

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

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

## Duel

“Great. I’m never going to make it to that appointment now.”

~ David Mann, the car driver

### Essential Guideline:

- clearly identify 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. Cite at least two concrete examples of **foreshadowing** used in this film. Also consider the use of **motifs** as a form of **foreshadowing**.
3. Cite an example of **irony** in this film (either *situational*, *dramatic* or *verbal*). Identify the example and explain why it’s an effective use of **irony** in the context of this movie.

**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. Recall a scene that impressed you aesthetically. What did you like about it – the editing, camera placement, lighting, etc?
5. Discuss two memorable scenes in terms of **Camera Placement: Distance from Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Spielberg in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
6. Discuss two memorable scenes in terms of **Camera Placement: Angle to Object**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. Why were these shots used by Spielberg in these scenes? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with the director’s shot selection?
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**.

**Part Three – Analysis:** 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.

8. Although we live in an age that is rich with information and technology, Spielberg reminds us that facts and figures do not contain the essence of human life – *story does*. Truth is actually more a product of our fiction, our Fairy Tales, and we really live through our stories. Fantasy and science fiction have a unique power because these types of stories can address current and future situations with the necessary distance and detachment to convey moral truth. What is *one* of these truths or themes that “Duel” explores successfully?
9. Some observers have noted that the main character’s name is David *Mann* and that he is in conflict with a rogue oil tanker truck – a *machine*. Therefore, it has been suggested that this is Spielberg’s way of overtly stating that the central **conflict** in this film is **man v. machine**. What do you think? Is this the central conflict? If so, explain. If not, what is the central conflict?
10. A few film critics have suggested that this film is mostly about *masculinity*. Or, rather, the perceived or real threat of a man’s loss of his masculinity – David Mann’s in this case. Mann is clearly troubled by his relationship with his wife and children, as well as the sense that he must make it to an important meeting in order to continue to provide for his family. His wife shares with him how troubled she was by the advances of one of Mann’s co-workers and the fact that her husband did nothing to stop the unwanted attention. Then Mann finds he’s in direct conflict with what is arguably the most “masculine” vehicle on the road – a large oil tanker truck. What do you think? Is that what this film is about?
11. In many ways, this film parallels much of Hitchcock’s work. In fact, Spielberg was a devotee of Alfred Hitchcock and likely borrowed much from Hitch’s work. So, what do you think? Identify at least three ways that “Duel” borrows from Alfred Hitchcock’s work – especially any of the films that we’ve watched for class.

**Notes:**

Release Date .....1971  
Director .....Steven Spielberg  
Screenplay.....Richard Matheson

**Characters:**

David Mann .....Dennis Weaver  
Mrs. Mann.....Jacqueline Scott  
Café Owner .....Eddie Firestone  
Bus Driver .....Lou Frizzell  
Old Man in the Car .....Alexander Lockwood  
Old Woman in the Car .....Amy Douglass  
The Truck Driver (*never seen*).....Carey Loftin