

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

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

## Close Encounters of the Third Kind

*“Close Encounter of the First Kind – Sighting of a UFO.  
Close Encounter of the Second Kind – Physical Evidence.  
Close Encounter of the Third Kind – Contact.”*

### Essential Guidelines:

- clearly state the question you are addressing
- you must use the provided Google Doc template for your final submission
- edit carefully and cite plenty of evidence
- submit a digital file following our class guidelines 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. **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 concrete examples of **foreshadowing** used in this film. Also consider the use of **motifs** as a form of **foreshadowing**.

**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 where Spielberg used his trademark technique of **dividing the frame into thirds** – visually, emotionally, and/or aurally. Why is your selection an excellent example of this technique? What impact did it have on the film and why do you believe Spielberg used it?
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**.

# FILM ANALYSIS

## Close Encounters Assignment · DeMiero

**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. There have been many sci-fi films involving aliens and contact with humans. What sets “Close Encounters” apart from the rest of the pack? Contrast this film with at least two other sci-fi films in terms of its quality, impact and/or endurance.
9. Analyze “Close Encounters” in terms of **Editing & Transition Devices: Temporal Considerations and Transitions**. Refer to your vocabulary handout. How was **real time, subjective time, and narrative time** applied in this film? What about **cuts, cross cuts, and jump cuts**?
10. Discuss the concept of **pacing** and analyze how Spielberg kept this film moving through non-traditional techniques. In other words, forget the typical “great action scenes and special effects” response, okay? Consider instead: **comic relief, characterization, shot composition, music, motif**, etc.
11. There are several essential **motifs** in this film. Select any two from the list below and thoroughly analyze their significance to the film. You may suggest additional motifs to analyze, but you must secure approval from Mr. D before proceeding.
  - 5-note alien communication
  - Devil’s tower shape
  - the pilgrimage or spiritual journey
  - government cover-up
  - the “gray” aliens
  - common man as victim/hero
12. For a “PG” rated movie, this film stirred up quite a bit of controversy at the time of its release. Some were highly critical of the scene in which Barry is abducted. Others claimed that the film was slam on the government. And still others claimed that the film was an attack on religion. Choose one of these three perspectives, do some historical research into the criticism in order to understand why some people reacted in such a manner, and then thoroughly explain why you either agree or disagree with the criticism.
13. In his essay, Andrew Gordon says: *“We first meet Roy as he is playing in his living room with electric trains. Their typical American, middle-class suburban household is cluttered and claustrophobic. It is not a scene of domestic happiness: Roy lacks a good rapport with either his children or his wife, and the tension foreshadows his later alienation from his family ... the Nearys grow progressively less amusing, and their problems are not resolved easily and sentimentally as in a television comedy; they only get worse. In the background in the Nearys’ first scene, the younger son, Toby, who is five or six, smashes a doll against a playpen. In a later scene Toby pounds the piano keys as his parents argue: his discord reflects the family’s disintegration. This is not a happy family, so it is not surprising that it eventually breaks up.”* Why do we so easily accept the loss of family as Roy proceeds through the events of this film? What purpose does his family serve in this script if they are so easily forgotten by the end?

### Notes:

Originally Released.....1977  
Special Edition Released.....1980  
Collector’s Edition Released.....1998  
Director: .....Steven Spielberg  
Screenplay:.....Steven Spielberg  
Music: .....John Williams  
Special Effects: .....Douglas Trumbull

### Characters:

Roy Neary .....Richard Dreyfuss  
Ronnie Neary .....Teri Garr  
Jillian Guiler.....Melinda Dillon  
Barry Guiler .....Cary Guffey  
Claude Lacombe .....François Truffaut  
David Laughlin (interpreter) .....Bob Balaban