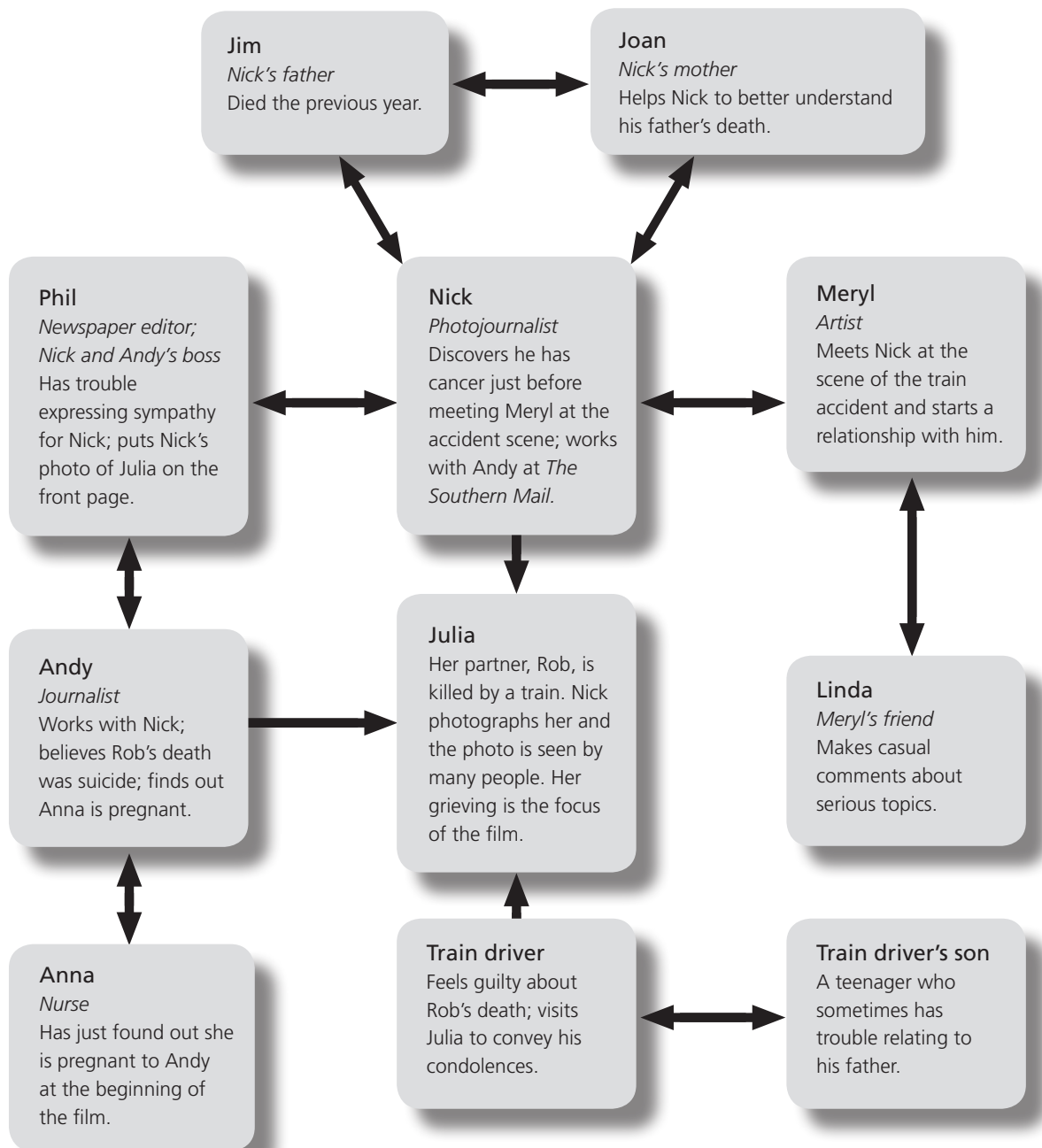


Contents

Character map	2
Introduction	3
Tips for writing essays	16
Essay 1: 'The animation and photomontages mean that we learn more about Nick and Meryl than other characters in the film.' Discuss.	18
Essay 2: 'Andy is an irresponsible character who is reluctant to admit to his mistakes.' Discuss.	22
Essay 3: 'Although Julia and the train driver only have small speaking parts, their roles are crucial to our understanding of the other characters.' Discuss.	26
Essay 4: 'Nick and Meryl come together only out of their fears of loneliness and death.' Discuss.	31
Essay 5: 'The film demonstrates that death is a universal human experience.' Discuss.	35
Essay 6: ' <i>Look Both Ways</i> challenges the norms of standard male–female relationships.' Do you agree?	39
Essay 7: ' <i>Look Both Ways</i> critiques the media's tendency to bombard people with messages about death.' Discuss.	44
Essay 8: 'Although speaking the truth can be difficult, the text shows that people should be honest with one another.' Discuss.	48
Essay 9: 'A random accident can have far-reaching effects on many people's lives.' How does the film explore this theme?	52
Essay 10: 'Sarah Watt's film <i>Look Both Ways</i> illustrates the many paths life can take.' Discuss.	56
Practice topics	60

Character map



Introduction

Look Both Ways explores a small group of people's responses to fundamental human issues such as death, tragedy, unplanned pregnancy, and relationships – both romantic and familial. To convey these abstract concepts, the film uses a variety of innovative film techniques which are worthy of examination and analysis.

Director Sarah Watt's debut feature film, *Look Both Ways* was both a critical and a popular success. The film was extremely successful on its 2005 release, winning several Australian Film Institute Awards including Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor (Tony Hayes, who plays the character of Andy Walker). Watt has since directed another critically acclaimed film, *My Year Without Sex* (2009).

Brief synopsis

The plot of *Look Both Ways* is based around the lives of several characters, all of whom are faced with unwanted news during the period of the film's narrative. The film begins by introducing its main characters. Meryl, an artist, is still reeling from her father's unexpected death; Nick, a photojournalist, has just been told that he has testicular cancer; Andy, a journalist, is told by his on-again/off-again girlfriend Anna, a paediatric nurse, that she is pregnant.

These characters are brought together through another unforeseen tragedy: the accident in which Rob, a young man, is hit and killed by a slow-moving train. Meryl, while on her way home from her father's funeral, witnesses the accident that kills Rob. Soon after, both Nick and Andy visit the scene to take photographs and interview those involved. This pivotal piece of action propels the narrative by bringing together Nick and Meryl, who develop one of the film's central relationships. It also introduces several minor but no less important characters: the unnamed train driver, who was driving at the time of Rob's death; and Julia, the widowed partner of Rob.

The narrative of *Look Both Ways* takes place over a brief period of time, beginning on a Friday afternoon and concluding two days later on the Sunday evening. The film also includes brief flash-forwards detailing key characters' futures, which are portrayed via rapidly edited montages of photographic stills in the film's final sequence. The film explores the ways in which characters slowly come to terms with the unexpected shocks that they suffer over the course of the

