Hints for the Final Film Critique:

- **Start from the beginning and re-watch the film if you have not seen it recently.**
  - It is beneficial to watch the film more than once. This will help you become more familiar with the film and help you to better use the film as examples of the technical elements in your paper. Watching a film more than once can also help you to see some of the nuances that you may have missed in a previous viewing of the film.

- **Discuss narrative other elements of storytelling.**
  - Remember that every film is telling a story. How does the screenwriter tell the story? Consider whether or not a film is told in real time, episodic in nature, or is the narrative cut in pieces? Is the narrative chronological, also called linear, or non-linear? Does the film use literary elements such as symbols, metaphors, or irony in the telling of the story? Is the film meant to be an allegory or a satire? How does dialogue affect the story? Does plot or character drive the film forward? Is the story told in flashback? How does the use of flashback affect the film?

- **Discuss acting and character.**
  - How does acting style affect a character? Did any roles in the film appear to be miscast? Did the star persona distract from the character that an actor was trying to portray? Was the actor able to disappear into the role? Were you, as the audience, able to forget the actor who was portraying the character and focus on the individual character? How does the actor use dialogue to reveal his/her character? How does the screenwriter use dialogue to reveal the motivations of a character? Does how a character moves give you an impression of the type of character he/she is? How does the costume affect the way you view a character?

- **Discuss cinematography and visual style.**
  - Be sure to consider the techniques the filmmakers use to establish a visual effect for the audience.   A filmmaker`s visual style choices are as important to telling a story and communicating emotion as any other aspect of the film. What was it that drew you to the film in the first place? How does the use of color or lack of color affect you as a viewer? Does color play a significant role in the film? How does the film make you feel when you see it? Does the camera movement affect the feeling of the film? For instance, what does rapid camera movement depict? How does the director use space to convey the setting? For example, a narrow focus can give the impression of tight spaces. Is there a difference between watching a film in widescreen or full screen? How is a scene composed? On what does the director want you to focus? What is prominent in the foreground and what is still visible in the background? A film is a series of pictures kind of like a moving photo album. Which pictures stand out in your mind? Why? How do special effects affect the way a film is perceived?

- **Discuss film's major types of shots and shot sequences as well as tempo and mood.**
  - The type of shots and shot sequences used in a film can affect the overall tempo and mood of the film. The film editor often works with the director to create the finished film. How does the type of shots used in a film affect the look of a film? Does the arrangement of shots give the film a certain pace? What is the rhythm and pacing of the film? Did the film seem to slow down in areas? Did the various cuts between scenes give the audience a certain perspective and create a mood for the film? How do the shot lengths reflect what is going on in various scenes? How do the shot sequences of a film establish the mood?

- **Discuss music and sound.**
  - Be sure to consider that, similar to visual style, filmmakers use sound and music strongly affects an audience`s response and interpretation of the film. Be sure to consider what roles sound and music play in different parts of film as well as how

they affect the overall presentation of the film. How does the music indicate the mood of a film? Can you tell what may happen in a film based on the music playing? Think about key musical themes. Which stick out in your mind? Are there certain things that you think of when you hear specific music? What kind of emotion does the musical score of the film produce? Are sound effects and automated dialogue recording (ADR) important to the film? How? How does the sound mix affect a film?

- **Discuss directing style.**
  - The director provides the overarching vision and look of the film. How does the director approach the subject matter of the film? What patterns and techniques does the director employ in the film to set the mood of the film? Does the director fall into the auteur theory of filmmaking in which the director is the author of the film imprinting it with his/her own personal vision? Does the director demonstrate a technical competence within the film? Is the film well-made? Does the film have a distinguishable personality? In other words, without seeing the credits, is the audience able to discern who the director is based solely on the style of the film? Looking briefly at the director's body of work, is there a specific theme or idea that is being repeated from film to film? How does this interior meaning manifest itself within the context of this specific film? Is the director working with actors that he/she has worked with previously? How did the director shape the story? What point-of-view does he/she use within the film?

- **Discuss potential societal impact.**
  - Remember that a film need not only be for entertainment purposes. A film can impact the audience in numerous ways. Did the film address a controversial societal or political issue? Is the film an allegory for a societal or political issue? How did the film portray this issue? What was the director trying to say about the issue through the film? Is the purpose of the film simply to allow the viewer a

sense of escape from daily life? Has the film been censored for content or language issues?

- **Discuss genre.**
  - Remember that different genres of film have different purposes and audiences. Be sure to define and analyze the appropriate genre of the film and its purpose. Consider whether the movie you are discussing falls into the genre of sci-fi, drama, action, war story, horror, romantic comedy, etc. Did you, as the audience, have certain expectations of the film based on its genre? What are some of the conventions of specific genre films? Does this film break from certain conventions of the genre?
- **Use specific examples from the film.** This helps to reinforce and support your ideas about the film. It also gives the reader a frame of reference when discussing how the various elements are used within the film.

- **Be sure to cite everything**. All films used as well as your textbook should have in-text citations as well entries on the reference page. The in-text citation for a film should be the director's last name and year of release: (Spielberg, 1993). The director should be the main citation as the film is being used as an example of the director's work instead of using information from the film as research. Please format the reference entry for the film as follows:

Spielberg, S. (Director). (1993). Schindler's list. [Motion Picture]. USA: Universal

  Pictures & Amblin Entertainment.

If you choose to use information from a special feature on the DVD, the in-text citation should include the producer(s)' name(s) along with the director: (Lustig, Molen, & Spielberg, 1993). The reference entry should be formatted as follows:

Lustig, B. (Producer)., Molen, G.R. (Producer), & Spielberg, S. (Producer & Director).

(1993). Voices from the list. *Schindler's list*. [DVD Special Features]. USA:

Universal Pictures & Amblin Entertainment.

- **Check your formatting and grammar.** Do you have a title page and header? Is your paper double spaced? Are paragraphs indented? Did you proofread closely to eliminate spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors?

- **Review the week 5 rubric.** Have you discussed all of the necessary elements?