KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER:
Slumdog Millionaire (2006, Boyle, UK)

Context and wider ideas:

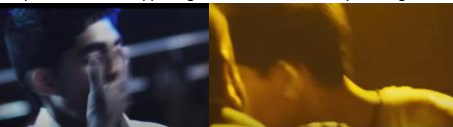- Set in the Dharavi, Mumbai, India. Dharavi is the most densely populated slum in the world.
- Explores the social inequality in Mumbai.
- Explores the corruption of power. Mostly shown through the treatment of the poor by the police.
- Explores the exploitation of street children.
- The film is an enmeshment of a traditional Bollywood film and a traditional Hollywood film.

Key characters

Jamal Malik The film's protagonist.
A young boy from the slums of Mumbai. His mother is killed when he was very young, leaving him and his brother orphans on the streets. Jamal is in love with Latika, another orphan. Jamal takes part in the gameshow 'How wants to be a millionaire' and wins but the gameshow host and police believe that Jamal cheated.

Function in the film:
Represents innocent impoverished people.
Acts as a moral compass; we view the other characters through their treatment of Jamal.

Salim Malik. Jamal's older brother. Salim's young life is similar to Jamal's. After their mother is killed, Salim feel's he needs to protect Jamal so becomes involved in gang culture.

Function in the film:
Represents what can happen to innocent impoverished people when they are corrupted.
Salim is a foil to Jamal.

Latika
Latika is also a victim of the Hindu riots. She is exploited by Maman as he tries to sell her virginity. When Jamal finds her later in the story, she is with the gang lord Javed. She sees Jamal on the gameshow and Salim allows her to escape and find Jamal.

Function in the film:
Represents how young impoverished girls are treated by the corrupt gangs. She has little control over her life.

Kumar
The gameshow host. He can use the corrupt police force at his will. He tries to stop Jamal from winning the show by, but this fails.

Function in the film:
Represents the façade of the wealthy. Using the gameshow as a façade for the corruption and exploitation in Mumbai.

Maman
A gang leader that exploits and harms children to get money. He blinds children to get more money from their begging. He tries to sell Latika's virginity. He is killed by Salim.

Function in the film:
Represents the corruption and exploitation that is ignored in Mumba, especially towards those in poverty.

Police Inspector
A corrupted police officer than is used by the gameshow host to interrogate Jamal using severe methods. At the end, he believes that Jamal is telling the truth and lets him go.

Function in the film:
Represents police corruption and coercive tactics that can be manipulated by those with the money or power to pay for their services.

Key Sequence 1: Opening sequence
Starts in-media-res.

Cinematography and Lighting:
- Close up shot of Jamal's face showing his confusion about the situation he is in.
- The audience also feels confused as they do not understand what is happening.
- The light is a harsh yellow which makes the scene seem grimy.
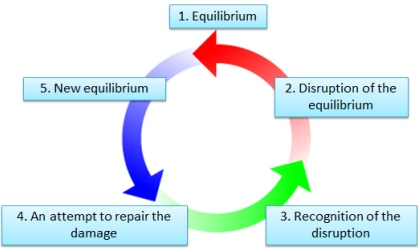

- The gameshow shots juxtapose the interrogation scene as the lighting is a harsh artificial blue. This is used as a façade to cover the grimy corruption underneath.
- The overhead shot makes Jamal look like he is in a cage which further establishes that he is trapped and his fate is inescapable.

Mise-en-scène:
- The circular set of the gameshow makes Jamal look like he is in a cage, which further establishes that he is trapped and his fate is inescapable.

Editing:
- An intertitle is added to the scene. The questions are positioned as a 'Who wants to be a millionaire' question but it is about Jamal. The audience are left with the line 'It is written' which links to the idea that it is fate driving the narrative.

A: He cheated
B: He's lucky
C: He's a genius
D: It is written

- The match cut of Jamal being slapped by Kumar and then the police interrogator shows how close the world of the gameshow and the world of corruption are. Just like a slap, the audience is shocked as it is still not explained what is happening in the scenes with the yellow light.

Key Sequence 2: Riot Sequence

Cinematography and Lighting:
- Canted angle creates fear and confusion. Makes the audience feel uneasy and creates an ominous atmosphere.

- Two different angles of Jamal's mother being hit. Gives a double impact to the audience. Shows that Jamal replays this scene in mind.
- Long shot of the train and people coming out. Shows how many people are rushing towards the slums and the extent of the danger.
- When the boys are running the camera is pulled back to move with them – making the audience run with the boys; we feel their terror.
- At the end of the scene, the low-key lighting on Jamal's face exaggerates the hidden darkness of Jamal's past and the trauma of these memories.

Editing:
Jump cuts that switch between the mother and the train show she is frightened and cautious and knows something is about to happen. Builds tension in the audience. Also, when the boys are running to show the confusion of the moment.
- Wipe cut, people running away from terror almost into Jamal's mind in the gameshow. Shows how repetitive and constant this memory is for Jamal.

Sound:
- Ominous, non-diegetic sound over the top of diegetic sound: Oppressive, shows something sinister is about to happen. Drowns out the sound of shouting – she is powerless. Builds panic in the audience.

Key Sequence 3: Ending Sequence

Cinematography and Lighting:
-Long shot of the empty train station. The train station wasn't empty before; this shows that the two of them are the most important thing to each other and there is nothing else.
- Close up of a kiss, which is a traditional way to achieve a happy ending.

Mise-en-scène: Jamal is in a train station. He is sat scrunched up on the floor, more like a poor street child than a millionaire. His expression is pensive (thoughtful). This subverts the audiences expectation of how a

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millionaire should behave, showing it isn't the money he was looking for; this was all for Latika.
- Jamal's shirt has become unbuttoned and he looks like a traditional Hollywood hero.

Editing: The shots switch between Jamal and Latika through a moving train, mirroring the scene where his mother saw the rioters and mirroring the earlier scene where Latika was kidnapped.
- As Jamal begins to run, the scenes from his past flash before him as if everything has led up to this moment.
- While Jamal and Latika kiss, there are lots of quick cuts from the time Latika was taken in the train station but played backwards, as if this has been erased and they were destined to be together. There is a juxtaposition between this meeting, which seems permanent, and their last meeting.
- The intertitle is repeated with the words 'It is written' further enforcing the fact that the events that led up to this moment was Jamal's destiny.

Sound: The non-diegetic sound is soft and romantic; the audience understands we this is about to be an emotional scene.

Specialist Focus: Narrative

Propp's narrative theory.
Propp argued that stories are character driven and that plots develop from the decisions and actions of characters and how they function in a story. Propp divided character roles into the following categories.

The hero **Jamal** **(Salim at the end?)**	Usually leads the narrative.
	Either has a quest, is looking for something or is trying to solve something.
The villain **Maman** **Kumar**	Struggles against the hero.
	Seen as morally bad and the audience turns against them.
	Attempts to stop the hero from achieving their goal.
The dispatcher **Police Inspector**	Send the hero on their mission.
The princess **Latika**	The person (or object) who the hero is looking for, or trying to protect.
The helper **Salim**	Supports the hero and appears at critical moments of the narrative.
The false hero **Kumar**	Appears to be heroic, but is revealed to be the villain.

Todorov's narrative theory.
Todorov argued that stories are plot driven and that plots follow the following structure:

1. Equilibrium
2. Disruption of the equilibrium
3. Recognition of the disruption
4. An attempt to repair the damage
5. New equilibrium

Narrative in Slumdog Millionaire.

In-medias-res: Starting the film in-media-res instantly creates a sense of confusion as the audience is thrown into the story. This mimics Jamal's confusion as he does not understand why he is being interrogated. There is

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a lack of exposition; we learn about Jamal and his story throughout the film.

Subverts Todorov: The film subverts Todorov's theory of equilibrium as it starts off with the disruption due the non-linear narrative. The audience are therefore unaware of what will come next as the film's structure is unpredictable.

Flashbacks: The use of flashbacks create a non-linear narrative. This impacts the audience as we understand Jamal's thought processes and the reason that he knows the answers to the questions. Each question is a chapter of Jamal's life.

Key Vocabulary

Word	Meaning	Image
antithesis	A person or thing that is the direct opposite of something else.	
binary opposites	Two things, ideas or characters that are the opposite of each other.	
corruption	Describes someone who uses their power in a dishonest or illegal way in order to make life better for themselves.	
Enmeshment	When two or more things are so deeply connected it is difficult to tell which traits belong to which.	
exploitation	The act of treating someone unfairly to benefit from their work.	
foreshadowing	Deliberate hints, clues and warnings of something to come later in a story.	
in medias res	When a film or book begins in the middle of a situation. There is a lack of exposition.	
intertitle	A word or group of words that appear on-screen but are not part of the scene.	
juxtaposition	Seeing or placing two things close together for contrasting effect.	
match cut	A cut from one shot to another that matches the action or the subject.	
narrative	A series of connected events that are written or told.	
non- linear narratives	When events are not told in chronological order.	
representation	Showing a person or group of people in a particular way.	
subvert	Undermines the expectation of a convention	
Social context	Themes and issues present in society which are reflected in a film.	