# Assignment 2: Part II: Movie 2: The Tree of Life

1. **Who is the protagonist of the story?**

There could be multiple protagonists in this story, the mother, the father or the son that died. They seemed to swap in and out throughout the movie.

1. **What is the conflict that drives the narrative?**

The conflict is the impact of a son who died at the age of 19 on the rest of the family and their lives, and it is also a meditation on life, death and God.

1. **What is the theme of the film?**

There could be multiple themes to this film, which are:

* The relationship between the son and the father.
* Life and death.

1. **Are the characters relatable? Why and why not?**

All the characters are relatable as they are a family unit and are experiencing the familiar dynamics between all the members of the family.

1. **What can you take away from this film that might benefit you as you write your story?**

* The use of voiceovers and their tone e.g. the whispers, identifying the internal thoughts of the protagonists.
* By telling the story through visuals and sound, it creates a greater emotional impact than if done through dialogue.
* The very quick flashbacks from the past intermingled quickly with shots of the present time.
* To create make the story larger than the family and more about life and death, the use of large, panoramic landscapes to remind us how small we are. This gives the story a more epic feel.
* To show the characters out of their usual lives and in dreamscapes e.g. Sean Penn in a canyon paired with voiceovers talking of love and knowing someone always. This gives the story a more metaphysical / spiritual feel, a sense that we can cross into different lives.
* The director shows the small interactions between people e.g. the father telling his son not to cross the property line to their neighbors. When paired with the panoramic landscapes, it emphasizes how small we are compared to the rest of the universe.
* The music score of the film is very impactful and adds emotion to the film.