

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Period \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

## North By Northwest

*“I am but mad, north–northwest: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.”*

~ Hamlet

*“War is hell, Mr. Thornhill, even when it's a cold one.”*

~ The Professor

### Essential Guidelines:

- clearly state the question you are addressing
- you **must** type your responses
- properly head your paper
- edit carefully and cite plenty of evidence
- you **must** use Word or OpenOffice and save as a .doc file only
- print a hard copy *or* submit an electronic copy following our class guidelines

**Part One:** 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. Choose one of these scenes from the film and describe its **mood**: a) Thornhill’s visit to the United Nations; b) Thornhill and Kendall meet on the train; c) the crop-dusting sequence; or d) Vandamm’s hideaway sequence.
2. Identify the **tone** of this film. What evidence do you have to support your view? Be as specific as possible with your explanation.
3. Cite at least two concrete examples of **foreshadowing** used in this film. Also consider the use of **motifs** as a form of **foreshadowing**.
4. Recall a **scene** that you didn’t like. Why didn’t you like it? What did it take away from the film if anything?

**Part Two:** 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.

5. Analyze a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement: Distance from Object**. Refer to your Film Production Vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Hitchcock in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with his selection?
6. Analyze a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement: Angle to Object**. Refer to your Film Production Vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Hitchcock in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with his selection?
7. Analyze a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Blocking and Movement**. Refer to your Film Production Vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Hitchcock in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with his selection?

## FILM ANALYSIS

### North By Northwest Assignment · DeMiero

**Part Three:** Pick *one* of the questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in about 5 ¶s. Depth of thought and meaningful analysis is what counts here, not hot air. 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.

7. Hitchcock “claims” he doesn’t use **symbolism** in his films. What do you think? Can you cite the use of symbols in “North By Northwest”? If so, identify at least three symbols and explain what they mean and what function they perform in this film.
8. Hitchcock frequently employed the **motif** of the “common man as victim.” In “North By Northwest” Cary Grant’s character not only falls prey to this motif, but is also the victim of misidentification. Analyze Grant’s performance as the “common-man victim,” and compare or contrast his performance with at least one other “common-man as victim” performance in another major film.
9. Identify an example of a **MacGuffin** from the film. Clearly demonstrate how your example fits the definition of a **MacGuffin**, then **analyze** its effectiveness and relevance to the story.
10. In order to really understand this film, you must know something about The Cold War. An underlying **motif** of this film is the fact that nearly every character is playacting and that nobody is really who they seem to be. How does this better explain what “North By Northwest” is really about?
11. Film critic Mel Valentin states: “Duplicity and multiple identities run deeply throughout the plot.” Who are some of the key duplicitous characters and how do their multiple identities impact the plot of “North By Northwest”?
12. You be the instructor. Write a question that you think would have been better than any of Mr. D’s. Additionally, you must include an acceptable answer, too. The best of the best will be used in future classes.

#### Notes:

Release Date ..... 1959  
Producer/Director ..... Alfred Hitchcock  
Screenplay ..... Ernest Lehman  
Music ..... Bernard Herrmann

#### Characters:

Roger Thornhill ..... Cary Grant  
Eve Kendall ..... Eva Marie Saint  
Philip Vandamm ..... James Mason  
Clara Thornhill ..... Jessie Royce Landis  
Professor ..... Leo G. Carroll  
Lester Townsend ..... Philip Ober  
Leonard ..... Martin Landau