Students at HL must make reference to a minimum of **four** films (two at SL). The chosen films must originate from more than one country. At HL some comparisons should be drawn between the films chosen.

The independent study must be presented in the form of a written dossier composed of the following three items.

* Rationale
* Script
* Annotated list of sources - Note the word ANNOTATED. This should not just be a list, but you should explain and analyze each source.

The **rationale** must offer a brief, reasoned explanation of what the concerns of the topic are in **no more** **than 100 words**.

The **script** must clearly indicate the relationship between the audio and visual elements of the documentary, employing an established documentary format such as “side-by-side” columns for video and audio components (go to 'Documentary Format' document below and use this as your base). All descriptions of video and audio elements must be both detailed and specific. Scripts must be 12–15 pages long at HL, using an accepted size of paper (for example, A4 or US letter) and **must use** 12-point Courier font (not in block capitals) and single spacing. It is important that the student treats a topic of film history/film theory in cinematic rather than literary terms.

**Formatting and Presentation**
Read the Format for Independent Study Script on the IB Film Assessment page.

**Grading**
Read the Checklist, the Grading Rubric, the Criteria and the document How to Maximize your IS Grade, all on the IB Film Assessment page.

**Research**

**Web-Based Research**
Internet Movie Data Base is a good place to begin (imdb.com)

**Journals and Academic Research**
Also check out the search engines that PASB subscribes to including EBSCO and JSTOR.

**BFI Research**
Those good folk over at BFI (British Film Institute) have come up with detailed research options and bibliographies for a whole variety of topics. This will really help you find articles and books of substance that will help you in your IS/EE. They have info on a wide variety of topics, ranging from Auteur Theory, to 007, to Iranian Cinema, to Animation, to Censorship, to Modern Noir, to Women in Film, to Gay and Lesbian Cinema, to Charlie Chaplin and Alfred Hitchcock.

**Research - Continued...**
The following are some suggestions that are worth consulting in the planning and creation of your independent study

**Text Resources**

* Examples of research by previous students
* Abstracts of university theses
* Key textbooks
* A range of magazines
* Glossaries of key terms
* Quotes by theorists

**Image resources**

* Contrasting film posters
* Movie stills and DVD covers
* Film magazine covers
* Moving image resources

**IT resources**

* Recommended websites
* Online academic film journals

**How to go about my Research Project**
Whilst this project does involve lots of research and the bringing together of many ideas, sources, images and quotations, it is aimed at being a fun and enjoyable project - this is why it is soooo important that you choose a topic that is of interest to you. Let's face it, film history and theory is a HUGE topic and there are endless areas to choose from - when there are very few limitations on what you can study, it can be very daunting to select your topic. In order to narrow this down, start by thinking about the following questions...

* Why did you become a film students in the first place?
* What interests you MOST about film?
* Which types of films do you enjoy watching most?
* What topics or areas of study have you enjoyed most in this course? How could you turn them into an appropriate topic for your Independent Study?
* Who is your favorite director? Why? Which other directors have a similar style?
* Which genre do you enjoy watching most?
* Which genre do you enjoy studying most? (This may be the same as the previous question, but it may well be different too)
* Are there are countries that have a particularly rich film history that interest you?

If you are finding it really difficult to choose the topic, come and have a chat with me and we should be able to narrow down your options together. Once we have come up with your broad topic, research can begin. You should change direction if you are finding the topic too problematic - but only after consultation with me!

**Define the topic**

* What is the bare outline of the area for discussion?
* Break down the topic into sub-topics or key concepts.
* Develop a broad overview of the topic by browsing sources.
* Become fully conversant with the necessary terminology.

**Develop a research strategy**

* What is the scope of the project?
* How much information will be needed?
* What is the appropriate level of the project?
* How manageable is the project?
* Can it be fully developed given the limits of the script?

**Locate and retrieve the information**

* Determine what type of information is needed—books, articles, current or archive information.
* Identify the likely and unlikely sources or places to find information.
* Ensure that you have all the information you need including the full citation of any references that are collected. When photocopying always write down the title and author of the book.

**Evaluate the information**

* Establish authority—who is the author and what is their credibility?
* Determine the scope of the work—what is its purpose?
* Evaluate accuracy and relevance.
* Recognize bias and/or point of view.

**Determine whether there is enough information**

* Look at the length and focus of your topic.
* Are there any unanswered questions?
* Does your topic represent only one point of view?
* Could you include anything further?

**Internet Research**
Web pages require the same, and sometimes more, caution as any other source. Anyone with access to a server can put material on the Internet. Do not assume statements are true. As a critical user a student should consider the following.

* Who is responsible for the site?
* What is its rationale/purpose?
* Is the information recent or part of an archive?
* Is the site permanent or part of a permanent organization?

**Top Tips**
Please include all of the following aspects in your IS...
Include a table like the one below at the bottom of the page underneath your rationale. It will help the examiner understand your key texts.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Film** | **Director** | **Country** | **Year** |
| Pulp Fiction  | Tarantino  | USA  | 1994  |
| Boyz N the Hood  | Singleton  | USA  | 1991  |
| La Haine (Hate)  | Kassovitz  | France  | 1995  |
| Cidade de Deus (City of God)  | Meirelles  | Brazil  | 2002  |

Make sure you refer to **country** and talk about influence.
- Why did these films come about?
- What socio-political or socio-cultural influences are there behind them?
- Did they set a trend or make an impact?
- If yes, why?
This does not have to be in huge depth, but it should be addressed.

Make sure you clearly link your images in the appendix to the body of the documentary.

Filmography needed too.

CHECKLIST: **THE INDEPENDENT STUDY**

-Have films been chosen from **more than one country**? (*Has the student chosen an unfamiliar****film tradition****or****film culture****to explore?*)

-Has the student chosen the correct *minimum* number of films? (**2** at **Standard Level LEVEL** and **4** at **Higher Level)**

**-**Does the student understand what **film theory** or strand of **film history** their *documentary script* focuses on. Do they state this **specifically** in their **rationale**?

-Is there a **rationale** (not a synopsis) of **no more than 100 words**?

-Have the films been well chosen? Do they **relate well** to the chosen *Film Theory* or *Film History* topic?

-Does the student treat **films**, **cultures**, and **countries** equally in the *documentary script*?

-Is the script written in **Documentary script format**? (**2 columns** with **audio** on the **right**, and **video** on the **left**, written across pages in ordinary orientation, **not horizontally**)

-Is the script written in correct professional style? **12 pt Courier font.**

-Is the script the **correct number** of pages? (**8-10 pages Standard Level/12-15 pages Higher Level**)

-Does the script show **familiarity** with the **films** and the **theory** or **history topic**? (The student should be watching the **complete films**, not excerpts on *Youtube* or elsewhere. They may want to watch films other than the main films being dealt with in order to become more familiar with the topic. The number of films represented is a **minimum**.)

-Does the script do a good job of engaging the **target audience**? (**Film students** like themselves. Be careful! This is not a reason for *dumbing down* the script.)

-Is there both **scope** and **depth** to the **argument**, or is it superficial?

-Is the **script** **well developed** both **visually** and **aurally**? (Strong scripts will require reading back and forth from **audio** to **video columns**. *Weak scripts will be an essay in the audio column with illustrative pictures in the video column.*)

-Do the **visuals** create a **meaning** and **rhythm** of their own?

-Are the **visuals** and **audio aptly** and **proficiently linked**? (*Careful there is not too much white space on the page.*)

-Have the **visuals** been **clearly** and **specifically described**? (*Time code may be used for the student’s reference but is not necessary, and time code alone will not allow the examiner to understand the significance of the visuals.*)

-Are the films **coherently** and **fully integrated** into the **script**?

Is there an **annotated list** of **sources**? (**FROM THE GUIDE:** *The annotated list of sources should refer to all materials used in researching the topic and all materials used in the documentary itself, including films from which extracts will be shown and quotations from experts or academics. Annotations should give the source and/or location of the reference. A comment on the relevance of the source must be included.*)

-Do **sources** indicate **persistence**? (*Time spent viewing and analyzing primary sources, and time spent discovering books, dvd commentaries, and other sources beyond the obvious internet sources.*)

**AT HIGHER LEVEL**

Are **insightful comparisons** made **coherently** and **with precision**?