

Selected Scene: Saving Private Ryan (1998), 04:32 - 07:32 time sequence

YouTube video link:

Google Drive back-up link:

Voice Over Script

Draft #3

(541 words)

Saving Private Ryan Clip - 04:32-07:32

Cinematography - Camera movement/Angles/Framing Mise-en-scene, Editing & Sound

Opening (14s) - *Location & mood is set as we "Tilt Down" to reveal the setting of a calm beach on an overcast day. The sound and motion of the waves is calming. Tank traps in the water, along with date and location shown on screen confirm we are in war Narrative. The calm before the storm. [Delete this]*

[Replace with...]

A "Tilt Down" reveals a calm beach on an overcast day. The sound and motion of the waves is calming. Tank traps in the water, along with date and location shown on screen confirm we are in war Narrative. The calm before the storm.

Next shot (15-25s)

A High angle shot capturing the boat and its environment, Spielberg is easing us into the action, preparing us for the battle. Switching to a handheld shot on board, shaking and jolting as the boat manoeuvres through rough seas. We get the feeling we're right there with them.

On board Boat (25-57s)

A close up of a shaking hand reveals something about this character, is it nerves? Battle fatigue? Or something else? The camera follows his hand, tilting up and back down in the motion of him drinking, lifting his head to reveal their leader, Captain Miller, then pulling back to reveal his troops. The framing and cinematography of this shot is superb. It reveals that this character is of importance to the story and to the survival of his troops. The mise-en-scene

builds an accurate picture and makes us feel like we're there, capturing the mood. Frightened. Scared. Vomiting.

(59s-1m:53s)

The driver delivers the first dialogue of the film, some 5 ½ minutes in. The captain & sergeant then follow giving their parting advice. The lack of dialog up until this point allows the mise-en-scene & shot sequences to tell the narrative. Allowing us to take it all in without distracting us with dialog. (Metz, 1974, p. 25).

The combination of cinematography, sound, mise-en-scene, special fx and editing brings the narrative all together with the action starting to intensify. Using the hand held shot we focus in on individual faces, changing from "Close-up" to "Big Close-up" framing, Spielberg wants us to see the fear on their faces and give us an insight to their thoughts. Moving between each character we witness their reactions to their environment as we hear explosions off camera. The prayers signify last rite commendation before crossing the threshold into the new world.

Landing (1m:54s-2m:20s)

A Low Angle, medium shot with the door lowing as a clever transition editing technique to reveal the soldiers in front of us being shot, we're made to look. Blood splatter on camera and all. The random camera movements as a POV shot feels as if you are with them, intensifies the action and portrays panic.

The high angle looking down from behind the enemy gunner portrays power, whilst the low angle reverse of this immediately after shows the weakness and vulnerability of the troops landing.

Into the Water (2m:20s-3m:00s)

We jump into the water to escape the barrage. Spielberg really wants us to feel the panic to survive. The water colour changes from murky to blue indicating their freedom for a brief moment. But as they sink and drown trapped by the gear that is supposed to save them, the blue disappears along with their freedoms as they die. Mise-en-scene in this sequence reveals to us that they are not even safe below the water, with some being shot below the surface as well as above. There is no escape.

Closing quote

Speilberg's aim was "...to show how, through the lens alone, how cinematographers approximate the character of a tumultuous and terrifying day in ways that are surprisingly similar and profoundly different". (Binns & Ryder, 2015, pp. 86-99).

Reference List (Script)

Binns, D., & Ryder, P. (2015). Re-viewing D-Day: The cinematography of the Normandy landings from the Signal Corps to Saving Private Ryan. *Media, War & Conflict*, 8(1), 86-99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635214540069>

Metz, C. (1974). *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* (M. Taylor, Trans.). Oxford University Press (Original work published in 1971).

Super Color Digital. (2020, December 18). *The Meaning of the Color Blue*.
The Meaning of the Color Blue | Super Color Digital

Project Reflections

Mid-Project Reflection:

(773 words total)

Process

I work full time, so my project & time management skills need to be good to ensure I hit the checkpoint goals, complete the tasks outlined for the overall project to ensure an on time submission. I am confident in my project management, but time management could use some work. Whilst I have great work ethic & dedication, I find that I spend a lot of time pondering thoughts and getting my head around the task before I start.

A good time management tip given on orientation day by a current student at SAE that has stuck with me was “start chipping away at your projects as soon as you can to really help reduce stress and keep on track”. I took this onboard and have formed a weekly check list of the tasks to complete, not only for Project 1, but for general class study as well, to hit key checkpoints. I have found this has worked to keep me on track and focused.

I could improve on my time management. Although I am confident at this point that I will complete the project & submit on time, I feel I can strengthen my initial prep time and understanding. Sometimes you just have to start, make mistakes on the way and learn from them to gain a greater understanding rather than executing it perfectly the first time.

Person

While no collaboration required in this project being a solo one, I have found working in class with my peers & facilitator to discuss weekly topics, Film of the Week, other relevant film clips and this project has helped develop my collaboration and communication skills by listening to, and offering feedback, breaking into small discussion groups and reporting to the class our thoughts & views.

Although I haven't spent as much time seeking feedback as I would have liked, I have really enjoyed the feedback process over the past 2 weeks. I have spoken to Renee to make sure my observations table, reflection notes and script are on track. Chris Moore & I have traded feedback on one and others work which I have found encouraging and constructive. As well as that I have received from Renee on reflections, referencing and script drafts. I also attribute my

wife for some great feedback outside of class toward the end of the process which has helped to fine tune my work.

I would like to receive as well as to be able to give more constructive written feedback earlier on in the process of a project to be able to improve my work and that of my peers as I believe as a group we are stronger and better learners. I might like to try an out of class method such as email, slack or even a google form to seek out and give back constructive and encouraging feedback.

Proficiency

Research & thinking critically would be an area I am least confident in. Research or referencing were not my forte before, so this is very new to me. With each week of class and completing our project work, I'm getting into the habit of integrating research more into my learning which is assisting with being more comfortable in this area. Development of my critical thinking skills is being assisted by the constant analysis of film clips in class, although a visual medium, it is helping me take in information, evaluate it and articulate what I am seeing.

Previous to studying at SAE, I was of the understanding that the story, plot & narrative were all terms to describe "The Story". Whilst the two concepts are related, they also have a distinct difference. Kolker describes the story as "This is what the film tells us, the process of events the characters go through and enact.", plot as "the abstract scheme of that story, what we summarise after we've seen the film, what film reviewers give us." and narrative as "the actual telling of the story, the way the story is put together, formed, and articulated." (Kolker, 2015, p. 48).

This not only gave me an understanding of the differences between the terms Story, Plot & Narrative, but also a good lead into Film Forms, coming up in the following weeks with Narrative being the essence of all the film forms coming together to tell the story & reveal the plot.

I can improve on the first half of the project by constantly developing and applying research and critical thinking skills throughout my learning of the Film Forms to gain a greater understanding of the forms as well as being able to analyse our chosen clip for this project and apply these learnings to better articulate this in my narration.

Reference List (Mid Reflections)

Kolker, R. (2015). *Film, form, and culture* (4th ed., p.48). Taylor & Francis.

Project-Completion Reflection:

(697 words total)

Appraisal:

Overall I think I completed a successful project, I am happy with the end result that I am submitting. I worked through three different versions of my script and the completed clip, citing and taking on board feedback along the way from my facilitator, peers & my wife, making the necessary changes and completing a project I think is worthy of submitting.

I found the process of initially watching the clip and voicing my script over it worked well to ensure what I was saying aligned with the clip & point I was making. I had to make several adjustments at the start to the script as I found I was too long winded in some areas and too short in others. This was really helpful. It allowed me to make most adjustments before I recorded the dialogue. I recorded my voice over in paragraphs, cataloguing them, then adding them to the clip using Davinci Resolve. I found this made it easier to arrange over my clip rather than in one continuous take. What I found challenging was differentiating between not being analytical enough of the film forms and falling into the trap of being too descriptive of the narrative. I had some great feedback that allowed me to make a few tweaks to ensure that I had enough analytical content to describe the deeper meanings behind things and dive deeper into the subtext.

My expectation at the start of this project when I read the brief was that I had no idea what any of these terms of film form meant and feared that I was going to refer to them in the wrong way at the wrong time and miss the subtextual meanings. The only thing I was confident in, was putting the clip and narration together using Davinci Resolve as I had used it before once or twice so I was quietly confident on this front.

Challenges:

Some obstacles I faced was the initial ripping of the clip of my chosen sequence. Although it was pointed out afterwards that I could have simply got it from YouTube, I captured it from Netflix which presented problems in itself as Netflix blocks any screen capture! But after some google research and the change of a few settings, then downloading "OSB", screen capture software, I was able to get a few clips ripped to bring into Davinci Resolve, so I could choose accurately, the scene I want to narrate.

I was overwhelmed at the start of all these different terms of film form and whether I would be able to grasp an understanding enough in time to be able to complete this project. But I learned that little by little each week, things started to make more sense and I had a greater understanding because of it. If they didn't, I would do some research to dig deeper so I would understand. For example I learned a number of things whilst completing this project including the difference between Story, Plot & Narrative (as referenced earlier in my Mid-point reflections), the difference between Diegetic & Non-Diegetic sound (MasterClass, 2021) and the importance of the cinematographer, and what their job entails (MasterClass, 2021).

Future Goals:

I feel I can manage my time more efficiently across the board. Whilst I feel I have a great work ethic and a dedicated mind to succeed, I feel room for improvement on the efficiencies of how I complete my work. This time I used Davinci Resolve to edit this project. Next time I will dive into Premiere Pro and start to learn this, as this is more widely used in the industry and would be of benefit to me to be across both programs to make me more employable in the future. I have already downloaded and started a few tutorials to get familiar. Research!.I will continue to research the things that I am unsure about to reinforce these facts or ideas I am learning about or need more clarification on. This worked to great effect in this project and I benefited a great deal learning a lot and building on things I only knew the basics of. This gave me the confidence I needed to complete this project.

Reference List (Completion Reflections)

Kolker, R. (2015). *Film, form, and culture* (4th ed., p.48). Taylor & Francis

MasterClass. (2021, September 4). *Diegetic Sound and Non-Diegetic Sound: What's the Difference? - 2023 - MasterClass*.
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/diegetic-sound-and-non-diegetic-sound-whats-the-difference>

MasterClass. (2021, October 2). *Film 101: What Is Cinematography and What Does a Cinematographer Do? - 2023 - MasterClass*.
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/film-101-what-is-cinematography-and-what-does-a-cinematographer-do>

Reference List (Overall Project)

- Binns, D., & Ryder, P. (2015). Re-viewing D-Day: The cinematography of the Normandy landings from the Signal Corps to Saving Private Ryan. *Media, War & Conflict*, 8(1), 86-99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635214540069>
- Eisenstein, S. (1957). *The film sense* (J. Leyda, Ed. & Trans., pp.157-181). Meridian Books. (Original work published 1942)
- Kolker, R. (2015). *Film, form, and culture* (4th ed., p.48). Taylor & Francis
- MasterClass. (2021, September 4). *Diegetic Sound and Non-Diegetic Sound: What's the Difference? - 2023 - MasterClass*.
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/diegetic-sound-and-non-diegetic-sound-whats-the-difference>
- MasterClass. (2021, October 2). *Film 101: What Is Cinematography and What Does a Cinematographer Do? - 2023 - MasterClass*.
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/film-101-what-is-cinematography-and-what-does-a-cinematographer-do>
- Metz, C. (1974). *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* (M. Taylor, Trans.). Oxford University Press (Original work published in 1971).
- Speidel, S. (2011). Conventions, Hollywood, art and avant-garde cinema. In J. Nelmes (Ed.), *Introduction to film studies* (pp. 81–87). Taylor & Francis.
- Spielberg, S. (Director). (1998). *Saving Private Ryan* [Film]. Paramount Pictures (0:04:32-0:07:32)
- Super Color Digital. (2020, December 18). *The Meaning of the Color Blue*.
[The Meaning of the Color Blue | Super Color Digital](https://www.supercolor.com/the-meaning-of-the-color-blue)

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| Scene/Sequence: Opening Action Sequence IN PART (4:32-7:32) Film: Saving Private Ryan Director: Steven Spielberg Year: 1998 | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| TIME (Note the time in HH:MM:SS for each interesting moment) | The Cinematic Formal Elements | | | | |
| | MISE-EN-SCENE (Setting, props, blocking, costume) | CINEMATOGRAPHY (Shot size, framing, angle, movement) | SOUND (Diegetic/non-diegetic, music, sound FX, ambience) | EDITING (What kind of edit? Cutting from - to?) | NARRATIVE (Story, plot, cause & effect, time, space) |
| 00:04:38 | Tank traps in water, definitely a war scene, cloudy & glooming creates mood. | Establishing shot, panning down from sky to beach shore finishing at Low angle. | All is quiet & calm except for the diegetic sound of waves breaking on shore. | On screen text establishing location & time before hard cut to rough seas on landing craft. | Establishes mood & setting, calm before the storm. |
| 00:04:48 | Landing craft, soldiers dressed for battle, sets the scene for what they're about to do. Vomiting over the side due to rough seas or from anticipation of what's to come. | Shaky shots from one boats point of view capturing the others everytime boats hit swell and spray over them, it shakes. Like we're there on board. | Diegetic sound of waves crashing when boat hits them, engine noise, loud and hard to hear. | Cut from calm shores of beach to roughness of boats ploughing through waves. | Juxtaposition of previous shot, calm waters to rough seas, building to horrors of war to come. This is how they enter the battle. |
| 00:04:58 to 00:05:18 | His acting, showing his hand shaking, a weakness maybe, battle fatigue, nerves, canteen, costume, cleanish looking, shadowing of eyes | Close-up of shaky hand, opening canteen panning up to show a soldier drinking as head goes up and back down with the motion then | Diegetic sound of background noise from previous establishing shot, metal canteen he's drinking from. | Flow of continuous shot helps with the reveal of the character and helps create context of where he is rather than cutting from one to the other. | Reveals one of main characters, gives us intrigue to his shaking hand which is referenced several times throughout the film, establishes he is |

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| | from helmet, Chiaroscuro lighting. | raised head to reveal his identity of a key character. Camera swaying from side to side from boat movement. | | | the men's leader from captain markings on the helmet, building suspense to what is about to unfold. |
| 00:05:29 | Costume, props all add to setting, location, actors and their expressions help to set mood and establish fear of whats to come | Dolly shot backwards from the captain, revealing his men before him | Diegetic sound of soldiers vomiting. Background noises previously established. | | Anticipation & suspense building mood, nervousness, scaredness, sea sickness, |
| 00:05:30 to 00:05:54 | Rifles in bags to protect from water and sand, costumes, they're all wet from rough seas, actors dialogue invoking trust and reassurance, confidence. | Focus on driver when he gives the ETA, front & centre, back ground in focus. Focus shot on captain while speaking to the men on his boat, other boat in back ground out of focus helps convey that this story is not about them its about him and his men. Camera movement still moving with boat | Dialogue is the only focus in this sequence of shots to establish instruction, last remarks, if you do these things we'll all make it through together, kind of like a pep talk before a game to inspire the men that they can do it. The first bit of dialogue and the last for a while. | Hard cut between different shots, following instructions from driver, Captain, to his sargent & back to Captain to the soldiers creating a sense of last minute remarks before the battle. Creates flow of dialogue all communicating something different. | Dialogue establishes that the hardest part of this mission is to get from the boat to safety, the anticipation of the battle becoming heightened and real, about to exit the safety of the boat into the unknown. |

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | from the soldiers point of view to make it feel like you are there. | | | |
| 00:05:54 to 00:06:23 | Rembrandt Lighting here on the soldiers faces is very dark and shadowy building suspense & anticipation, eyes are almost not visible like they don't want us to see them, get to know them alluding to the fact they won't last the battle. Actor expressions say it all. Scared shitless. | Close up of the soldiers and their reactions to the shellings, showing fear, praying, camera still moving with the boat. | Diegetic sound of bombings or explosions, heightening the fact that they're getting close to shore, creating anticipation and suspense of what is about to happen. Also heightening the fear of the men to us. | Cuts and tracks between different soldiers on boat, introducing us to a couple of key characters through the film. This cutting is showing us the different types of people that make up soldiers, young, old, religious or not, kind of like a montage of the fallen if you like. | All of this building and building suspense, the Battle is about to begin. |
| 00:06:23 to 00:06:37 | Bullets flying, blood splatter on the camera/screen, actors/soldiers falling where they stand, not even off the boat. | Low shot from outside the boat from where the danger's perspective showing them standing tall, brave but sitting ducks, then jumps back on boards and gives us a soldiers perspective as they are all ambushed as if we | Special effects of the bullets hitting soldiers, ricocheting bullets off boat, diegetic sound of the soldiers yelling & moaning in pain and being shot, loud! We certainly know they're under attack and the battle has begun. | The cuts between their opening onto the battlefield when the door opens, from the danger's/enemy's perspective then back to the soldiers perspective really shows the quickness of how it all unfolded. | The mese-en-scene really sets the scene of the brutal nature of war, how horrific it is with blood splatter on the screen/camera really tells this story well and what these men must have experienced landing on that beach. |

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | were there with them witnessing the horrific mass death | | | |
| 00:06:37 to 00:06:52 | Location of the beach landing showing dead bodies, tank trap props, landing boards, then the fort/bunker where all of the firing is coming from, the coastline, rugged clips | A high angle/long shot zoom from the enemy's gunner perspective where the danger and death is stemming from and just how they were sitting ducks from that perspective. A lot didn't stand a chance. Frantic nature of the battle with the steadicam shot running behind the gunners. This becomes a shot/reverse shot of the fighting going from the high nature of where the firing is coming from, back down to the soldiers on the boat perspective looking | The loud ringing out of the machine guns & shells flying, special FX. Gives a feel of a massacre happening. | Changing from the beach landing craft perspective to the enemy causing all that death and pain gives us a perspective of the enormity of the fight and the disadvantage they had defeating them. Then switching back to perspective of landing boat looking up at where the firing is coming from and the cliffs gives perspective of the fight. | In order to live they must overcome this hurdle and find a way out as they are just getting slaughtered trying to exit the landing craft and make it to the beach. this scene give a sense of urgency to the situation, if they don't hurry, they will die. |

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| | | back at the bunker where the firing is coming from. | | | |
| 00:06:52 to 00:07:21 | Location, in the water, under water, soldiers jump in to save their life from all of the machine guns with various weapons & ammunition, costumes, weighing them down, very things designed to save their life in battle, ends up killing some of them, trapping them under water. Colour blue under water indicating coldness, either temperature or coldness of death. Trapped. | Camera jumping from the boat into the water with the soldiers, like you're right there with them. Going from safety underwater to above constantly then an underwater shot shows its not safe even under water. | Fighting, yelling, loudness of guns firing, explosions, lots of special effects, to the quiet eariness and tranquillity like nature under water but the fight still can't be escaped with sounds of bullets still heard through the water. Underwater sound FX help make it feel like we are under water too | Using the camera into the water as fades to other shots and then they turn into an underwater (blue like shot) cutting to different shots in some quick concession conveys panic like nature than holds on soldier gasping for his last breaths who is now at peace compared to the chaotic nature above the surface. | showing that surviving, not only thru the dangers of battle, but also the surroundings when trying to take cover and avoid the obvious dangers. Time is frantic with everyone running like crazy people. Horrors of war are everywhere. |
| 00:07:21 to 00:07:32 | | Camera shot following the soldier trying to save another ducking above and below water, showing what | | | This shot sequence of one soldier saving another reveals the theme of the movie "Saving Private Ryan" we don't know who that |

Scene/Sequence Analysis Breakdown Grid

Mark each moment of interest in the 'Time' column, and make notes—in respective columns—on what occurs with each formal element

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | they're dealing with underwater and above. Iconic shot of saving a soldier. Sets up the theme of the movie, | | | is yet but the heroic nature that is embedded in war, is show to us early one. One man risking himself to save another. |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|