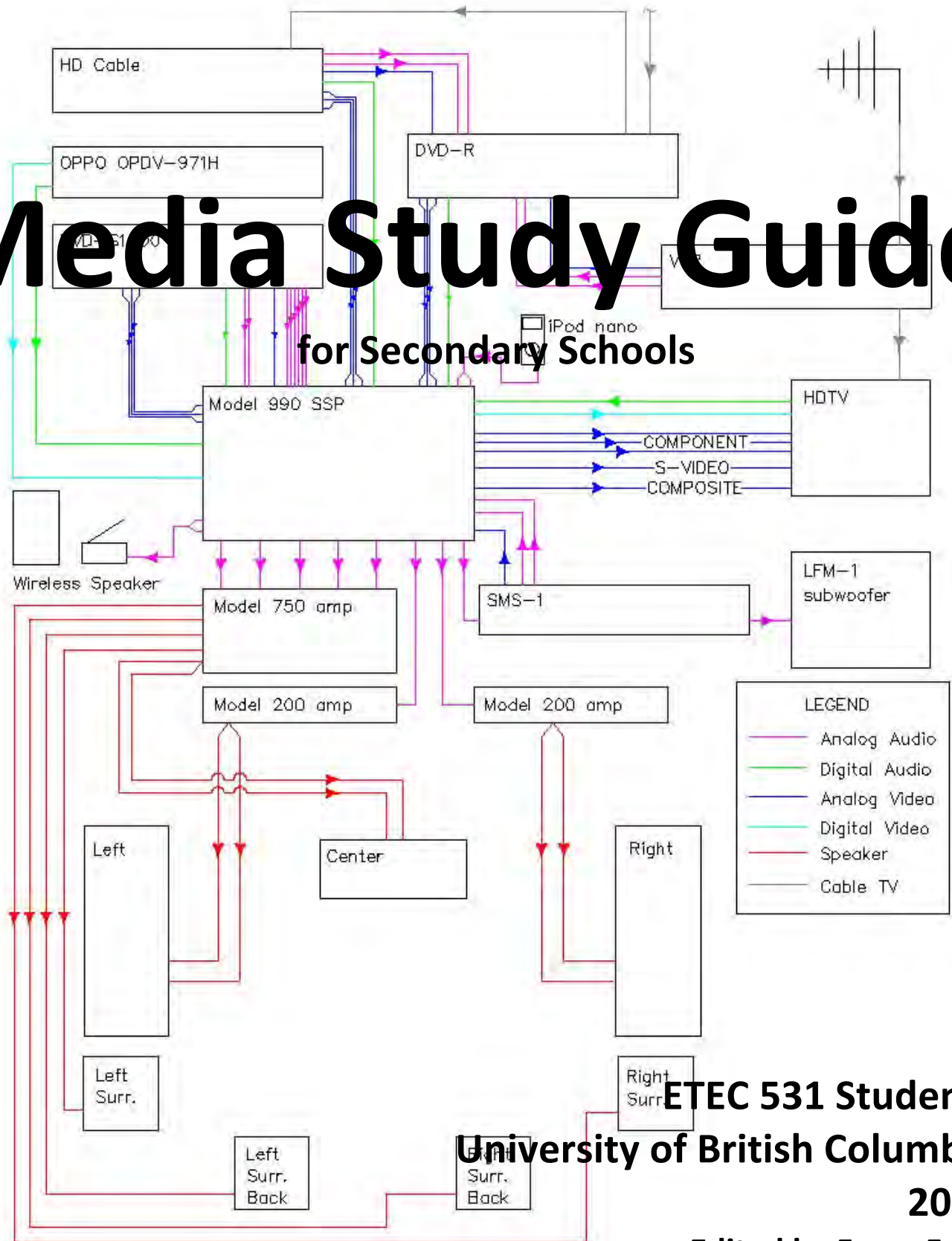


Media Study Guides

for Secondary Schools



ETEC 531 Students
University of British Columbia
2013

Edited by Franc Feng

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Preface & Acknowledgements

This text represents the work of a group of 21 graduate students enrolled in the MET program, many of whom are also teachers enrolled in a (Curriculum issues in) Cultural and New Media Studies course in the summer of 2013, designed by Dr. Stephen Petrina and Dr. Franc Feng, and taught by Dr. Feng. The challenge for the group was to write a Media Studies text that appealed to all grades in the school system, providing teachers with an interesting, diverse and rich resource for use in the classroom. The individual sections can be adopted and integrated into any number of subjects or adopted as a textbook for (Curriculum issues in) Cultural and New Media Studies in the schools.

We acknowledge the support of family and friends and the various cultural agents and artists whose illustrations or texts were incorporated into the sections of the book. We also acknowledge the work of graduate students (work in progress, this is a preliminary draft, their names to be included) who worked on the cover page and publishing this textbook.

We hope you are as inspired with the insights within each section, as we were producing these, and we encourage you to continue learning about media, culture and technology.

Reality Television

Reality.....or just realism?



Learning Outcomes

- Evaluate logic and the quality of evidence presented (BC Ministry of Education, 2007, Gr. 11 & 12)
- Identifying and challenging bias, contradictions, and distortions (BC Ministry of Education, 2007, Gr. 11 & 12)
- Critique reality television programming
- Analyze how editing can derive and change meaning

Key Concepts

- What is reality television?
- Why is reality television so popular?
- What sub-genres of reality television exist?
- How do producers edit footage to create episodes?
- Is reality television reality or just realism?



What is Reality Television?

Reality television, also known as reality shows, is a "television programming genre that presents unscripted situations, documents actual events and usually features unknowns instead of professional actors" (Wikipedia, 2013, para. 1). While the popularity of the reality television genre has exploded in the past 15 years, it has actually existed since the 1940's when the show *Candid Camera* originated (Wikipedia, 2013). Since then, the genre has evolved and grown into a multitude of sub-genres with most major television networks creating and televising unique reality shows in hopes of breaking into this audience market. The genre has grown so much that there are several networks (such as MTV and TLC) that focus primarily on televising all reality content.

Recently, controversy has arisen over the "reality" factor of reality television. While the genre name and definition excludes the ideas of pre-scripting and contrived story lines, many reality shows are under fire for pre-creating and manipulating plots in order to gain audience appeal. As viewers, we must learn how to critically examine this genre in order to distinguish between what is reality and what is being portrayed as realism.

Did you know...

- Screenrant.com statistics show that in 2000 there were 4 reality shows on television. By 2010, there were 320.
- Perez Hilton's blog states that Simon Cowell is the richest reality television star raking in 90 million dollars in 2012.



Sub-genres of Reality Television include:

Competition: American Idol, Dancing With the Stars, Survivor, Big Brother

Documentary: Deadliest Catch, Duck Dynasty

Hidden Cameras: Just For Laughs Gags, Punk'd

Legal: Judge Judy

Makeover: The Biggest Loser, What Not to Wear

Renovation: Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, Overhaulin'

Social Experiment: Wife Swap, Secret Millionaire

Supernatural: Long Island Medium

Why is Reality Television so Popular?

According to Guttentag (2008), reality television is an economic choice for television networks. Not only does reality television cost considerably less to produce since there are no actors or writers to pay, but advertising spots during reality television shows can typically sell for twice that of a television drama show. As such, Guttentag (2008) argues that television networks will do whatever it takes, including the manipulation of video and audio footage, to increase their ratings so they can in turn make more money off of commercials. (to view Guttentag's lecture go to <http://goo.gl/3kOfI>)

Within the media world, audiences are considered consumers. For consumers, reality television plays out in the real world what many of us would consider to be fantasy. Ideas such as a nobody becoming an

instant singing sensation, the girl next door transforming into a Cover Girl, finding true love, winning a million dollars - are consumer fantasies. Consumers are also enamored with seeing conflict erupt before their eyes. According to Gervin (2013), "the public can relate to the situations and lives of the people who play roles on reality television shows" (para. 1). As such, viewers become somewhat addicted to seeing what will happen on next week's show as they become intrigued by the lives of reality television stars. It is often the mix of fantasy with reality that brings consumers back time and time again to view their favorite show. This mix is also what prompts television networks to continually create and produce unique reality shows that will appeal to the television public.

Tricks of the Trade

Ratings are the key to keep a show running. If a show is not interesting, the ratings drop and the show may be in danger of being cancelled (Striipe, 2011). Producers try to prevent this from happening by ensuring that each episode is dramatic enough to keep the viewers hooked (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Tricks to make an episode more dramatic or suspenseful include:

- Frankenbiting
- misleading montage (editing reactions to fit into certain scenarios)
- the leading interview (during "confessionals," such as the diary room in *Big Brother*, producers can make a scene more dramatic than it really is by asking the right questions and receiving answers to voice over that particular scene)



- the overdub (adding noises and captions to suggest more than what really happened) (Poniewozik, 2006).

Most Watched Reality Television Shows 2012-2013

(tvguide.com)

1. American Idol
2. Dancing With the Stars
3. The Voice
4. Duck Dynasty
5. Survivor

Celebrities Who Got Their Start on Reality Television

(perezhilton.com)

1. Jennifer Hudson
2. Lauren Conrad
3. Kim Kardashian
4. Elisabeth Hasselbeck
5. Bethenny Frankel
6. Ke\$ha
7. Kelly Osbourne



The World of "Frankenbiting"

Although we may assume reality show producers create episodes based on un-scripted and un-manipulated footage, this is not always the case. Many reality shows edit footage using a popular tool called frankenbiting. Frankenbiting

can "create dramatic situations by rearranging the sequence of events and dialogue" (Diehl, 2009, para. 1). This can happen in one of two ways.

1. A piece of unedited audio footage may be played out of context.
2. Chunks of audio footage (words, phrases, and sentences) that originally had nothing to do with each other are edited to create a new audio sequence. This new sequence acts as narration for a piece of video footage which helps create believability.

While some might argue frankenbiting merely adds interest to a reality show, others say the direct manipulation of audio and video footage is unethical.

Reality vs. Realism

Reality television shows may appear to be based solely on reality, but, if this is true, it would mean that these programs are presented in "the state of things as they actually exist, rather than as they may appear or may be thought to be" (Wikipedia, July 8, 2013, par.1). However, this is not the case, as reality television shows do not merely present what has happened in "real time," rather, scenes are edited and manipulated to portray meaning (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Thus, reality television is not simply reality, as it portrays characteristics of realism (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Realism is "the general attempt to depict things accurately, from either a visual, social or emotional perspective" (Wikipedia, May 13, 2013, para.1).

Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.

-Albert Einstein

Reality (n).

The state of things as they actually exist

Realism (n).

The general attempt to depict things accurately



Sources for Further Study – Text

1. Reality Television Statistics
<http://goo.gl/ekhsu>

2. Reality is Only an Illusion, Writers Say
<http://goo.gl/7N06Y>

3. What is Reality TV's Influence on Culture
<http://goo.gl/Mv9xG>

Sources for Further Study – Video

1. TEDTalk: The Value of Reality TV
<http://goo.gl/zd7DW>

2. The Inside Scoop Behind Reality Television
<http://goo.gl/AjXBi>

3. Reality Check Documentary
<http://goo.gl/vGSwW>

Student Activity #1

The *Celebrity Apprentice* is a reality game show created by Mark Burnett. Throughout the competition, celebrities (who have been out of the spotlight for a few years) compete for a charity of their choice. Donald Trump gives the celebrities business-themed challenges and at the end of each episode, Mr. Trump "fires" one of the celebrities based on their performance during the challenge.



Adam Carolla, celebrity podcast host, was a contestant on season 5 of *The Celebrity Apprentice*. After being "fired" from the show, Carolla posted a podcast outing the show for manipulating him, his team, and the edited episode that was aired on television.

Read the following article written by Josh Tyler of the website *Television Blend*.

To locate the article go to: <http://goo.gl/DSvsX>

Discuss:

1. Why would a *Celebrity Apprentice* producer direct Adam Carolla to execute such a presentation? What does this do for the show?
2. If you were Adam Carolla, would you follow the producer's suggestions? What would happen if you chose to, or if you chose not to?
3. What elements of this situation depict reality? Realism?
4. Does this article provide positive or negative media for *Celebrity Apprentice*?
5. Do you think producers influence cast members on other reality television shows (e.g. teams in the *Amazing Race*, home cooks on *Masterchef*, etc.)? If so, how?

Your Turn: The following questions have been retrieved from an SAT college entrance exam. Although there was controversy surrounding its use in that context, it fits in well with this discussion. In paragraph form, respond to the following questions:

"Reality television programs, which feature real people engaged in real activities rather than professional actors performing scripted scenes, are increasingly popular. These shows depict ordinary people competing in everything from singing and dancing to losing weight, or just living their everyday lives. Most people believe that the reality these shows portray is authentic, but they are being misled. How authentic can these shows be when producers design challenges for the participants and then editors alter filmed scenes?" (Strauss, 2011)

"Do people benefit from forms of entertainment that show so-called reality, or are such forms of entertainment harmful?" (Strauss, 2011)

Student Activity #2

Editing video and audio footage is something that happens with every television show. With reality television however, producers have to take hours of video footage and condense it into a 40-45 minute episode. Not only do they have to condense the available footage, they also have to ensure it will appeal to the audience.

Charlie Brooker (host of various BBC programs) demonstrates how reality television editing can be used to portray a very specific story. When reality shows have countless hours of footage, they can pick, choose, splice, and edit content as they wish. Brooker would argue they do this in such a fashion as to create story lines, emotions, and incidents that didn't actually happen. Watch this short clip of Charlie Brooker demonstrating how footage can be edited. Clip is located at: <http://goo.gl/NMzIJ>

Discuss: Do you think reality show editing creates a false impression of what actually occurs?

Your Turn: Create a 30-45 second clip of a group of people talking. As exemplified in Brooker's clip, try to get some footage of the whole group as well as up close shots of people talking. Once the clip has been shot create 2 versions of the clip. In one version, a person from the group needs to be portrayed positively. Use audio narrative and editing as Brooker did to create this portrayal. In the second version, that same person needs to be portrayed negatively. Again, use audio narrative and editing to accomplish this.



Biressi, A. & Nunn, H. (2005). *Reality TV: Realism and Revelation*. New York City: Columbia University Press.

Diehl, M. (2009). The ethics of reality TV: Frankenbiting. From *A Critical Guide to: Reality Television*. Retrieved on July 12, 2013 from <http://www.rtfmediastudies.tcu.edu/Ethics%20Frankenbiting.htm>

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Poniewozik, J. (2006, February 6). How reality TV fakes it. *TIME Magazine*. Retrieved online July 18, 2013 from http://resource.rockyview.ab.ca/rvic/ela101/related_reads/how_reality_tv_fakes_it.pdf

Seanbaby. (2012, January 14) *Frankenbite*. Retrieved online July 18, 2013 from http://www.cracked.com/blog/5-secrets-making-reality-tv-they-dont-want-you-to-know_p2/

Strauss, V. (2011, April 15). SAT question on reality TV stirs controversy. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved online July 18, 2013 from http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/sat-question-on-reality-tv-stirs-controversy/2011/03/15/ABjNjCY_blog.html

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Tyler, J. (2012, March 13). Adam Carolla Says Celebrity Apprentice Fired Him For Doing What Producers Wanted. Retrieved online July 13, 2013 from <http://www.cinemablend.com/television/Adam-Carolla-Says-Celebrity-Apprentice-Fired-Him-Doing-What-Producers-Wanted-40409.html>

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Super Size Me

A Media Study Guide by James Chen and Andrew Lemon

Film Facts:

Title: Super Size Me

Release Date: 2004, May 7

Written, directed, produced, and starring: Morgan Spurlock

Running time : 98 minutes

Rating: PG-13

Country: United States

Introduction:

The topic for this media study guide is *Super Size Me* (Spurlock, 2004), a film that examines what a “fast food” diet can do to the human body. The purpose of this guide is to engage students in dialogue about the food choices they make by creating a media production in response to the issues relating to the film. Through this process, students will examine the fast food industry from a critical perspective and reach their own conclusions about the influences that the fast food industry has on society.

Learning Outcomes:

Grades: 8-10

By watching the film *Super Size Me* and working through the activities in this guide, students will be able to:

- Gain critical thinking skills in media literacy education by
 - Discussing the effects of a diet high in fat and sugar
 - Considering the role fast food has in rising obesity rates
 - Becoming aware of the marketing methods used by fast food restaurants
 - Investigating what makes for a healthy diet
- Use digital technology to create a media production on a select topic

Synopsis:

Super Size Me (Spurlock, 2004) is a documentary film about America’s love of fast food. It follows Morgan Spurlock as he embarks on a “McDonald’s only” diet for thirty days, while tracking what a diet high in fat and sugar can do to the human body. Spurlock examines the rising rate of obesity in America and links it to an increase in fast food restaurants. The main focus of the movie is McDonald’s, but he also touches on other fast food restaurants, including Wendy’s and Burger King.

During the film Spurlock eats only food that can be found on the McDonald’s while trying every single item at least once. He restricts the amount of physical exercise he gets to better reflect what the average American does in a day, and accepts the offer to “Super Size” his meal whenever he is asked. At the end of film we see that Spurlock has gained 25 pounds and his vital signs, blood work mental health have all worsened considerably (with the exception of his mental health, Spurlock had these measured before he began the diet to have a baseline which to better measure the effects).

Spurlock looks at how children are the primary target of a marketing campaign aims to build brand loyalty to a particular fast food restaurant and how schools also become a place for fatty, sugary foods to be marketed. Throughout the film hear from a variety of health and nutritional experts who speak out against the dangers of eating foods high in sugar and fat. Supporters of the film see it as an expose on the fast food industry, whereas critics denounce it as an unrealistic example taken to extremes.

Key Concepts:

- This guide will engage learners in critical thinking through discursive and reflective activities on issues such as:
 - the dangers of a diet high in fat, sugar, and salt
 - the importance of exercise
 - the target audience of fast food advertising
 - the importance of a healthy diet
 - the prevalence of fast food
 - the role big companies play in the lunch programs of many school districts
 - the importance of eating in moderation

Fast Food Facts:

Before we begin, let us consider some of the facts on fast food.

- According to Statistic Brain (2013):

Fast food is the term given to food that can be prepared and served very quickly. While any meal with low preparation time can be considered to be fast food, typically the term refers to food sold at a restaurant or store with preheated or precooked ingredients, and served to the customer in a packaged form for take-out/take-away. The term “fast food” was recognized in a dictionary by Merriam Webster in 1951.

Stat	Data
Number of Fast Food Restaurants in America	160,000
Number of Americans served daily	50 Million
Annual Fast food Revenue	\$110 Billion

Frequency	
Once per week	44%
Twice	20%
Three or more	14%
Seven	6%
Never	28%

Source: Statistic Brain, 2013.

- Elaine Magee (2007), a weight loss expert from WebMD, categorizes fast food as “junk food,” which are “foods that contribute lots of calories but little nutritional value” (para. 2).
- Magee also points out that a research study conducted by the Children’s Hospital in Boston found the following factors inherent to fast food that promote overeating:
 - It’s low in fiber.
 - It’s high in palatability (that is, it tastes good).
 - It offers a high number of calories in a small volume.
 - It’s high in fat.
 - It’s high in sugar in liquid form.
- Brenda Wollenberg (2010), author of the blog *Childhood Obesity 101*, points out that the primary effects of fast food intake are a higher risk of:
 - heart disease digestive issues
 - type II diabetes
 - liver and gall bladders diseases (i.e. fatty liver)
 - high blood pressure
 - high cholesterol levels and, one of most obvious effects of fast food intake,
 - obesity (especially visceral fat). (para. 2)

Now that you have some basic facts about fast food, let us consider the following questions to focus our study.

Focus Questions:

Before viewing the movie, answer the following questions in groups of 2-3. Have one group member record your answers:

- What do you know about obesity? What causes it?
- What is a calorie? How many calories does the average adult need to maintain a healthy body weight?
- What do you think of when you hear the term “fast food”?
- Does McDonald’s (and other fast food restaurants) do enough to promote healthy choices on their menus? How many of these healthy items can you name?
- Is it ethical for restaurants to entice children to eat there by offering toys as part of the children’s meals?

- Is it ethical for restaurants to use cartoon characters/movie stars to entice children to eat there?
- Should advertising for fast food be limited during television programming aimed at children?
- How often should people eat fast food? How often do you eat fast food?



After viewing the movie, reconvene with your group and answer the following discussion questions. Again, have one group member record your answers

- What does the film say about the following?
 - McDonald’s
 - Personal health
 - Obesity in the United States
 - The American way of life
- What are some of the things you can do to improve your eating habits?
- Is Don Gorske a good ambassador for McDonald’s? Why or why not?
- Should McDonald’s (and other fast food restaurants) be required to post nutritional information about their food? Should they be required to have warnings on the menus listing the risks associated with eating fast food?
- Prior to watching the movie, how often did you eat fast food? Will your habits change after watching the movie?
- Morgan Spurlock’s girlfriend was a vegan during the filming of this movie. Could this diet be considered as extreme as the diet he follows?
- Why do you think there are so many McDonald’s located in Manhattan?
- What role (if any) do you think the government should have in regulating the fast food industry?
- Are movies like “[Mac and Me](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JexVCaaWb)” good for McDonald’s, or do they have potential to backfire? <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JexVCaaWb>
- How often should people eat fast food?
- How is “fast food” affecting the way people live?
- How much do companies spend on direct media advertising? Why?
- How do fast food commercials influence the perception people have of fast food restaurants such as McDonald’s? What are the messages being relayed by the viewers of those commercials?
- What types of food and beverages are available at your school? How do they affect the food choices that you and your peers make? Why are certain

of food and beverages preferred over the others? If you and your peers are not making wise food choices, what can you do to change that?

The next section will guide you through the process of creating a media production and put your creative thinking and technical skills to the test!

Activity 1: Media Production

The purpose of this activity is for you to make use of the affordances offered by digital technology to create a media production in response to one or more of the issues found in Morgan Spurlock's (2004) film *Super Size Me*.

- **What is a media production?**

A media production (MP) is a representation of your thoughts, ideas and engagement on a particular subject using media technology. It is a way to express yourself by putting your technical skills into practice (Petrina & Feng, 2013).

- **Activity**

For this assignment, you will work in groups of 2-3 to create a 5 minute mediated response in the format of a YouTube video to answer one or more of the questions

- posed by Spurlock himself in *Super Size Me*; OR
 - posed by yourself related to the issues in Spurlock's film; OR
 - found under the Focus Questions section of this study guide; OR
 - from one of the following topics on
 - Healthy eating
 - Healthy lifestyle
 - Alternative dietary choices (e.g., veganism, vegetarianism, etc.)
 - Corporate propaganda
 - Environmental effects of the fast food industry/lifestyle
- Your creative response should reflect your thoughtful engagement on the subject.
 - After finishing your MP, post an individual reflection of the activity on the class discussion forum.



Steps to consider

To understand the media production process, please consider the following examples:

- Sample media productions

Please review the following media production samples to get a better idea of what a media production might look like:

- [Who needs media literacy education?](#) by James Chen (2013)
- [Does information want to be free?](#) by Andrew Lemon (2013)

While viewing each video, consider the following questions:

- What key concepts/issues did the video address?
- What were the examples used to portray the messages?
- What and how were the tools used to create the contents found in video?
- What did the producer do to bring coherence to the story?
- Which element (images/graphics/texts/sounds/music/etc.) grabbed your attention the most? How?

- Creating the script and storyboard

- [How To Write A Script For Video - Pre-Production Basics \[ReelRebel #34\]](#)
- [How to Create a Storyboard for Your Video Shoot](#)

- Finding examples and resources (images/music/sounds)

- [Copyrightfriendly](#) has a list of sites that contain media files under the Creative Commons or Copyleft licenses.
- [Creative Commons](#) has a search engine which enables you to find media files that are free to use and share.
- [Freeplay Music](#) has a searchable database containing music files that are free to use and share.
- [Freesound](#) has a searchable database containing sound effects that are free to use and share under the Creative Commons license.

- Downloading and converting media files for production

- [Zamzar](#) This web software converts media files into formats compatible with your editing software
- [Free FLV Converter & Downloader](#) This free software downloads online videos and converts flash (.flv) files into formats compatible with your editing software

- Citing your sources

It is necessary to give credit to other people's work if you use them in your own work for educational purposes. As you collect the contents (images, videos, sounds, music, research, web document, etc.) to be used in your media production, make sure to save the links to those files in a separate favourites folder so you can find the information you need to make the citations. At the end of your video, please make sure to cite all the contents.

you used that were created by someone else. Check out the following reference on APA citation for media sources:

- o <http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/library/citations/apa.html>

- **Creating the video**

Here are some resources and tutorials for the tools you can use to create the media production:

Video editing for Windows

- o PowerPoint
 - [PowerPoint 2007 Demo: Create a basic presentation quickly](#)
Note that PowerPoint versions before 2010 do not have a feature to convert the presentation slides into video format and need additional steps for conversion.
 - [How to Convert PPT to Video - Windows Movie Maker 2007](#)
 - [How to Convert PowerPoint 2010 Presentations Into Videos](#)
- o Windows Movie Maker
 - Windows 7 [Editing your video using Movie Maker](#)
 - Windows 8 [Edit your video](#)

Video editing for Mac

- o iMovie [How to use iMovie](#)

Sound editing

- o Audacity
 - [How to use Audacity to record your narrative](#)
 - [How to use Audacity to edit audio files for free](#)

- **Uploading onto YouTube**

Note: When uploading onto YouTube, make sure the "Privacy Setting" of your video is set to "Unlisted" and the "Category" set to "Education".

Once your media production has been uploaded onto YouTube, post the link to your video on the class discussion forum.

- o [How to upload a video to Youtube 2013](#)

- **Reflection:**

Upon completing the activity, consider structuring your reflection based on Gibbs' (1988) Reflection Cycle:



Source: gibbs [Image file]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/upgrade/images/gibbs.gif>

Activity 1: Media Production Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Not Meeting	Meeting	Exceeding
Answer questions posed	The MP does not answer any questions posed	The MP adequately answers questions posed	The MP clearly and thoughtfully answers questions posed
Examples	The MP does not provide any examples	The MP provides relevant examples	The MP provides examples that enhance the understanding of concepts and message
Presentation	Presentation of the MP is poor	Presentation of the MP is clear	Presentation of the MP is clear and engages the audience
Technology	The MP makes minimal usage of technology	The MP makes adequate usage of some technologies	The MP makes adequate usage of a variety of technologies

Activity 2: A Reflection for Further Study

For further study, write a one page reflection based on one of the following sources of information related to the issues found in and surrounding the film *Super Size Me* itself. Please confirm with the instructor if you wish to reflect on a source of information not listed below.

Healthy diets & lifestyles

- What Causes Obesity in Children?
<http://www.childhoodobesity101.com/causes-obesity-children.html>
- Effects of Fast Food
<http://www.childhoodobesity101.com/effects-of-fast-food.html>
- High Fructose Corn Syrup
<http://www.childhoodobesity101.com/high-fructose-corn-syrup.html>
- The Truth About Your Food
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Oq24hITFTY>
- Take Charge of Your Health!
<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/pdfs/teenblackwhite3.pdf>
- Food & Fitness
Choose one of the articles from the list of categories (e.g., Total well-being, Healthy weight, Nutrition basics, etc.) found on this page.
http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/#cat20130

Film related

- A look inside the PR battle against Super Size Me
<http://ca.ign.com/articles/2004/05/07/a-look-inside-the-pr-battle-against-super-size-me>
- From 2004: 'Super Size Me'
http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-500183_162-615975.html
- Inside the McDonald's Empire
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNTludttRh8>
- McDonald's phasing out Supersize fries, drinks
http://www.nbcnews.com/id/4433307/ns/business-us_business/t/mcdonalds-phasing-out-supersize-fries-drinks/
- 'Super Size Me' Director Speaks Out on Obesity
<http://www.muscleandfitness.com/news-and-features/features/super-size-me-director-speaks-out-obesity>

Conclusion:

In this unit, we examined the fast food industry through critical lenses. We are reminded by the analogy that ultimately, we are what we eat. Morgan Spurlock's self-imposed diet may seem extreme, but in the end we are the ones who decide what to do with our own bodies and how we want to live. The influence of the media on our diet may be unnoticeably startling, which is why it is important to always critically examine the information we receive from such sources. Before you order that Big Mac combo, think about the film, *Super Size Me*.

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MEAN GIRLS

July 2013

Starring Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams, Tina Fey, Tim Meadows, Amy Poehler, Ana Gasteyer, Lacey Chabert, Lizzy Caplan, Daniel Franzese, and Neil Flynn.



Navigating bullying through movies a study guide

By Danielle Chrisman and Craig Chubb

The focus of this study guide is to empower grade 9 and 10 students by giving them the skills to not only combat bullying, but also to give them the necessary leadership skills to proactively prevent it from happening. The guide also gives students the opportunity to study the impact that media has on creating and recreating stereotypes and how it affects one's self-image and notion of identity.

The unit allows students to critically assess the different forms

of media and the manner in which it influences individuals and groups. Students will become more adept at scrutinizing the various messages to whom the media targets.



By using the movie *Mean Girls*, we hope that students will be able to better approach the topic of bullying in a non-threatening manner, and be able to

identify the different forms of bullying by taking a pro-active stance against it and being supportive of one another.

PLOT SUMMARY

Cady Heron is about to enter high school after being home schooled for 15 years. What she doesn't expect is that her time in Africa would end up being far less "savage". Confronted and naive about the social order and rules of the Plastics, the "popular" girls at the school, Cady joins their ranks, and soon finds herself bullying everyone. Having fallen to the influence of her peers, her social status skyrockets, but at the cost of losing her identity and friendships in the process.

Learning Outcomes

students will be able to...

- * Students will be able to identify the different forms of bullying and be able to discern the difference between persistent bullying and “teasing”.
- * List choices an individual can make in order to attain and maintain one’s physical and emotional health. This means encouraging and participating in regular physical activity (individual or group) and willing to engage in new challenges. It also means encouraging one’s self to build healthy relationships with others by strengthening one’s interpersonal skills.
- * Respond in a healthy and constructive manner when confronted with overt and persistent bullying. Students will have the skill set to respond to different scenarios of bullying (i.e. cyber bullying, physical, and emotional).
- * Feel empowered enough to not suffer in silence and to seek out help from parents, school staff, and friends.
- * Critically evaluate the media’s portrayal of bullying in its various forms.
- * Have a better understanding of the power of positive and negative influences on individuals and groups.

“Victims of persistent bullying are more likely to suffer psychological harm and social exclusion compared to non-victims.”

Canada's Public Health Leader

- * Learn how to respond to physical and verbal bullying in a manner that allows students can take on leadership roles to actively tackle bullying issues in their school and community.

Silence

Part of the power surrounding bullying is its ability to prevent one from speaking out against it. All that does is empower the bully and weaken the bullied.



Key Concepts

creating safe schools

- * **Stereotypes** - The media plays an important role in influencing social norms and those social norms are recreated, therefore reinforcing specific stereotypes.
- * **Cliques** - The role that cliques play in creating a sense of both inclusion and exclusion.
- * **Social Status** - The teenage years are challenging for youth because a great deal of emphasis is placed on social status and the deep need to feel connected.
- * **Forms of Bullying** - Bullying can occur in many different forms. It can be physical or emotional, and can be either in person or online (i.e. cyberbullying).
- * **Influence** - Both media and peers play a large role in shaping what an individual deems to be cool, how to dress, and how to act in social situations.
- * **Power Structures** - Bullying can easily be boiled down to forms of power structures. What motivates individuals to bully? Is it a conscious or subconscious



"Raise your hand if you have ever been personally victimized by Regina George."

Mean Girls

Have you ever been personally victimized by someone like Regina George in your school?

need to feel powerful or is the need to bully derived from a lack of self esteem?

- * **Notions of Cool** - The media often uses its influence to create ideas of what is considered cool in youth. This is often what is imitated by youth as the ideal look or behaviour.



Burn Book

"And they have this book, this 'Burn Book' where they write mean things about girls in our grade."

Focus Questions

pre-viewing

- * How do you define bullying?
- * Are there different types of bullying?
- * Have you ever bullied?
- * What makes someone popular?
- * What makes someone unpopular?
- * How do you define cool?
- * Why do you think people bully?
- * Does bullying look different coming from boys or girls? How?

post-viewing

- * Did this movie accurately portray bullying? Explain.
- * What strategies do you think schools need to put in place to curtail bullying?
- * What do you think the movie's reference to the animal kingdom was meant to suggest?
- * Why did the movie make heavy reference to the colour pink?
- * Which character in the movie do you feel that you relate to the most? Explain.
- * Did the ending of the movie capture reality? Why or why not?
- * What do you think the relationship is between *Mathletes* and *Plastics* in the movie?



Bullying awareness activities

knowing how to deal with a bully...

ACTIVITY 1 - LEARNING TO DEFEND AGAINST BULLYING

Respond to the quotes from the movie below in a way that empowers you. Because verbal bullying often takes us by surprise and we're often unequipped to appropriately respond, this exercise is meant to help prepare you for those potentially unexpected moments of verbal bullying. Share with your classmates your responses and discuss the effectiveness of each of them.

"I'm sorry I called you a gap-toothed bitch. It's not your fault you're so gap-toothed."

"We only carry sizes one, three, and five. You could try Sears."

"I'm sorry that people are so jealous of me... but I can't help it that I'm so popular."

"I don't hate you cause your fat, you're fat cause I hate you."

ACTIVITY 2 - LEARNING TO CRITICALLY EVALUATE MEDIA

Critically evaluating media requires us to have a discerning eye by not accepting portrayals at face value. While watching the movie fill out as many examples as you can find that fall under each of the key concepts. Afterwards discuss in small groups the type and extent of the influence that the media has over each of these key concepts.

Stereotypes	
Cliques	
Social Status	
Forms of Bullying	
Power Structures	
Influence	
Notions of Cool	

ACTIVITY 3

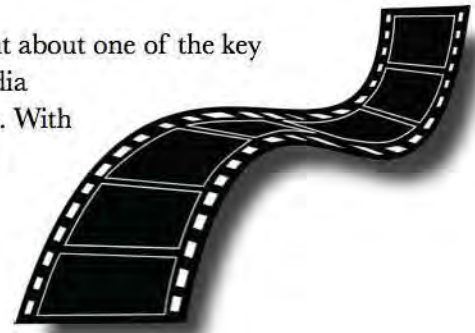
In groups of 4, create a Media Production public service announcement about one of the key concepts in this study guide. You should be following all stages of a media production, including pre-production, production, and post-production. With the final result, you will be asked to hand in your script and storyboard. The final result should be approximately a minute in length.

Here are some examples to get you started:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9v7eQVzvyI8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKB9HRgkKRA>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_C7sd_UDU0 (Warning: Graphic content)



Sources for Further Study videos, websites, and poems

13 GOING ON 30

In this clip from the movie 13 Going on 30, we see the stereotypes of the popular girls, and the girl who wants to be a part of their clique. It is interesting to see the power hold the popular girls have over Jenna, and how they get her to do what they want, by convincing her it is best for her.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3alsoggLLm0>

LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED

Love is All You Need is a video in which homosexual relationships are the norm, and heterosexual relationships are seen as different. The story follows a young girl, struggling with her sexuality, as she is teased for being “different”.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ROXTFfkco> (WARNING: Graphic Scenes, may not be appropriate for all audiences)

KID'S HELP PHONE WEBSITE - BULLYING

This website was created by the Kid's Help Phone with lots of information about types of bullying, and what to do if you are being bullied, witness bullying, or are bullying. There are also tools and games dealing with bullying that youth can access.

<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/InfoBooth/Bullying.aspx>

TO THIS DAY

A video compilation based on Shane Koyczan's poem To This Day. The poem tells the story of Shane's youth, of people he knew, and the ongoing story of bullying that continues to this day. The poem talks about the ongoing emotional distress that bullying takes on people, but ends with an uplifting message.

<http://vimeo.com/59956490>



“You can't join Mathletes, it's social suicide.”

Mean Girls

When someone is being bullied, there are appropriate responses, and safe places to turn to including friends, parents, teachers, and the Kid's Help Phone (1-800-668-6868) which is there to listen, 24 hours a day.

Kid's Help Phone Counselling Team



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The Outsiders

A Look at Love and Loyalty

A Movie Production Based on the Novel by S.E. Hinton

Samuel Nelles

Matthew Hull

ETEC 531

Introduction/Synopsis

The Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton, is a fictional autobiographical novel written by Ponyboy Curtis. Ponyboy is growing up in the mid 1960's where the culture is dominated by rock n' roll. Being from the "wrong side of town," Ponyboy and his friends make up the Greasers, squaring off against their upper-class rivals: the Socs. Through the novel we read about Ponyboy's struggle to cope with the loss of his parents, the violence that grips the two gangs, and the desire to belong. Though there are many themes presented within the novel the two that we will focus on in this unit will be love and loyalty. As Ponyboy struggles to find his place among his family and friends, he struggles to learn the price of loyalty and the value of love from unlikely places. This unit is designed to give students the opportunity to explore the themes of love and loyalty, with the intent of applying them within their own lives and social situations.



Greasers:

Ponyboy Curtis
Darrel Curtis
Sodapop Curtis
Two-Bit Matthews
Steve Randle
Dallas Winston
Johnny Cade

Girls:

Cherry Valance
Marcia

Socs:

Randy Anderson
Bob Sheldon
Paul Holden

Additional Characters:

Jerry Wood
Mr. Syme

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Work cooperatively in groups or pairs to explore and understand ideas and create responses and thoughtful questions about text-based themes.
2. Explain and support personal responses by making connections with prior knowledge and experiences, describing reactions and emotions, generating thoughtful questions, and developing opinions using evidence.
3. Write and represent: to explain and support personal responses to text, interpret and analyze ideas and information from texts, and synthesize and extend thinking.
4. Analyze and discuss healthy relationships (family, friends, mentors,) healthy lifestyle choices, bullying and gangs, and substance use and abuse.
5. Utilize web-based tools to create, edit, save and publish documents in a variety of programs, demonstrating keyboard skills, graphic manipulations, audio/video integration, blogging skills, and internet safety.
6. Imaginatively explore characters through the use of drama skills including: body and voice, role, structure and elements, and technique; as well as explore social and cultural context and make connections.



Key Concepts:

1. **Society and Class** *"I'm not saying that either Socs or greasers are better; that's just the way things are"* (p.8) The Greasers and Socs are two distinct groups and only interact with violence.

2. **Love and Loyalty** *"if you don't stick up for them, stick together, make like brothers, it isn't a gang anymore"* (p.21) The Greasers are represented as a group bonded tightly - more tightly than some families. They are fiercely loyal, love each other, and accept one another as they are.

3. **Violence** *"That whole page was covered with stories about us - the fight, the murder, the church burning, the Socs being drunk, everything"* (p.63). The teenage gangs are definitely violent. This is not fictional; this was the author's experience growing up, and she has accurately written about these gangs and their fights, rumbles, and even murder.

4. **Appearances** *"most looked at us like we were dirt"* (p.15) The Greasers are proud of their "tuff" appearance, greasy hair, and dangerous attitudes. The Socs have their colourful clothing and expensive cars. These outward signs are not, however, what is important about the groups. It is what is inside each person that is significant.

5. **Education** *"Darry has never really gotten over not going to college...although Soda attaches no importance to education. School bored him. No action"* (p.64) School is not portrayed as important to a number of the protagonists. It is to Pony Boy and Darrell. This is a realistic look at the different values of teens, regardless of the social grouping.

6. **Choices.** The characters in this book are constantly making choices that directly impact their futures. Choices involving their lifestyle, actions, reactions, and violence are all shown in this book, as well as the consequences.

7. **Death** *"I hadn't seen him cry in years, not even when Mom and dad had been killed"* (p.58). Death is a primary focus in this book; not just the death of the boys parents, but also the death of a Soc and how that drives the plot towards its inevitable conclusions.

8. **Parents/Families** *"If it hadn't been for the gang, Johnny would never have known what love and affection are"* (p.13). The gang has in many cases directly replaced the family unit. There aren't many strong positive parents in this book, rather there are deeply flawed or absent parents. This gives the characters free reign over their actions, as well as the lack of guidance they needed to make better decisions by themselves.

9. **Bullying** *"need a haircut, greaser?"*
The medium-sized blond pulled a knife out of his back pocket and flipped it open"
(p.10) Integral to the violence in this book is the bullying. It is frequent, and often is just the first step in violent interactions. Whether at school or on the street, bullying is a part of this book.



**"GET SMART AND
NOTHING
CAN TOUCH YOU"**



Pre-Viewing Activity - on Love and Loyalty

After reading the novel, but prior to watching the film in class, I want you each to discuss the following questions with two other students in the class. These students do not need to be sitting next to you, and you cannot speak with the two at the same time. This is a one-on-one activity.

1. Ponyboy is the main protagonist of the story. It becomes obvious near the beginning of the novel that the attribute of loyalty is an important attribute for group members to have. Do you feel the same way about loyalty? Do you expect loyalty from your friends?
2. With the value of loyalty being held to such a high standard in the group, are there any characters in the novel who have divided or conflicting loyalties? If so, which characters, and how do they deal with this conflict?
3. Darrel, Ponyboy's oldest brother, decides to raise his two younger brothers. Why does he do this? Is it out of love, loyalty, or some other motive?
4. Other than the examples listed above, what are some of the examples of loyalty found in the novel *The Outsiders*, by S.E. Hinton?
5. In the novel we find examples of both romantic and familiar love, between family and gang members. Which type of love do you believe is the main focus in the novel? Why?
6. Much of the story is based on Ponyboy learning to love his brother Darrel more. Why did his relationship with his brother change, and what does Ponyboy realize that changes his opinion of his oldest brother?
7. What does the lack of love in the case of Jonny Cade tell us about the importance of love in the home? By extension, why was the connection between Dallas and Johnny so strong?
8. What has a greater impact on how a child turns out, parents, or their outside environment?

Post-Viewing Activity

After viewing the film in class you will be separated into groups of two. After you have been placed into your groups select one of the two following activities.

1. **GOANIMATE.COM:** Your group will be recreating one of the scenes from the movies using an online animated video editor. Specifically, you will be looking for scenes that deal with our theme of love and loyalty. Please speak with the teacher if you would like to do a different theme. Before starting your project you will need to do the following things:

Post-Viewing Activity - Continued

- a. Decide on your scene. This could be a fight scene, a soliloquy, a group conversation; anything that you and your group feel represents the theme of love and loyalty. Prior to logging on to the computer, you need to have your scene picked out
 - b. After you have selected your scene, as a group, you need to write out the storyboard. A story board will include all of the characters, their lines, and actions that you plan to use in your animated movie. If your group would prefer to do this part of the assignment in Word please speak with the teacher before you login. I would suggest using a pencil and paper as it will allow you to make quick and easy adjustments to the script. The storyboard will need to be handed in at the end of the assignment, so make sure that you have it done.
 - c. After you have decided on your scene, and written up your storyboard, you can now log onto your *goanimate.com* account. Remember this is a group activity, and each of you should find ways to participate in the creation of this project. Your scene should last between 3-5 min, and should either include you own recorded voice or use the text-speech option within the software. When finished, share the link to video on the classroom blog.
2. **STORYBOARDTHAT.COM:** Similar to the first option, you group will be recreating a scene of your choice from the Outsiders movie. However, this time you will be creating the scene as a storyboard. Now don't assume that this is going to be easier because you don't create an animated feature - this will have its own challenges. Before you begin on the computers though, you will need to accomplish a few things first.
- a. Decide on your scene. This could be a fight scene, a soliloquy, a group conversation, anything that you and your group feel represents the theme of love and loyalty. Prior to logging on to the computer, you need to have your scene picked out
 - b. After you have selected your scene, as a group, you need to write out the storyboard. A story board will include all of the characters, their lines, and actions that you plan to use in your animated movie. This part of the assignment needs to be done using a pencil and the provided storyboard paper. Because the final project will be a storyboard, I want you to have a visual image of what you want each cell to look like. You must have at least 12 cells.
 - c. After you have decided on your scene, and written up your storyboard, you can now log onto your *storyboardthat.com* account. Remember this is a group activity, and each of you should find ways to participate in the creation of this project. Again, your final product must have at least 12 cells, and each cell should have some sort of text - either scene setting, or conversation among the characters. When finished share the link to video on the classroom blog.





Further Study

1. To learn more about the greasers check out the article on Greaser Subculture on Wikipedia: <http://bit.ly/18xHD9e>
2. In the novel *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton we read that the Greasers were fans of Elvis Presley music, while the Soc's listened to The Beatles. Based on the following clips, how might you characterize each group based on their music choice:

Elvis: *Suspicious Mind* <http://bit.ly/13aBYBx>; *Backstage footage* <http://bit.ly/162vEAm>

The Beatles: *Day Tripper* <http://bit.ly/13aB9bH>; *I Wanna Hold Your Hand* <http://bit.ly/17BI56n>

3. One of the driving factors within the novel *The Outsiders*, is the force behind gangs, which is ultimately a desire to belong. If you are interested into learning more about the formation of gangs, try the following article by Mike Cardie Ph. D. on his conclusions as he considers why youth join gangs: <http://bit.ly/14DLn9W>. To read more of his findings check out this link: <http://bit.ly/162wHjG>

If you liked *The Outsiders*, try:

The Chocolate War, by **Robert Cormier**. While on the surface this is a story about a boy refusing to sell chocolates for a school fundraiser, this book explores gangs, intimidation, violence, and good vs. evil. Highly censored for years, this is a fascinating book that is insightful and a fast read.

The Pigman, by **Paul Zindel**. Two teens form an unlikely relationship with an elderly man after a practical joke. The situation surrounding the death of the old man and the narration by the three characters make this an engaging read.

Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret, by **Judy Blume**. This book is more focused towards girls and explores gender issues, clubs, belonging and isolation with a frankness unusual in Juvenile fiction. Like the other books in this list and *The Outsiders*, this book has been banned in many districts, but is definitely worthwhile for any reader.

"IT'S OKAY. WE AREN'T IN THE SAME CLASS. JUST DON'T FORGET THAT SOME OF US WATCH THE SUNSET TOO."

Credits

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"I AM A GREASER. I AM A JD AND A HOOD. I BLACKEN THE NAME OF OUR FAIR CITY. I BEAT UP PEOPLE. I ROB GAS STATIONS. I AM A MENACE TO SOCIETY. MAN DO I HAVE FUN!"



THE BIG BANG THEORY

Math Science Mystery, unravelling the mysteries, It all started with a big bang

Activity Game Cheat Sheet



Penny: 'I need to go back to dating dumb guys from the gym.'



The Big Bang Theory is an American sitcom series first premiered in 2007 and is currently approaching its 7th season. The show is composed of 5 main characters living in California, USA.

The four male characters, Sheldon, Leonard, Howard and Rajesh have much in common and are good friends. They are scientists, geeky, intelligent and enjoy comic book and gaming. Sheldon and Leonard are also roommates. The female character, Penny, who is also Sheldon and Leonard's neighbour is an aspiring actress currently working as a waitress at The CheeseCake Factory.

The characters are in their 20s and are completing graduate school or have recently begun their career. The show centers on places and events these characters encounter in their daily lives and how they interact with each other and situations they find themselves in.

Try it yourself

Theory Experimentation



Take one of the theories mentioned in this episode that you found interesting. Through graphics, video, or audio create a 1 minute media summary on the theory.

Mission Deadline - 3 days



Explore a super hero mentioned in the episode. Create a one page description of the portrayal in popular culture. Explore all media – print, movie, franchise, and attire. What character attributes do they have?

Mission Deadline - 5 days



In groups choose one scene and prepare to act out the dialogue. Minimum 2 minutes long.

Mission Deadline - 14 days



Sheldon: 'I am not crazy, my mother had me tested'

Discussion Starter: California Institute of Technology



Four of the characters work at Caltech in Pasadena, California. Consistently ranked in the top five but recently ranked the number one university in the world for 2012/2013 by *Times Higher Education*.

What is it about Caltech that clinched this award?



What are their flagship programs and what are they best known for?

Would you like to go to Caltech?

Discuss in groups of 3 or 4 using resources from the internet to formulate your discussion points. This will be presented by one of the members of your group before the end of the day.

From Exploring the Universe to TBBT concepts

Life after graduation.

What will life be like after high school graduation? Is the show a realistic representation of it? This show portrays adults who have recently entered the workforce and some of the challenges they face at this stage in their lives. The main character Penny is struggling to pursue her career in acting and have been met with little success and resorts to paying the bills by working at the Cheese Cake Factory. She often questions



herself if she should continue or give up her dream. What would you recommend she does?

Friendship.

One recurring theme throughout the show is that of friendship. Friendship forms among the characters with diverse backgrounds, views and personalities. Sheldon is rational and unable to read emotional cues, while his roommate Leonard is constantly seeking approval. Their misunderstandings often lead to humorous situations. Leonard has a crush on his neighbour Penny from the moment they met. Their on and off again relationship is a staple on the show, do you think that they are good for each other?



Stereotypes.

Are the characters stereotyped? There are the geeky, socially awkward scientists who like comic books, sci-fi and video gaming. Set in California, there's the outgoing waitress hoping to become an actress and Howard, who is Jewish, still lives with his mother. Can you see any other stereotypes?

Learning Objectives



The study guide adheres to learning outcomes from the English 11, 12, Visual Arts 11, 12 (Media Arts) and Planning 10 curriculum:

- To select, adapt and apply strategies for predicting content
- To view collaboratively and independently a broadcast media (TV series) and to analyze theme and characters
- To identify the intended audience of the show and analyze factors that contribute to its rise to popularity
- To analyze the role that the media has in reflecting, sustaining, challenging beliefs and traditions
- To develop skills and the use of various media material to creatively express an idea through designing, editing a media production
- To compare a variety of post-secondary education and training institutions and programs








Barenaked Ladies wrote and recorded the show's theme song, which describes the history of the universe and the Earth since the dawn of time.

Ed Robertson, a lead singer and guitarist in the band, was asked by the producers and he drew inspiration from Simon Singh's book, *Big Bang*, which he had just finished reading. Listen to the theme song with the words [here](#).



Activities and Thought Questions

A post viewing activity: An in-depth look at the characters.
Complete the following chart after viewing an episode:

Character	Description about the character	Challenges the character deals with in their lives or in the episode viewed
 Sheldon		
 Leonard		
 Penny		
 Howard		
 Rajesh		

Consider these questions:

- State a conflict or disagreement between any two characters on the show and describe if and how the conflict was resolved.
- Can you relate to any of the experiences or conflicts experienced by the characters? Describe one example.
- Select one character and describe his/her feelings toward the other characters. How does the other characters opinion change about your character? Make sure to include examples to support your opinion.

Complete the chart and consider the questions individually. Be prepared to share your ideas with a partner and one member of the group will share with the class.



Further Study Options



If you look at all the media patterns on the walls in the corridors, they are all exactly the same from floor to floor. And the clocks addies on the stairway match from floor to floor. They change lights, elevator signs etc. but it's all the same that goes over and over on different floors.



A Brief History of Time by Stephen Hawking attempts to explain a range of subjects in cosmology, including the Big Bang, black holes and light cones, to the non-specialist reader. Stephen Hawking also guest starred on The Big Bang Theory. Click [here](#) for the audio of the book.

At the end of each episode Chuck Lorre Productions include an Official Vanity

Card. Lorre includes a message that usually reads like an editorial, essay, or observation on life. Here is an archive of them - [Link](#)

The Big Bang Theory is a multi-camera studio production with a live studio audience. For more information on multi-camera productions click [here](#).



This publication is in no way affiliated with CBS. Chuck Lorre Productions re-creates Best Television. Reproduced as an Educational resource only. 2012

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MODERN FAMILY

Alicia Wernicke and Marijke Henschel

July 2013

A Study Guide for Media Studies 12

Introduction

Modern Family was created by Christopher Lloyd and Steven Levita and is a comedic “mockumentary” that revolves around the lives of three connected families. This family has: second marriages, step-children and adopted children, gay relationships, and a non-traditional family tree that involves uncles being younger than their nieces and nephews. The premise of the show is to show the trials and tribulations of everyday family life and how it is reflected in non-traditional family structures, while showcasing the evolving nature of what constitutes a ‘family.’ As you will see, many stereotypes emerge from this show.

Click on the link below to see the Introduction to the “Family”
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aogZUDx51vQ>

Stereotype:

“A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.”

Learning Goals:

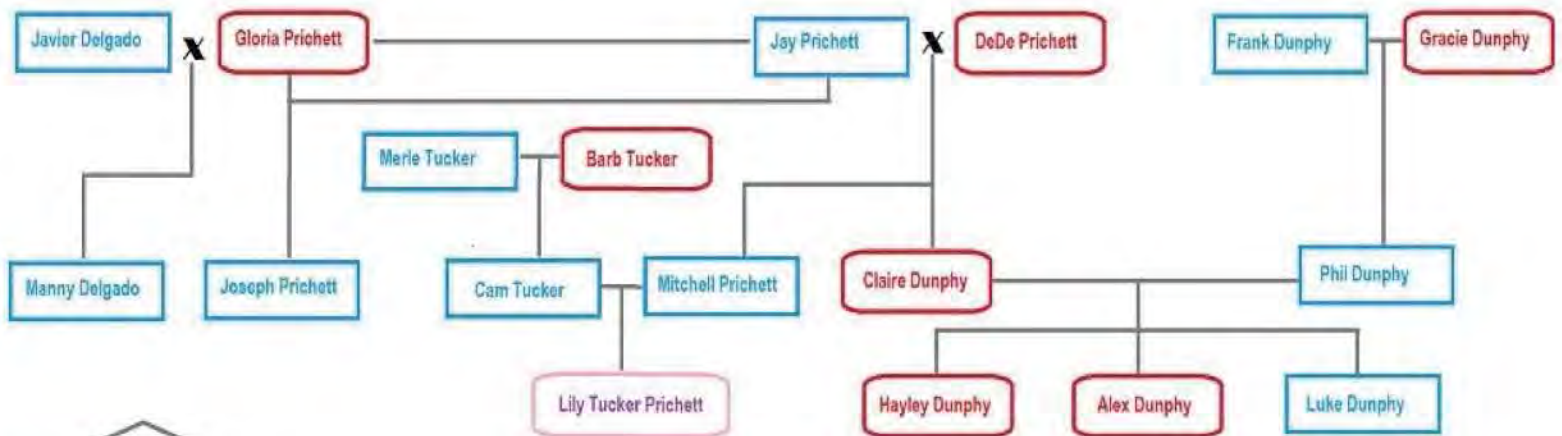
- Students will be able to understand the effects of stereotyping and society’s perception of different minority groups.
- Students will have a better understanding of how television media represents different types of people.
- Students will have a better understanding of evolving family structure.



Key Concepts - Before Viewing

- 1) What are stereotypes?
- 2) How are families represented in television?
- 3) What stereotypes are represented in TV series and films?
- 4) In your opinion, what does a ‘normal’ family look like?

Modern Family Tree



Think, Pair, Share:

1) While watching the Modern Family episode in class, make a sketch of a Modern Family Tree. Use red for female, blue for male, purple for adopted children, following your teacher's instructions.

2) Compare your Modern Family Tree sketch with a classmate. What are the differences between your family trees? What are the differences between yours and the actual tree that is provided for you on this page? Did you notice that Manny is Hayley's uncle, even though he is younger? Are there any other surprises?

Your Family Tree:

Individual: Research your own family tree by interviewing members of your family. Create a colour-coded family tree like Modern Family example above.

As a class: Share your family trees. Using a classroom map, pin the countries that reflect your ancestry. For example, if you are German and Irish, you would pin Germany and Ireland. Hold a classroom discussion talking about similarities and differences within the classroom. Also, discuss potential stereotypes relating to these countries, ex. German people like to eat sausage.

Extension: Film a "mockumentary" introducing your immediate family members. You may use yourself or peers for actors in place of your family members (bust out the costume mustache for dad).



Family Tree



Relationships Within Modern Family

Fill in the following table after watching the episode of Modern Family shown by your teacher. Use the last row to analyze an additional relationship of your choice.

Key Relationships	Describe their relationship in a sentence.	What are the stereotypes present in this relationship?	What is their role in the family?
Jay and Gloria			
Phil and Claire			
Mitchell and Cameron			
Jay and Mitchell			
Hayley and Alex			
Phil and Luke			

Relationship Breakdown

After filling out the above chart and discussing your findings in small groups, watch the following YouTube clips about the characters describing their relationships.

Do you find that your perceptions match up with the creator's intentions?

Jay & Gloria



Couples

Phil & Claire



Father/Son Relationships

Phil and Luke



Mitchell and Cameron



Jay and Manny



Jay and Mitchell



Stereotypes in Modern Family

- A smart “dorky” sister (Alex) constantly fights with her older beautiful “dumb” sister (Hayley)
- Gay couple adopts an Asian child
- Claire is an over-achieving stay-at-home mom while Phil is the sole monetary provider
- An older man (Jay) marries a much younger “trophy wife” woman (Gloria)
- Mitch and Cam are more “dramatic” making the gay relationship very visible
- Crazy older grandpa (Frank Dunphy)
- Luke is the odd, annoying younger brother
- Mitch and Phil try to get the approval of their father/father-in-law (Jay)

Stereotypes in Television

On your own, write your responses to the following questions on a piece of paper.

- 1) What are some stereotypes present in your high school?
- 2) What are some groups in your school? Does everybody fit into these groups? Where do you fit into these groups?
- 3) How can stereotyping or categorizing people affect you and your life?
- 4) Does television encourage stereotypes?



In an online survey on Debates.org, 80% of people think that television encourages stereotypes. An anonymous comment was made that reported, “Stereotypes exist because there is a shred of truth to each and every single one, but stereotypes survive because we as a society allow our media to encourage and glorify negative stereotypes”. Another opinion presented on the poll is, “people are responsible for how they are influenced by the media, the media is not responsible”. Somebody who claims that stereotypes are not encouraged by television states that “...actions encourage stereotypes. Stereotypes exist because there is some truth to them. Television might portray these stereotypes, but they already existed.”

Share your thoughts about this generalization with the class. Does Modern Family fit into the realm of other television shows with respect to stereotypes?

Gay and Lesbian Stereotypes Activity

Does the use of comedy help build awareness to different stereotypes or does it negatively enhance/encourage it? Write down any stereotypes you see in the following clip, then discuss the ones below as a class.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H68Z72PzP0Q>

Examples of Stereotypes in the clip:

- A reference to the lesbian woman visiting a "lumberyard"
- A lesbian woman calls a gay man "Sally"
- A Venn-diagram of "sexuality" explains that gay and lesbian people have nothing in common
- A gay man makes reference to a lesbian woman having an "unfinished woodworking project at her house"
- A lesbian woman makes a reference to eating a "frittata" at the gay couple's house
- A gay man makes a reference that all lesbians are vegetarians
- Both sides "scoff" at the idea of a gay man being a "homemaker" and a lesbian woman being a "contractor"
- A gay man makes reference to the lesbian women riding motorcycles
- A lesbian woman said, "Why are gay men always so sarcastic?"

Key Concepts - After Viewing

- 1) How can we be more educationally aware while viewing television?
- 2) Did analyzing an episode of Modern Family change your views on "family" dynamics? If so, how?
- 3) Did analyzing an episode of Modern Family change your views on stereotypes? If so, how?



Sources for Future Study

Media Smarts

Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy

<http://mediasmarts.ca/?gclid=COe6ysv2mLgCFaU5QgodvYAFw>

Youth Media Alliance

Improving the quality of content created for them on all screen-based media.

http://www.ymami.org/index_en.html

Stereotypes of Homosexuality in the Media

Our aim is to spread awareness and to educate.

<http://lgbtvsmedia.wordpress.com/2013/03/14/stereotypes-of-homosexuality-in-the-media/>



The Pursuit of Happyness - Media Study Guide

Planning 10 - Career Exploration Unit

Introduction:

At some point in your life each one of you will succeed at achieving employment at first job. There are a number of steps to go through before achieving this result including searching for a suitable job, writing a professional resume and cover letter and preparing for and succeeding at the interview. As an introduction to the Planning 10 Career Exploration Unit we will start by viewing the film The Pursuit of Happyness.

The Pursuit of Happyness is based on the true story of Chris Gardner (Will Smith), a bright and talented marginally employed salesman. Struggling to make ends meet, Gardner finds himself and his five-year-old son evicted from their San Francisco apartment with nowhere to go. When Gardner lands an internship at a prestigious stock brokerage firm, he and his son endure many hardships, including living in shelters, in pursuit of a better life for the two of them. (Ward, 2007)

Learning outcomes & Key Concept:

The Pursuit of Happyness highlights many of the topics discussed during the Planning 10 Career Exploration Unit. The expected learning outcomes from viewing this film and participating in the related activities are that the students will become introduced to and familiar with the below terms and gain experience with the interview process as they participate in filmed mock interviews. The students are also expected to gain a solid understanding of what the 8 Focus Areas in the Graduation Program are and what post secondary education, training and employment opportunities exist in these Focus Areas. Furthermore, by participating in the Sources For Further Study the students will learn how to write a professional resume and cover letter.

- ❖ Focus Areas
- ❖ Resume & Cover letters
- ❖ Interviews
- ❖ Employment Opportunities
- ❖ Education and training
- ❖ Work Ethic



Focus Questions:

Prior to viewing the film take 5 minutes to think about what the below terms mean to you. Then as a class share your answers:

Happiness	Poverty	Family
Home	Dreams	Employment
Money	Success	Hard work

To be discussed in groups of 2-3 students after viewing the film:

- 1.) What are some of the challenges Chris Gardner faced when trying to sell his bone density scanners?
- 2.) Chris faced many challenges during the movie, yet he still achieved many of his goals. Describe a minimum of three decisions he made or behaviors/personality traits that he demonstrated that helped him reach his goals. Use specific examples from the movie to support the decisions you think were
- 3.) What were three financial decisions that Chris made during the Pursuit of Happiness and describe the consequences that resulted



Decision	Consequence

- 4.) During the interview at Dean Witter, Martin Froh asked Chris " what would you say if a guy walked in for an interview without a shirt on and I hired him! What would you say? What was Chris's response?

5.) If you were in Chris's position would you have attended the interview covered in paint? Why or why not? What did this show about Chris's drive?

6.) Chris's resume highlights that he was first in his senior class. When items should be included on a resume and what should you highlight?

7.) At the end of the film we learn that Chris became a multimillion and successful stockbroker. In your opinion what made Chris the happiest?



"You want something. You go get it. Period." (Chris Gardner)

Activities:

Activity #1

Focus Areas are designed to help you learn about the broad range of education and career choices. They also help you choose an area of interest or several areas of interest for you to pursue during the high school Graduation Program. Based on your own interests and aptitudes, you will concentrate your studies in one or more of the following Focus Areas:

- ❖ Business and Applied Business
- ❖ Fine Arts, Design and Media
- ❖ Fitness and Recreation
- ❖ Health and Human Services
- ❖ Liberal Arts and Humanities
- ❖ Science and Applied Science
- ❖ Tourism, Hospitality and Foods
- ❖ Trades and Technology



At one point in the film Chris is walking in the financial district and sees a stockbroker parking a luxurious car. Chris turns to the man and says "I have two questions for you what do you do and, how do you do it?" The man replies I'm a stockbroker. Chris asks the stockbroker if you have to go to college to become a stockbroker and the man replies "You don't have to. You have to be good with numbers and good with people."

Discuss with a partner what Focus Area you think Chris would fit best into and list as many courses as you can that are offered at our school that would fit into Chris's Focus Area.

Now visit http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/docs/moe_grad_portfolio_part_2.pdf to learn about all the different Focus Areas. After reviewing the documents choose 1 Focus Area and using your desktop publishing skills (Photoshop, MS Word, Indesign or MS Publisher) create a 1 page flyer that summaries your Focus Area. The flyers will be displayed in our classroom to help students learn about the different Focus Areas therefore the flyer should be informational in nature and include:

- ❖ Skills and Internets
- ❖ 11/12 required and elective courses
- ❖ Employment options
- ❖ Post secondary training options

Activity #2

As we viewed in the film the interview process can often be very nerve racking and sometimes we are asked questions that catch us off guard e.g. when Martin Froh asked Chris " what would you say if a guy walked in for an interview without a shirt on and I hired him! What would you say?

The best way to prepare for an interview is to practice. Therefore, in partners we are going film mock interviews. Each of you will get the chance to be pretend to be the employer and the job candidate. Take this exercise seriously as we are going to post your interviews on the class blog for feedback.



Below is a list of common questions you may be asked in the interview. Choose 8 questions to ask your partner.

1. Why Are You Interested in Working for Our Company?
2. How Has School Prepared You For Working at Our Company?
3. What Do You Think It Takes to be Successful in This Position?
4. How Would You Describe Your Ability To Work as a Team Member?
5. What Has Been Your Most Rewarding Accomplishment
6. What is your greatest strength?
7. What is your greatest weakness?
8. How do you handle stress and pressure?
9. Describe a difficult work situation / project and how you overcame it.
10. Why should we hire you?
11. Tell me about yourself.
12. When are you available to work this summer? When could you start and when do you need to return to school?
13. What days and hours are you available each week?
14. Do you have any activities that would prevent you from working your schedule?
15. If you have worked before, what did you like best about your last job?
16. Do you have references I can contact?

Below is a list of questions you may want to ask the employer/interviewer. Choose 3 to ask.

1. How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
2. How would you describe a typical week/day in this position?
3. What is the typical work week? Is overtime expected?

4. Does this job allow for flexible hours or part time work?
5. If I am extended a job offer, how soon would you like me to start?
6. What advancement opportunities are available for the person who is successful in this position?
7. What kind of training is provided for this position?
8. What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job?

As many teenagers get hired to work in retail for their first job choose either, SportCheck, McDonalds, Tim Hortons or Chapters for your mock interviews. After you have chosen your questions and practiced being both the interviewer and interviewee come and sign out a camera from Mr. Campbell and film your mock interview. Next post your mock interview to your class blog for student and teacher feedback.

Sources for Further Study:

For additional practice with interviewing visit <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/student-interview/a/student-interview-questions.htm> and click on the below item and view the answers to the commonly asked interview questions.

- ❖ High School Job Interview Questions and Answers
- ❖ Entry Level Interview Questions and Answers
- ❖ Summer Job Interview Questions and Answers
- ❖ College Job Interview Questions and Answers



To learn more about questions not to ask at interviews visit:

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewquestionsanswers/a/interviewquest2.htm>

A professional resume and cover letter are a prerequisite when applying for a job. Visit the links below to learn about what to include in a resume and how to structure your cover letter.

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/resumes/a/resumesandletters.htm>

After reviewing the website for practice write a resume as if you were applying for an entry level customer service position at McDonalds,

References:

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Photo credits:

<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Film/ThePursuitOfHappyness?from=Main.ThePursuitOfHappyness>

<http://workingkind.com/tag/the-pursuit-of-happyness>

<http://greenlynn.blogspot.ca/2012/05/living-on-margins.html>

Hotel Rwanda

A Media Study Guide for Social Justice 12



This media study guide provides students with insight into the root causes of genocide, with a specific focus on the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Students will use this guide to interpret how Western media sources and American filmmakers represented the massacre of over 500,000 ethnic Tutsis by the Hutu majority. Furthermore, students are encouraged to consider how the intended audience's perception of events is constructed

through what is shown and what is not. The information and activities provided in this guide are meant to supplement the BC Social Justice 12 curriculum by having students address two important goals of the course: 1) that students acquire knowledge that allows them to recognize and understand the causes of injustice, and 2) that students apply critical thinking and ethical reasoning skills to a variety of social justice issues.

Background Information

About the film
Key Questions
Links to PLO's

Pages 2 & 3

Activities

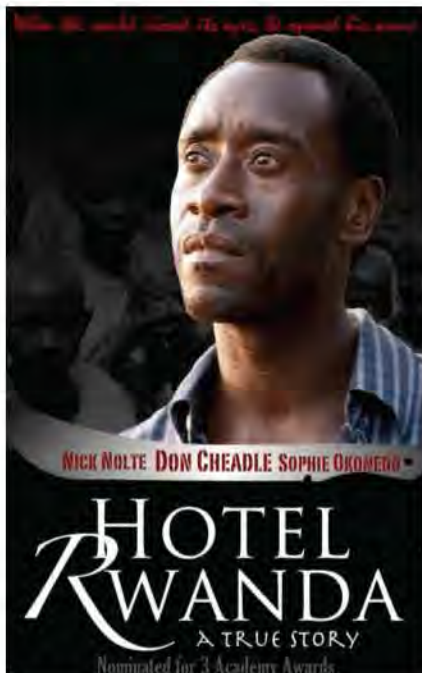
Includes activities for before, during, and after viewing as well as additional activities

Pages 4 -7

Resources & References

Extra resources for classroom use

Pages 8 & 9



About the film

The 2004 film *Hotel Rwanda* depicts the early months of the Rwandan genocide and follows the real-life experiences of Paul Rusesabagina, a Rwandan hotelier responsible for saving the lives of over 1200 Tutsi and moderate Hutu refugees. The film, directed by Terry George and written by George and Keir Pearson, stars Don Cheadle as Rusesabagina in an Oscar-nominated performance. Due to the subject matter of the film and the graphic portrayal of actual events that occurred, it is advisable to spend some time preparing students for what to anticipate and to discuss feelings and reactions to the film during and after the screening.

What are the root causes of genocide?

According to the Oxford Dictionary, genocide refers to the 'deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group.' Its causes are complex and may take decades to manifest, but many scholars concede that the following factors are usually present when genocide has occurred:

- 1) The presence of a discriminated minority;
- 2) Political or economic instability;
- 3) The minority population is viewed as a threat to the stability of the majority – propaganda used to further escalate this sentiment;
- 4) Precipitation of violence or aggression followed by periods of retreat;
- 5) A specific event or circumstance prompts the timing of

What factors led to the Rwandan Genocide?

The Rwandan genocide occurred between April and July 1994. The divide between the Hutu and minority Tutsi groups stems back to German and Belgium colonial rule between 1884-1962. In an attempt to secure influence over this Central African region, European colonists provided Tutsis with more privileges and power, despite being a minority. The Europeans justified this due to the lighter skin tones and facial structure of the Tutsis.

When Rwandan independence was achieved in 1962, the Hutu regained political control. 100 years of resentment against the Tutsis had built up within the Hutu population, resulting in oppressive discrimination against ethnic Tutsis. Decades of sporadic violence culminated in an increasingly politicized media and military that criticized and denounced the Tutsi population.

On April 6, 1994, President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed as his plane was shot down during its approach to Kigali Airport. While the perpetrators of the attack remain unknown, Hutu extremists seized on the opportunity to blame Tutsi rebels and launched a plan to exterminate the Tutsi population (and their moderate Hutu supporters) as retaliation.

How were language and images used to construct a negative and simplified representation of events that conformed to the expectations of Western audience?

Western media tends to portray Africa as chaotic and propagates the colonial stereotypes of Africans as being nothing more than violent, warring natives. When it comes to Africa, Western media focuses primarily on issues such as AIDS, corruption and poverty - all of which reinforce negative connotations of Africa for Western *audiences*.

Many critics argue that Rwanda was such a poor country that there wasn't much reason for Western media to care. Most media outlets reported that the violence seemed to erupt overnight without much consideration as to why. As a result, the media was slow to distinguish between the 'shooting war' between government forces and Tutsi rebels, and the systematic targeting of ethnic Tutsi civilians. When it came to the Rwandan genocide, news agencies were often uncomfortable using the term genocide and did so sparingly if at all. The BBC, for instance, sought to cast a more balanced story, and would often replace the term 'genocide' with generic terms such as 'indiscriminate mass-

"I think if people see this footage, they'll say 'Oh my God, that's horrible.' And then they'll go on eating their dinners."

-Photojournalist Jack Danglish,
Hotel Rwanda



Pre-viewing Questions

In groups of 3, discuss the following questions:

- What role does media play in your lives?
- Discuss any story that you have read/watched that make you angry or wanted to take action.
- What news stories and/or movies get you talking the most? Why?
- Define genocide. Give examples from history
- Do you know any places today where genocide is happening?
- What causes genocide?



Scene from *Hotel Rwanda*

During Viewing

While viewing the film, record examples of how people support or violate the following elements of social justice:

	Support	Violate
Dignity & Worth		
Human Rights		
Hegemony		

After viewing the film

With a partner, discuss your findings that you reordered in your chart as well as any other thoughts/issues/emotions that you thought of during the film.

Class Discussion:

1. Do you feel that Paul treats the important guests with genuine care or with an ulterior motive? Or do you feel he is just extremely good at what he does?
2. How do you think the footage that Jack shot of the killings would change the world's opinion of the genocide? As Jack puts it, 'If people see this they'll say . . . this is horrible and then go on eating their dinners.' Do you think he is right? How do we move beyond an emotional reaction to pursuing justice?
3. After finding hundreds of dead bodies along a road near the hotel, Dube asks Paul, 'Why are people so cruel?' How would you answer that question?
4. What is your perspective on the genocide? Has it changed as a result of seeing this film?

Roundtable Discussion:

Currently (as of 2005) there are about 100,000 individuals suspected of committing acts of genocide who are imprisoned in Rwanda. This represents a huge emotional and financial burden to all parties. There needs to be a way in which Rwandan society deals with the issue of justice and reconciliation. This then is the task that we will look at. We will start with the assumption that all parties agree that a trial will need to take place, in order to assist with the sense of closure and also to bring those responsible parties to justice. Students will form three interest groups: Never Again (the Rwandan genocide victims' organization), the Rwandan national government, and the UN.

In these groups they will reach decisions on the following issues:

- **Justice:** Should an admission of guilt be a required step in each trial?
- **Reparations:** Should this be considered? How much? How should they be awarded?
- **Sentences:** What should this consist of? Jail time? Is the death penalty being considered? Is that reasonable, considering the types of crimes committed and that there are 100,000 awaiting trials? Do commanders/leaders of the genocide have a greater responsibility than individuals who carried out orders?
- **Trials:** Should they be held at the local, national, or international level, or any combination of the three? How and where is it possible to carry out fair trials? Who are to be the judges?



During the film, Jack (the photojournalist), says, “If people see this they’ll say . . . this is horrible and then go on eating their dinners.” Sadly, this all too often the truth. However, awareness is the first step in making a difference in the world.

Your task is to research current areas where genocide is still happening. You will present your findings in a creative, engaging manner by either producing an informative video, a wiki, or another media production of your choice. Focus on providing your viewers with accurate information as well as links to help facilitate change in these troubled regions. You should keep in mind aspects such as powerful use of language and images as well as who your intended audience is.

Countries/Areas to consider:

Current:

Sudan

Syria

Myanmar

Congo

North Korea

Here are some websites that can help you get started (do not just rely on Wikipedia!):

<http://www.genocidewatch.org/alerts/countriesatrisk2012.html>

<http://www.genocidepreventionnow.org/Home/WORLDDGENOCIDESITUATIONROOMWGSR/CurrentGenocideEvents.aspx>

<http://endgenocide.org/>

<http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/>



Genocide Memorial Church - Rwanda

Alternative Follow Up Project: Who is the real Paul Rusesabagina?

Watch the following TED talk about the danger of relying on a single story.

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

When we view films we need to ask ourselves who made it and why. This may also inform us as to its overall message. These questions become quite important when we consider historical events. Can we rely on Hollywood to portray historical issues? What are the strengths and weaknesses of Hollywood films in informing us regarding historical and social justice issues?

Hotel Rwanda and its portrayal of Paul Rusesabagina caused some controversy in Rwanda. Since the release of the film in 2004, Paul has been awarded several humanitarian awards which some of his fellow citizens disagree with. Read the following articles for more information.

Hotel Rwanda - Without the Hollywood Ending

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/nov/17/hotel-rwanda-hollywood-ending>

Romeo Dallaire: Senator Slams 'Hotel Rwanda' Film As Revisionist 'Junk'

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2011/12/29/romeo-dallaire-hotel-rwanda_n_1174607.html

“Hotel Rwanda” hero in bitter controversy

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/04/04/us-rwanda-genocide-film-idUSL0420968620070404>

Having read these other points of view, discuss the following questions:

- Does this change how you understand the representations made in *Hotel Rwanda*?
- Does Hollywood have an obligation to be more truthful in their storytelling?
- Romeo Dallaire asserts the only value of the film is that it has kept the discussion about the Rwandan genocide alive. In your opinion, even if the story is mostly or partially fictional is it still worth viewing? Explain.

Paul Rusesabagina (L)
with Don Cheadle (R)



Resources for further study

Interview with Paul

Rusesabagina: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LchWLP-XsVw>

UCF interview with Paul Rusesabagina:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMe5wLLuO8E>

History.com overview of the event

<http://www.history.com/topics/rwandan-genocide/videos#rwanda-background-to-genocide>

Media Failure over Rwandan Genocide (BBC Report):

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/3599423.stm>

Fact Sheet About the Rwandan Genocide

<http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Rwandan-Genocide-World-Without-Genocide.pdf>

Companion film - [Shake Hands with the Devil](#) (based on Romeo Dallaire's book of the same name); please note the film is rated "R." See movie trailer [here](#)

Facing History and Ourselves: The Case of Rwanda Hate Radio

www.facinghistorycampus.org

Frontline's "Ghosts of Rwanda"

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/

Human Rights Watch

www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/

Crimes of War

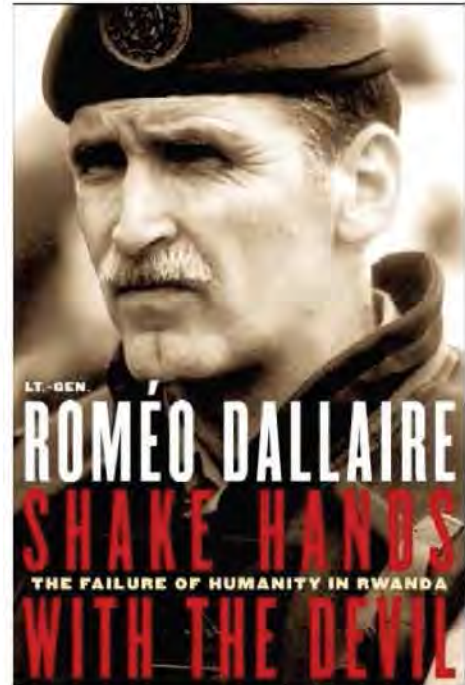
www.crimesofwar.org/onnews/news-rwanda.html

Global Issues

www.globalissues.org/HumanRights/Media/Propaganda/Rwanda.asp

The American University, Washington College of Law

www.wcl.american.edu/humright/center/rwanda/



HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

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Wikimedia Commons. (2007, February 26). *Human rights watch* [Illustration]. Retrieved from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hrw_logo.gif

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

Stacey Boon, Kymberly Francis, Margaret Lee

July 2013

Introduction

The popularity of the t.v. show, **"The Walking Dead"**, is one current example of our fascination with zombies and a zombie apocalypse. Zombie based learning activities are a highly engaging way to involve students in learning about media, media literacy, and social issues, among other topics and skills. These stories, whether in the form of video, animation, or text, can teach us a lot about ourselves and our society. The thought of losing everything makes one realize our dependency on each other, on technology, and on what we know. We may also realize what we miss in our culture and what we take for granted. Mostly, zombie stories give us hope that humans can survive, even when facing the most terrifying and relentless enemy. And sometimes, the most frightening enemy isn't actually the zombie, but other people.

Learning Objectives

This guide & activities are intended to help students to:

- use technology to aid collaboration during inquiry
- use technology to investigate and/or solve problems
- compose, revise and edit text
- communicate through multimedia
- understand the role of technology as it applies to self and work

"Society is more interested in the zombie at times when as a culture we feel disempowered...and when we are experiencing economic crises, the vast population is feeling disempowered...watching a show like 'Walking Dead' provides a great variety of outlets for people."
-Sarah Lauro
Clemson University



Image courtesy of quicheisinsane

Other Zombie Films

- 28 Days Later
- World War Z
- Warm Bodies
- Sean of the Dead
- Zombieland



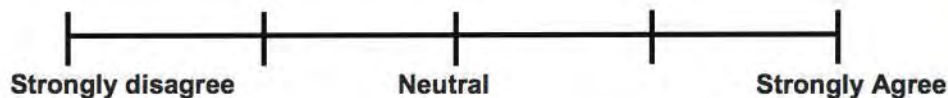
Focus Questions

- Why are zombies so popular at different times in our culture?
- What do zombies represent?
- In the case of zombie apocalypse, what do you think you would miss most?
- What do you think would happen to our society if all the structure and rules were taken away?
- Do you think humans could survive in any circumstances?
- What elements of our culture do you think you take for granted?
- What do zombies teach us about ourselves?
- How do you tell the difference between right and wrong?
- What does it mean to be soulless?

Pre-Viewing Activity

Before students watch and respond to episodes of “The Walking Dead”, conduct a gradients of agreement exercise with the class. You may choose to use a student response system (i.e., i-clickers) to engage students in discussion about each statement. Another option for this activity may involve having students physically organize themselves around a large gradient in the classroom (on white boards, floor, or wall).

The rating scale options may include:

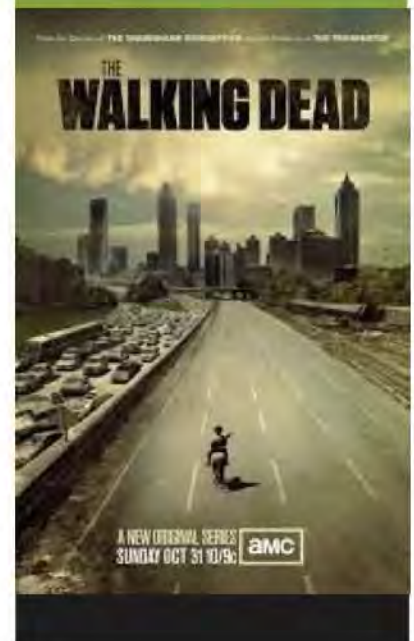


Have students respond to the following questions and discuss

- Violence is ok when you are under threat.
- People are basically good.
- Human beings will survive in any conditions.
- If there was no law and order, people would govern themselves.
- It is possible to stay sane and healthy in a world in chaos.
- People in our society are kind of like the zombies depicted in “The Walking Dead”.

Other questions for discussion:

- How would you stay sane and healthy in a world in chaos?
- Some people would say that we are like zombies (i.e. mindless consumers) who spend a lot of time shopping and staring at screens, rather than interacting with each other. What are your reactions to this?



Key Questions Post-Viewing Discussion

Follow the individual exercise with small group discussions. Students in each group should be ready to go up to the front of class and present the different themes that they have come up with. Key question may include:

What do you think that the people who produce and create "The Walking Dead" are trying to say in their show?

How do the characters in the show change as a result of the apocalypse?

Are things hopeful or bleak for people in the apocalypse? Why?

What kind of people would you want in your group if you survived the zombie apocalypse?

What rules would you put in place for you group?

Identify one theme in the show and give an example. (Eg. Betrayal—Win tricks and traps the group in the CDC telling the group that the building is going to blow up in an attempt to make them believe that this would be the least painful way to leave this new world.)

Bring the small groups together for a large group debrief to make sure students are on track before they begin the video assignment.



Image courtesy of stellaanddelena

Post-Viewing Activity

Have students independently watch any 2-3 episodes of "The Walking Dead". They should respond to the following questions while they are completing this individual activity.

- Describe the zombies in "The Walking Dead" (i.e. fast, slow, dumb, smart, feeling, unfeeling?)
- Can the outbreak be contained, prevented, or defeated?
- What message does the show send about violence?
- What message does the show send about human nature?
- What happens to the community, families, and friendships when social breakdown takes place?
- What do people seem to think is most important before the outbreak and after the outbreak?
- How do the characters change as a result of their experience?

Follow the individual exercise with a small group discussions in class.

The Zombie Master Plan Video

After students have completed the individual viewing activity and larger group discussion, they should begin group work creating an official “Zombie Master Plan” video. In their small groups, students synthesize all information, observations, and discussions, and create a 3-5 minute persuasive video outlining a plan to survive a zombie attack. The video may be in the form of a newscast, a documentary, a music video, or a comedy. Encourage students to be creative with their videos. The video must include a minimum of 1, and a maximum of 3, different themes (i.e. betrayal, hope, human nature) and a detailed plan for best chance of survival in a zombie apocalypse. Upon completion, students share master plans in the large group, weighing advantages and disadvantages of each group’s plan, as well as analyzing, critiquing, and discussing the media skills used and the best approach.

Other “The Walking Dead” & Zombie Resources

The Walking Dead: Which Character Are You? Personality Test
<http://www.amctv.com/shows/the-walking-dead/which-character-are-you>

Zombie School: Inside The Walking Dead
<http://www.amctv.com/the-walking-dead/videos/season-4-zombie-school-inside-the-walking-dead>

The Making of The Walking Dead Walkers Multimedia Magazine
<http://www.amctv.com/shows/the-walking-dead/walker-gallery>

Walking Dead: A Character Study (Criticism of Walking Dead)
<http://exiledonline.com/walking-dead-a-character-study/>

Walking Dead Discussion Ideas
<http://www.zombieteacher.com/ideas/walking-dead-discussion-ideas-from-the-atlantic/>

Zombies of the Past Decade (Infographic)
<http://guycodeblog.mtv.com/2011/10/17/zombie-pop-culture-timeline/>

Interactive Timeline of Zombies in the Media
<http://www.ohio.edu/people/av205009/vico462/ZombieTimeline/>

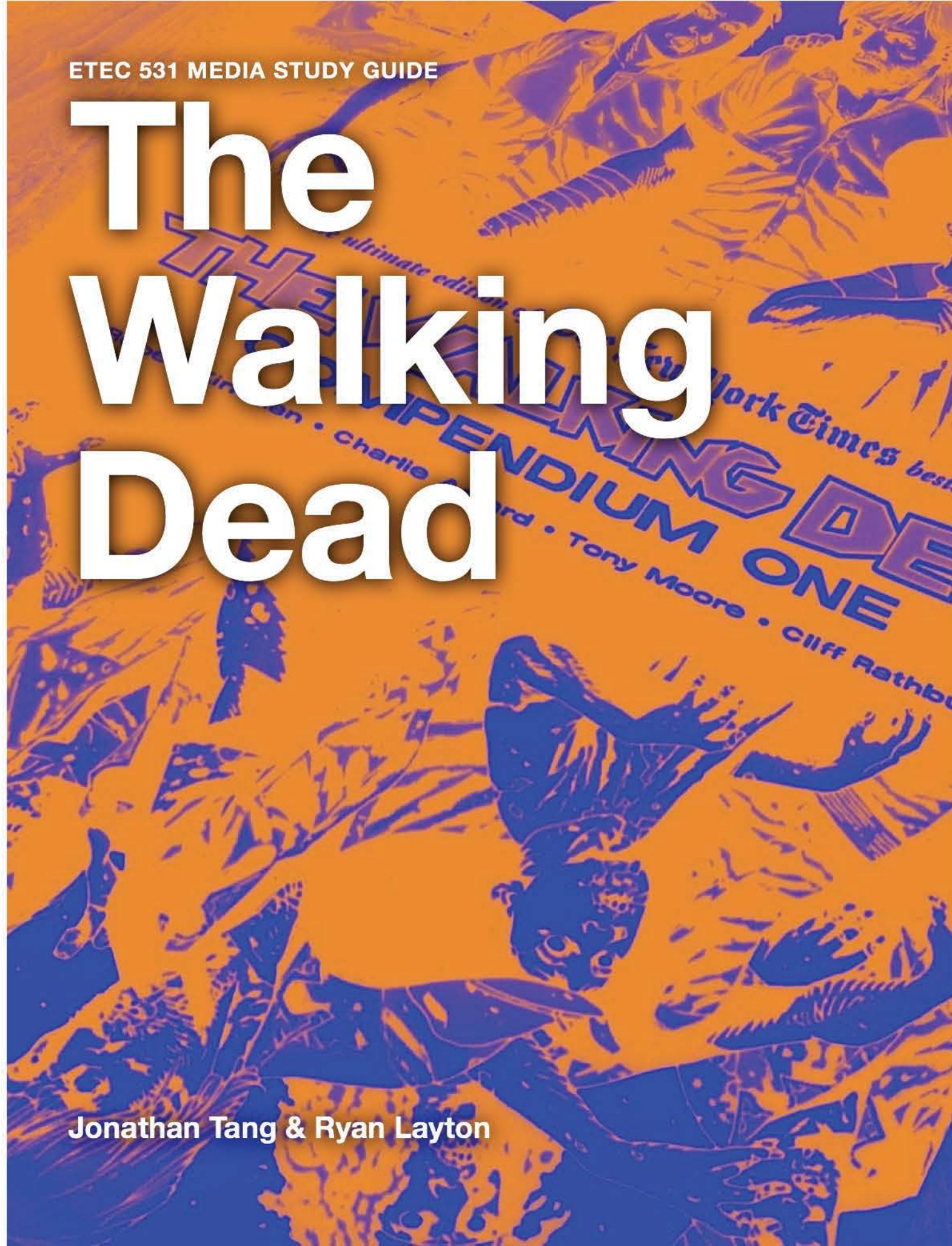
Nail (2009) comments on the power of zombie film as supplemental text:

“There are good reasons to show films in an English class, and students’ need for media literacy becomes more important as multimedia communication technologies become more ubiquitous. Using film in a unit on the undead makes sense, as most students’ prior knowledge of the undead likely comes from movies and television in the first place”.

ETEC 531 MEDIA STUDY GUIDE

The Walking Dead

Jonathan Tang & Ryan Layton



Introduction



INTRODUCTION

The Walking Dead is a graphic novel first published in 2003. The series was created by Robert Kirkman and released by Image Comics. *The Walking Dead* received the 2010 Eisner Award and in that same year was adapted into a television series airing on AMC in the U.S.

The series takes place in a post apocalyptic future where humans are outnumbered by the ever growing population of "Walkers." (The term zombie is not used in the series.) The story follows a group of surviving people who are trying to stay alive in a threatening world. Lead by their fearless leader, Rick Grimes, along with his son Carl and wife Lori, the group seeks refuge from the seemingly neverending danger.



Learning Objectives

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Students will be able to critically engage in meaningful analysis about the impact on the storyline and reader engagement of a graphic novel.**
- **Students will be able to apply themes in the Walking Dead to real life situations.**
- **Students will be able to work in groups to: view, respond, evaluate, critique and review the themes prevalent throughout the story.**
- **Students will be able to connect to a personal experience of extreme fear and examine how they reacted in a situation of panic.**
- **Students will be able to compare and contrast the character development, themes, setting, narrative between the graphic novel and the television series.**

The Walking Dead graphic novel series provides an excellent storyline for students to explore society, gender biases and stereotypes that occur frequently in the media. While the story is ongoing on a graphic novel series, novel series and television episodes, the main focus of this media study guide is on the first set of graphic novel books. The students will be asked to make comparisons of character development and representation along with discussing how the narrative development affects the audience perception of the characters in the first season of the television series.




History of Zombies

History of Zombies

- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley is considered by many to be the first zombie, or undead
- During the 20's and 30's, H.P. Lovecraft wrote short stories that explored the theme of the undead ("Cool Air", "In the Vault" and "The Outsider")
- H.G. Wells writes *Things to Come* which describes a plague that causes people to wander and infect those they come in contact with
- The 1950's saw the release of *Tales from the Crypt* from EC Comics
- George R. Romero, director of *Night of the Living Dead*, is considered as the father of the modern day zombie



Questions



IT
MAY NOT BE
SAFE NOW BUT
LOOK AT THAT
FENCE. IT
COULD BE MADE
TO BE SAFE. THAT
PLACE HAS BEDS,
SUPPLIES, CLOTHES,
MAYBE EVEN SOME
FOOD--IT HAS
TO.

Pre-Reading Questions

PRE-READING QUESTIONS:

What is the first thing that you would do in a time of crisis? (ie. earthquake, fire, tornado, monsoon, etc)

What do you value in this world?

What are some emotions that you might encounter?

What does it mean to be living in a society?

What rules do we abide to everyday to be living in a society?

Have you ever wanted to do something but was worried about the consequences?

Are you good at making quick decisions and then living with your decisions? What if they had major implications between who your friends were, if you were to live or die?

How do people change when they are scared or nervous?



After Reading

AFTER READING THE FIRST 6 CHAPTERS

At first glance, The Walking Dead appears to be about the state of the world after a global catastrophe. How zombies have become the dominant species and how humans must fight to survive. But as the story progresses it is clear that the “biters” play an ever decreasingly important role.

At the centre of this story is Rick Grimes. A police deputy who wakes from a coma and then tries to come to grips with what the world has become, how people have changed. The story follows Rick as he seeks to protect and lead his own family and a small group of people to safer locals. The story looks at how Rick must react in order to protect the lives of those in his care, even if it means killing the undead or living alike.

After having read, watch the animated comic book for chapter one located at:

<http://www.amctv.com/the-walking-dead/videos/the-walking-dead-motion-comic>

Discuss the following questions after having read the first 6 chapters:

- Did you enjoy reading The Walking Dead? Explain.
- What were the most surprising scenes? Why were they surprising?
- Did you have a different impression of the first chapter after having watched the animated graphic novel? In what ways did your impression change?
- In what ways do you think that The Walking Dead’s story applies in your life?
- Create a mind map of all the characters, locations and other relevant information in the story.



Activities



Activity 1

ACTIVITY #1

Option 1:

Each character certainly was going through a range of emotions as they survived the first few days. Either using one of the characters in the group or if you choose, to put yourself into the group, and record a daily diary of your days events. This can be in a written, audio, video or of a mixed variety. Ensure you that you discuss your participation and reaction to the group's decisions, especially Rick and Shane.

Option 2:

The video game Left 4 Dead and Walking Dead share a lot of similarities with respect to it's narrative of survivors trying to avoid the undead. Play the first two levels of the game and rewrite the narrative for one of the characters. Place yourself in the role of these characters and write about a discussion you are sharing with your group members. Imagine what skills you have to contribute to the group or what you might be worrying about. This can be presented in a written, audio or video format.



Activity 2

ACTIVITY #2

The Walking Dead begins with Rick being shot and transported to a hospital, but then 1-2 months of the story is missing. Characters allude to different things that happened during that time, but no mention about the plague or how it appeared.

Individually, or in groups of 2, create a blog (using [Blogger](#) or [Wordpress](#)) from the point of view of one of the characters from the Atlanta, Georgia group that was alive as the world changed (Lori, Carl, Shane, Glenn, Dale, Andrea, etc.) Begin your blog before news of the infection arrived and what you were doing, then explain the events that lead up to your arrival with the group in Atlanta, Georgia.



Themes

The Walking Dead covers many different themes. Using the table below, find specific examples from the story of the following themes.

Theme	Example from Story
Betrayal	
Denial	
Envy	
Fear	
Hope	
Regret	
Secrecy	
Teamwork	

Find an example in your own life (or one from someone close to you if need be) of the different themes discussed in this graphic novel.

Theme	Real life connection
Betrayal	
Denial	
Envy	
Fear	
Hope	
Regret	
Secrecy	
Teamwork	

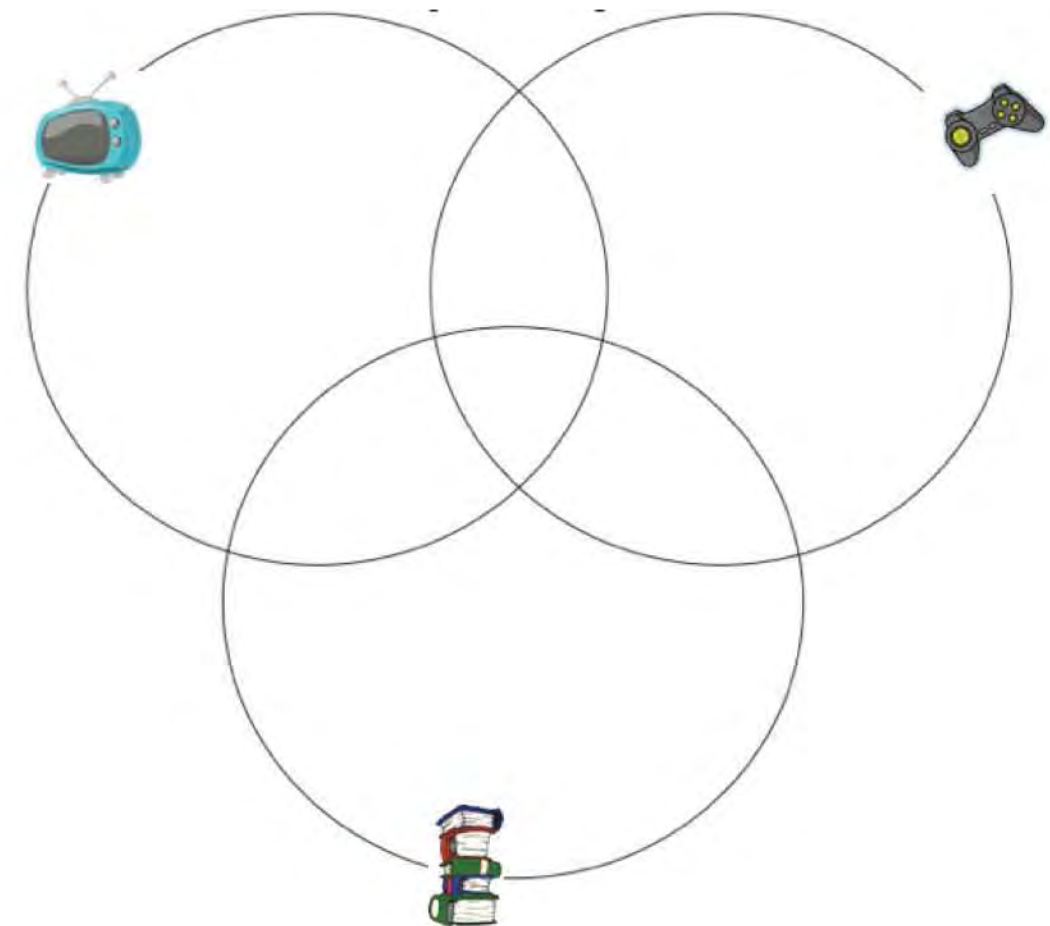
Mediums

THE MEDIUMS

Walking Dead was so successful in the release of it's graphic novel that both a television series and video game has been created based on the original story. Neither of these two mediums tell the story identically and have chosen to use the general plot as a guide. Despite this, the different mediums impact the reader, viewer, or player in both similar and different ways. Before you begin the Venn diagram, please ensure you complete the following with a partner or yourself:

- i) Read the first six episodes of the graphic novel Walking Dead.
- ii) Watch the first episode of the **AMC Television series: Walking Dead**
- iii) Play the **Walking Dead video game** on a variety of platforms (ie. iOS, Xbox, Playstation, etc)

You will notice many similarities and differences as a participant in the story. When completing the following diagram, try to think more about the general affordances and limitations of each medium. Please provide an example as well.



Extra



Sources for Further Study / References

SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Left 4 Dead Comic:

<http://www.l4d.com/comic/>

The Walking Dead graphic novel Wiki:

http://walkingdead.wikia.com/wiki/The_Walking_Dead_Wiki

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THE HUNGER GAMES

Media Study Guide - ETEC 531

By: Lisa Nevoral

Introduction

The Lionsgate film *The Hunger Games* was directed by Gary Ross and released in 2012. The screenplay, which was based on Suzanne Collins bestselling book, "The Hunger Games", was written by Gary Ross, Suzanne Collins, and Billy Ray.

The Hunger Games is a movie that shows a future dystopian America, called Panem, where people in twelve districts struggle to survive and a minority of wealthy people live in the Capitol. The Hunger Games involve two young representatives from each district, selected by a lottery, to participate in a televised competition that the citizens of Panem are required to watch. The twenty-four participants, called tributes, are placed in an arena where only one person will live to be the victor.

Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence), a sixteen-year-old from District 12, volunteers to take her sister Primrose's (Willow Shields) place in the competition. The fellow-male tribute from District 12 is Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson), who is the baker's son. The two will travel to the Capitol where they will be guided by their drunken mentor, Haymitch Abernathy (Woody Harrelson), who has been District 12's only Hunger Games winner.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this media study guide, students will be able to:

- Summarize and analyze about the characters, themes and messages of the film.
- View the production and make decisions on the use of text, image, and sound.
- Show how the themes discovered in the film have relevance to their own lives.
- Comprehend, interpret, and evaluate ideas and information obtained from the film and share their thoughts with other students.

*"May the odds be
ever in your
favour."*

- *The Hunger Games*



Courtesy of: commons.wikimedia.org

This Media Study Guide:

- Was created for students in grades 8-10.
- Was developed so students can **critically** and **actively** engage with the themes presented in *The Hunger Games*

The Movie's Certification:

- MPAA - PG13
- Canada (BC) - PG

Key Concepts

Key Concept	Explanation
Violence	<i>The Hunger Games</i> movie includes a lot of teen-on-teen violence, although overall, less graphic than the novel's description. Viewers will have to deal with over twenty deaths in which the tributes have been killed by various weapons, by having their necks broken and skulls cracked, or by their bodies being ravaged by carnivorous and poisonous creatures. Why is violence so key in this movie? What message are the movie makers (and the author) trying to make about screen violence as entertainment?
Poverty/Class Distinction	In a lot of societies, there is still a hierarchy of class. This may play a large role in determining how we think, act, live, etc. In this movie, it is quite evident that some of the people live in poverty, while others do not. Katniss has to hunt and use her wits to survive daily life and the skills that she has obtained ultimately help her in the arena. Do we see extreme poverty or class distinction in our world today? Why do we still have poverty and class distinction?
Spectacle	The term spectacle means an event that is unusual or disturbing, of being on lavish display. The tributes are the center of attraction and the citizens don't view <i>The Hunger Games</i> as brutish punishment, but rather as popular entertainment. Katniss, the main character, realizes that to be victor, she must give the audience entertainment value. Can this be seen in contemporary society?
Revolution/ Rebellion	Although Panem has 12 districts now, there were at one time 13. District 13 rebelled and was thwarted by the Capitol. Throughout the movie, Katniss can be seen to do things where she rebels against the system. Who is the real antagonist in this movie; the other tributes or the Capitol? Have we seen, in our past or in present day, revolutions starting against powers of authority?
Community	Each district provides a certain "good" for Panem and has an industry associated with it. District 12, which is the poorest of all districts, is the coal mining district. The Capitol, the biggest city of Panem, is where the central government is located and the wealthiest citizens live. The Capitol keeps its population in line by keeping the districts separate, by enforcing the Hunger Games upon them, and by class systems. One theme that develops during the movie is that people are stronger when they work together. Have you found this to be true? What does the word community mean to you?



Movie Poster
Courtesy of: www.hollywoodreporter.com

Before viewing the movie...

There are many themes found in the movie *The Hunger Games*. Before viewing the movie, give your definition of these themes by filling in Table 1. At the end of the movie, we will revisit these themes and you will note if your definition has changed.

Theme	Definition
Dystopia	
Survival	
Humanity	
Totalitarian Governments	
Desensitization	
Reality TV	
Starvation	
Compassion	

Table 1: Themes of *The Hunger Games*



Katniss shooting a bow
Courtesy of: www.flickr.com

Pre-viewing Questions

1. What does the title *The Hunger Games* mean to you?
2. What is propaganda? Can you give an example of propaganda that may be occurring in our world today?
3. List three reality TV shows that have currently been on television and explain the basis of one of the shows.
4. What skills do you have to survive if you were to enter The Hunger Games? What is the most you would do to survive?
5. In your view, is it different to see violence than to read about it? Explain.
6. What does "may the odds be ever in your favor" mean to you? Why might this statement be an insult to the tributes?



Peeta and Katniss
Courtesy of: stalkerzoo.deviantart.com

After viewing the film...

1. Discuss the themes of the movie with a partner.
2. Answer the "Discussion Questions".
3. Discuss your answers to the "Discussion Questions" in groups of 4.

"Why do you think we have a winner? Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear."

- President Snow

Themes of *The Hunger Games*

With a partner, go over each other's definitions for each of the themes found in Table 1. If the definitions have changed for you **after** watching the movie, describe the changes to your partner. Discuss with your partner if there are any other themes that were represented in the film. What were they? Fill in Table 2 with the new themes and their definitions.

Additional Themes	Definition

Table 2: Additional Themes of *The Hunger Games*

Discussion Questions

Dystopia

The Hunger Games is considered a dystopian film. As defined by The Free Dictionary by Farlex, "it is an imaginary place or state in which the condition of life is extremely bad, as from deprivation, oppression, or terror." This type of genre usually takes place in the future and often includes totalitarian governments. But, as many science fiction writers do, they are commenting on concerns and issues that are occurring during their own time period.

1. Explain how *The Hunger Games* is a dystopian film. Provide examples as seen in the movie.
2. Can you think of any nations that have totalitarian governments in present day? Give some examples and explain why you think it's a totalitarian government.

Poverty

Poverty is a major theme throughout this film and can be especially seen by contrasting the well-to-do Capitol with the poverty-stricken District 12.

1. Describe the differences between the Capitol and District 12. How does the director create these differences between the wealthy Capitol and the impoverished District 12 (think of design of sets, costumes, and makeup)?
2. Do we still see poverty and starvation today? What are some things we could do to help people that may not have enough money or food?

After viewing the film...

"I just don't want them to change me... I don't want to be another piece in their game"

- Peeta



Courtesy of:
www.goldentrailer.com

Discussion Questions continued...

Propaganda

Propaganda is a topic that can be found in *The Hunger Games* movie. Two definitions of propaganda are:

As described by Google Dictionary:

"information, esp. of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view."

As described by BusinessDictionary.com (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/propaganda.html>)

"In general, a message designed to persuade its intended audience to think and behave in a certain manner. Thus advertising is commercial propaganda. In specific, institutionalized and systematic spreading of information and/or disinformation, usually to promote a narrow political or religious viewpoint. Originally, propaganda meant an arm of the Roman Catholic church responsible for 'de propaganda fidei,' propagation of the faith. It acquired negative connotations in the 20th century when totalitarian regimes (principally the Nazi Germany) used every means to distort facts and spread total falsehoods."

1. Describe an instance in the movie where a propaganda film was shown.
 - a) What was the message of the propaganda film?
 - b) Who voice was used to describe why the Hunger Games were necessary?
 - c) What images were used to portray the Hunger Games in this propaganda film?
 - d) How does the music and voice over contribute to this message? Explain.
2. Research one propaganda example that may occur in contemporary life.

Katniss

Katniss is the main character in *The Hunger Games* book and movie. Her character and skills have been molded partly by where she resides, her living conditions, and the people in her life.

1. Describe her character and skills. How did these attributes help her in the Games?
2. Why does she volunteer to take her sister's place? Would you voluntarily enter the Hunger Games to save you own sibling(s)?
3. Explain Katniss' relationship with Gale, Peeta, and Haymitch. Did any of these relationships change over time? Explain.
4. How did Katniss show compassion throughout the movie? Do you think you would show compassion to other tributes?
5. Katniss rebels against the system several times throughout the movie. What does she do to rebel?
6. How do you think you may have behaved if you had to partake in The Hunger Games?

After viewing the film...

"What if everyone just stopped watching?"

- Gale

Discussion Questions continued...

Compassion and Humanity

Compassion and humanity are themes within this movie. The Hunger Games are meant to dehumanize the tributes, but on several occasions, the tributes choose compassion and humanity over this.

1. Name several people that showed compassion in the movie. What did they do?
2. How is the theme of humanity represented in the movie? Who has shown humanity and who has behaved inhumanely in the movie? Is it just the tributes?
3. What do you think you would do if you were faced with either killing another person or showing them compassion? Where can we see this in today's world?

Final Thoughts

1. Who is the real antagonist in the film? Is it the other tributes or someone /something else?
2. The Hunger Games is supposed to be a pageant of honour, courage, and sacrifice. Explain why or why not you think this is true.
3. What messages and warnings does *The Hunger Games* have for our society in general, and for you personally?
4. What is desensitization? Are we becoming desensitized to war and violence because of the availability of violent images on television and the Internet? Explain.

Activity 1 - Social Media

Lionsgate did a very good job creating buzz about *The Hunger Games* through social media, Web sites, press releases, marketing literature and sales to maximize the exposure of the movie before its release date. Lionsgate's marketing team clearly understood its fan base and its social campaign was hugely successful.

1. Using any social media format (ie. Facebook status update, Twitter, texting, etc...), write a series of comments pretending you were the tribute chosen at The Reaping to enter The Hunger Games. Write the comments how you would actually write a status update or tweet (for example, use hashtags if you were writing in a Twitter format). You must have a minimum of 8 entries that includes the following events:
 - The Reaping
 - The train ride to the Capitol
 - Two training days (you can write more than two)
 - The "Revealing of the Tributes" parade
 - The interview with Caesar Flickerman
 - Showing off your skills to the panel
 - Just before you enter the arena



Mockingjay Pin
Courtesy of: www.flickr.com

Activity 2 - Comparing Reality TV to *The Hunger Games*

The Hunger Games movie touches upon themes on contemporary culture.

In groups of two, you will create a short presentation (3-5 minute video) explaining how the film relates to aspects of contemporary culture such as reality TV and war coverage. You and your partner will choose one topic from the following:

1. Compare current reality TV shows to the "last man standing" premise of *The Hunger Games*. Which shows pit people against each other? Why is it so much fun to watch alliances, voting off, and the meanness of these programs? How far do you think shows like these could go?

2. Discuss the ways in which the "Gamemakers" control the environment and "entertainment" value of *The Hunger Games*. Compare that to reality TV today. Are there differences? Are there similarities? Do you think that contestants on reality TV behave differently than they would otherwise knowing they are on "live" TV?

'To get sponsors, you have to make people like you.'
– Haymitch

'It's all a big show. It's all how you're perceived'
– Haymitch

3. Explain how this relates to people on reality TV now?

4. In how many ways are *The Hunger Games* and today's TV reality shows similar? Choose one reality TV show and state the similarities and differences to that seen in *The Hunger Games*.

5. Compare *The Hunger Games* to TV coverage of the Olympics and in particular, the creation of champions and stars (how is success at the Olympics celebrated).

6. Compare *The Hunger Games* to riots and social unrest of today and the way they are portrayed in the media.



Athen's Olympic Stadium
Courtesy of: www.dcrainmaker.com



Reality TV show Survivor Logo
Courtesy of: lozengellis.wordpress.com

Extension Activities

1. Write a Film Review (adapted from FilmEducation)

Once you've viewed the film, write a critical review of *The Hunger Games*. You may do this in two ways:

- **Word document** (doc/docx) – 300 words maximum
- **Video** (avi/mov/mp4) – 2 minutes long

Include the following information, stating evidence from the film, as well as your own opinion:

- **Director** – who is it? Have they directed anything else?
- **Main Stars** – who are they? Are they well-known or just coming onto the scene?
- **Plot** – what is the movie about?
- **Characters** – who are the main characters? Which actors play them? What was the quality of acting?
- **Genre of film** – What type of genre was this movie? Does it fit with your expectations?
- **Soundtrack** – did the music add to the movie? Did you notice the music? Did you like or dislike the soundtrack?
- **Audience** – who was this movie aimed at? What was the rating on this movie? Would you recommend this movie to others? Why or why not?

2. Read a Dystopian Book

Read one of the following dystopian books and compare and contrast the book to "The Hunger Games". How are they similar to the plot line for "The Hunger Games"? How are they different?

- **Divergent** (Divergent, Book #1) – Veronica Roth
- **Insurgent** (Divergent, Book #2) – Veronica Roth
- **Catching Fire** (The Hunger Games, Book #2) – Suzanne Collins
- **Mockingjay** (The Hunger Games, Book #3) – Suzanne Collins
- **Ender's Game** (Book #1) – Orson Scott Card
- **Brave New World** – Aldous Huxley
- **Feed** – M.T. Anderson
- **Fahrenheit 451** – Ray Bradbury

Katniss and Peeta
Courtesy of: <http://cinemanla.es>