

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

## The Seven Samurai

*“The farmers have won. We have lost.”*

~ Kambei Shimada

### Essential Guidelines:

- clearly state the question you are addressing
- properly head your paper
- edit carefully and cite plenty of evidence
- *please* use the Google Doc provided in our Google Classroom
- be sure to properly submit your final draft via the Google Classroom
- you *may* print a hard copy following our class guidelines and turn it in to the class basket, but I prefer the Google Doc

**Part One – Literary Connections:** Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source. Use examples from the film and/or other related films that would provide supporting evidence.

1. Consider and describe the **mood** and **tone** of this film. Does the **mood** change? Is there anything unique about the **tone** of this film?
2. **Dramatic irony** refers to a situation in which events or facts not known to a character on screen are known to another character and/or the audience. How is **dramatic irony** used in this film? Cite and explain at least two examples.
3. Cite at least two strong examples of **symbolism** used in this film. What purpose did these **symbols** have and were they effective?

**Part Two – Cinematic Connections:** Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source. Use examples from the film and/or other related films that would provide supporting evidence.

4. Discuss a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement: Distance from Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used in this scene? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
5. Discuss a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement: Angle to Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used in this scene? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
6. Recall a scene that you liked in terms of **composition** and/or **cinematography**. Why did you like the scene? What did the choice of composition/shot selection add to the film? What ideas have other directors and films borrowed from Akira Kurosawa and this film?
7. We know that there are essentially **three types of movement** in film: 1) the viewer’s eye searches and scans the screen, 2) characters or objects move in relation to the frame, and 3) the camera moves across, into or away from its own field of vision. Cite a memorable scene from this film for each of these **three types of movement**.

## FILM ANALYSIS

### The Seven Samurai Assignment · DeMiero

**Part Three – Analysis:** Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in about 3 to 5 ¶s. Depth of thought and analysis is what counts here, *not* hot air. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source.

8. **Establishing Environment.** “Seven Samurai” is set in a very foreign environment – both in terms of geographical place and of historical period. Did you have trouble relating to this film because it was so “foreign”? By the end of the film, did you feel more comfortable with this environment? What did Kurosawa do to help audiences connect better to this film?
9. **Mood & Atmosphere.** A well-known film critic wrote that the great Japanese filmmakers have “*the knack of capturing mood and atmosphere, of presenting the environment as an extension of man.*” Do you find this is true of Akira Kurosawa in this film? Explain with examples.
10. **War & Peace.** “Seven Samurai” is also very much a war movie. Like many war films it examines the efforts of different types of people, different segments of society, to pull together and fight a common enemy. Another aspect of the war film is that, like most action films, it tends to use weapons symbolically: each kind of weapon has special connotations attached to it, meaning that the filmmaker can use deliberately. How does Kurosawa use (a) *the sword*, (b) *the spear*, (c) *the bow and arrow*, and (d) *the gun*?
11. **Hello There.** You probably noticed that each of the seven samurai is introduced differently, and that each has a distinct personality. Who is your favorite of the seven samurai, and why? What was your first impression of him and how did Kurosawa establish that perception?
12. **The Plot Thickens.** Like most carefully structured dramas, “Seven Samurai” begins with the disruption of the status quo (the peasants can no longer peacefully live their lives and till their land) and ends when that status quo is restored. Still, the experience has had a profound effect on the peasants. How do the peasants change in order to meet their crisis? What do you think will happen with the peasants in the future?
13. **Coming of Age.** As in most war films, and many Westerns, this movie works with a coming-of-age theme, in its use of Katsushiro, the young samurai. What does Katsushiro come to learn about war, society, and life in general by the end of the film? Choose a character from a more modern film that essentially parallels Katsushiro’s in this movie.
14. **Your Choice.** Got a better question? Submit it and the best of the best will be used in future editions of this assignment. Of course, you also have to provide an essay response, too.

#### Notes:

Released .....1954  
Director .....Akira Kurosawa  
Screenplay.....Akira Kurosawa,  
.....Shinobu Hashimoto  
.....& Hideo Oguni  
Cinematography.....Asakazu Nakai

#### Characters:

Toshirô Mifune .....Kikuchiyo  
Takashi Shimura .....Kanbei  
Keiko Tsushima .....Shino

Yukiko Shimazaki .....Wife  
Kamatari Fujiwara .....Farmer Manzo  
Daisuke Katô .....Shichiroji  
Isao Kimura .....Katsushiro  
Minoru Chiaki.....Heihachi  
Seiji Miyaguchi.....Kyuzo  
Yoshio Kosugi.....Farmer Mosuke  
Bokuzen Hidari .....Farmer Yohei  
Yoshio Inaba .....Gorobei Katayama  
Yoshio Tsuchiya .....Farmer Rikichi  
Kokuten Kôdô.....Grandad  
(see *IMDB.com* for more)