Slumdog Millionaire (Boyle, 2008)
Knowledge Organiser

Institutional Information
1. Director: Danny Boyle
2. Writer: Simon Beaufoy
3. Cinematographer: Antony Dod Mantle
4. Production Companies : Celador Films and Film 4 (British)

Narrative
1. Narrative: the method and means by which you construct the events of a story into a plot.
2. Episodic narrative – questions mark the chapters in Jamal's life, with cumulative **tension** as final question heralds the dénouement
3. Circular narrative – narrative starts near the end then goes back in time to return to this point later on, using **voiceover** and **flashbacks** to show Jamal's childhood
4. Narrative viewpoint: Confessional **first-person narrative**, but restricted – we only see parts of Jamal's life
5. Binary Oppositions create conflict – Jamal & Salim, poverty & wealth / happiness & status / India & West (Cultural Imperialism), Realism & Fantasy.
6. Conforms to **3 act structure**

Characters		
Name	**Propp**	**Narrative function**
1. Jamal	Hero	Jamal is on a quest – to find Latika, not win the money
2. Latika	Princess	To be rescued from the villians
3. Salim	Villian/Helper	Thwarts Jamal's chances of happiness, but then helps Latika escape at the end
4. Kumar	False "Helper" – actually villain	Appears to be helping Jamal, but actually trying to stop him winning
5. Maman	Villain	Appears to be helping Jamal, but actually using him for his own ends
6. Javed	Villian	Takes the princess and keeps her from Jamal
7. Police Inspector	Donor	Believes Jamal and sets him free to complete the quest

	Technique	Example	Effect
Cinematography	**Dutch angle**	Opening sequence of the quiz studio	creating confusion and reflecting the feelings of the **protagonist,** Jamal Malik, positioning us with him from the start
	2. Mid-shots and crane shots	Opening sequence of the quiz studio	conventional to WWTBAM – audience as voyeurs
	3. Lighting/ coloured tints	Opening sequence of the quiz studio	Shows **strands of narrative** (interrogation – yellow; TV studio – **high key** and **single source lighting**)
	4. Use of SI-2K digital cameras; 11 frames per second	O Saya sequence	avoid the masses of spectators impacting on filming and also to allow filming within the confines of the slums, making the **audience feel** as though they **are actually there**; also **slow-motion** aspect
Sound	**1. Diegetic sounds and leitmotif of WWTBAM**	Opening sequence of the quiz studio	indicate the **setting** and the **link** between the film and the global TV export, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*
	2. Sound bridges	Opening sequence and Latika's race to the studio	connect the **different elements of narrative**
	3. Urban soundtrack by A. R. Rahman featuring MIA	O Saya sequence	reflects the **gritty realism** and the **film's Mumbai/Western fusion.**
Mise-en-scene	**1. Contrast between WWTBAM studio and police station/slums**	Opening sequence and throughout	The **studio setting** (glossy surfaces, lighting, dress) **contrasts** with the **grimy and gritty** setting and shows the **difference** between rich and poor in Mumbai
	2. Questions on screen	Throughout	Foreground **episodic** structure
	3. Importance of place shown through language, captions, dialogue	Throughout, especially in opening sequence	The **place** is central to the narrative – it is about the struggles in this particular place and time
Editing	**1. Cross cutting**	Throughout	When Latika is rushing to the studio it is used to **prolong** the scene, create **tension** and **suspense**
	2. Flash cutting	Opening Sequence	create sense of **confusion** between **threads of narrative**

Context
1. Set in **Mumbai, 2006**
2. Boyle and Beaufoy both have stated they wished to **transport Western audiences** to the slums of India to portray the energy and community to try and **challenge** some of the more **traditional representations of poverty-stricken slum dwellers**
3. Dharavi slum is the **third-largest slum** in the world; it is also one of the most densely populated areas on Earth.
4. explores the **dichotomy of India** where poor street children are exploited whilst others enjoy the latest developments in technology due to rapid globalization & a booming economy
5. the **corrupting influence of Western values** is embodied in the representation of Salim's greed for money; he is even willing to sacrifice his relationship with his brother
6. the film draws on and makes references to the tradition of **Bollywood** (superstar Amitabh Bachchan is referenced and shown as well as the final dance scene being a nod to the traditional dance scenes played out in Bollywood romances).

Controversy
1: Casting – Dev Patel (British) was cast as an **antithesis** to the **traditional Bollywood male** (strong/handsome/hero) from his role on C4 TV show Skins. Some praised the casting for going against the traditional Bollywood representations. Some **criticised** the **casting of a Brit** rather than an Indian lead.
2: Representation The film faced criticism from the Indian public that this is part of the **"ghetto picaresque**" genre and it peddles **"poverty porn"**
3. Payment of cast and crew – Indian cast and crew were **underpaid** and treated **inadequately**; this was investigated by Indian authorities and found **not** to be the case