Film report

1. Saving Private Ryan
2. I chose this film because Tom Hanks is in it and because it’s a Steven Spielberg production. Because I’m a big fan of both, I figured I would like this film.
3. The first important character is captain John Miller. He is the leader of a group of rangers fighting in France against the Germans. He likes to keep things for himself, like the fact that he used to be a school teacher and memories of his wife. I would describe him as a good man, but also a little naïve, because at one point during the film he stopped his men from killing an enemy and let him go free instead. Of course, the man came back with troops. I also suspect he has Parkinson or something in that direction, because his hands were shaking the whole time.

Another important character is private James Ryan. He is the person captain Miller and his group went looking for. I would describe him as diehard and loyal, because when he gets told that his brothers died and that he needs to go home, he doesn’t want to leave the other rangers behind and still fight against the Germans. He has a lot of sympathy for captain Miller.

There isn’t really a third important character, so I will write a little about the character with a personality that was different from the others. Upham I would describe as naïve like Miller and afraid. He was the one who convinced Miller to let the enemy go. Though when he returned with armed men, he was also the one who shot him. I think he’s afraid and maybe weaker than the others, because when a German was choking, stabbing and shooting at two of the other rangers, Upham crawled in a corner and cried instead of helping. I wouldn’t say he’s a coward, because I have no idea what I would have done in that situation.

1. The first important scene of the film was the moment at which the three brothers Ryan died. It is important, because this is the moment where Miller’s mission to find James Ryan starts.

The second most important scene is when Miller and his rangers actually find James Ryan. The group has travelled a long way and even lost two people in order to find him. This is the moment where the whole movie is about, so I think it is a pretty important part of it.

Last but not least, there is the scene in which captain Miller dies. He gets shot a couple of times and later dies due to the wounds. Before his death, he tells private Ryan to ‘earn it’. This is an important scene, because captain Miller is basically the main character of the story.

1. I think what Stephen Spielberg wants to show us with this movie is what war actually looks like. In most other war movies, when a soldier dies, the commander can write to their families that they never knew what hit them and that they died quickly. But in this movie, what really happens gets shown: wounded people with their guts hanging out crying for their mothers, doctors having to pull a bullet out of someone’s arm with their own hands and badly traumatized soldiers. Spielberg is trying to tell the world to stop these wars and to be a little nicer to each other. These wars are killing actual people with families and friends who care about them and we’re all acting like it’s normal. The message Stephen is trying to get across is that we shouldn’t take the hard work of soldiers for granted and that we should appreciate them more.

Creative exercise 6

If I had to choose a different name for this movie, I would go for ‘Earn It’. I would choose this title, because when captain Miller and his crew find Ryan, he is confused about why he deserved to go home. He asks himself why he earned that privilege and not one of his fellow rangers. Later on, the Germans attack the bridge that Miller and his crew and Ryan’s crew are protecting. The Germans are about to win and Miller pretty much gives up. He gets shot multiple times, but only moments later military airplanes fly over and shoot at the Germans. Private Ryan and another ranger rush over to Miller and the other ranger leaves again to get medical help for him. As he is dying, Miller tells Ryan: ‘earn it, you’ve got to earn it’. After that the movie shows an old James Ryan, standing in front of Miller’s grave, saying that he hopes he earned it.