

Name(s) _____

Period _____ Due Date ___/___/___

Seven Samurai

“The farmers have won. We have lost.”

~ Kambei Shimada

Essential Guidelines:

- clearly state the question you are addressing
- use black or blue ink *or* type
- double space (skip lines)
- *do not* write on both sides of the paper
- edit carefully
- cite evidence

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. Answer on a separate piece of paper. (25%)

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. Cite at least two concrete examples of **foreshadowing** used in this film. Also consider the use of **motifs** as a form of **foreshadowing**.
3. Consider the **editing** of the film. Did the episodic presentation, variety of film and video media, and unique montage techniques add to this film? If you were the editor or director would you have done anything differently?

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. (25%)

4. Recall a scene that impressed you aesthetically. What did you like about it – the **editing, camera placement, lighting, pacing**, etc?
5. How important was the **music** in this film? When you saw some of the scenes how did the music fit the scene? Did you feel that this was a good technique or did you feel that it didn't match with the **pacing** of the scene?
6. Recall a scene that you liked in terms of **composition** and/or **cinematography**. What ideas from other directors and films did the director borrow? Why did you like the scene? What did it add to the film?

Part Three: Pick *one* of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in about 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. Answer on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this page. (50%)

7. “Seven Samurai” is set in a very foreign environment – both in terms of 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?
8. A writer on Japanese film has said 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 Kurosawa in this film? Explain with examples.
9. “Seven Samurai” is also very much a war movie. Like most war films it treats 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 it tends, like most action films, to use weapons symbolically: each kind of weapon has special connotations attached to it, connotations which the filmmaker can use deliberately. How does Kurosawa use (a) the sword, (b) the spear, (c) the bow and arrow, and (d) the gun?
10. 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?
11. 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 they change in order to meet their crisis?
12. 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?

Notes:

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

Key Characters:

Toshirô MifuneKikuchiyo (as Toshiro Mifune)
Takashi ShimuraKanbei
Keiko TsushimaShino
Yukiko Shimazaki.....Wife (as Yukio Shimazaki)
Kamatari FujiwaraFarmer Manzo
Daisuke Katô.....Shichiroji (as Daisake Kato)
Isao Kimura.....Katsushiro (as Ko Kimura)
Minoru Chiaki.....Heihachi
Seiji Miyaguchi.....Kyuzo
Yoshio KosugiFarmer Mosuke
Bokuzen Hidari.....Farmer Yohei
Yoshio InabaGorobei Katayama
Yoshio TsuchiyaFarmer Rikichi
Kokuten Kôdô.....Grandad (as Kuninori Todo)