

Close reading of key scenes

Using the time codes provided, watch each of these scenes and focus on the following prompts. Think about the ways in which Warwick Thornton, through his choices as director, creates meanings for the viewer. Ask students to share their responses with another student and then ask them to write a short response on how and why the sequence engaged them in both scenes.

Another day (00.00 – 5.10)

The colours used in the credits

The position of the camera when Samson wakes and the effects of this closeness

The soundtrack and its specific commentary

The ways in which Samson's movements are followed by the camera

The sense of life's rhythms in the community that are established in the opening sequence

The ways in which Samson's character is established

The comparisons between Samson's life and that of Delilah and how they are made

The use of natural organic sounds

The relationship between Delilah and Nana and how this is established by both actions and the way the camera films their relationship

How the camera focuses on character and reveals the setting in this sequence

Home (87.30 – 93.22)

The role of Delilah in Samson's survival and renewal

Delilah's tears as her signature music is played and what those tears mean.

The palpable strengths of Delilah and how they are recorded

The placing of the cross on the tin wall

The bathing of Samson and how the tenderness of this sequence is elicited by the filmmaker

The message to Samson from his father and Samson's reaction

The shared gaze and its impact

The final song and its clear statement

The sense of hope and how it is conveyed

Creating and Communicating: five assessment tasks for students

1. Choose your favourite scene from the film. Show the scene in class and explain how Warwick Thornton creates the emotional effects in the viewer.

2. Samson and Delilah's relationship has been described as 'true love' on the DVD cover. In what ways is their love revealed and how is their love story different from a love story you might have seen in other 'teen' films?

3. Write a short response on the importance of music in their lives or search for the lyrics to the soundtrack from the film and write about the ways in which the music complements the story of *Samson and Delilah*.

4. Gonzo is very kind to Samson and Delilah under the bridge. Put yourself in Gonzo's shoes. Write about his past life which we glimpse in the photograph when he was younger.

5. Visit this [website](#) for a *Four Corners* episode on ABC TV which investigates the issue of who profits from the sale of Indigenous art, which is raised in *Samson and Delilah*. What is your opinion on this issue?

Extension websites

Indigenous cinema and art is a canvas that is getting broader all the time. The following sites offer teaching and learning materials including a study guide (which I co-wrote), other Indigenous films (including the short films of Warwick Thornton) and information that might help inform your teaching of *Samson and Delilah*. If you live Victoria, you can visit the Koori Heritage Trust in Melbourne or go to the permanent and free Screen Worlds exhibition at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image at Federation Square which includes a discrete focus on Indigenous filmmaking.