

## **SUPPORTING MULTIMODAL LITERACY: SUPPLEMENT 10**

### **Television and Film Analysis Questions \***

#### **Opening**

- How does the piece begin?
- How are the characters introduced?
- What is the setting (time and place)?
- What are the elements of mis-en-scene (or the physical elements of the production, such as costumes, props, sets)?

#### **Editing and Camera Work**

- How are individual scenes edited? Fades? Dissolves? Abrupt cuts?
- How does the editing affect the overall narrative or our understanding of certain characters or plot lines?
- Are there longer scenes with fewer cuts or shorter edits? Or is there a mix?
- What is the relationship between some of the edits—does the ordering of or juxtapositions of scenes or characters in quick succession affect the plot or characters?

#### **Camera Work**

- How do the camera angles in key scenes affect our understanding of characters or plot?
- Is the camera work smooth or unstable? Does the camera work have a handheld quality? Or is it shot in such a way that we forget the camera is present?
- Does camera angle create a sense of power or diminishment by shooting subjects from below or above?
- How are key shots composed? What is in the foreground and background? Does the relationship of items in the frame comment on the overall themes or content?
- What is presented in close up? How do these choices affect the content?
- How does lighting affect the mood or tone of the piece?

#### **Sound**

- How does the music add to the mood of the piece? Does it foreshadow aspects of the plot, heighten tension, or shape our understanding of key characters or plot lines?
- Are there sound effects included, such as laugh tracks or other noises, that add to the scenes?
- Are certain sounds or music related to key images or characters?
- Is any music recognizable? What are the implications of using this recognizable piece of music?
- Is there narration? Who is the narrator and what scenes do they narrate? What images accompany the narration?

#### **Themes**

- Who are the central characters, and what aspects of society do characters represent?
- What kinds of values are asserted by the piece? Is there a moral to the story? Does the story affirm or subvert common values?
- What might the central conflict of the piece be?
- How are key themes related to the context surrounding the piece?
- How does the ending of the piece resolve the overall conflict? Or raise questions?

*\* Some of these questions have been adapted from Frank Serafini's book Reading the Visual, from the chapter on Exploring Film*