Year 12 Visual Text Study – *Gattaca*

Exemplar Essay B

Vincent is the main character of the film ‘Gattaca’ directed by Andrew Niccols. The experiences of and the actions of Vincent helps the development of the theme ‘determination’ and ‘genoism’.

Vincent’s determination is shown throughout the film. His daily life procedure is full of determination. In the beginning of the film we see him washing himeslef with a brush. We see an extreme close-up of his nail, hair, and skin particles falling. We also see him attaching a urine and a blood sample on him. In the workplace, he cleans the area regularly making sure that none of his particles are left behind. Instead, he leaves Jerome’s skin and hair sample in his workplace to be perfectly disguised as Jerome. His determination is shown when he tries to ‘become’ Jerome. He learnt how to write with his left hand, do pull-ups everyday, and breaks his legs and stretches it to become taller. One of the two key scenes that show determination are the scene in the gym and the swimming race with Anton. In the gym Vincent runs on the running machine for 20 minutes. Because Vincnet has a very weak heart, he can’t run for 20 minutes. But with determination, he ran 20 minutes without changing his facial expression. Another key scene is when Vincent does a swimming race three times with Anton. Anton is Vincent’s brother, but is a ‘Valid’. Because of that, he is genetically superior to Vincent. In the first race, when they were young, Vincent lost. But in his second and third race he won with determination. The determination broke the genetic barrier, ‘One moment that made everything else possible’. After that, he decided to leave his house to head off to his dream. Vincent’s determination was what kept him going and leading him to success. His determination was the key theme of the film, and has proved that genetic data isn’t everything. ‘Who knows what he can do?’

Genoism is another key theme of ‘Gattaca’. In Gattaca, there are two kinds of people; ‘Valids’ and ‘In-Valids’. Most valids are genetically designed and because of that they’re genetically more superior. In-valids are the ones who are naturally born, and lack skills / intelligence compared to the valids. Genoism is therefore, discrimination against invalids. Throughout the film, the director reflects the theme by the interaction of Vincent and the society. When he was young, he wasn’t accepted by society because he was an in-valid. He didn’t even receive his father’s name because he was an in-valid. Discrimination continued within the family. Because of this, Vincent always seemed lonely and distant. The director portrayed this by filming Vincent through another object. We see Vincent taking a shower through a door, we see him leaving home through a blind, and we see him gasping for air through the locker. Through Vincent’s experiences, we see the theme of genoism and get the idea of the future that the director created.

‘If the glass is cleaner, it will be easier for you to see me’ said Vincent when he was working as a cleaner. Who might have guessed that he could be an elite in Gattaca? By Vincent, the director is saying genetic data isn’t everything. It’s the heart of an individual that creates us. This can apply to our society. Vincent can be a person who has a disability or mental illness. Vincent has shown determination and with it, he broke through the genetic barrier to achieve his dreams.