Trumbull Public Schools
Trumbull, Connecticut

Film as Literature ACP
English
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Film as Literature

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TRUMBULL HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS STATEMENT

The Trumbull High School Community, which engages in an environment conducive to learning, believes that all students will read and write effectively, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities that address problem-solving through critical thinking. Students will use technology as a tool in decision making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will encourage independent thinking and learning. We believe ethical conduct to be paramount in sustaining our welcoming school climate.

INTRODUCTION

Many believe that media texts are inferior to classic literature and thus do not have their place in today's classroom. However, the English department feels that, not only is the inclusion of media study significant for today's student, it is necessary and quite natural. Using film as a vehicle for understanding "allows teachers to connect the world of the literary canon and formal composition with the media-rich world our students inhabit as they avidly consume the media in their time outside of the class" (Teasley). As English teachers, we bring to our students texts they would not choose on their own, teach them to think critically about them, and to craft personal and analytical responses so that they may see that their lives are not that far removed from the texts they explore. Having a one-semester film course included in our English Program of Studies welcomes the *visual text* to the classroom, which is already of paramount importance to our students' lives.

PHILOSOPHY

The curriculum for this one-semester course, *Film as Literature,* is based on the belief that our media-savvy students should be allowed the opportunity to develop a higher level of visual literacy as this ability to understand and interpret images is increasingly important in today's world. Students need to understand how thoughts and ideas become visual interpretations and reflections of fiction and/or the world in which they live. Film will be examined as a technical art, a visual art, and a medium through which themes and ideas are communicated. Students will be exposed to the formal structures and stylistic characteristics of film so that they may look critically at film and develop their own criteria by which to discuss, analyze, and evaluate. As a result, teachers of this course will expect students to move from "passive viewers" to "active viewers."

Film as Literature, like other electives in the English Program of Studies, is not simply a viewing course, but also one committed to the development and refinement of language arts skills in reading, writing, and speaking. Depending upon any given film, film excerpt, or theme covered in the class, students will write in a variety of forms of discourse including, but not limited to, analytical analyses and comparative analyses and research essays. With any given writing assignment, as is the case in all of our English classes, students will be encouraged to find their own voice in their writing. Seen as an extension of student thinking, writing should be presented and assigned as an ongoing process of drafting and revising before a finished product is submitted. In order to foster independent thinking and learning, the course will ask students to examine new visual texts and encourage them to discover their own interpretations. Students will make inferences and generate questions in an attempt to go beyond the literal and develop a greater depth of understanding. Students will use writing, speaking, and visual texts to prepare for future viewing, to think about what they have viewed, to make their own interpretations, and to communicate their ideas to others. Ultimately, it is a goal of the English department to combine our traditional English curriculum with the power of media literacy in ways that engage our students who are so connected to the ever-present visual images of our contemporary world.

FILM AS LITERATURE COURSE DESCRIPTION

The half year (one semester) elective course *Film as Literature* teaches students to become active, critical viewers of films so that they may, in fact, develop a certain degree of *visual literacy*, the ability to understand and interpret images. This course is designed to provide an understanding of the formal structures and stylistic characteristics of film. As heightening one's understanding of visual literacy is so essential in today's world, students who take this course will examine film as a technical art, a visual art, and a medium through which themes and ideas are communicated. In addition to learning how to view actively and critically, students will speak and write about various aspects of film composition and film criticism. Students will learn technical terminology so that they will not only see what is on the screen, but also understand how and why directors film a scene in a particular way.

In addition to viewing films, students will be exposed to a variety of written texts including critical reviews, director's notes, articles about the film industry and screenplays.

Students will be expected to write viewing notes, responses, analytical essays, comparative analysis essays, and research essays. Methods of assessment will include these written pieces, quizzes, class contribution, a final project, viewing notes, and other special projects requiring oral, visual, and written presentations. As students develop their own visual literacy, they will hopefully look critically at film and develop their own standards by which to discuss, analyze, and evaluate. It is a goal of this course to have our students move from "passive viewers" to "active viewers."

GOALS

Students will:

- demonstrate their evolution from passive to active viewers
- convey their analysis, synthesis and evaluation of film in oral, visual and written communication
- employ concrete evidence from films and research materials to support interpretations and stances

In all units of study, students will:

Reading Standards for Literature (RL)

RL.11-12.1—Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2—Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3—Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g. where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.5—Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g. the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

RL.11-12.6—Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g. satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

RL.11-12.7—Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama or poem (e.g. recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

Reading Standards for Informational Text (RI)

RI.11-12.1—Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI.11-12.2— Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.11-12.3—Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

RI.11-12.5—Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

RI.11-12.6—Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

RI.11-12.7—Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

RI.11-12.10—By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11-12 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Standards (W)

W.11-12.1—Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or text, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11-12.1a—Introduce precise knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claims from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.11-12.1b—Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

W.11-12.1c—Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

W.11-12.1d—Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.11-12.1e—Provide a concluding statement or section that follows form and supports the argument presented.

W.11-12.2—Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.2a—Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g. headings), graphics (e.g. figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.11-12.2b—Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

W.11-12-2c—Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

W.11-12.2d—Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

W.11-12.2e—Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

W.11-12.2f—Provide a concluding statement or section that follows form and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g. articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

W.11-12.3d—Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

W.11-12.4—Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1 – 3).

W.11-12.5—Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for the conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1 – 3 up to and including grades 11-12).

W.11-12.6—Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11-12.7—Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W.11-12.8—Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.11-12.9—Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11-12.9a—Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literature (see RL.9-10.9)

W.11-12.9b—Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (see RI.9-10.8).

W.11-12.10—Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.11-12.1—Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own ideas clearly and persuasively.

Speaking and Listening Standards (SL)

SL.11-12.1a—Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

SL.11-12.1b—Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

SL.11-12.1c—Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions' and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

SL.11-12.1d—Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

SL.11-12.2—Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g. visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

SL.11-12.3—Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

SL.11-12.4—Present information, findings, and supporting evidence , conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

SL.11-12.5—Make strategic use of digital media (e.g. textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

SL.11-12.6—Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Language Standards (L)

L.11-12.1—Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.11-12.1a—Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

L.11-12.1b--Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g. Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, Garner's Modern American Usage) as needed.

L.11-12.2—Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.11-12.2a—Observe hyphenation conventions.

L.11-12.2b—Spell correctly.

L.11-12.3—Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.11-12.3a—Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g. Tufte's Artful Sentences) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.

L.11-12.4—Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11-12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.11-12.4a—Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

L.11-12.4b—Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g. conceive, conception, conceivable).

L.11-12.4c—Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both in print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

L.11-12.4d—Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.11-12.6—Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrases important to comprehension or expression.

UNIT ONE
Intro to Film Criticism

Essential Questions:
- What is the message in this film about family, marriage, happiness, sex and beauty?
- Why is the title of the film *American Beauty*?
- Why is the image of the "dancing bag" that Ricky films beautiful?
- Is this film an accurate portrayal of suburban America?
- How are various ideas explored in the film: youth, sexuality, beauty, death and independence?

Scope and Sequence:
The *Film as Literature* course has both core and supplemental films (see page 20 for film list). The core films/texts include: *Casablanca (1943), Rear Window (1954), The Graduate (1967), Annie Hall (1977), Do The Right Thing (1989) and American Beauty (1999).* The core films do not need to be presented in a specific order and may be paired with supplemental films. The teacher is responsible for educating students on film terminology so they are able to identify and analyze the cinematic, narrative, character and editing techniques applicable to each film. Teachers should refer to the Supplemental Materials/Internet Sources (see page 23) for informational websites. These will aid in developing and supplementing film units. The following are model questions that would **accompany viewing notes** for two of the core films.

Core Texts – Viewing Questions and Viewing Notes Focus Areas

American Beauty - Viewing Questions
The Roses/Color/Symbols:

- What do the roses symbolize?
- Where and when do you see them?
- Are there other images or symbols used in the film? Explain.
- How is color used and important? (Red, others)

Film Techniques:

- Is Lester's narration (voiceover) effective? How and why?
- How was music used in the film?
- How is music used to symbolize "awakening" or other ideas? (Connections between character and specific music types: Frank Sinatra and Carolyn, Lester and Classic Rock, fantasy sequence and music)
- How is lighting used in the film?
- How is Ricky's video camera used? What do we see through that lens? Is it different from the other view we have?

Annie Hall **- Focus Areas for Viewing Notes**

- Characters & Relationships (analyze relationships using narrative elements)
- Setting (NYC vs. LA)
- Camera Shots/Angles (Where are the characters placed and why?)
- The use of non-classical Hollywood Narratives (present to flashbacks to present with other elements thrown in). Pay attention to HOW the story is told because it is not a chronological story.

- Narrative Elements:
    - Inner discourse (we hear the characters thoughts)
    - Subtitles
    - Animation
    - Split screens
    - Flashbacks
    - Flashbacks within scene narration (the scene will come to a stop at times)
    - On street interviews
- How is the film like a relationship? Does it grow as we watch?

Instructional/Teaching Strategies
Direct instruction, whole-class and small group discussion, think/pair/share, brainstorming, active viewing, viewing notes, modeling, peer and teacher feedback, anticipation guides, KWL, pre-writing, gap-filling, visualizing, scaffolding, revising, editing, publishing, online discussions, storyboarding

Technology Competency Standards
1. Creativity and Innovation - Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. Communication and Collaboration - Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
3. Research and Information Fluency - Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.
4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making - Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
5. Digital Citizenship - Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

Assured and Suggested Learner Activities
- Viewing notes
- Supplemental Text – Model Essay Question

Lars and The Real Girl

Reverend Bock states, "Lars asked us not to wear black today. He did so to remind us that this is no ordinary funeral. We are here to celebrate Bianca's extraordinary life. From her wheelchair, Bianca reached out and touched us all, in ways we could never have imagined. She was a teacher. She was a lesson in courage. And Bianca loved us all. Especially Lars. Especially him."

Essay Question:
How was Bianca a teacher? How was she a lesson in courage? Prove how Bianca impacts the community through an analysis of specific scenes. Develop a focused thesis/claim and maintain focus within paragraphs.

Evaluation and Assessment Methods
See assessment overview at end of Unit plans

Time Allotments / Pacing Guide
Approximately 6 weeks

UNIT TWO

Early Cinema Research Project

Essential Questions:
- What is the importance of your topic to early cinema?
- What is the importance of your topic to modern cinema?

Scope and Sequence

Students will use research and presentation skills to learn and teach aspects of early cinema. They will be assigned one of the topics to research. From their research, they will write a paper about their topic, which they will use as the basis for a 7-10 minute presentation. The presentation will highlight the information presented in the paper. Students will also present and explain a film that relates to their topic.

Early Film Stars

1. Lillian and Dorothy Gish
2. Gloria Swanson
3. Laurel and Hardy
4. Buster Keaton
5. Mary Pickford
6. Douglas Fairbanks
7. Charlie Chaplin
8. Lon Chaney
9. Harold Lloyd
10. Rudolph Valentino
11. Fatty Arbuckle
12. Errol Flynn
13. Greta Garbo
14. John Gilbert

Issues in Early Films and Filmmaking

1. Scandals: Arbuckle, Chaplin, Taylor
2. D.W. Griffith
3. Edison

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

Direct instruction, whole-class and small group discussion, think/pair/share, brainstorming, active viewing, viewing notes, modeling, peer and teacher feedback, anticipation guides, KWL, pre-writing, gap-filling, visualizing, scaffolding, revising, editing, publishing, online discussions, storyboarding

Technology Competency Standards
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Assured and Suggested Learner Activities
- Research paper

Evaluation and Assessment Methods
See assessment overview at end of Unit plans

Time Allotments/ Pacing Guide
Approximately 4 weeks

GRADING (student rubric)

Paper = 2 Test Grades under Test Average
Content: You will receive a test grade for Content
- Do you respond to and support all aspects of the assignment?
- Length: approximately 3 pages (citations should not take up half a page)

Research/Format: You will receive a test grade for Research and Format
- You need 3 different sources. Use a variety of reliable sources including books, internet, encyclopedias, periodicals, etc.
- Visit http://owl.english.purdue.edu for all MLA and writing needs.
- Cite direct quotes and paraphrased material using MLA format to avoid plagiarism (quotations require leads and discussion).
- Provide a works cited page using correct MLA format.
- The paper follows all writing guidelines (introduction, thesis, topic sentences, transitions, paragraphs, conclusion, et cetera).

Presentation: 7-10 minutes = 1 Test Grade under Participation Average
- Your presentation must fill the time.
- You must talk to the class, not simply read from your paper. Be interactive.
- You must have 2 visuals (film clip, poster, handout, et cetera). Your film clip should not be more than a 3-5 minute block and it should be explained in relation to your topic. *How does your clip address the essential questions of the Early Cinema Project?*
- Speak loud and clear, use eye contact, "own the material," do not chew gum, etc.

Notes/Additional Directions:

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Storyboard

Essential Questions:
- How does a director's choices affect an audience?
- How does visual symbolism tell a story?

Sketch

Choose a simple activity for a twelve shot sequence (examples: brushing your teeth, tying your shoes or frosting a cupcake). You will sketch your twelve shots in simple storyboard form. This does not require elaborate art work – stick figures will do! You will need to plan the distance and angle of the shot (use correct terminology) by penciling it in on the storyboard sheet (see handout). Do not include sound or editing components.

Still Images

You will create still photographic images of your sketches. Arrange your twelve shots in their proper order and mount them on a poster.

Written Explanation

In a 2 page typed and double-spaced response, analyze your control of the camera and the images you produced. Your response should be well developed and include specific detail for support. (Why did you shoot the pictures the way you did? Why did you zoom in? Why did you zoom out? Why did you choose the angles you did? Why did you choose the colors you did? Why did you choose the placement you did? etc.)

Twelve Shot Sequence Activity (to accompany *Rear Window*)

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

Direct instruction, whole-class and small group discussion, think/pair/share, brainstorming, active viewing, viewing notes, modeling, peer and teacher feedback, anticipation guides, KWL, pre-writing, gap-filling, visualizing, scaffolding, revising, editing, publishing, online discussions, storyboarding

Technology Competency Standards
1. Creativity and Innovation - Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. Communication and Collaboration - Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
3. Research and Information Fluency - Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.
4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making - Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
5. Digital Citizenship - Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

Assured and Suggested Learner Activities

- Twelve Shot Sequence Activity (to accompany *Rear Window*)

Evaluation and Assessment Methods

See assessment overview at end of Unit plans

Time Allotments / Pacing Guide

Approximately 3 weeks

Twelve-Shot Sketch

UNIT FOUR
Final Assessment – Genre Study

Essential questions:

- How have film genres evolved throughout the history of film and what can these changes tell us about the world and societies from which they emanate?

- What elements of film are specific to certain genres? Which elements transcend genre? How can our understanding of these elements heighten our awareness of a director's work?

Scope and Sequence

Film Genre Study

The purpose of this final assessment is to demonstrate the students' transformation from "passive" to "active" viewers by using the knowledge they gained in this course. In pairs or groups, the students will be assigned a particular genre of film. They will present their findings, historical and contemporary, to the class in a 45-minute presentation.

In both a paper and a presentation, students must respond to the following questions:

Define your genre: What is your genre about? What specifics are commonly present? What particular film techniques characterize this genre? What purpose does the genre serve for viewers? Who are some famous directors and why are they famous? Are there any famous stars that are commonly associated with this genre?

Historical Information: When did this genre emerge? Can you make some connections about the state of the nation (i.e. what historical events may have contributed to this genre) and the nature of your genre? What is considered the "first" of this genre? What names are connected with this genre historically?

Contemporary Information: How has this genre evolved and why? What films of this genre exist now?

Film Clips: You must preview at least two films from your genre on your own time, preferably as a group. As a part of your presentations, you must show the class at least two film clips that somehow illustrate critical element(s) of your genre. You need to select an earlier clip (in order to give an historical perspective), and then a more contemporary clip (in order to show how the genre evolved). You will need to turn in viewing notes from the films you watch with your group.

Types of Genres: (You will be assigned a genre)

Action/Adventure Films   Science Fiction Films
Comedy Films   War Films
Crime and Gangster Films   Western Films
Cult Films
Horror Films
Musical Films
Romance Films

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

Direct instruction, whole-class and small group discussion, think/pair/share, brainstorming, active viewing, viewing notes, modeling, peer and teacher feedback, anticipation guides, KWL, pre-writing, gap-filling, visualizing, scaffolding, revising, editing, publishing, online discussions, storyboarding

Technology Competency Standards

1. Creativity and Innovation - Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. Communication and Collaboration - Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
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5. Digital Citizenship - Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

Assured and Suggested Learner Activities

- Genre Project

Evaluation and Assessment Methods

You will receive an **<u>Individual and a Group</u>** grade for this project. (Refer to your contracts)

Your individual grade will be based on:

- Attendance at group meetings
- Focus and work done on presentation in and out of class
- Viewing notes from the two films you view as a group
- Your individual role in group presentation
- A written (1 page) self-reflection on your role in the project and the grade you think you will earn individually and as a group (based on contract)

Your group grade will be based on:

- A homework assignment for your classmates (You will provide your classmates with a homework assignment the <u>night before</u> your presentation. The assignment will be interesting, stimulating, and have an obvious and appropriate connection to your presentation.)
- A handout for the class with an outline of your presentation, a definition of your genre, and a works-cited page (MLA format)
- The quality of your presentation (Are you well informed? Interesting? Practiced? Do you provide a visual for the class, power point, over-head, etc.?)

- The quality of your content in written and spoken form (Did you research thoroughly? Are your sources appropriate and from respectable sources? Did you answer all of the project questions? Is your paper well written? Do you follow all MLA requirements? Do you properly cite ALL paraphrased information and direct citations?
- Was your presentation both interesting and insightful, not just a summary of facts?)
- Do your classic and contemporary clips (and explanation) define and represent your genre? Basically, do you answer all project questions?
- Is there equal contribution by all group members to the presentation (Refer to group contracts)?

Time Allotments / Pacing Guide

Approximately 3 weeks

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
(to be used throughout units of study)

Teachers of *Film as Literature* will evaluate students using a variety of techniques in order to accommodate and recognize different learning styles.

Core assessments should be implemented throughout the marking periods and should show students' progress in the following areas:
- writing analytical and comparative essays,
- reading and responding to visual texts, and
- reading and responding to visual texts not discussed in class in order to assess students' ability as independent thinkers and viewers.

Evaluation will include an assessment of the following student activities:

Student Class Contribution (involvement with the whole class as well as in small group activity) that demonstrates...
- ability in discussion - quality as well as quantity in participation,
- ability in oral response-quality as well as quantity in participation,
- originality of insight,
- critical thinking and depth of insight,
- ability to develop a critical stance, and
- ability and willingness to work as part of a team.

Student Writing Assignments (formal analytical and comparative essays as well as critical viewer responses in the form of viewing notes, etc.) that demonstrates...
- creative and insightful thought,
- development of a strong thesis with defined, organized, and narrowed focus,
- development of ideas,
- unified organization,
- appropriateness and correctness of language,
- fluency and variety in language, appropriate and correct use of spelling, grammar, and vocabulary,
- awareness of audience and clarity of purpose,
- varied and appropriate supporting evidence,
- ability to make connections among films, readings, and the outside world,
- ability to develop a critical stance, and
- close analysis of assigned films and readings.

Quizzes (announced and/or unannounced) that demonstrate students'...
- awareness and understanding of film and assigned readings and
- intellectual and emotional response to assigned films based on viewing notes.

Additional Assured Assessment(s) that require students to demonstrate film literacy:
- creative expression of independent thought which include oral presentations using effective speech techniques media center and Internet research projects

Final Assessments (required) that ask students to demonstrate... (See Appendix A for Final Assessment)
- the ability to apply research on a film genre to two representative films (one historical and one contemporary) and
- the ability to critically analyze, synthesize, discuss, and evaluate film in the written and spoken word.

COURSE, LEVEL
Film as Literature, Writing Elective, ACP Level

COURSE CREDIT
.5 English credit
One semester

PREREQUISITES
This course is open to seniors with the recommendation of their English teacher.

**TEXTS AND RELATED RESOURCES CORE TEXTS/FILMS
ALL SIX FILMS ARE REQUIRED**

The Core Films for this course include:

Casablanca (1943)
Rear Window (1954), Vertigo (1958), Psycho (1960) or another Alfred Hitchcock film
The Graduate (1967)
Annie Hall (1977) or The Purple Rose of Cairo (1985)
Do The Right Thing (1989)
American Beauty (1999)

The Supplemental Films for this course <u>include but are not limited to:</u>

500 Days of Summer
A Bronx Tale
After Hours, The King of Comedy (some Scorsese film that is appropriate)
Almost Famous
Bonnie and Clyde
Bowling for Columbine, Roger and Me, or another Michael Moore film
The Candidate
Citizen Kane
The Godfather
The Ides of March
Lars and the Real Girl
The Lord of the Rings Films
Midnight Cowboy
Moulin Rouge
On the Waterfront
Pleasantville
Rebel Without a Cause
Rocky
Saving Private Ryan
Say Anything
Sixteen Candles/ Pretty in Pink /Ferris Beuller's Day Off
Smoke Signals Thelma and Louise
This is Spinal Tap
Unbreakable/The Sixth Sense/Signs

SUPPLEMENT MATTERIALS/INTERNET SOURCES

http://www.movingimage.us/education/

http://www.afi.com

http://www.imdb.com

http://www.oscars.org/education-outreach/teachersguide/index.html

http://www.trumbullct-library.org/default.htm

http://www.afi.com/members/catalog/

http://www.filmnoirfoundation.org/contribute.html

http://www.movingimagesource.us/research/guide/type/9/20/3

http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/

http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/wcftr/

http://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/WAVE

http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Rubric 1: Read Effectively

Category/Weight	Exemplary 4	Goal 3	Working Toward Goal 2	Needs Support 1-0
Respond X_____	Demonstrates exceptional understanding of text by: • Clearly identifying the purpose of the text • Providing initial reaction richly supported by text • Providing a perceptive interpretation	Demonstrates understanding of text by: • Identifying the fundamental purpose of the text • Providing initial reaction supported by text • Providing a clear/straight-forward interpretation of the text	Demonstrates general understanding of text by: • Partially identifying the purpose of the text • Providing initial reaction somewhat supported by text • Providing a superficial interpretation of the text	Demonstrates limited or no understanding of text by: • Not identifying the purpose of the text • Providing initial reaction not supported by text • Providing an interpretation not supported by the text
Interpret X_____	Demonstrates exceptional interpretation of text by: • Extensively reshaping, reflecting, revising, and/or deepening initial understanding • Constructing insightful and perceptive ideas about the text. • Actively raising critical questions and exploring multiple interpretations of the text	Demonstrates ability to interpret text by: • Reshaping, reflecting, revising, and/or deepening initial understanding • Summarizing main ideas of text • Actively interpreting text by raising questions and looking for answers in text	Demonstrates general ability to interpret text by: • Guided reflection and/or revision of initial understanding • Summarizing some of the main ideas of text • Guided interpretation of text by locating answers to given questions in text	Demonstrates limited ability to interpret text as evidenced by: • Struggle to implement guided reflection and/or revision of initial understanding • Struggle to summarize any main ideas of text • Struggle to answer questions by locating responses in text
Connect X_____	Demonstrates perceptive connections • text-to-text • text-to-self • text-to-world	Demonstrates specific connections • text-to-text • text-to-self • text-to-world	Demonstrates general connections • text-to-text • text-to-self • text-to-world	Struggles to make connections • text-to-text • text-to-self • text-to-world

Evaluate
 	
X_____
	Demonstrates insightful evaluation of text by one or more of the following:
	
	• Critical analysis to create a conclusion supported by the text
	• Perceptive judgments about the quality of the text
	  • Synthesis of text
	  • Expression of a personal opinion
		Demonstrates an evaluation of text by one or more of the following:
		• Critical analysis to form a conclusion from the text
		• Thoughtful judgments about the quality of the text
		• Evaluation of text to express personal opinion(s)
			Demonstrates a general evaluation of text by one or more of the following:
			• Formulation of a superficial conclusion from the text
			• Assessment of the quality of the text
			• Use of text to express personal opinion(s)
				Demonstrates a struggle to evaluate the text by one or more of the following:
				• Formulation of a conclusion from the text
				• Assessment of the quality of the text
				• Use of text to express personal opinion(s)

Rubric 2: Write Effectively

Category/Weight	Exemplary 4 Student work:	Goal 3 Student work:	Working Toward Goal 2 Student work:	Needs Support 1-0 Student work:
Purpose X_____	• Establishes and maintains a clear purpose • Demonstrates an insightful understanding of audience and task	• Establishes and maintains a purpose • Demonstrates an accurate awareness of audience and task	• Establishes a purpose • Demonstrates an awareness of audience and task	• Does not establish a clear purpose • Demonstrates limited/no awareness of audience and task
Organization X_____	• Reflects sophisticated organization throughout • Demonstrates logical progression of ideas • Maintains a clear focus • Utilizes effective transitions	• Reflects organization throughout • Demonstrates logical progression of ideas • Maintains a focus • Utilizes transitions	• Reflects some organization throughout • Demonstrates logical progression of ideas at times • Maintains a vague focus • May utilize some ineffective transitions	• Reflects little/no organization • Lacks logical progression of ideas • Maintains little/no focus • Utilizes ineffective or no transitions
Content X_____	• Is accurate, explicit, and vivid • Exhibits ideas that are highly developed and enhanced by specific details and examples	• Is accurate and relevant • Exhibits ideas that are developed and supported by details and examples	• May contain some inaccuracies • Exhibits ideas that are partially supported by details and examples	• Is inaccurate and unclear • Exhibits limited/no ideas supported by specific details and examples
Use of Language X_____	• Demonstrates excellent use of language • Demonstrates a highly effective use of standard writing that enhances communication • Contains few or no errors. Errors do not detract from meaning	• Demonstrates competent use of language • Demonstrates effective use of standard writing conventions • Contains few errors. Most errors do not detract from meaning	• Demonstrates use of language • Demonstrates use of standard writing conventions • Contains errors that detract from meaning	• Demonstrates limited competency in use of language • Demonstrates limited use of standard writing conventions • Contains errors that make it difficult to determine meaning

Rubric 5: Independent Learners And Thinkers

Category/Weight	Exemplary 4	Goal 3	Working Toward Goal 2	Needs Support 1-0
Proposal X_____	Student demonstrates a strong sense of initiative by generating compelling questions, creating uniquely original projects/work.	Student demonstrates initiative by generating appropriate questions, creating original projects/work.	Student demonstrates some initiative by generating questions, creating appropriate projects/work.	Student demonstrates limited or no initiative by generating few questions and creating projects/work.
Independent Research & Development X_____	Student is analytical, insightful, and works independently to reach a solution.	Student is analytical, and works productively to reach a solution.	Student reaches a solution with direction.	Student is unable to reach a solution without consistent assistance.
Presentation of Finished Product X_____	Presentation shows compelling evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows deep understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows extensive and appropriate application of 21st Century Skills.	Presentation shows clear evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows adequate understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows adequate application of 21st Century Skills.	Presentation shows some evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows some understanding of the problem and its components. Solution shows some application of 21st Century Skills.	Presentation shows limited or no evidence of an independent learner and thinker. Solution shows limited or no understanding of the problem. Solution shows limited or no application of 21st Century Skills.

Rubric Category	Points Awarded	Your Rationale for Points Awarded
Films: The presenters show the class the two required film clips that illustrate critical element(s) of their genre. (The critical elements are presented to the class) They select an earlier clip (in order to give the historical perspective), and then a more contemporary clip (in order to show how the genre evolved). The clips are thoroughly analyzed/explained (it is clear why the two films represent the genre). The two required clips and any other clips shown are analyzed for the class (camera angles/shots, narrative elements, characters and editing techniques).	_____/35	
Information: The presentation answers the following questions: **Define your genre**: What is your genre about? What specifics are commonly present? What particular film techniques characterize this genre? What purpose does the genre serve for viewers? Who are some famous directors and why are they famous? Are there any famous stars that are commonly associated with this genre? **Historical Information**: When did this genre emerge? Can you make some connections about the state of the nation (i.e. what historical events may have contributed to this genre) and the nature of your genre? What is considered the "first" of this genre? What names are connected with this genre historically? **Contemporary Information**: How has this genre evolved and why? What films of this genre exist now?	_____/35	

Visuals and Handout: The visuals should be aesthetically pleasing. They should complement and accent the presentation. They should have a purpose. You should deduct points for poor quality, improper use of visuals or lack of visual aids. Film clips do not count as visual aids. The handout presents an outline for the presentation (highlight the major points), a definition of the genre and a works cited page.	_____/10	
Involvement/Entertainment of the class: The speakers present the information (in a clever way) so it keeps you involved as an audience member (viewer). Reward your classmates for their originality and effort.	_____/10	
Homework Assignment: It made you think, there was an obvious connection to the presentation and it maintained teacher's level of academic expectations. The homework assignment was presented to you prior to (day before) the presentation.	_____/10	
Deductions (up to ten points): If someone runs over or under in time, speaks in a monotone, "reads" their presentation, lacks organization, comes in late during another presentation, or is disrespectful of others during another presentation (talking, not participating,), etc.	-(_____)	
Total Points:	_____/100	

Viewing Notes Rubric

Film Viewing Notes, Analysis and Criticism
Rubric (Refer to your notes, questions, and areas of focus provide for each film)

√+

- Reveals the viewer's steady, thoughtful awareness (of viewing note areas and focus areas) throughout the film
- Reveals the viewer's mind at work while viewing, asking questions, making observations, drawing conclusions
- Reveals an awareness and discussion of specific film techniques at work

√

- Reveals the viewer's steady awareness (lacking viewing note areas and focus areas) throughout the film
- Reveals some evidence of a mind at work, but relies mostly on plot points/summary, less on reacting, questioning & analysis
- Reveals some awareness of specific film techniques at work, but lacks discussion

√-

- Reveals spotty awareness of film, perhaps viewer was distracted, sleeping, doing other work, or absent
- Mostly plot events recorded with no evidence of reacting, questioning, thinking or analysis
- Minimal or no film techniques noted

Writing Responses: Complete on a separate sheet of paper

1. **Look back over your notes and explain what you believe was the intended effect of two of the cinematic or narrative elements that you noticed. Why did the director, cinematographer, etc. use them? Use** specific examples **to support your thoughts.**

2. **Reflect on today's screening. What struck you the most about the film? Did it meet your expectations? What surprised you? What questions do you have? What themes did the film explore? Support your response with evidence from your notes.**

Camera Angles, Lighting, Shot Style

Narrative Elements (How is the story being told to you? Use of color, sound, music, etc.) (Setting, plot, etc.)

Characters (Who are these people? What are they like? How can you tell?) (Actor's performance, specific dialogue, characterization, etc.)

Editing Technique

APPENDIX C
Permission Slip for *Film as Literature* course

In order for students to take part in the *Film as Literature* course, they must receive the permission of their parent/guardian to view the following Core and Supplemental films that are not rated or rated PG, PG-13, and R. Please print and sign below.

I _____ **grant** _____
        (Name of parent/guardian)   **(Name of student)**

permission to view the following films in the *Film as Literature* course.

The Core Films for this course include:
  Casablanca (1943)
  Rear Window (1954), Vertigo (1958), Psycho (1960) or another Alfred Hitchcock film
  The Graduate (1967)
  Annie Hall (1977) or Manhattan (1979)
  Do The Right Thing (1989)
  American Beauty (1999)

The Supplemental Films for this course <u>include but are not limited to</u>:
  500 Days of Summer
  A Bronx Tale
  After Hours, The King of Comedy (some Scorsese film that is appropriate)
  Almost Famous
  Bonnie and Clyde
  Bowling for Columbine, Roger and Me, or another Michael Moore film
  The Candidate
  Citizen Kane
  The Godfather
  The Ides of March
  Lars and the Real Girl
  The Lord of the Rings Films
  Midnight Cowboy
  Moulin Rouge
  On the Waterfront
  Pleasantville
  Rebel Without a Cause
  Rocky
  Saving Private Ryan
  Say Anything
  Sixteen Candles/ Pretty in Pink /Ferris Beuller's Day Off
  Smoke Signals Thelma and Louise
  This is Spinal Tap
  Unbreakable/The Sixth Sense/Signs

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

RESOURCE FILE

American Beauty. Dir. Sam Mendes. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Annette Bening, Thora Birch, Wes Bentley, Mena Suvari, Chris Cooper, Peter Gallagher, and Allison Janney. Dream Works, 1999. Film.

Annie Hall. Dir. Woody Allen. Perf. Woody Allen, Diane Keaton, and Tony Roberts. United Artists, 1977. Film.

Casablanca. Dir. Michael Curtiz. Perf. Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains. Warner, 1942. Film.

Do the Right Thing. Dir. Spike Lee. Perf. Spike Lee, Danny Aiello, Ossie Davis, Richard Edson, Giancarlo Esposito, and John Turturro. Universal, 1989. Film.

Rear Window. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Perf. James Stewart and Grace Kelly. Paramount, 1954. Film.

The Graduate. Dir. Mike Nichols. Perf. Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft, and Katharine Ross. Embassy Pictures, 1967. Film.

CURRENT REFERENCES

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (State Website)
http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy

Technology Competency Standards
http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-students/nets-student-standards-2007