**Sam Fender 17 Going Under**

**How do VISUAL ELEMENTS create meaning in this audio-visual music video?**

The music video uses visual elements to explore the complexity of human relationships. There is evidence of conflict: two girls are shown fighting in a rapidly-paced sequence, created through sharp and frequent jump cuts and shot-reverse shot editing techniques. This positions the audience as a highly engaged observer of a fight, and the cameras are close to the action, suggesting that the audience might be about to participate. This style of editing and camera work is also true for more romantic sequences, with a montage of hand-holding, hugging, embracing and other passionate and intimate codes of gesture, enhanced with a soft red light in places, a code of colour that symbolises passion, but also is used in this video to symbolise danger and conflict. Finally, there is a long shot of a mother and child staring out to sea from a cliff top – their backs are to us and they seem isolated by the choice of shot. This is coupled with the linguistic codes ‘I remember…’ which combines with the camera work to create a melancholic and nostalgic feel. Perhaps Fender remembers a happier time with his mother, but even that memory seems bleak and cold, even though there is clearly care and affection between mother and child.

Visual elements also combine to reflect poverty and hardship. A recurring motif is a shot of Sam Fender, isolated in the middle of a mise-en-scene of typical working-class terraced houses. The camera is tracking around him at speed, a dizzying effect that suggests he is trapped and disorientated by the setting. The audience are taken back to this mise-en-scene on two further occasions and each time, Fender is higher up, ending up in a position where he can see over the rooftops and beyond the street. This could symbolise a potential escape for Fender, combined with the fact that the camera moves behind and below him, so that the audience perceive him as more powerful, perhaps symbolically suggesting that he is more in charge of his own destiny and will maybe escape the dreary and deprived confines of his home town. Throughout the video there are signifiers of deprivation: a bottle lying on its side, suggesting alcohol dependency. All the characters in the video wear ordinary clothing and coded within that clothing choice is the suggestion of poverty.

A final theme that is explored symbolically through visual elements is the idea of a journey to the future. For a lot of the video, Fender is in a car, but he is a passenger, suggesting that he is not quite in control of the journey. The codes of lighting focus on his face, but the rest of the scene is dark, suggesting an enigma or uncertainty. Occasionally the camera switches to a POV shot and the road ahead is dark and poorly lit, and rain is falling, perhaps suggesting dangerous conditions and risk ahead. Another clear symbol of the future is the use of horizons. The characters, all young and from the same background, spend a lot of time on the beach, either staring out to sea or acting out conflict and romance. It is a place of change and potential, a liminal space where the future is being worked out. The wide shots and high angles that are often used allow the audience to see far beyond the people to the horizons beyond, symbolising an unclear future that might be full of promis

