fun and carefree character. Tybalt, a Capulet, is precise and controlled in movement while Benvolio, a Montague, is more casual in dress and manner, and seems more relaxed. This makes it easy for a modern audience to identify groups visually. We are supposed to sympathise with the laid back Montagues and the Capulets are coded as the villains. This binary opposition is effectively established from the very start of the film.

Following Up

Character analysis of Tybalt – antagonist.

Representation of Romeo/ Juliet – protagonists.

Representation of the two different families - conflict

Other key scenes:

The ball/ Romeo and Juliet first meet

Mercutio and Tybalt die

Romeo's final scene/ the death of the lovers

Building confidence

- If you've started with a tried and tested favourite…
- Get confident
- Start to build up your active learning techniques
- Evaluate what's worked and what you would do again
- Apply them to new texts.
- Collaborate and don't reinvent the wheel!