**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Guide to Critical Assessment of Film**

The following questions should help you in your critical evaluation of your film choice(s) for your assigned essay. Please keep in mind that sophisticated film, like literature, requires more than one viewing to begin to appreciate its purpose beyond merely the plot. You will need to view your film(s) with this in mind. You should use some of these questions to complete the essay on your film.

**BACKGROUND**

Who is the writer of the film? Has the screenplay been adapted from another work?

Who is the director?

When was the film made?

**STRUCTURE / FORM**

What does the title mean in relation to the film as a whole?

How are the opening credits presented? Do they relate to meaning?

Why does the film start in the way that it does?

Are there any motifs (scenes, images) of dialogue which are repeated? What purpose do they serve?

What three or four sequences are most important in the film? Why?

FILM ANALYSIS TERMS

Is sound used in any vivid ways either to enhance the film? (i.e. Enhance drama, heighten tension, disorient the viewer, etc.)

How does the film use color or light/dark to suggest tone and mood in different scenes?

Are there any striking uses of perspective (seeing through a character's eyes, camera angle, etc.) How does this relate to the meaning of the scene?

How and when are scenes cut? Are there any patterns in the way the cuts function?

What specific scene constitutes the film's climax? How does this scene resolve the central issue of the film?

Does the film leave any disunity (loose ends) at the end? If so, what does it suggest?

Why does the film conclude on this particular image?

**RESEARCH**

**Director:**

How does the director view the topic of the film? What is his/her opinion?

**Source**:

What is he/she trying to accomplish?

**Source:**

How does he/she see the main characters?

**Source:**

What does he/she hope to accomplish with the film?

**Source:**

How well does this film relate to the director’s vision and purpose based on your research?

**Historical Research:**

Does the film represent a specific time period? Which time period?

In what way(s) does the film show this time period?

**Source:**

What specific historical events are important to this time period? Why?

**Source:**

Who are the important historical figures of this time period? What are they best known for?

**Source:**

How does this film relate to the historical information you have read on the topic?

**Thematic Tie / Symbolism:**

What message does the film seem to be conveying to viewers? How do you know?

**Message:** (State the message using a complete sentence. Do NOT use I, me, or you.)

**Evidence:** What happens in the movie that illustrates this message? Summarize a scene or moment in the movie that best illustrates this message.

**Symbols:** What items seem to carry special importance in the movie? Why? List 2-3 symbols and explain their significance.

What does the title of the movie really mean? Why do you believe the director/writer chose the title they did?

How does the title relate to the theme of the movie?