

Consider the way in which at least TWO individual episodes, sections or events contributed to a text you have studied.

In the film The Truman show directed by Peter Weir and written by Andrew Nichol two events that contributed to the film significantly were Truman re-uniting with his father and Truman's escape from Seahaven. ✓ These events added to the film as they brought to life various themes including manipulation revealed through the production techniques, and also helped us as the audience to realise and appreciate Truman's feeling of entrapment throughout the film. ✓

After Truman (played by Jim Carrey) sees his 'father' in the street, <sup>dis</sup>guised as a homeless man when he (the father) is in fact supposedly dead from a drowning tragedy in Truman's childhood, Truman finds himself on a path of self destruction as he starts to question the validity of his life in Seahaven. ✓ Truman's wife and mother brush Truman concerns aside with childish talk "I see dad all the time too Truman", however the issue surrounding seeing his father continues to consume Truman. ✓ It is his trusted friend Marlon who Truman feels he can confide in. While discussing Truman's now crumbling life Marlon reveals that he has found Truman's father "I've found him for you", we as the audience are privy to the complex formation of this event through crosscutting to 'The Truman show' studio and the creator Christof who is controlling the entire event. ✓

The theme of Manipulation was evident throughout the staging of this event. ✓ Through cues to Marlon, camera angles "wait...wait...now! Zoom for a close up", special effects such as fog and musical dynamics "cue music...more!". ✓ Christof acts as a conductor and is able to build atmosphere for the audience of 'The Truman Show'. ✓ By taking advantage of the fragility of Truman's situation Christof hopes he can cull Truman's sense of adventure and cause him to remain in Seahaven. ✓ Truman is unaware that the entire event is a farce and is being watched by the millions who have followed his life, 'The Truman show' bar sits wrapped in silence and the man in the bath is near tears as Truman hugs his father in a lingering embrace. ✓ Most disturbing is the way in which Christof sees his manipulation as an art and a talent rather than taking full note of the effects on Truman himself and also shows the extent to which Christof will go to create ratings unmistakable in his congratulations "Christof, you've done it! Ratings have gone through the roof". ✓

Truman's escape from Seahaven is a climax for both the film and the television show 'The Truman show' and is a frightening display of Christof's manipulation and Truman's sense of entrapment. ✓ On discovering Truman is not at his home the entire cast and crew of 'The Truman show' break into a frenzied panic, transmission of the television show is cut and the film takes on a somewhat sinister tone as the determination of all to keep Truman entrapped is blatantly obvious. ✓ On finding Truman out at sea on his boat trying to sail away from Seahaven, Christof smiles somewhat malevolently and utters "Truman... where are you going?" while stroking the screen. Christof realises that Truman is serious in his attempt to escape and through special effects creates a storm at sea that will in his hope, make Truman afraid and cause him to turn back. ✓ The storm does nothing to douse Truman's spirit and desire; "Is this all you can do?" Little does Truman know that his life is in danger as Christof becomes fundamentally determined in retaining Truman for the show, when the suggestion that Truman may die Christof responds "He was born on television wasn't he?" as if Truman is merely a pawn rather than a person. ✓

This event highlights the feelings of Truman's entrapment and also serves to show once again the never-ending pursuit of Christof to keep Truman within the dome of Seahaven. ✓ The storm which threatens Truman's life is of no concern to Christof it is more the fact that his 'creation' is threatened by the act of escaping by Truman. ✓ Crosscutting enables us as the audience to witness the reactions of Truman and Christof as they in a sense wage war against one another. ✓ On hitting the dome's wall

Truman breaks down, coming to the realisation of his suspicions that his entire life was indeed a farce and he is entrapped more than he perhaps realised. Christof speaking from the 'Lunar room' tried to convince Truman that his life in Seahaven is "no worse than the real world...the real world is sick Truman". The high angle shots and wide-shots also show both the isolation and vulnerability of Truman as he makes the decision to leave his entrapped life in search of one of freedom. Christof is shocked when Truman leaves the show with his infamous phrase "Good morning, good afternoon, and <sup>good evening</sup> ~~good night~~ <sup>in case</sup> "I don't see ya, goodnight" before closing the door of the dome behind him. The event is a clear illustration of how Entrapped Truman feels and how Christof is utterly dependent upon the entrapment of Truman, a frightening thought when considered in the context of reality television programmes today.

These two events contributed to The Truman Show a great deal and illustrated important ideas that should be considered when studying the text. The themes of manipulation and entrapment are particularly pertinent in today's society considering the extensive number of reality television shows that no doubt use certain techniques involving manipulation and entrapment to keep us watching. Because these issues were so integral and contributed so much to this film they also left resounding impressions upon me and begged the question; are we too entrapped and manipulated as Truman is, and just not aware of it?

(E)

This is a fantastic essay  
 Perceptive + insightful, with a good  
 balance of discussion between  
 production techniques + theme.