

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

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

## Citizen Kane

*"I don't think any word can explain a man's life."*

### 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 template provided in Canvas
- be sure to properly submit your final draft via Canvas

**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 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 it add to the film? Was there anything ground-breaking about it?
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

### Citizen Kane 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. Please use the resources available to you at my website.

8. **Rosebud.** Consider Mr. Thompson's final speech: "*No, Mr. Kane was a man who got everything he wanted and then lost it. Maybe Rosebud was something he couldn't get or something he lost. Anyway, it wouldn't have explained anything. I don't think any word can explain a man's life. No, I guess Rosebud is just a piece in a jigsaw puzzle, a missing piece.*" So, what was "Rosebud" – literally and figuratively?
9. **Enigma.** This film asks the question: "*Can we really know the meaning of a person's life?*" Kane emerges as an enigma, a question mark, because he is not presented from a single point of view that pretends to be reality. Rather, his story is told in terms of a quest for knowledge (the reporter's), through the perspectives of many different witnesses. Aside from the opening death-scene (*through whose eyes are we seeing this?!?*), we observe Kane through six different sets of eyes – Thompson's newsreel, Thatcher's, Bernstein's, Leland's, Susan's, and Raymond's. Analyze why each particular facet of Kane's life is told by each "narrator," and why the narratives are assigned and ordered as they are.
10. **Breaking the Structural Rules.** Feature films before "Citizen Kane" tended to be very straightforward in their treatment of time. Flash-backs and flash-forwards were extremely rare, for example. A typical film of the time would have started with a very young Kane and progressed through his life, period by period, until his death. Instead, "Citizen Kane" opens with the death of its protagonist. Why do you think this was done, and what was to be gained by this narrative structure?
11. **Tragedy.** Some have compared the story of Charles Foster Kane to some of the most famous tragedies in all of literature. So, does the comparison hold up? Do a little research into the elements of a classical tragedy and defend whether you believe this film qualifies.
12. **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 .....1941  
Director .....Orson Welles  
Screenplay .....Herman J. Mankiewicz  
.....& Orson Welles  
Cinematography .....Gregg Toland  
Music .....Bernard Herrmann

#### Characters:

Orson Welles .....Charles Foster Kane  
Joseph Cotton .....Jedediah Leland  
Dorothy Comingore .....Susan Alexander Kane  
Agnes Moorehead .....Mrs. Mary Kane  
Philip Van Zandt .....Mr. Rawlston  
Everett Sloane .....Mr. Bernstein  
Ray Collins .....James "Jim" W. Gettys  
(see *IMDB.com* for more)