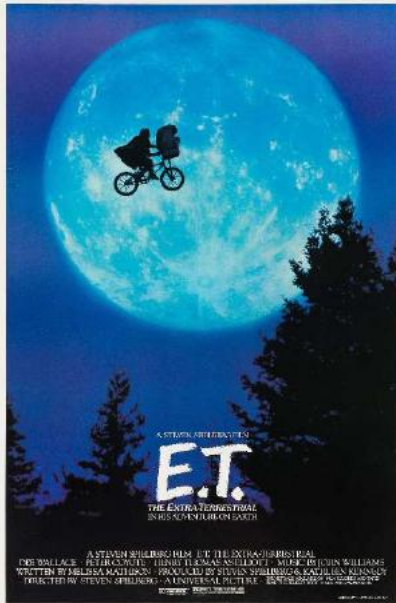


'E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial'

Knowledge Organiser



Director: **Stephen Spielberg**

Release: **December 1982**

Production Company: **Universal**

Country of Production: **USA**

Genre: **Science Fiction**

Narrative: *Classic Hollywood, linear 3-act structure*

Specialist focus: *Genre/Comparison Aesthetics; Narrative; Representation – compare with Invasion of the Body Snatchers*

Plot in one sentence: *A troubled child summons the courage to help a friendly alien escape Earth and return to his home world.*

Box office: *stands alone at the top of the chart without a sequel and as a template for blockbusters that became the favoured Hollywood production model – especially later children's animations. Compare with 'Spirited Away'.*

Key words

Consumerism

Space exploration

Nuclear family / single parent family

Post-Vietnam War

Classic Hollywood narrative with 'happy ending'

Binary opposites: youth vs. authority

Thematic codes of science-fiction: 'what if ..'

Juxtaposition

Panavision

High-concept films

Director as Auteur



Historical context

This film is post-Vietnam.

The USA was embracing a new era of productivity, prosperity and positivity.

The USA's relationship with the USSR in the very early 1980s was calm, post Cold-War, but before the greater freedoms and liberality of Perestroika in the late 1980s. The Soviet regime was still regarded with great suspicion in the West.

However, in the USA, authority and adulthood are still seen as a threat and not to be trusted. It is a world for children.

Technical details

Used 35mm film gauge, significantly more expensive than 16mm film but seen as cost-effective for high-quality images in main-stream films.

Panavision – the company that produces cameras with a widescreen lens. Compound word from panorama and vision.

Aspect ratio – the ratio of the width to the height of an image on screen. Used to great effect by Spielberg with predominantly low-angled shots.

Characters

E.T.	
Elliott	<i>Henry Thomas</i>
Gertie	<i>Drew Barrymore</i>
Mary	<i>Dee Wallace</i>
Michael	<i>Robert Macnaughton</i>
'Keys'	<i>Peter Coyote</i>



Component 1, Section A

Question	Mark
<i>2a</i>	1 mark
<i>2b</i>	4 marks
<i>2c</i>	10 marks
<i>3 - comparison with IOTBS</i>	20 marks

