1. Which episode / genre are you watching?

Rom-Com

1. What are some of the early (for me) examples of film(s) in that genre?

Splash, Breakfast at Tiffany’s, 4 Weddings and a Funeral, Groundhog day

1. What are some of the more recent example(s) of films in that genre?

The Shape of Water, 500 Days of Summer

1. What are some of the features of the genre described in the episode?

Music, Meet Cute, Obstacle,

1. Who are some of the central characters / protagonists within that genre?

A main duo consisting of two characters who meet at the beginning of the film and fall in love, though not always knowingly. Traditionally, a boy meets girl, but many adaptations of this duo have been made, e.g. girl meets fish, or boy meets boy.

A gay bestfriend who is in a position to offer a character support without the threat of getting involved in the relationship themselves.

1. Identify some of iconography from the genre

A gift from one lover to another, e.g. a ring or a typewriting ribbon.

A male lead with perfectly gelled hair.

Females with glittering eyes.

A car in which the two lovers go for a drive.

Female characters will often have mirrors, lipstick, and other glamorous accessories (this is more noticeable in earlier Rom-Coms)

1. What are some of the important cinematic elements of that genre?

A montage with music playing over it, perhaps to condense time in order to show how a character is lost in the world and just going through the motions, or perhaps to draw out and exaggerate a separation between two characters e.g. one flying away on a plane.

Bright pleasant lighting, often low contrast, so balance of key and fill. The lighting is quite realistic; it does not particularly enhance the mood. I believe this lighting style is essential in keeping the films at least somewhat grounded, given that the comedic interactions and exposition between the characters is not very life-like.

1. What sort of themes (big ideas) does the genre try to tackle?

People being lost in the world with nothing and no-one <it provides hope to this relatable situation.

The battle against issues and obstacles which stand in the way of true love -often very personal issues.

1. Are there any influences from other genres / narratives?

Somewhat similar to modern superhero movies (Thor Ragnarok, Spiderman Homecoming): comedy is used to make for an entertaining journey as a protagonist, who often experiences a defeat, must conquer a personal obstacle before achieving their ultimate goal (be it saving a planet or securing a romantic partner).

1. Can you identify any changes / developments in the genre from early films to more recent ones?

Switching up the gender, and even species of members in the central duo.

A move towards focusing on elderly couples as well:

With the shift in the world of cinema to portray more grounded films, glamour and aesthetic perfection have noticeably become less desirable traits in film characters; contemporary audiences look to relate more with characters on the screen. Perhaps this style of cinema will prove more beneficial in supporting the mental health of the average civilian and cement itself on to our screens, or maybe we will see a turn back towards the escapism provided by westerns, and early Rom-Coms.