

## TO READ FILMS

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### **Reading the Story Itself**

What does the beginning tell readers?

How does the dialogue contribute to the story? What is being said if we “read between the lines”?

What are the important aspects of the perspectives of major and minor characters?

What elements in the story are being used symbolically, like names, places, music, culture, and so forth?

What “twist” or “trick” is used to bring about the turning-point and closure of the story?

How does the ending compare to classic “Hollywood endings” and how does it deviate from standard “Hollywood endings”?

How does the epilogue contribute to the overall story?

How has the story interpreted culture?

How may it have shaped culture?

### **Reading the Telling of the Story**

What is the significance of the title of the movie?

What genre or genres are used to tell the story and how does this contribute to the meaning of the movie?

What are the filmmakers trying to say with the story?

How have the filmmakers tried to say what they are trying to say?

In what ways might the perspective of the filmmakers differ from the perspective of any of the characters in the story?

What contextual<sup>2</sup> matters—historical, cultural, artistic, and so on—help explain the movie?

### **A Christian Reading of the Film**

What biblical and/or theological themes were surfaced in the film?

What does this film say about the human situation that rings true? What sounds like a misreading?

How does the film challenge prevailing evangelical thinking?

What kinds of conversation does this film open up amongst religious viewers?

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<sup>2</sup> Con-text: con = “with, in, under”; text = what we read.