

Unit 3: Video

"In the right hands, a novel's beginning alone can make you feel like you've just fallen into a fast-flowing river, snatched away from reality and hurtled downhill. They range from hard-boiled pulp fiction to classics to, well, *The Bible*; the only thing they have in common is that they're so good it's impossible not to read on. Unfortunately, right now you can't. But you can share your mind's eye view of that special moment in a graphic representation of that moment in time..."

Assignment 1:

We are finally going to be starting on video! There is so much to learn when it comes to video and I hope you all enjoy this unit - it requires us to get out of the classroom a lot more.

For your first assignment you will be creating a 1-2 minute black and white video based on a words from the first paragraph of text from famous pieces of literature.

The beginning paragraph of any book is meant to help set the stage of a story so try to think of this work as a way to describe space and time and use the words as descriptors for the scene. Think about lighting, natural light, artificial light.

I will give you a lesson on the types of shots however I would like for you to shoot most of this imagery over the break - reason being is that you will have varying landscapes to work with that you won't have up here in Leysin. Try to get as much footage as you can - you will be graded on the proof of footage you took over the break.

This film will be silent and can be set to music so no need for a script - just think of ways to set the scene.

Key Words:

- Panning
- Tilting
- Dolly
- Trucking
- Wide Shot
- Medium Shot
- Close up

Quotes to choose from:

NORWEGIAN WOOD (HARUKI MURAKAMI)

I was 37 then, strapped in my seat as the huge 747 plunged through dense cloud cover on approach to Hamburg Airport. Cold November rains drenched the earth. Lending everything the gloomy air of a Flemish landscape: the ground crew in waterproofs, a flag atop a squat building, a BMW billboard. So - Germany again.

THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE (SHIRLEY JACKSON)

No live organism can continue for long to exist sanely under conditions of absolute reality; even larks and katydids are supposed, by some, to dream. Hill House, not sane, stood by itself against its hills, holding darkness within; it had stood so for eighty years and might stand for eighty more. Within, walls continued upright, bricks met neatly, floors were firm, and doors were sensibly shut; silence lay steadily against the wood and stone of Hill House, and whatever walked there, walked alone...

PRIDE & PREJUDICE (JANE AUSTEN)

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES (CHARLES DICKENS)

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the

season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way — in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

A FAREWELL TO ARMS (ERNEST HEMINGWAY)

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the leaves.

THE STRANGER (ALBERT CAMUS)

Mother died today. Or maybe yesterday, I don't know. I had a telegram from the home: 'Mother passed away. Funeral tomorrow. Yours sincerely.' That doesn't mean anything. It may have been yesterday.

AS I LAY DYING (FAULKNER)

Jewel and I come up from the field, following the path in single file. Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own.

The path runs straight as a plumb-line, worn smooth by feet and baked brick-hard by July, between the green rows of laidby cotton, to the cottonhouse in the center of the field, where it turns and circles the cottonhouse at four soft right angles and goes on across the field again, worn so by feet in fading precision.

The cottonhouse is of rough logs, from between which the chinking has long fallen. Square, with a broken roof set at a single pitch, it leans in empty and shimmering dilapidation in the sunlight, a single broad window in two opposite walls giving onto the approaches of the path. When we reach it I turn and follow the path which circles the house.

ALL THE PRETTY HORSES (CORMAC MCARTHY)

The candleflame and the image of the candleflame caught in the pierglass twisted and righted when he entered the hall and again when he shut the door. He took off his hat and came slowly forward. The floorboards creaked under his boots. In his black suit he stood in the dark glass where the lilies leaned so palely from their waisted cutglass vase. Along the cold hallway behind him hung the portraits of forebears only dimly known to him all framed in glass and dimly lit above the narrow wainscotting. He looked down at the guttered candlestub. He pressed his thumbprint in the warm wax pooled on the oak veneer. Lastly he looked at the face so caved and drawn among the folds of funeral cloth, the yellowed mustache, the eyelids paper thin. That was not sleeping. That was not sleeping.

LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN (JAMES AGEE)

But it is of these evenings, I speak. Supper was at six and was over by half past. There was still daylight, shining softly and with a tarnish, like the lining of a shell; and the carbon lamps lifted the corners were on in the light, and the locusts were started, and the fire flies were out, and a few frogs were flopping in the dewy grass, by the time the fathers and the children came out. The children ran out first hell bent and yelling those names by which they were known; then the fathers sank out leisurely crossed suspenders, their collars removed and their necks looking tall and shy. The mothers stayed back in the kitchen washing and drying, putting things away, recrossing their traceless footsteps like the lifetime journeys of bees, measuring out the dry cocoa for breakfast. When they came out they had taken off their aprons and their skirts were dampened and they sat in rockers on porches quietly. It is not of the games children play in the evening that I want to speak now, it is of a contemporaneous atmosphere that has little to do with them: that of fathers of families, each in his space of lawn, his shirt fishlike pale in the unnatural light and his face nearly anonymous, hosing their lawns. The hoses were attached at spigots that stood out of the brick foundations of the houses. The nozzles were variously set but usually so there was a long sweet stream spray, the nozzle wet in the hand, the water trickling the right forearm and peeled-back cuff, and the water whishing out a long loose and lowcurved and so gentle a sound. First an insane noise of violence in the nozzle, then the irregular sound of adjustment, then the smoothing into steadiness and a pitch accurately tuned to the size and style of stream as any violin. So many qualities of sound out of one hose: so many choral differences out of those several hoses that were in earshot.

EAST OF EDEN (JOHN STEINBECK) my favorite book ever!

The Salinas Valley is in Northern California. It is a long narrow swale between two ranges of mountains and the Salinas River winds and twists up the center until it falls at last into Monterey Bay. I remember my childhood names for grasses and secret flowers. I remember where a toad may live and what time the birds awaken in the summer - and what trees and seasons smelled like - how people looked and walked and smelled even. the memory of odors is ver rich.

I remember that the Gabilan Mountains to the east of the valley were light gay mountains full of sun and loveliness and a kind of invitations, so that you wanted to climb into their warm foothills almost as you want to climb into the lap of a beloved mother. They were beckoning mountains with a brown grass love. The Santa Lucias stood up against the sky to the west and kept the valley from the open sea, and they were dark and brooding - unfriendly and dangerous. I always found myself a dread of west and a love of the east. Where I ever got such an idea I cannot say, unless it could be that the morning came over the peaks of the Gabilans and the night drifted back from the ridges of the Santa Lucias. It may be that the birth and death of the day had some part in my feeling about the two mountain ranges.

LIT (MARY CARR)

Mother's yellow station wagon slid like a monopoly icon along the gray road that cut between fields of Iowa corn, which was chlorophyll green and punctuated in the distance by gargantuan silver silos and gleaming, unrusty tractors glazed cinnamon red. Mother told me how the wealth of these farmers differed from the plight of the West Texas dirt farmers of her Bust Bowl youth, who doled out mortgaged seed from crocker sacks.

But because I was seventeen and had bitten my cuticles raw facing the prospect of fitting in at the private college we'd reach that night which had accepted me through some mixture of pity and oversight and because I was split-headed with the hangover Mother and I had incurred the night before.

A WINTER'S TALE (Mark Halprin)

There was a white horse, on a quiet winter morning when snow covered the streets gently and was not deep, and the sky was swept with vibrant stars, except in the east where dawn was beginning in a light blue flood. The air was motionless but could soon start to move as the sun came up and winds from Canada came charging down the Hudson.

THE DRAWING OF THE THREE (Stephen King)

The gunslinger came awake from a confused dream which seemed to consist of a single image: that of the Sailor in the Tarot deck from the man in black had dealt (or purported to deal) the gun-slinger's own moaning future.

He drowns, gunslinger, the man in black was saying, and no one throws out the line. The boy Jake.

THE WIZARD AND THE GLASS (Stephen King)

There was no reply from Blaine for a long, long time, and when he did respond, it was not with words. Instead the walls, floor, and ceiling began to lose their color and solidity again. In a space of ten seconds the Barony Coach once more ceased to exist. They were now flying through the mountain-range they had seen on the horizon: iron-gray peaks rushed toward them at suicidal speed, then fell away to disclose sterile valleys where gigantic beetles crawled about like land locked turtles. Roland saw something that looked like a huge snake suddenly uncoil from the mouth of a cave. It seized one of the beetles and yanked it back into its lair. Roland had never in his life seen such animals or countryside, and the sight made his skin want to crawl right off his flesh. Blaine might have transported them to some other world.