

Cloverfield



Suitable for:

15 plus and over, Film/Media Studies

Film details:

Cert. 15, Running time 85 mins

Cloverfield follows various terrified people as they hold a video camera and film as a monster of unknown origin begins destroying their city.

Cloverfield and Genre

How would you define the genre? What gives you this information? Be specific: it could be something you see or hear, or the way in which these elements are conveyed to you.

Make a list of things that indicate genre to you.

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Some of you may have classified the film as horror and some as science fiction. Based on the trailer, is this an easy distinction to make? What are the possible advantages of this?

Are there any shared conventions that we might expect to see?

Cloverfield – Telling The Story

- From watching the trailers (or after you've seen the whole film) how would you describe the visual style?
- Does the film employ a range of techniques? What do these different techniques bring to the meaning conveyed in the film? Why do you think they've been used at different points?
- Start with one of the three trailers and consider the camerawork, (movement and position) and editing. How does this change during the trailer and to what effect? Does this match up with your experience of the whole film?
- For you, are any of these techniques associated with a particular genre?

Focus On Off-Screen Space

Off-screen space relies on the audience filling in the gaps and imagining what the characters are reacting to. We are often sure through other information (e.g. non-diegetic music, reactions of the protagonists etc.) that what is being signalled at or reacted to is frightening, even if we don't actually see it. Think about the following questions in relation to this film:

- You might expect not to see the monster or the threat in the trailer but how sustainable is this technique for a full-length feature film?
- Do you think that it is more or less scary to see the 'monster' on screen at some stage, or not at all?
- Why do you think this technique might be attractive to filmmakers?
- Is this approach unique to film, or can you think of other forms of entertainment that use similar techniques?