

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Elements of Suspense*

### *iMovie Project*

Overview: In this project, you will be identifying the elements of suspense, analyzing their effect on film, and creating your own suspenseful short film.

#### Part One:

Complete the following table to define and understand each of the elements of suspense used in film.

Element of Suspense	Meaning	Example(s)
Setting	The setting should be familiar or a scenario the audience can relate to.	
Credible (Believable) Characters	The audience can "buy in" to the characters...this does not mean they are real-life (aliens, ghosts, etc. are fine!).	
Character Compassion	The audience must have compassion for the character.	
Conflict	There must be a problem - whether the protagonist knows it or not!	
Camera Angle	High angle (looking down/small) makes the character look vulnerable Low angle (looking up) makes the character look ominous/scary.	
Audience Knowledge	The audience should know more than the characters. *This causes "build up".	
Editing Flows With the Action	The more intense the action on screen, the more frantic (fast) the editing must be.	



Framing of the Shot	The closer the shot/smaller the frame, the more anxious the audience will feel.	
Low Key Lighting	It is more suspenseful to not be able to “see” everything.	
Slow Motion	Slow motion draws out a suspenseful scene, making it more suspenseful.	
Sound	Sounds (or lack of sounds) add to the suspense.	Music, ticking clock, silence, etc.

Part Two:

Annotate each of the following short clips (played for the class) for the element(s) of suspense used and the effect on the audience.

Clip #1 – *Jurassic Park*

Element of Suspense	Example from Clip	Effect on Audience

Clip #2 – *Gravity*

Element of Suspense	Example from Clip	Effect on Audience

Clip #3 – *Monsters, Inc.*

Element of Suspense	Example from Clip	Effect on Audience

Clip #4 – *E.T.*

Element of Suspense	Example from Clip	Effect on Audience

Part Three:

You are now going to create your OWN suspense short film! Your video should be only 3-5 minutes and include at least **four** elements of suspense.

First, brainstorm the plot/conflict for your short film. Though this is only a short film, you should still follow the plot outline below to create an engaging and suspenseful video.

Group Members:

1) **\*\*Conflict** – Create a conflict that your main character(s) will encounter. Remember that your character(s) may or may not know that this conflict exists until the end. As this is a SCHOOL project, your **conflict must be school appropriate** and considerate of current events!! You must get teacher approval before you move to the next step.

Conflict examples: tornado, aliens, ghosts, animals (spiders), scary doll, etc.

The conflict in my short film will be \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) Complete the plot chart below to plan for your short film.

- Complication #1 (first thing that “complicates” the plot):
- Complication #2 (second thing that “complicates” the plot):
- Complication #3 (third thing that “complicates” the plot):
- Climax (moment when the audience knows how it will end):
- Resolution (the “end”...remember this can just be “suggested” rather than shown):

3) Characters

Who will your characters be? Complete the chart below.

Character	Physical Description	Personality Traits

4) Elements of Suspense

Which elements of suspense will you use?

Element of Suspense	How You Will Use It In the Film