

Rear Window

Analytical Essay Topics for SAC & Exam Practice

Students are required to write an analytical interpretation of the text in response to the chosen question/topic. The answer must be supported by close reference to the text. Approximate length 800 – 1000 words.

1. How does *Rear Window* successfully combine the genres of thriller and romance?
2. 'While Hitchcock has created *Rear Window* in the genre of a thriller, its focus is more on the ordinary than the extraordinary.' Discuss.
3. How does the film-maker use cinematic techniques to explore the social, cultural and political contexts?
4. To what extent does *Rear Window* offer the audience a Hollywood happy ending?
5. How do the filmmakers encourage us to sympathise with Jeff despite his flaws?
6. "I'm going to make this a week you'll never forget."
'In *Rear Window* it is Lisa who controls the way in which events play out.' Do you agree?
7. 'In *Rear Window*, Lisa subverts the male gaze.'
8. "You think either one of us could ever change?" How much do Jeff and Lisa change in the course of the film?
9. Hitchcock manipulates the viewer to become the voyeur rather than Jeffries.' Do you agree?
10. 'Jeff can only achieve his desire to solve a murder through his co-operation with and reliance upon the looks and actions of women.'
11. 'Jeff represents the emasculated post-war American man while the female characters have a range of possibilities for females in this era, though not necessarily a range of choices.' Discuss.
12. 'L. B. Jeffries and Lars Thorwald are equally villainous.' Do you agree?
13. "We're two of the most frightening ghouls I've ever known."
'Few of the characters in this text behave in a moral or ethical way.' Discuss.
14. 'The moments in the film when the audience is allowed to view events from their perspective, unguided by L. B. Jeffries, most clearly communicates Hitchcock's message.' Discuss.
15. How are the characters in the apartments used by Hitchcock to reflect aspects of Jeff and Lisa, and their relationship?
16. '*Rear Window* not only tells the viewer where to look, it also determines our judgement of the events that unfolds.' Discuss.
17. '*Rear Window* effectively warns its viewers of the evil that exists beneath the surface.' Discuss.
18. '*Rear Window* asserts that the urban environment facilitates destructive loneliness and isolation.' Discuss.
19. 'The film leaves the audience with the conviction that there are many ways of looking at and understanding the world.' To what extent do you agree?

20. How does *Rear Window* force its audience to question the values and roles expected of the characters by their society?
21. To what extent can *Rear Window* be seen as representing American society in the early 1950s?
22. 'The film's emphasis on appearance and social and economic status is shown to be a veneer to disguise loneliness and a chilling alienation from other people.' Discuss.
23. How does Hitchcock suggest that there is a strong connection between our private and our public lives?
24. 'Throughout *Rear Window*, there is a constant tension between appearance and reality.' Discuss.
25. "We're a nation of Peeping Toms." To what extent does Hitchcock endorse this idea in *Rear Window*?
26. '*Rear Window*' argues that people should mind their own business.' Do you agree?
27. '*Rear Window* is at once critical and sympathetic of the human urge to watch.' Discuss.
28. 'The idea of guilt is central to this film.' Discuss.
29. '*Rear Window*' shows how easy it is to be deceived by appearances.' Discuss.
30. '*Rear Window* explores how very few people behave in moral and ethical ways.' Do you agree?
31. "There can't be that much difference between people and the way they live." Does *Rear Window* show this to be true?
32. "I'm gonna do something drastic ... I'm gonna get married and then I'll never be able to go anywhere." '*Rear Window* presents a cynical view of marriage.' Do you agree?
33. '*Rear Window* presents a cynical view of romantic relationships.' Discuss.
34. To what extent does the whole film revolve around marriage?
35. 'Hitchcock's film presents marriage as a necessary evil.' Do you agree?
36. 'The film *Rear Window* is much more about the relationships between men and women than it is about solving a crime.' Discuss.
37. 'The women in *Rear Window* are presented as being just as dependent on men as they are independent.' Discuss.
38. To what extent do the female characters of the film both criticise the values of their world, yet also act as guides for the male characters?
39. '*Rear Window* ultimately depicts women as dependent on men.' Discuss.
40. How does *Rear Window* suggest that relationships between men and women are not always easy?
41. 'The characters in *Rear Window* crave companionship and belonging.'
42. 'In *Rear Window* Hitchcock demonstrates that appearances can be deceiving.' Discuss.