

Media Study Guides

for Secondary Schools

ETEC 531 Students
University of British Columbia

2013

Edited by Franc Feng

Table of contents

Technoscientific imaginaries: social justice, colonialism, discourses of power, oppression, discrimination, ethics, stereotyping

1. Avatar: A media study guide (Jhodi Leong, Jeremy Inscho, Kimberly Wagner)
2. The last airbender: Media study guide (Colin S. Kam)

Social justice, self-expression, human rights: Socio-political economics, power, oppression, heroes, ethics, empowerment

1. Film Studies 11: Exploration and analysis of Slumdog millionaire (Adrienne Longworth & Eileen Monks)
2. Ai Wei Wei: Never sorry (Sheena Abboud & Simon Forst)

Cultural norms in inclusive, elementary classrooms: school culture, roles, bullying, gender stereotyping, bias, environmental issues

1. Recess media guide (Megan Dodgworth & Caitin McKeachie)
2. Dr. Suess' The Lorax (Neil Busby & Catherine Ranson)
3. Gender stereotyping in Children's Film (Sabrina Quigley & Tyler Sherwood)

Techno-scientific culture/discourses- Cutting edge technologies, forensic science, hypothesis formulation, data analysis, investigation/research, post graduation, geek culture, stereotyping, relationships

1. CSI: Crime scene investigation (Bruno Chu & Jonathan Lai)
2. The big bang theory: Media study guide: Grades 8-10 (Anthony Pauk, Colleen Ruddy, Alanna Williams)

Preface & Acknowledgements

This text represents the work of a group of 19 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.

A Media Study Guide

Authors: Jhodi Leong, Jeremy Inscho, Kimberly Wagner



Introduction and Film Synopsis: Written and directed by James Cameron, the visual effects stunner *Avatar* (2009), has received a great deal of acclaim, including three Oscars for art direction, cinematography and visual effects. In addition to these and [many other awards](#), the film has also generated significant controversy.

Set on the fictional planet *Pandora*, lead character and paraplegic Jake Sully is given a chance to take the role of his deceased twin brother, Tom in scientific research of Pandora's indigenous people, the Na'vi. By controlling the avatar genetically developed for Tom, Jake regains freedom from his wheelchair, which is otherwise medically possible but unaffordable to Jake in this futuristic setting. The primary purpose of the human presence on Pandora is to mine the extremely valuable [unobtainium](#) mineral, and the goal of the Avatar program is to liaise with the Na'vi and convince them to move away from their Home Tree, which sits atop a significant deposit of unobtainium, or be moved by force. Jake becomes a military escort for the other avatars on their anthropological and botanical studies of Pandora's wilderness, where practically everything is trying to kill you. He makes several mistakes in this unknown environment, becomes separated from the group, and is saved from death by Neytiri, daughter of Mo'at, the Omaticayan spiritual leader and Eytukan, the Omaticayan chief. He ultimately becomes accepted by the Omaticayan clan of Na'vi and mentored in their ways by Neytiri. Eventually Jake transcends his humanity, and supersedes Tsu'tey, the lead Omaticaya warrior, to become both chief and military leader.

Learning Outcomes: This study guide has been designed to be applicable across a broad range of subject areas and grade levels. Through it, students will examine the metaphors in the film and contrast them to the Indigenous Canadians' context and beyond, as the themes are universal. Students will also critically analyze this media's (i.e. film's) influence on the depiction and interpretation of Indigenous cultures.

Course specific learning outcomes addressed by this study guide include:

BC Social Studies 9

- defend a position on a controversial issue after considering a variety of perspectives
- analyse the relationship between Aboriginal people and Europeans and explain the role of each in the development of Canada
- assess how identity is shaped by a variety of factors, including belief systems and ethnicity
- analyse roots of present-day regional/cultural/social issues within Canada
- define colonialism, imperialism, and nationalism
- analyse factors that contribute to revolution and conflict
- demonstrate understanding of the ways in which Aboriginal people interact with their environment

ON English Media Studies 11 (open)

- analyse how individuals or groups are presented in media works and assess the accuracy and influence of these representations
- analyse media representations of social, political, and cultural issues and explain how the representations influence people's interpretation of the issues and their level of concern
- Compare their own and others' responses to a variety of media works and explain how the characteristics of audiences influence how the audiences interpret and enjoy particular works
- use appropriate production techniques to create a media work about an important social or cultural issue for a particular audience

Pre-Viewing Activities: Before viewing the film, use the following focus question sets to review elements of colonial history in Canada and to anticipate parallels with this futuristic story. In a group of 3-4 students, determine who will be the researchers (1-2), recorder, and reporter. Using your History notebook, textbook, and appropriate online sources, complete your assigned question from #1-4 and #5. While discussing your responses, try to consider what is stated and what is not stated in the text or multi-media source. Each group will report to the class on their assigned question and their current Aboriginal news story.

- How did initial contact between the Europeans and Aboriginals influence the development of Canada? What were the advantages and disadvantages for each group? (Create a four-quadrant chart.)
- Describe the following characteristics of Aboriginal culture as compared with European culture in “colonial times” (Create a two-column chart):
 - family life
 - male/female roles and responsibilities
 - customs
 - religion/beliefs
- Question #2, except in “modern times.”
- How are Aboriginal people represented in media as compared to Caucasian people in the 21st Century? (Create a two-column chart)
 - your textbook
 - tv shows / films
 - news media
 - Internet
- Using the Internet, find a current Aboriginal issue news story. Describe it briefly and write a bibliographical entry to credit the source. What is the nature of the conflict? Has it been resolved? What social issue is highlighted by this news event? What is the parallel or connection with colonial times?



Viewing Activity: While viewing the film, use the themes graphic organizer provided to record observations about the main themes of the film.

Teacher Option 1: Students choose three themes of their choice and record at least three observations per theme.

Teacher Option 2: Students are assigned a theme and must record 6-10 observations for that one theme.

Viewing Chart:

Theme	Examples from Film
colonization/imperialism	
ethnicity	
nationalism	
patriotism	
family role	
militarism	
gender roles	
TEK (traditional ecological knowledge)	

To activate thinking...

Though Avatar can be seen for its artistic and cinematographic excellence, it is frequently critiqued for its parallels to colonization of indigenous peoples across *this* planet, and the many other controversial themes portrayed. Chief among these are the tropes of the Noble Warrior and the Ecological Indian. “Noble warrior” describes a romanticized view of, often elite, warriors who fight according to a code of honour to achieve personal glory and honour. Such protagonists, are generally the heroes. Noble warrior antagonists usually appear as the “worthy adversary.” In *Last of the Mohicans*, author James Cooper describes the noble warrior: “In war, he is daring, boastful, cunning, ruthless, self-denying, and self-devoted; in peace, just generous, hospitable, revengeful, superstitious, modest, and commonly chaste.” The Ecological Indian is a stereotype often applied to indigenous cultures as being idealistic and living in perfect harmony with nature, having a genetic disposition to mystical ecological knowledge, and feeling remorse for the necessities of life such as hunting due to a spiritual interconnectivity of all things living or not. Today, we understand Indigenous knowledge relationships to the land and environment better as being shared through story, tradition, and spiritual practice as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), rather than something genetically inherited.



Post-Viewing Activities:

One’s identity within a culture can be influenced by such factors as family, gender, belief systems, or ethnicity. How would you describe your identity in terms of these factors?

Aboriginal culture has a strong base in ecological interconnectivity. It has been suggested that the Omaticaya culture has many parallels to Aboriginal culture. Analyse the elements of the Omaticaya culture that are indicative of this ecological interconnectivity.

In Aboriginal culture, traditionally women have played a significant role in the guidance of family and tribe life. What role do Neytiri, Mo’at, and Eywa play within the tribe? What parallels can be drawn between their roles and those of women in Aboriginal culture?

Jake developed a strong connection with the Omaticaya tribe, often going against the desires of his own people in favour of helping the tribe. Can you think of reasons why Jake felt this strong connection and why he disobeyed his orders? Has there been a time when you went against what you were being told because you felt strongly that it was not the right option for you?

Jake’s initial reaction to his avatar body was excitement for the use of his legs. He took advantage of this opportunity to run and feel the ground with his feet, an opportunity not afforded to him in reality due to the paralysis of his legs. If you were to have the opportunity of designing your own avatar, what three characteristics would be most important to you, and why?

Several parallels have been drawn between current military events and those portrayed in the movie. Analyse current military events around the world for similarities to those depicted in the movie.

The *New York Times* described Avatar as ‘a sort of two-edged cultural imperialism’ in reference to the stereotypical depiction of the white people and the native tribe. Describe what author David Brooks meant by this comment.

Several names such as *Pandora* or *Unobtainium* can be associated with meaning outside of the film. Describe what these words indicate to you about their presence and meaning in the film. Can you find other examples within the film?

Learning Activity:

Produce a 30-60 second PSA addressing the topic and impact of stereotypes. This PSA should include visual and audio media.

“Those trees were sacred to the Omaticaya in a way you can’t imagine.”

-Dr. Grace Augustine

Vocabulary: Using a variety of resources (i.e. textbook, notebook, dictionary, appropriate websites) and working with a partner, define the following terms that relate to colonial history and the fictitious story of the film:

- Aboriginal / Indigenous
- Advocacy / Environmentalist / Tree-hugger
- Avatar / Hinduism / Spiritualism
- Betray / Exploit / Rationalize / Subjugate
- Colonialism / Imperialism / Materialism
- Fable / White Messiah fable
- Metaphor / Garden of Eden
- Mercenary / Militarism
- Primitive / Savage / Noble Savage myth
- Self-sacrifice

Learning Activity:

Teacher Instructions: Discuss the themes that students listed throughout the movie in the viewing activity (suggested themes: TEK, colonization, ethnicity, gender roles, role of family, nationalism, imperialism, racism, patriotism, militarism). Assign each group of 2-3 students a different focus theme.

Student Instructions: In groups of 2-3, create a mind map, using software such as VUE, of the latitudinal problems associated with your group’s assigned theme and specific examples from the movie. Provide a thorough analysis of how each example from the movie is representative of the theme.

Using timeline software such as Office Timeline, create a timeline tracing the longitudinal problems and events associated with your group’s theme.

Provide a cross-sectional analysis of the latitudinal and longitudinal problems.

Avatar provides additional themes to critique beyond the Noble Warrior and Ecological Indian that make critical analysis a valuable activity. The film's portrayal of gender roles including successful hard-nosed, arrogant males; females and spirituality; females as warriors, and the fallibility of females in accepting outsiders are all open to criticism and critique. Likewise the Eurocentric, white superiority embodied in Jake Sully's character as he transitions from inferiority as a paraplegic within a white dominated society, to inferiority as an Omaticaya outsider, to superiority as the political and militaristic leader of the Omaticaya.

Controversial Topics:

Several events and depictions in the film have been associated with religious practices such as reincarnation, pantheism, goddess worship or nature worship. There has been mixed opinions on the accuracy and meaning of these events and depictions. Analyse these and other elements from the film for religious significance. Are these events and depictions accurate, relevant, or meaningful? What significance does this add to the film?

The Tree of Souls and Pandora have been compared to the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life from Genesis. Do you think this comparison was intentional? Why or why not. Does this influence the way that we think about The Tree of Souls and its significance in the film Avatar?



Link to Media Literacy:

How does media portray Aboriginal culture? Describe stereotypical elements from media productions of Aboriginal culture that are present in the film Avatar.

Is this a perpetual stereotype of Aboriginal culture in media? What other films have portrayed Aboriginal culture in similar ways? What effect does stereotypical representations of a culture in media have on a societal views of that culture? Should we be concerned about these stereotypical representations?

Learning Activity:

Create a short story or narrative (500 words or less) representing a culture of your choosing in a way similar to other media productions of the same culture. Analyse other media representations of that culture to find common key elements for portrayal.

Scene Analysis:

Arrival in Pandora: In this sequence, Jake meets several key characters who are repeatedly stereotyped: Jake, Grace, Colonel Miles Quaritch, Parker Selfridge, and the Na'vi. Explain each.

Jake's 1st Pandora experience: Jake is dangerous on Pandora because of his own ignorance. List instances where Jake shows his ignorance about the environment and the Omataakai people.

Grace's Healing: The healing of Grace shows the unity of the environment, the Omataakai, and their spiritualism. Describe how they are like an organism. How is their unity demonstrated?

Neytiri Saves Jake: The moment when Neytiri saves Jake's human form is quite touching. Why is this scene so emotionally powerful?

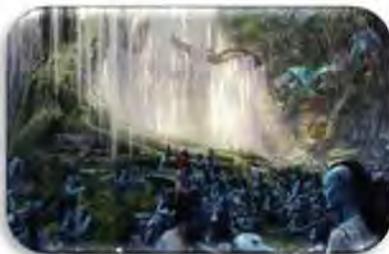


Further Research:

The following films have similar themes to Avatar. It may be of interest to view, compare and contrast any or all of them.

1. Dune (1984)
2. Dances With Wolves (1990)
3. FernGully (1992)
4. Last Samurai (2003)
5. District 9 (2009)
6. Pocahontas (2005)

For a better understanding of Indigenous peoples' relationship to the environment and their place of being, we recommend Keith Basso's chapter *Stalking with Stories* in *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Note: language and sexual references not appropriate for all students). The preeminent text on native spirituality is *God Is Red* by Vine Deloria Jr.



Extension: Storytelling Project: In traditional indigenous cultures, storytelling was used to teach history; values, beliefs, and morals; and life skills. It is still valuable in our modern culture as a powerful tool for these same reasons. Storytelling on its own helps to deepen messages, but the ability to also use digital media to support oral storytelling adds a further dimension. Although the teacher is often viewed as the storyteller who weaves the learning for the students, the students have valuable stories to share with each other as well. In order to connect the past with the present, each student will create a 1-3 minute video about one of the following topics below that relate to the themes of the film and our modern culture. Use an appropriate digital storytelling application to respond to your topic using a variety of visual, textual, and auditory tools.

Topics:

1. Technology and scientific advancement in the film is presented negatively as infringing on another culture. Do you agree with this portrayal? Why or why not?
2. Explain an ethical dilemma you have experienced regarding the environment. Was it resolved? Is it an ongoing issue?
3. Choose a current issue in your locale that involves Aboriginal land rights. What are the main points of contention? How can it be resolved?
4. The Internet is considered a new landscape – digital space to be occupied that seems limitless. Is this new universe an equalizing environment? Can everyone have a voice, or do inequalities still exist?
5. This film is accused of containing a collection of stereotypes and having Romantic notions about the past. Choose a character with whom you most relate, and explain how or why.

“Everything is backwards now, like out there is the true world, and in here is the dream.”

-Jake Sully

Additional Activities:

1. In small groups, write a new ending to the Avatar story that is unique as opposed to stereotypical. Complete a storyboard as a group, and then create a comic strip using such tools as Comic Life or Bitstrips for Schools.
2. Choose one of the Post-Viewing questions and complete a one minute video response using a film program like Photostory, Movie Maker or Xtranormal.
3. Canadian Aboriginal students can create their own short film or web-based new media that “illustrate[s] the vitality and excellent of [Indigenous] art and culture in contemporary media” to submit to the [imagineNative](#) Film & Media Arts Festival.
4. View a documentary focused on Aboriginal issues and themes in Canada (or North America). Then create an infographic that represents the key issues presented in the film. Here are some suggestions from the National Film Board Online: *You Are on Indian Land* (1969), *The Other Side of the Ledger: An Indian View of the Hudson’s Bay Company* (1972), *The Invisible Nation* (2007), or *Totem: Return and Renewal* (2007). There are also quality documentary films available for order at [First Nations Films](#). Finally, [March Point](#) (2009) is an American film available for purchase through iTunes.
5. The novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007) by Alexie Sherman contains a number of modern issues that relate to current Aboriginal culture in North America. His film *Smoke Signals* (1998) is also a creative work that is worthy of critical discussion. Choose one or both of these works to use for further study on current issues that relate to Aboriginal youth trying to find their place in society.

References:

- Basso, Keith. (1996). *“Stalking with stories” in Wisdom sits in places: Landscape and language among the western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Deloria, Vine Jr. (1994). *God is red: A native view of religion*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum.
- MacLean, M. & Wason-Ellam, L. (2006). When Aboriginal and Metis Teachers use Storytelling as an Instructional Practice. *A Grant Report to the Aboriginal Education Research Network, Saskatchewan Learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/storytelling>.
- Murphie, A. & Potts, J. (2003). *Culture and technology* (Chapter 1). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Volcic, Z. (2001). A critical historical overview of media approaches. *Medij*, 7(1-2). 45-67.

Learning Activity:

Avatar was the first of three movies to be made. What do you think the plot of the sequel will be? Create a potential plot diagram for the sequel.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN THE LAST AIRBENDER

Media Study Guide

by Colin S. Kam, ETEC 531, July 2013

Purpose

The media study guide for *The Last Airbender* has been written for Grade 8-10 audience and it addresses its depictions of ethnicities through the main and minor characters in the movie. The learning activities meet a selected set of BC PLOs for the Planning, English, Media Studies, Social Studies and Social Justice curricula.

Introduction

- Written/Directed by: M. Night Shyamalan
- MPAA Certification: Rated PG for Fantasy Action Violence
- Release Date: July 1, 2010
- Running Time: 103 minutes

The Last Airbender is a live-action film adaptation of the first season of Nickelodeon's animated TV series *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. The original series was created and produced by Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko, according to whom its universe is set in an Asian-influenced world.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify and analyze colorism and ethnic stereotypes in film.
- Analyze ethical and moral issues with use of colorism.
- Compare and contrast two forms of media (i.e. live-action film vs. animation series).
- Identify the roles that film has in reflecting, sustaining and challenging beliefs and traditions.
- Engage in a critical analysis about the characters, direct messages and indirect messages.
- Engage in a production to respond to the film and make use of text, image and sound.



Background

Human civilization is divided into four nations: the Water Tribes, the Earth Kingdom, the Fire Nation, and the Air Nomads. Each nation has a distinct society, wherein people known as benders have the ability to manipulate and control their nation's element using physical motions of martial arts. The series creators base each bending style on real martial art forms that lead to clear visual differences in bending techniques used by each nation.



The Avatar is the only person in the world who can bend all four elements.



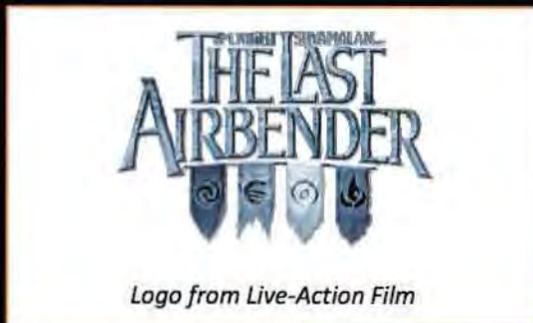
Avatar Aang

Synopsis

One hundred years prior to the film, Avatar Aang of the Air Nomads disappeared without a trace and the Fire Nation started launching a brutal war against the other nations. A century has passed with no hope in sight to change the path of destruction when Avatar Aang resurfaces back into the world. He teams up with waterbender Katara and her brother Sokka to restore balance to their world.

Activities: Before the Movie

1. Who is the film's target audience? Justify your answer.
2. Compare the logo from the film and the logo from the animated series. Discuss these questions with peers in class or in small groups:
 - a) How are they similar? Be specific.¹
 - b) How are they different? Be specific.
 - c) What do you think the difference mean or tell us?



Logo from Live-Action Film



Logo from Animated Series

3. Watch the bonus feature "The Legend so Far" from the animated series Book 1 DVD (12 minutes) to retrace the events of the first season leading up to Aang's arrival to the Northern Water Tribe. This short is intended to provide background information (characters, settings, plot) from the original source that inspired the movie.
 - a) Pay attention to the opening sequence where Aang introduces the four nations. What are your first impressions of each nation? Justify your response.²
 - b) Provide a brief character sketch of the protagonists: Aang, Katara and Sokka.
 - c) Do the minor characters seem generic or authentic? Are they well developed? Justify your response.

¹ Include in differences: color, font family, symbols, graphics, texture, etc.

² Translation: 水善 – Benevolent Water; 土強 – Strong Earth; 火烈 – Fierce Fire; 气和 – Peaceful Air

Activities: During the Movie

1. In the opening sequence, the Chinese calligraphy is replaced with meaningless scribbles.
 - a) Why do you think the producers opted to replace with unintelligible symbols?
 - b) Do you think the change was intentional? Justify your response.
 - c) Do you think this change impacted the integrity of the film? Justify your response.

2. Complete the table as you watch the movie. Put an asterisk beside the names of main characters.

Characters	Physical Description	Depiction of Character(s)
Air Nomads		
Avatar Aang		
Monk Gyatso (in flashbacks)		
Southern Water Tribe		
Katara		
Sokka		
Gran Gran		
SWT Villagers		
Fire Nation		
Prince Zuko		
Uncle Iroh		
Commander Zhao		
Fire Lord Ozai		
Fire Nation Army		
Earth Kingdom		
Earthbender Boy (unnamed)		
Earthbender Father (unnamed)		
Earthbender Prisoners		
Monk in Air Temple (unnamed)		
Northern Water Tribe		
Master Pakku		
Princess Yue		
NWT Citizens		

Activities: After the Movie

First Impressions

1. What conclusions have you drawn about colorism or the film's depiction of ethnicity?
2. What other messages, whether direct/indirect or intentional/unintentional, did you get from watching the film?
3. Share these conclusions with your peers and listen to their conclusions. How are their conclusions similar to or different from yours?

Guided Discussions

The movie was heavily criticized for its casting of roles. Lopez (2012) argues that "the original cartoon was set in an Asian world, so all four lead roles should go to Asian American actors. Instead, producers cast three white actors as the heroes and an actor of South Asian descent as the villain."

1. Why do you think the producers have chosen to cast three Caucasian actors for lead roles and to cast South-Asian and Middle-Eastern descent actors for villain roles? Do you think their reasons are justified? Do you think these reasons are fair or ethical? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think the producers have chosen to cast East-Asian actors and Circumpolar actors as victims with limited dialogue? Are their reasons fair? Why or why not?

Stereotypes are generalizations that are assigned to groups of people. These groupings can be by race, class, gender, religion, country of origin, etc. These generalizations, whether negative or positive, are used to limit a group. By stereotyping, people can be told that they can't do something because of the stereotype or can be mistrusted because of their stereotype (e.g. racial profiling). Colorism is specific to the generalization based on people's skin color.

3. How can colorism in films be dangerous?
4. Why do you think Hollywood films use colorism and ethnic stereotypes? Do you think it is ethical? Do you think it is intentional? Why or why not?

In an interview, writer and director M. Night Shylaman says, "This is a multicultural movie and I'm going to make it even more multicultural in my approach to its casting. There [are] African-Americans in the movie, so it's a source of pride for me. I'm actually doing a very culturally diverse movie. In fact, I believe it's the most culturally diverse tent pole movie ever made. It doesn't have, like, a token person. The entire landscape will be ethnically diverse. That's the entire point of the series."

5. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
6. Do you think the film can be multicultural without the use of ethnic stereotypes?
 - If yes, how could have this been achieved in *The Last Airbender*?
 - If no, why not?

Research / Media Project

You will create a webpage (or a wiki, or a blog) that discusses how ethnicities and cultures are depicted in other popular movies or TV series. In group of threes, select a school-appropriate movie or series, either live-action or animated, that is targeted towards young adolescents. In your group, critically watch the movie or a few episodes from series. In 5-8 paragraphs, discuss how ethnicities and cultures are depicted in other movies or TV series. Use the following focus questions to write your paragraphs.



- What does the movie or series depict about ethnicity and/or culture? How does it depict? Are the depictions positive or negative? Provide evidence from the movie or series.
- Do you think the depictions are accurate? Why or why not?
- Do you think the depictions are intentional? Why or why not?
- What messages do you think the creators/writers are trying to say?
- What messages, whether direct/indirect or intentional/unintentional, does the main audience receive?
- How does the message impact the audience?



Come up with at least one more question in your group.

The webpage needs an embedded 90-second YouTube video that introduces the movie or series episode that you are reviewing. Include images and graphics to support your responses and to complement the layout and format of the webpage. Consult the teacher about copyright issues. Finally, using bibme.org, create a list of cited works in APA (or MLA) format.

Additional Resources

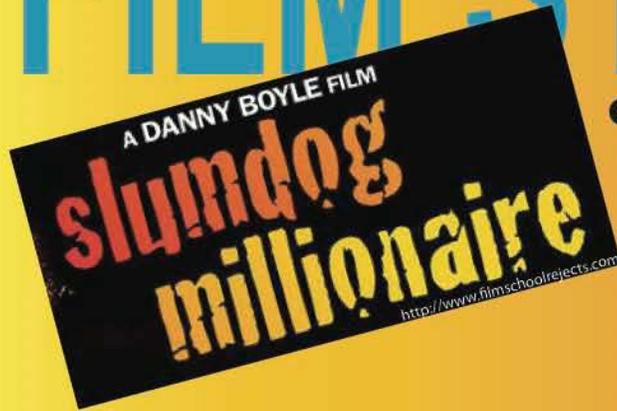
- filmeducation.org – a UK-based website that promotes and supports the use of film within the curriculum.
- mediasmarts.ca – a Canadian organization that promotes digital and media literacy.
- racebending.com – an International grassroots organization of media consumers that analyzes popular media and advocates for underrepresented groups in the entertainment industry.

References

- Avatar: The Last Airbender (2013). In *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved on Jul 25, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Avatar:_The_Last_Airbender.
- Avatar: The Last Airbender (2013). In *Common Sense Media*. Retrieved on July 25, 2013, from <http://www.common Sense Media.org/tv-reviews/avatar-the-last-airbender>.
- Chaney, J. (2010). Talking with director M. Night Shyamalan about *the Last Airbender*. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://voices.washingtonpost.com/celebrityology/2010/07/talking_with_director_m_night.html
- Last Airbender, The (2010). In *Common Sense Media*. Retrieved from <http://www.common Sense Media.org/movie-reviews/the-last-airbender>.
- Last Airbender, The (2010). In *Internet Movie Database*. Retrieved from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0938283>.
- Last Airbender, The (2013). In *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved on Jul 25, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Last_Airbender.
- Lee, M. (2010). Depictions of gender and ethnicity in *The Last Airbender*. Retrieved from <http://www.racebending.com/v4/campaigns/airbender/depictions-of-gender-and-ethnicity-in-the-last-airbender>.
- Lopez, L. K. (2012). Fan activists and the politics of race in *The Last Airbender*. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 15(5): 431-445. Retrieved from <http://ics.sagepub.com/content/15/5/431>.
- McMillan, G. (2008). Avatar casting makes fans see ... white. *io9*. Retrieved from <http://io9.com/5111680/avatar-casting-makes-fans-see-white>.
- Poyton, M (2010). *The Last Airbender Study Notes*. *Film Education*. Retrieved from http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/The_Last_Airbender.pdf.

FILM STUDIES 11

exploration & analysis of



This study guide will address several themes in the movie and challenge students to explore a variety of aspects related to film and production.

about slumdog millionaire

A British film made in 2008, and directed by Danny Boyle, Slumdog Millionaire is an adaptation of the novel Q&A which was published in 2005 and written by the Indian author and diplomat Vikas Swarup. The film won eight Academy Awards for 2008 including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Adapted Screenplay. The setting is Mumbai, India. Although the film has received great praise it also has received criticism because of its depiction of India. Some claim it reinforces the divide between India and the West.

learning outcomes

It is expected students will:

- identify artistic components and describe how they affect meaning
- apply artistic components to develop individual style in film and television works
- demonstrate an acceptance of how they look on camera
- evaluate their work and the work of others
- use appropriate vocabulary when discussing or producing film and television works

themes within the movie

Role of the Hero

Child Poverty

Rights of the Child

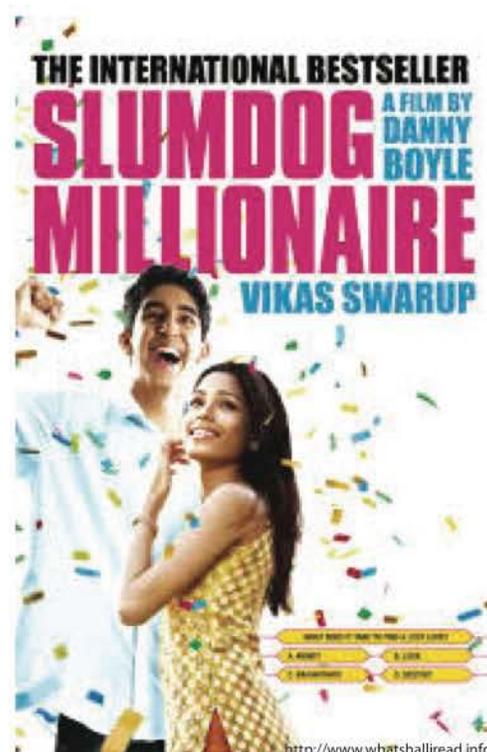
Inequality

Love

Oppression

Power

Imbalances



POVERTY

question: Child poverty is a huge problem not only in India but all over the world. Here in BC one of every seven children is living in poverty and two-thirds of them live in Metro Vancouver. (<http://tacklingchildpoverty.eventbrite.ca/>) Working in groups answer the question, 'What are some of the differences and similarities between the children in the movie and the children in BC?' Draw a Venn diagram to illustrate your thoughts.

question:

In the Movie Slumdog Millionaire there are several scenes where the children are participating in activities that are generally considered wrong. ie. stealing, trespassing, manipulating. Do you think that it is OK for people to steal because of their particular situation? Can you think of a scenario where this has happened in your community? What reasons lead people to steal?



wexler495esm.blogspot.com

Produce your own question for Jamal that takes place while he is playing Who Wants to be a Millionaire. You will create a script of a flashback to show how a key event from Jamal's life enabled him to answer that particular question. When creating your flashback topic you are to address at least one of the following themes: child poverty, the role of the female, or the rights of the child

After reviewing several examples of scripts (provided by teacher) from various movies and T.V. shows you will create your own scene framed by the context of Slumdog Millionaire. Remember pay attention to the type of vocabulary used in the scripts ie. do you remember what VO means? For help with words commonly used in film refer to: <http://litmuse.net/resources/study-guide/film-vocabulary> or <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/syllabi/w/weisenfeld/rel160/flmterm.html> Remember to use proper terms in your piece. When producing your script be aware of using components such as framing and the emotion that should be portrayed ie. tell the reader if the character is scared or if there is a POV camera shot explain details of each particular scene and use components & terminology such as VO.

Activity: Produce a Script & Storyboard

After the class will view each piece and discuss the artist's choices, components and how these portray a your own style.

When creating your storyboard:

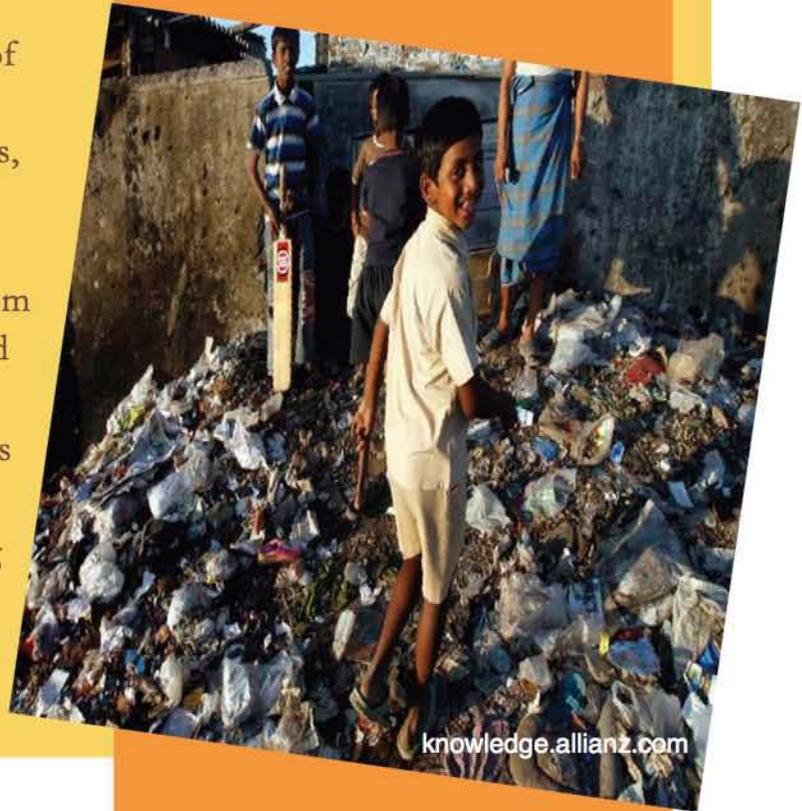
You will be asked to

- Provide constructive feedback to one another
- Offer logical reasons for the choices you have made about artistic components
- Draw conclusions about how the artists' components work together to create a style
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in your own work
- Consider how the changes in the artistic components affect the meaning and impact

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Key Concepts:

- understand concepts and terminology of social justice, including discrimination, diversity, equality, empowerment, ethics, human rights, oppression, prejudice, stereotype
- how we learn ethics and values, and from whom/what; analysis of own values and beliefs
- diverse perspectives; how belief systems affect perspectives and decisions
- critical thinking skills, ethical reasoning skills
- personal definition of social justice



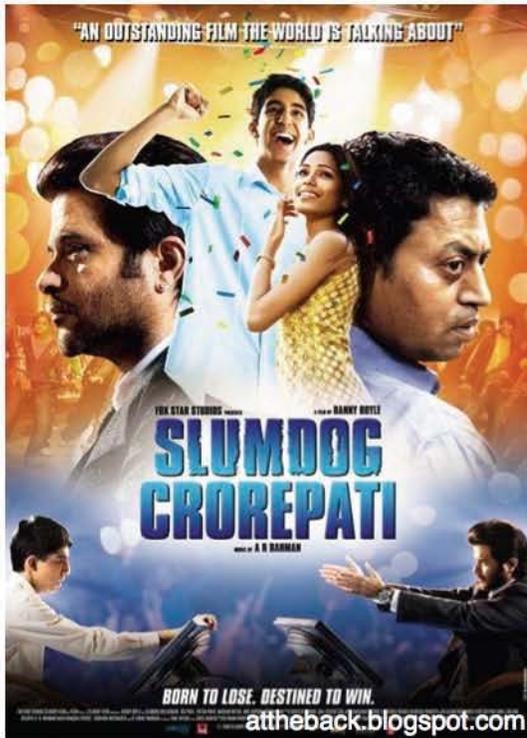
question:

Jamal and his brother Salim can be considered heroes. What are the differences in the way their character approaches this role in the movie?

activity:

Using a graphic organizer (t-chart, venn diagram, other), examine the similarities and differences between this love story and another of your choice. Consider the implied fairy tale that is occurring in Slumdog Millionaire – hero/heroine, obstacles and challenges, climax, ending (happily ever after).





additional sources for further study:

<http://bcpovertyreduction.ca/justice-not-charity-student-teacher-resources/>



<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncd-jne/guide-acti-eng.php>

<http://www.agkino.de/britfilms/6/archiv/StudyGuide-SlumdogMillionaire.pdf>

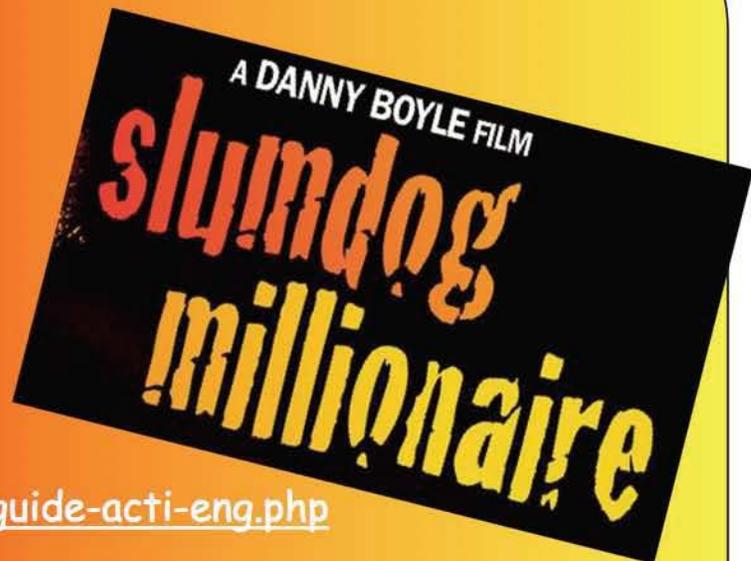
Activity:

in small groups, re-enact and video tape a scene from the movie as to how it might look if a similar scenario occurred on the streets of Vancouver or other large Canadian city



Activity:

using some form of media, create a public service announcement focussing on poverty or one of the key social issue concepts (commercial, video, etc.)



AI WEIWEI
NEVER SORRY



Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry

Study Guide

Sheena Abboud and Simon Forst

University of British Columbia

ETEC 531-66B

Dr. Franc Feng

July 31, 2013



Introduction

“The world is not changing if you don’t shoulder the burden of responsibility.” Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei is a Chinese artist and social activist. He is widely regarded as China’s most famous international artist and most vocal government critic. Ai uses his art, social media such as Twitter, and video documentaries such as *Never Sorry* to criticize the Chinese Government’s human rights and anti-democracy ideologies. (Never Sorry LLC, n.d.)

Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry is a documentary by American freelance journalist and documentary filmmaker Alison Klayman. Klayman has produced TV and radio stories for PBS, the New York Times, and National Public Radio (NPR). Klayman

moved to China in 2006 and worked on various projects before meeting Ai in 2008. She produced a short video for one of his photography exhibitions and was then given unprecedented access to Ai Weiwei for the next three years. Klayman was able to follow Ai as he installed major art exhibitions in Haus der Kunst in Munich and the Tate Modern in London, investigated the Chinese Government’s cover up of the Sichuan Earthquake tragedy, and had various run-ins with Chinese police, including being beaten, having his studio demolished and finally being arrested and secretly detained for over two months. (About, n.d.)



Learning Outcomes:

Social Justice:

Identify the fundamental principles of democracy

Apply critical thinking skills to social justice issues, situations, and topics

Use an ethical perspective to analyze social justice issues

Understand how belief systems affect perspectives in relation to social justice issues

Analyze the causes of social injustice

Discuss the consequences of social injustice

Fine Arts:

Identify how context influences the content and form of various art forms

Understand how artists create meaning and effect in 2-D and 3-D media

How evolving technologies effect production and distribution of images

Pre-Viewing



Pre-Viewing Questions:

How is the Chinese system of government different from the Canadian system?

What forces can suppress or take away the rights of humans?

What human rights do you feel are sometimes suppressed in our country?

What is a dissident?

Why are human rights groups concerned about the arresting of dissidents?

What might be considered "anti-Government behaviour" in Canada?

What human rights, if any, do you feel are being jeopardized in Canada?

View the film trailer here:





Post-Viewing Discussion Questions:

What do you think about the scale of Ai Weiwei's art? Would it have a different impact if his pieces were smaller?

What is Ai Weiwei trying to symbolize by destroying a Neolithic Vase?

Why did the Chinese Government allow him to do so much before arresting him?

What's the difference between what Ai Weiwei does and Liu Xiaobo, who has been sentenced to eleven years in prison?

Is social media the key to democracy? Why or why not?

Why would the government hide how many students died in the Sichuan earthquake?

Why is it important for Ai to file a lawsuit against his beating, when he knows nothing will happen?

What do his sunflower seeds symbolize?

Why was his Shanghai studio destroyed?

What do you think happened to Ai while he was incarcerated, and why was he let out?

Throughout the film, Ai is often referred to as "Teacher Ai". Why do you think some had chosen this title for him?

Explain Ai's quote "I think being powerful means being fragile".



+ Post-Viewing Activity

Have each student put their names on a piece of paper and spend 2-3 minutes writing down what they think about the Canadian Government. Tell them that they will be asked to share this with the class. Give an example, such as *"I think the Government is..."*

When they are finished, ask a few students to read out what is written on his/her piece of paper. Ask the rest of the class what they think about what the person has said.

Show the students the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html) (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>) with a focus on Section 2(b) and explain that they have just exercised their Right to Freedom of expression. If there is time, discuss what other areas of the Charter relate to Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry. Then show them [the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights](http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/) (<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>) and compare how Canada's Charter agrees with Article 19.

On a second piece of paper, have the students spend 2-3 minutes writing down something that they would like to change about the Canadian Government. Give an example, such as *'I would change the way the government runs the country by...'*

Again, have 3-4 to read aloud what they have written. Write these students' names on the board. When they are finished, announce that if the students listed on the board lived in a country that restricted freedom of expression, such as China, they could have gone to jail for what they had just said.

- Discussion: Have students work in pairs and list ways in which freedom of expression can be exercised. Write these all up on the board.

At Supplemental Activities

Use the following activities to further elaborate upon themes covered in the film. Use the following resources to support each activity.

1) Self-Expression through Social Media

[China's censorship can never defeat the Internet by Ai Weiwei](#)

(<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2012/apr/16/china-censorship-internet-freedom>)

2) Artist Study

[Photo slideshow of Ai's work](#)

3) Hollywood in China

[Iron Man 3 China Trailer](#)

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-tSmEE8d18>)

[Iron Man 3 Trailer](#)

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ke1Y3P9D0Bc>)

Article: [Iron Man 3 is latest Hollywood movie to court Chinese censors](#)

Article: [Iron Man 3 smashes opening box office record in China](#)

Article: ["When Night Falls" and "Django Unchained": Movie censorship in China](#)

Article: [Lights! Camera! Censorship! Hollywood fed up with Chinese "brick wall"](#)

Self-Expression through Social Media



Illustration: Andrzej Krauze

In his article, *China's censorship can never defeat the Internet*, Ai Weiwei discusses the role of the Internet –mainly social media –on facilitating the freedom of creativity and self-expression for the people of China.

- 1) Research and explain one other example where citizens used social media to speak out against an oppressive government.
- 2) Examine the accompanying illustration to the article (above); explain how this illustration supports the message of Ai Weiwei's article.
- 3) It's your turn to speak out against an action made by your government. Write your own manifesto explaining what you disagree with and why. Explain your plan of action, including which media outlets you would use, to spread your message and take action.

“And if the Internet is uncontrollable, freedom will win.”

– Ai Weiwei



Artist Study: Ai Weiwei

Explain which one of the three works below stands out to you and why.



(above) "Ai's "Remembering" at the Haus der Kunst ahead of the exhibition "So Sorry," on Oct. 8, 2009, in Munich. "Remembering" is a memorial to the victims of the devastating May 2008 quake in Sichuan province that killed 5,300 children. It is composed of 9,000 backpacks in five colors that write out a sentence in Chinese told to the artist by a mother of one of the quake victims: "For seven years she lived happily on this Earth." (Flanagan, p.18)

(above) "Ai Weiwei, shown here on June 30, 2009 in China, was arrested while boarding a flight from Beijing to Hong Kong on April 4, 2011, as part of a crackdown to suppress a feared uprising in China. As activists moved for a Jasmine Revolution, inspired by the protests and regime changes in the Middle East, the communist nation has begun to arrest writers, activists, bloggers and other dissidents." (Flanagan, p.6)

(right) "Ai poses amid his work "Rooted Upon," which is made of 100 pieces of trees, at the "Haus der Kunst" (House of Art) during the presentation "So Sorry" on October 9, 2009 in Munich." (Flanagan, p.14)



Hollywood in China

In order to appease censorship regulations in China, Hollywood films have been released with alternate versions of big name titles. Most recently, Iron Man 3 added bonus footage to include Chinese content. Watch the trailers below and see if you can pinpoint the changes. Why do you



UK and North American Trailer



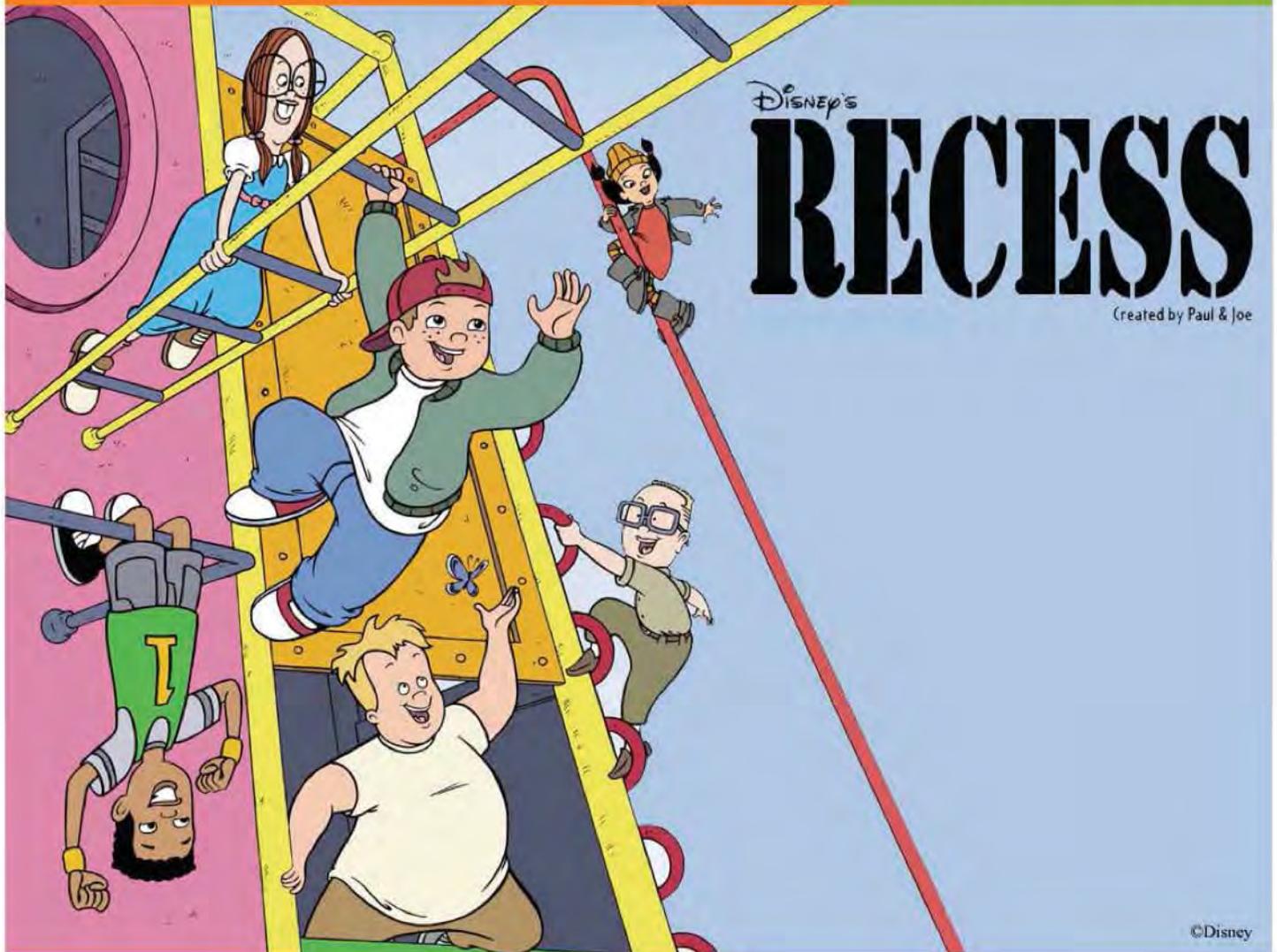
International China Trailer





References

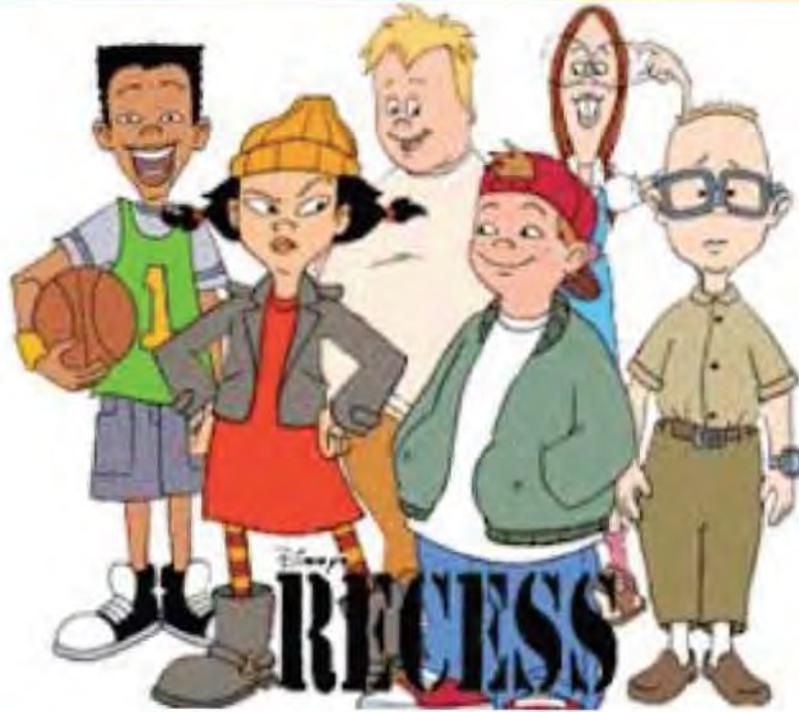
- Ai Weiwei. (2012, April 16). *China's censorship can never defeat the Internet*. The Guardian. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2012/apr/16/china-censorship-internet-freedom>
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2002). *Visual Arts 11 and 12: Art Foundations; Studio Arts*. Retrieved from http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/pdfs/arts_education/2002visualarts1112_artfoundstudioarts.pdf
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2008). *Social Justice 12*. Retrieved from http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/pdfs/social_studies/2008socialjustice12.pdf
- Flanagan, E. (2013, May 22). *Artist Ai Weiwei answers to 81 days in China prison: Profanity-laced heavy metal (Slideshow: Artist Strikes a Nerve)*. Behind the Wall. NBC News. Retrieved from http://behindthewall.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/05/22/18417855-artist-ai-weiweis-answer-to-81-days-in-china-prison-profanity-laced-heavy-metal?lite
- Human Rights Watch. (2011). *Right Words 11: Freedom of Expression Lesson Plan*. Retrieved from http://www.rightwords.org.uk/files/Lesson_plan_Right_words_11.pdf
- Never Sorry LLC. (n.d.). *About the Film*. Retrieved from <http://aiweiweineversorry.com/index.html>
- About. (n.d.). In Alison Klayman: Freelance Journalist and Documentary Filmmaker. Retrieved from <http://alisonklayman.com/about.php>



“It’s well characterized comedy of playground manners and teasing social awareness rings”
-WH ‘Time Out’

INTRODUCTION

The Walt Disney animated series *Recess* from the co-creators of *Rugrats* ran on Saturday mornings from 1997 to 2001. The show follows the lives and adventures of six fourth graders as they discover the social norms of primary school culture and protect each other from potential enemies including teachers, their peers and older students. The story takes place at Third Street School and the events largely mimic real life scenarios in both school culture and adult society.



And if you ever
tell a teacher on
me again, I'll hit
you so hard your
clothes'll hurt!

-Gelman

Curricular Focus

This study guide has been written to complement the educational nature of the series *Recess* and is intended for a primary audience. It provides information and instructional suggestions that compliment the Healthy Relationships section of the BC IRPs for grade three students. The focus will be two fold the first activity will deal with issues related to understanding and embracing individuality, while the second activity focuses on ways to prevent and deal with bullying. Additional suggested activities have been created to explore ways that create and promote a welcoming and inclusive classroom for all students and staff members.

Disney's *Recess* cartoon series deals with many playground issues one particular episode will be the main focus of this media study "Gus' Last Stand". In this episode, the school bully named Gellman has set his eyes on Gus as his main target for his tormenting as his last victim had moved away. Whenever Gus is alone Gellman throws him into a trash can. After getting some advice from his father, Gus decides to stand up to the bully, Gellman. Although his attempt to stand up for himself fails, T.J. decides to stand up for his friend and is quickly backed by the rest of the school, which finally provides Gus with some solace as Gellman gets scared and runs away.



I don't have
one best
friend... I
have five!

-Theodore J. 'T.J.'
Detweiler

Learning Outcomes and Goals

Recess is a television series for children which can be used to teach many concepts outlined in the *British Columbia Integrated Resource Package* (BC IRPs) however this media study guide will focus on teaching strategies to deal with bullying. Some examples of the outcomes from the Healthy Relationships section of the Health and Career section that will be covered are:

C4 - describe skills for building and maintaining positive relationships (e.g., communication skills, interpersonal skills)

C5 - describe the nature and consequences of various forms of bullying behaviour, including the potential effects on those who are bullied and the potential consequences for students who bully

Learning Objectives

1. Students will define actions that are characterized as bullying behaviour.
2. Students will discuss the implications of bullying.
3. Students will gain an understanding of the type of classroom and playground environments that make them and other children feel welcome at school.

Focus Questions

Pre-viewing Questions

The objective of these guiding questions is for students to realize that a student body, and more specifically friend and play groups, are composed of people that have some things in common, such as a like of similar games and activities, but also friends and playmates differ in many ways. Each one of your peers and friends has special strengths and traits that make a unique individual. No two people are exactly alike, that's what makes our school, community, and world so interesting to live and learn in.



1

What are some of your favourite things about recess time and why?

2

Who do you play with during recess?
Is it the same people everyday?

3

What are some things you have in common with your friends?

4

What are some differences?



Post-viewing Questions

These questions can help bring students to the understanding that it is a normal for problems to arise and people to feel hurt. Have students recognize the need for guidelines to help everyone feel included and resolve issues that happen at recess, as well as in the classroom.

1

Does every student think recess time is fun?
In the episode, how did Gus, the boy being bullied, feel?

2

What words come to mind when I say the word
bully or bullying?

3

Think of a time when you helped out someone who was feeling
down. How did you cheer them up and make them feel better?

4

*What are some important rules that can help everyone feel
welcome and safe at our school?*

5

What are some ways we can share our ideas about bullying, and
more importantly ways to stop it?

Learning Activities

Activity #1: WHAT IS BULLYING?

As a class, have students re-visit the topic of bullying presented in the Recess episode, as well as real life examples they may have experienced or witnessed.

In partners, have students brainstorm words that come to mind when the teacher says the word bully or bullying? Come together as a whole class and create a word collage expressing the feelings and emotions surround the concept of bullying.



To contrast, have student think about how it feels when everyone feels welcome and safe at school. Create another word collage representing an “everyone welcome” school philosophy.

<p>sadness BULLYING hurt unwelcome mean afraid tears</p>	<p>smile laugh friends family EVERYONE WELCOME supportive playsafe happytogether fun</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



“Knowing what’s right doesn’t mean much, unless you do what’s right”

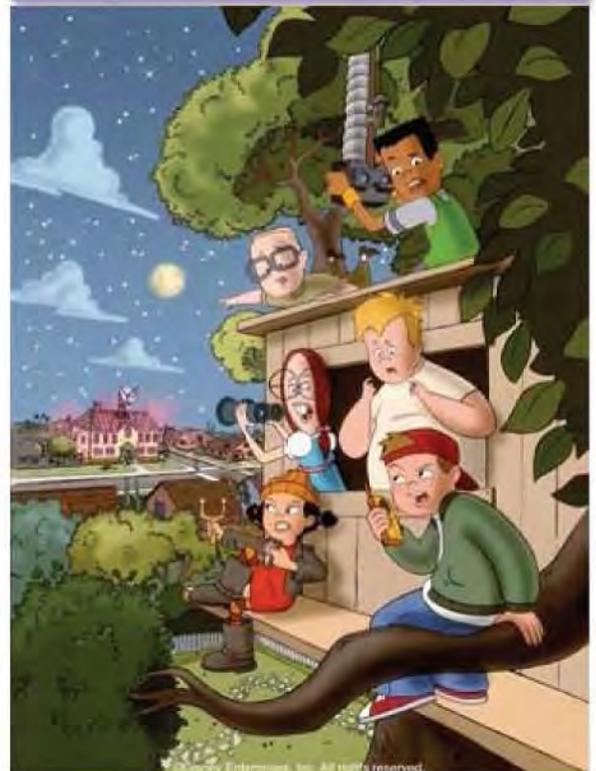
- Theodore Roosevelt

Learning Activities

Activity #2: EVERYONE WELCOME

Students will collectively develop a list of guidelines of how to make their classroom and playground a safe place for learning and fun.

Students will use a variety of mediums, including digital photography, text collage, audio recordings and presentation design, to produce a communally media production to share their message with the school.



Extensions

To further explore and discover students' individuality, a '30 Day Photo Challenge' that focuses on gratitude will help students to see what makes them both the same and special in their own ways.

Further Reading

Alexander and the Terrible

Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

By: Judith Viorst

Bullies Never Win

By: Margery Cuyler

Dexter the Tough

By: Margaret Peterson Haddix

King of the Playground

By: Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Further Viewing

Hannah Montana: School Bully

Malcolm in the Middle: The Bully

The Teaching Channel: Bullying at School



Day 1: Favorite Food

Day 2: Smile

Day 3: Happiness

Day 4: Leaves

Day 5: Morning Sky

Day 6: Books

Day 7: Something Funny

Day 8: Favorite Color

Day 9: Inspiring Person

Day 10: Nature

Day 11: Something Old

Day 12: Hands

Day 13: Written Words

Day 14: Movement

Day 15: Technology

Day 16: Animals

Day 17: Memories

Day 18: Something New

Day 19: Best Friend

Day 20: Seasonal

Day 21: Where You Sleep

Day 22: Clothing

Day 23: In Your Closet

Day 24: Gratitude

Day 25: Artwork

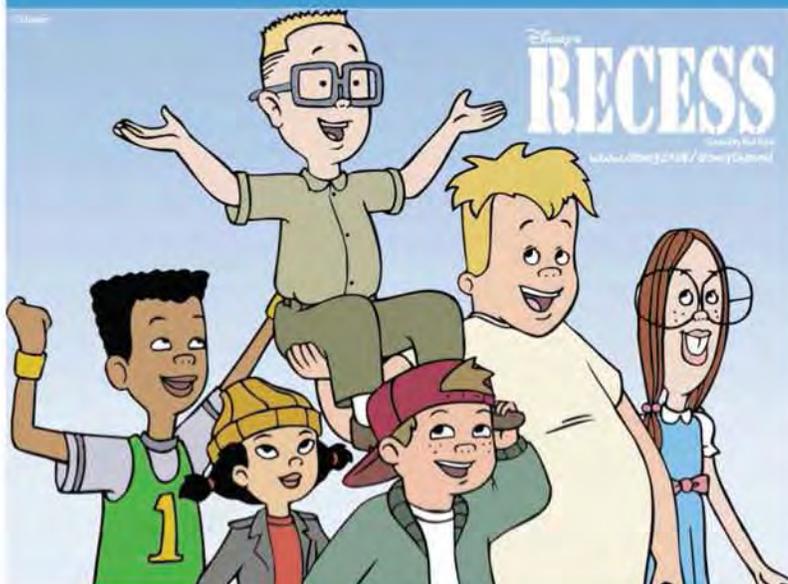
Day 26: Transportation

Day 27: Daily Routine

Day 28: Nighttime

Day 29: Light

Day 30: Self Portrait

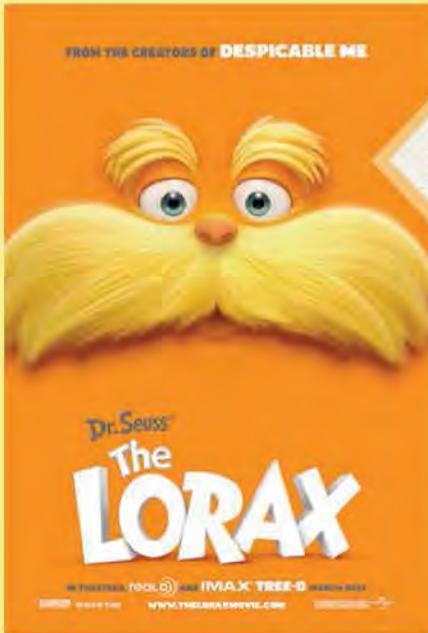


References

Ansolabehere, J. & Germain, P.(1997 - 2001). Recess . Hollywood: American Broadcasting Company, UPN, Disney Channel, Toon Disney.

The Internet Movie Database (IMB), Recess (2001) Retrieved from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0126170/>

DR. SEUSS' THE LORAX



Read the quotes taken from the movie and discuss in your groups the message the director is trying to portray.



"A tree falls the way it leans. Be careful which way you lean."

Dr. Seuss - The Lorax

The learner should critically analyze the environmental issues and the bias that is presented in the film. In addition, consider the controversy the marketing of this film established creating a mixed messages for the consumer.

Dr. Seuss' The Lorax was released in March 2012 as a computer-animated 3D musical fantasy comedy film taken from the Dr. Seuss' children's book of the same name. Directors of the film were Chris Renaud, and Kyle

Balda. The music was composed by John Powell and screenplay Cinco Paul and Ken Daurio. The film is a fictional story that idealizes the danger that corporate greed poses to nature. In the film the Lorax character is personified as the

environment and the Once-ler character giving life to corporate industry. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lorax_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lorax_(film))

The Cast



TED - ZACK EFRON



ONC-LER - ED HELMS



THE LORAX - DANNY DIVITO



GRAMMA NORMA - BETTY WHITE



AUDREY - TAYLOR SWIFT



LEARNING OUTCOMES

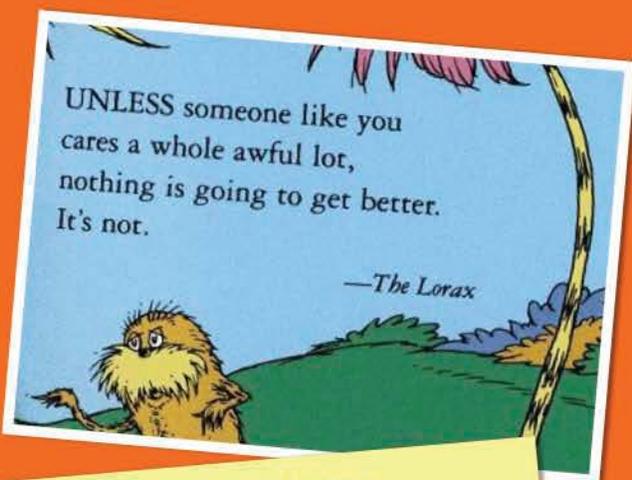
Upon completing this study guide and watching the film the student will be able to:

- Critically analyze various forms of media as a learning median
- Apply key themes of environmental issues and bias influence
- Work in small groups to discuss, evaluate and provide varying perspectives on current and future environmental issues
- Reflect on how the use of media technology depicts societal issues



"Catch! calls the Once-ler. He lets something fall.
It's a Truffula Seed. It's the last one of all!
You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.
And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.
Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.
Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back."

Dr. Suess - The Lorax



The Lorax "Let it Grow" theme song

Listen to the theme song on the link of page 5 and discuss how the lyrics of the music impact the director's message in the film.

Sources for Further Study:

<http://news.moviefone.ca/2012/03/02/the-lorax-movie-environmental-message/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lorax

<http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/The%20Lorax.pdf>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_issues_in_Canada

Other movies to view that feature environmental issues.

Avatar
Hoot

Happy Feet Two
Over the Edge
An Inconvenient Truth

E - Wall

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT



What was the land of the Lorax like before the Once-ler arrived? Did it seem like someplace you'd like to live? What parts of your own environment would you be sad to see go?

What kind of person is the Once-ler? Why won't he listen to the Lorax? The Lorax says to the Once-ler, "You are crazy with greed." Why does the Lorax say that? Do you agree or disagree?

Why does the Lorax speak for the trees? Why is it important to speak up for others? Have you ever spoken up for someone else? Has someone else ever spoken up for you?



What do you think the boy hearing the story will do with the Truffula seed that the Once-ler tosses to him? What would you do if you were the boy?

How does the Once-ler feel about what his Thneed business did to the Lorax and friends?

Why is *The Lorax* called a cautionary tale?

taken from http://www.seussville.com/Educators/lorax_classroom/educatorlorax_discuss.php

Video Assignment

The movie *The Lorax* is often seen as being biased. In a group of four create your own short video, 4-5 minutes long, that retells the story in an unbiased way. When you submit your video please include a short write up explaining your choices and the reasons behind them. This should be about one to two paragraphs for each 1 minute of video.



I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees for the trees have no tongues.

Things to think about:

- Make sure all of the important characters are included. If they are not make sure that your write up explains why.
- All group members should have a speaking part.
- Costumes and setting are important! (Bonus marks for great costumes)
- Feel free to use any mix of media you wish, you can create the whole video using animation or live action if you like!

The Medium is the Message

The medium is the message is an idea put forth by Marshall McLuhan. Simply put it means that the medium used to convey an idea is intimately tied to that idea. It affects how the viewer receives the information. For example if someone chose to send a message to you via skywriting, you would bring all of your preconceived ideas about skywriting to the interpretation of the message.

As a class create some brainstorms

What ideas about cartoons do you have?
What are they used for?
How do you view them?
What ideas about colours do you have?
The Lorax is full of bright colours.
How does this affect you?
Music is a large part of our lives.
How does the soundtrack make you feel?
Is this deliberate?



1. "Let It Grow (Celebrate the World)"
2. "Thneedville"
3. "This is the Place"
4. "Everybody Needs a Thneed"
5. "How Bad Can I Be?"
6. "Let it Grow"
7. "Let It Grow Gospel Ending"
8. "Thneedville"
9. "The Once-ler's Traveling Madness"
10. "I Love Nature"
11. "You Need a Thneed"
12. "Nobody Needs a Thneed"
13. "Biggering"

The Environment

There is no doubt that The Lorax has a strong environmental message.

In this modern media age the tie-in is an important (to the producers any ways) part of a movie. The Lorax had many tie-ins. Some of these were environmentally friendly, some not.

Are these tie-ins explicit? Why or why not?

Are you affected by these tie-ins? Do they make you want to buy the products?

Can you think of product tie-ins that fit with the message of The Lorax? Create a list.

Do you think that a cartoon was the best way to get this message across?

THE SOUNDTRACK IS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/album/dr.-seuss-lorax-original-songs/id509519540>



Soundtracks

Soundtracks are very important parts to films. They become linked with our memories of the film and our interpretation of it. They are used to add more information and emotion to scenes.

Create your own soundtrack for The Lorax. The original soundtrack has 13 songs, your soundtrack should have at least 13 as well.

Write out your soundtrack, include the name of the song and the artist. Make sure the song is school appropriate please.

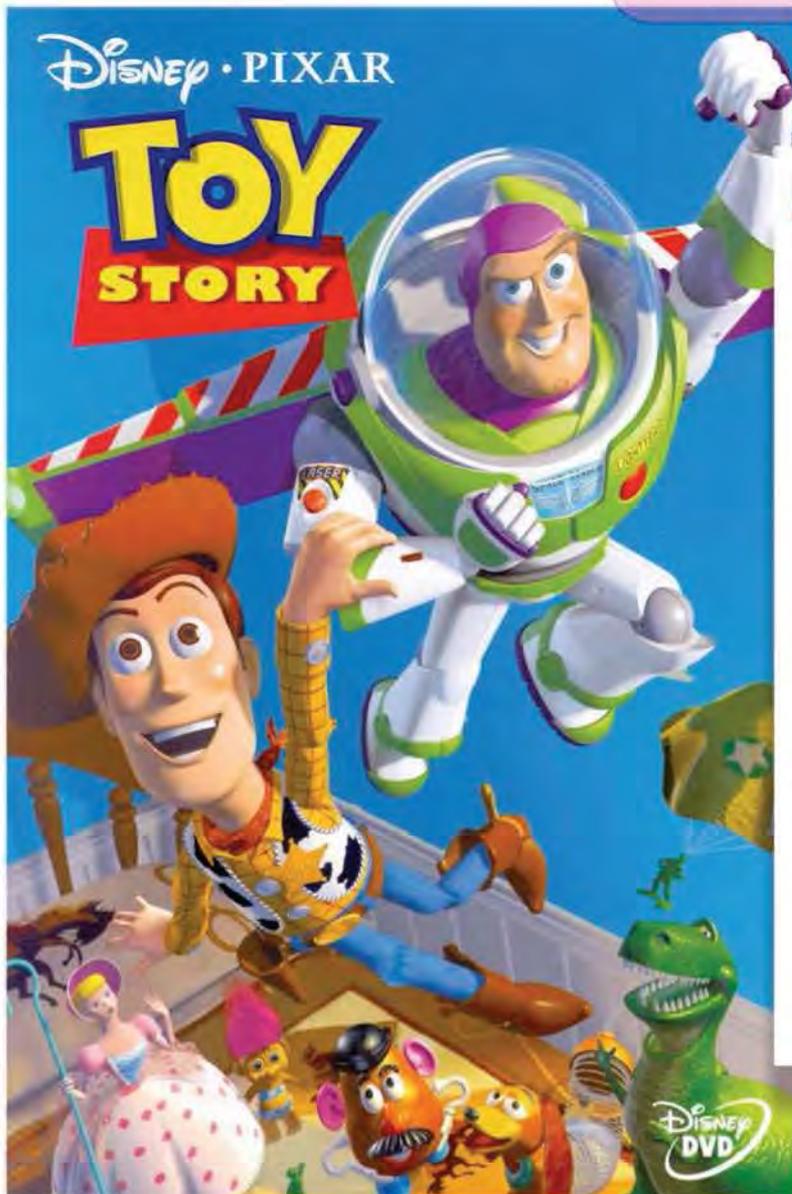
For each song write a short paragraph explaining why you chose this song and what part of the movie it goes with.

ETEC 531 Media Study Guide

by

Sabrina Quigley
Tyler Sherwood

Gender Stereotyping in Children's Film



A focus on the gender stereotypes in the children's film Toy Story and a look at how children view themselves, and others, in regards to commonly promoted gender roles in the media. This media guide is suitable for use with younger primary aged children.

A. Introduction

In 1995, Walt Disney Pictures released *Toy Story*, the very first feature-length computer animated film. Produced by Pixar Animation Studios, it is the first of three films based on the adventures and relationships between a group of toys who pretend to be lifeless whenever humans are present. The film primarily focuses on the relationship between Woody, a pull string cowboy, and Buzz Lightyear, an astronaut action figure.

This media guide will focus on the gender stereotyping that is evident throughout the film and the impact that such media has on how students view themselves and others in regards to commonly promoted gender roles in the media. This media guide will be suitable for use in primary classrooms in conjunction with teacher guidance, class discussions and activities to explore and examine common stereotypes that students are familiar with and urge students to examine gender stereotypes found in the media and the world around them.

B. Key Concepts

There are two main characters in the film, with a number of supporting characters. Both of the main characters are male with female characters only being seen periodically and in supporting roles.

B. Key Concepts (Cont'd)

Woody is the main character of the movie and the most beloved of all of the toys in Andy's room (Andy being the human boy who owns the toys). He is a pull string cowboy (classic all-American strong male character/hero) and is seen as the leader of the rest of the toys because he receives more playtime than all of the other toys the room. At the beginning of the movie, he has the respect of all the toys and the love of Bo Peep. He becomes very threatened by Andy's new toy, Buzz Lightyear, (who receives much attention from Andy) and displays jealousy and low self esteem when his position of power is in jeopardy. Woody is a tall, skinny character, with his floppy movements focussing on his somewhat silly and old-fashioned (cowboy) personality.

Buzz Lightyear is a space commander (another classic all-American strong male character/hero) who wears a space suit, a helmet, has retractable wings and various sound effects. He displays very strong and masculine characteristics, walking straight and tall and has a large build. He is physically impressive and quite flashy. He quickly gains the interest of the other toys in Andy's room, including the romantic interest of Bo Peep.

Bo Peep is the only female main character (and one of the only female toys in the film). Bo Peep is dressed as a young shepherdess and is used as a sex symbol to increase the tension between Woody and Buzz. The obvious stereotype of the strong, muscular man getting the girls over the skinny, awkward boy is illustrated when Buzz arrives and immediately gains the attention of Bo Peep. Throughout the conflicts in the film, Bo Peep remains on the outside, allowing the male figures to solve the problems that arise.

B. Key Concepts

The other toys make up the **supporting characters** in the film. Though they do not illustrate specific gender stereotypes, they do represent fairly specific stereotypes that are not necessarily gender-specific. It is important to note that all of the supporting cast are male characters. Mr. Potato Head and Hamm (piggy bank) are both short, round characters and they make up the stereotypical comedic element, based on their appearance. Slinky the Dog is Woody's best friend and he is given a calm, southern accent while Rex (dinosaur) suffers from low self-esteem (short, useless arms, clumsy given his large size) and hides given any opportunity if there is conflict.

For a more detailed description of the toys in Toy Story, please go to the following links:

[Link One](#)

[Link Two](#)

C. Content Images

The below images are of the main characters in the film. The images are in large format so that teachers can show them on a projector for illustration purposes in the classroom. Images could also be copied and printed for student use in activities.

Woody, the main character.



(image taken from www.empireonline.com)

Buzz Lightyear



(image taken from mobile-wallpapers.feedio.net)

Bo Peep



(image taken from pixar.wikia.com)

C. Content Images

Toy Store Image



Image of a typical toy store with the girls' section containing stereotypical 'girl' colours and the boys section (located far right) containing stereotypical 'boy' colours.

Compilation advert from a local newspaper/catalogue.

The image to the right depicts stereotypical toys and images from local advertising and catalogues. Note the colours and the genders playing with the specific toys (science kit, tools, garage, fairy tales).



D. Focus Questions

Teacher note - These focus questions should be used to stimulate a class discussion about the topic. It would not be suitable for a grade two student to work through these questions independently. This topic will require teacher guidance to draw students into the content and lead them toward inquiry and thought about gender stereotypes evident in the media. Select questions may be used as a writing response activity.

1. a) Which one of the toys from Toy Story would you choose to buy using your allowance?
b) Why would you make that choice?
c) What about the character in the movie made you want that specific toy?
d) Do you think that someone of the opposite gender (boy or girl) as you would like the toy that you picked?
e) Why or why not?

2. **Teacher note** - Show the students a picture or pictures of the inside of a typical toy store using a projector (toy advertisements work as well).

Look at the pictures of the toy store (and print advertisement) from the above images.

- a) What do you notice about the toy store (s) in the picture (s) ?
b) Which area of the toy store would you look for toys that are of interest to you?
c) What makes you more interested in some areas of the toy store than others?

D. Focus Questions

3. Imagine you are going to a party where there will be a gift exchange among children the same age as you.

a) What gift would you pick to take to the party if you knew your gift was for a girl?

Why would you make that choice?

b) What would you pick to take if you knew the gift was for a boy? Why would you make that choice?

c) What would you take if you did not know whether the gift was for a boy or a girl?

Why would you make that choice?

4. If you could add a character to the film without telling the audience whether it is a boy or a girl, what would it be?

5. Choose a character from Toy Story.

a) Do you know whether the character is a boy or a girl?

b) Would it make a difference to the story if the character was the opposite gender (boy or girl)?

c) Why or why not?

d) Would it make a difference to the story if you did not know whether the character was a boy or a girl?

e) Why or why not?

D. Focus Questions

6. Choose a toy that you have at home that you believe would make a good character in the next Toy Story movie that boys and girls would both like. Describe the toy to a partner.

E. Activities

Pretend that you work at a toy factory. You have been given the job to create a toy that all boys and girls your age will want to buy. You can work on this project by yourself or with a partner. Here are some questions to help you get started thinking about your toy:

- What will your toy look like?
- What will your toy be made of?
- What will make your toy special?
- Why will both boys and girls like your toy?
- What makes your toy different from other toys?
- Where could you buy your toy?

Once you have an idea of what kind of toy you would create, choose one of the following activities to do. When all groups are finished, we will share the advertisements with the class. We will talk about whether the advertisements made us want to buy the toy or not. We will find out whether the advertisements made both girls and boys interested in buying the toy.

E. Activities (students may choose more than one if time allows)

Print Advertisement

Use Paint or KidPix (or similar) to draw a poster to advertise the toy that you have created. The poster should make both boys and girls want to buy your toy. You may think about advertisements for toys that you have seen in magazines, newspapers or on billboards for ideas. You may choose to make the rough draft of your poster on paper and then use Paint or KidPix to create your final advertisement. Remember to save your poster while you are working on it!

Radio Advertisement

Write an advertisement for the toy that you have created that could be played on the radio to make both boys and girls want to buy your toy. Practice reading your advertisement so that you are able to read it easily. Use a microphone and Audacity (or similar) on a computer to record your radio advertisement. Remember to save your recording once you are happy with the way it sounds.

Video Advertisement

Write a video advertisement for the toy that you have created that could be played on the Internet or on a television. Remember that it should make both boys and girls want to buy your toy. Practice acting out your advertisement until you are ready to record it. Use the classroom video camera to record your advertisement.

F. Sources for Further Study

Additional resources for students to continue with follow-up activities if there is continued interest or if the unit of study continues for a longer period of time.

Picture Books with Non-Traditional Gender Themes

The Paperbag Princess by Robert Munsch. This story has a strong female role.

Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman. A story of a young girl who learns she can be anything she wants.

Little Granny Quarterback by Bill Martin. This story is about a grandmother who dreams back to when she was a college football quarterback.

Additional Films for Analysis with Evident Gender Stereotypes for Analysis

Beauty and the Beast (1991 Walt Disney)

Cinderella (1997 Walt Disney)

Aladdin (1992 Walt Disney)

Cars (2006 Pixar Studios)

G. Additional Resources

Additional information about gender stereotypes in animated film

[LINK](#)

Article on gender and stereotyping with young children

[LINK](#)

YouTube clip with young students (aged 4-5) discussing gender

[LINK](#)

CSI:

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

MEDIA STUDY GUIDE

Bruno Chu &
Jonathan Lai

INTRODUCTION

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation is a top-rated, crime-drama series which follows a team of forensic evidence investigation experts working for the Las Vegas police department. Using cutting-edge technology and methods to solve grisly murder cases, the series mixes deduction, gritty and graphic subject matter, along with character-driven drama. The program has inspired a host of other procedurals crime-solving television shows, including several spin-offs series.

A procedural drama is a genre of television programming which focuses on how crimes are solved. The protagonist(s) are usually an expert in a specific field of study, or a team from a branch of law enforcement. Each show usually has an episodic format that does not require the student to have seen previous episodes. Episodes typically have a self-contained, stand-alone plot that is introduced and resolved within the same episode. This format is often referred to as "case-of-the-week". Conversely, procedurals dramas are contrasted with serial dramas which rely more on continuing story arcs.

One of the advantages of producing procedurals is its predictable structure. Due to their stand-alone nature, they are more accessible to new students than serials. Self-contained episodes also make it easier for a regular viewer to return to the show if they have missed some episodes. In general, procedurals can usually be re-run with little concern for episode order.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This media study guide will assist students in:

1. Recognizing the procedures involved in the investigation of a crime.
2. Observing how forensic evidence is collected, handled and analyzed.
3. Formulating a reasonable hypothesis.
4. Using available evidence to support a claim.
5. Apply learned concepts by creating a unique CSI episode.

KEY CONCEPTS

Key concepts repeated throughout the series include:

- Following procedure and protocol
- Investigation and research
- Analyzing data
- Establishing evidence-based facts
- Evaluating legal or moral implications
- Identifying options and consequences
- Making and implementing the best option

PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

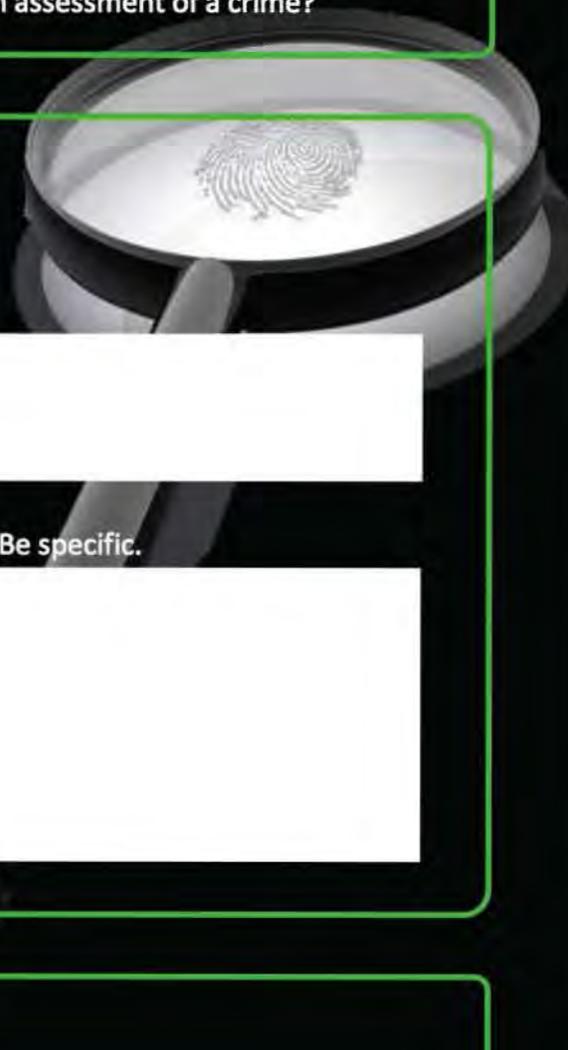
Before watching the episode of CSI, consider the following questions:

- What can you learn about a crime by examining the victim? ie. "What tales can dead men tell?"
- What kinds of clues can be gathered from a crime scene?
- Into what categories can evidence be organized? Give an example for each category.
- How are some pieces of evidence better than others?
- What factors are used to determine a person's guilt?
- What is circumstantial evidence? What role does it play in an assessment of a crime?

VIEWING QUESTIONS

While watching the episode of CSI, answer the following questions:

- What crime(s) is being investigated in the episode?



- What evidences were gathered and used to solve the crime? Be specific.

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

After watching the episode, answer the following questions:

- How important should physical evidence be to the acquittal or conviction of an accused?
- How reliable is DNA evidence?
- What factors can affect the quality DNA evidence?
- How have advances in DNA technology helped to ensure justice is being served?
- What are other types of evidence are subject to interpretation?

ACTIVITY Create Your Own CSI Episode

Instructions:

1. Find a partner or form a group (of 4 max.)
2. Select a crime. Please be creative, make sure it is appropriate to present in class. Anything obscene, graphic or excessively violent will not be allowed.
3. Have your crime approved by the instructor.
4. Complete the *Brainstorm* section to make sure your case has all the major elements.
5. Using the procedural pattern presented in CSI, write step by step how you would investigate your crime.
6. Add other interesting details to your episode:
 - Is the primary setting “on location”, “in the lab” or both?
 - What tools and equipment will you need?
 - What investigative methods will you use?
 - What additional expertise do you need?
 - Are there others on your CSI team?
7. Select a presentation method. ie poster, PowerPoint, video, etc.
8. Divide and coordinate responsibilities among your group members.
9. Select an available date on “CSI Presentation Calendar” to present in class.



BRAINSTORM

Complete the details below to help create your episode:



What is the nature of the crime?



What are the pieces of evidences related to the crime?



What methods are used to analyze the evidence?



Who are the potential suspects?



RESOURCES

The following resources will provide further information for your presentation:

- CSI Wiki
<http://www.csifanwiki.com/>
- How Crime Scene Investigation Works
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/csi.htm>
- How Stuff Works (Forensic Science page)
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/forensic-science-channel.htm?page=1>
- Forensics on Trial (transcript)
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/tech/forensics-on-trial.html>



Related television series: *CSI: Miami*, *CSI: NY*, *Bones*, *Criminal Minds*, *NCIS*, *Numb3rs*



EVALUATION

Your presentation will be evaluated on the criteria below:

	Below Expectations 1	Meets Expectations 2	Exceeds Expectations 3
Use of Evidence & Sequence	Uses less than the appropriate amount of evidence and is out of sequence	Uses an appropriate amount of evidence and in sequence	Clearly uses all evidence appropriately and is in perfect sequence.
Presentation Quality	Minimal effort with no extras to make it more interesting to the audience	Good presentation with some thought given to what the audience may find interesting	Presentation displays a high level of visual appeal; interesting and entertaining throughout
Creativity & Originality	Project topic copies something that has already been done many times before, such as a CSI episode	Project topic is something that may have been done before, but with a twist of some sort	Project topic is unique, either something from fantasy or reality that hasn't been considered before



Media Study Guide: Grades 8 - 10

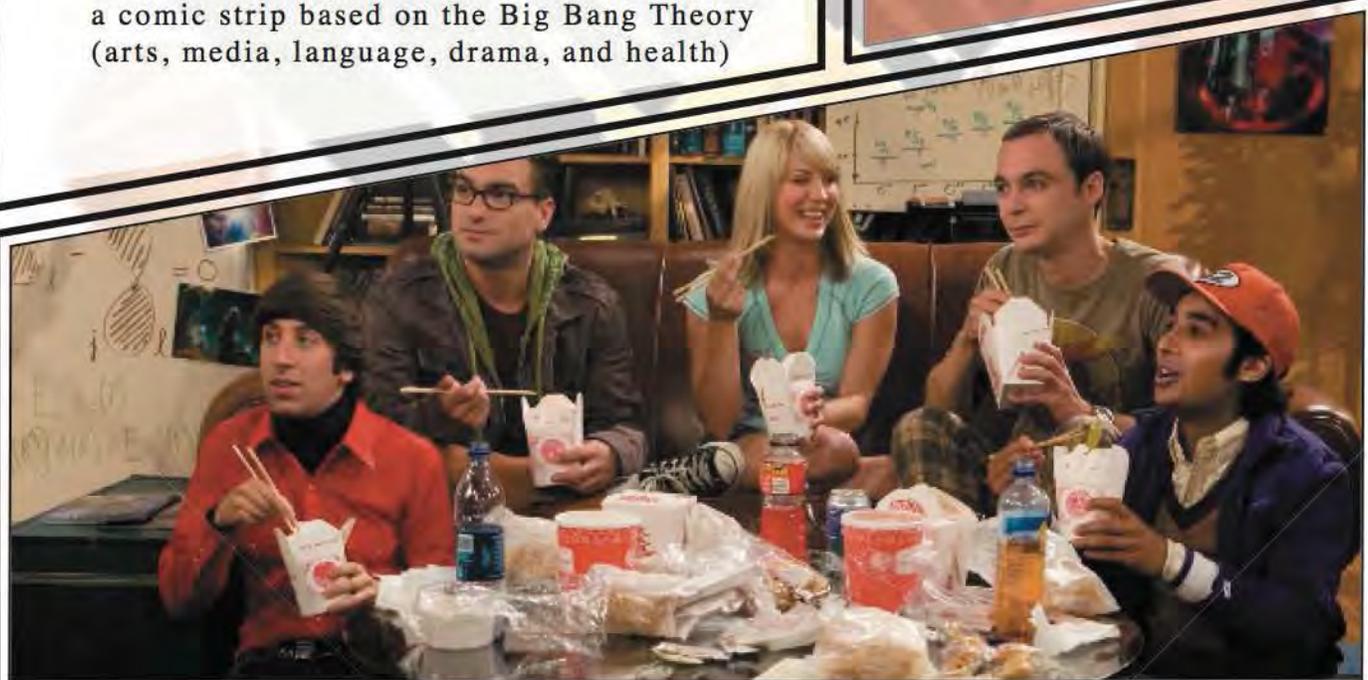
This study guide has been created so students can actively and critically engage with ideas around stereotypes (“geek culture”) and relationships.

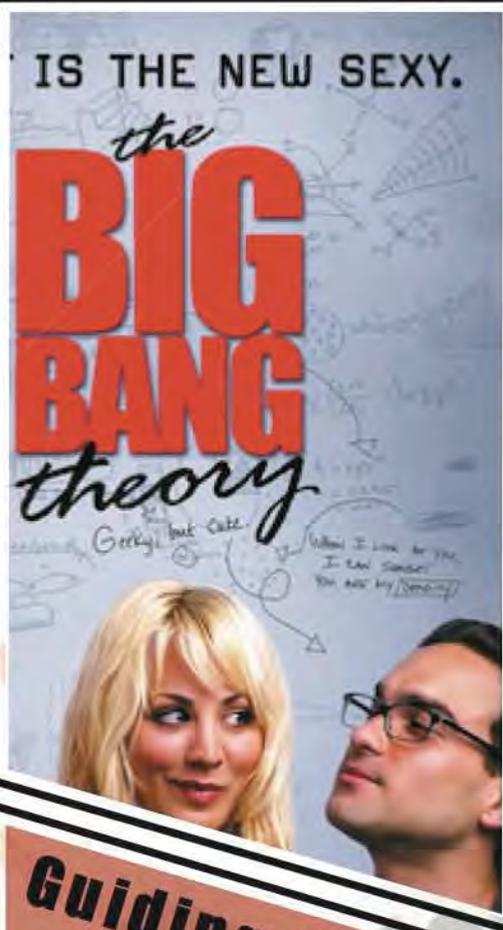
Learning Outcomes:

- ✿ Identify how the content of the Big Bang Theory reflect stereotypical characters, and how these stereotypes are challenged (media)
- ✿ Examine the different relationships on the Big Bang Theory and consider why these relationships exist the way they do (health)
- ✿ Explore how the dialogue between the characters generates relationships and personalities (drama)
- ✿ Represent ideas about characters, stereotypes and relationships through the construction of a comic strip based on the Big Bang Theory (arts, media, language, drama, and health)

Introduction:

The Big Bang Theory is a TV sitcom featuring two scientists, Sheldon and Leonard. The “geeks” share an apartment, and across the hall is a “popular” girl, Penny. The show follows the quirks and antics of Sheldon, Leonard and their other two geeky friends, Raj and Howard. All four of the men work at a university where three of them are researchers and the fourth, Howard, is an engineer. Penny is a waitress at a restaurant, and is an aspiring actress. Penny’s social skills and common sense contrast with the “geekiness” and intelligence of the four men. Despite their different social circles and careers, Leonard and Penny have dated on-and-off, much to the annoyance of Sheldon who doesn’t get along with people very well. Raj and Howard like having a pretty girl around but still behave like goof-balls around Penny. The series shows how people are more than just stereotypes, and how their relationships can affect them both positively and negatively.





Key Theme: Stereotypes

Watch the following clips and discuss the questions in small groups:

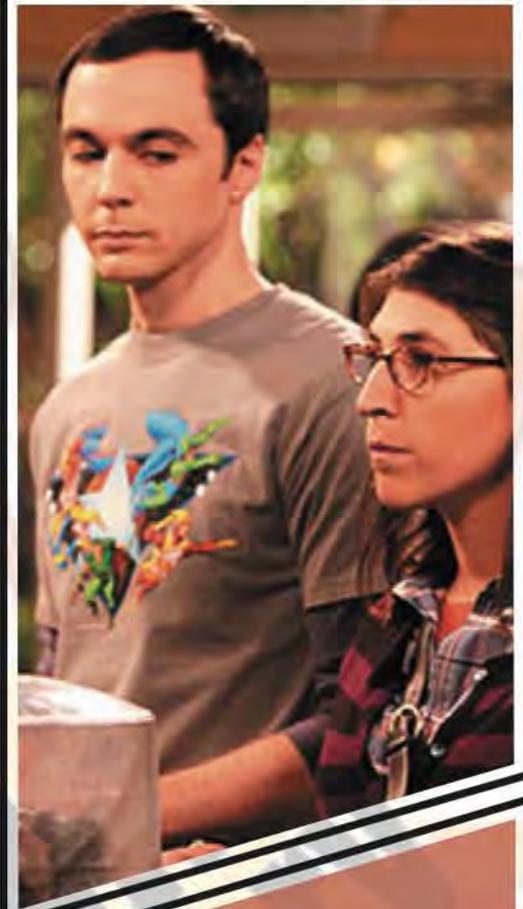
1. "Sheldon plays basketball":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUuFkJjX7UM>
2. "Comic books":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxhG2OnRfLY>
3. "Girls aren't invited":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N4820rpuJk>
4. "Girls aren't invited2":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5am_E1JkU14

Guiding Questions:

1. Stereotypes: What are they and how do they connect with your own experiences in relation to what you see on the show? Is this show changing perceptions of the stereotype "geek"? How?
2. How are the women represented? How do the men view/speak of them? If you were to summarize, how would you characterize the Male-Female relationships in terms of gender roles? What stereotypes of women are present or being challenged in these clips.
3. Why do you think this show is a success? Who watches BTT and what do you think they like about it? How do stereotypes help play in to the anti-hero persona.
4. Is Sheldon accepted in society at large, or only in his small group of friends. So long as his friends accept him, does it matter that society in general may not tolerate his quirks?

"Stereotypes are widely-held, but over simplified beliefs about a group of people..."

Key Theme: Relationships



Watch the following clips and discuss the questions in small groups:

1. "Geek bullies":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jR7CjrmCk0>

2. "Sheldon flatters Leonard's mom":

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_0wXDCU6wM

3. "Special Sheldon":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3Bpukvdbso>

Guiding Questions:

5. Bullying can go both ways. Watch the "Geek bullies" clip -- how are the main characters behaving? Penny makes an excellent point at the end of the scene, so why do you think the characters engaged in this type of behaviour that they themselves have condemned in the past? What stereotype is being challenged in this clip?
6. The main characters parents are often featured in episodes. Why do you think that is? What stereotypes are represented or are being challenged in the mother son relationships on the show? Find examples.
7. What characters do you most identify with and why? Does The Big Bang Theory make it more socially acceptable for people to be a geek? How do they accomplish this? Is this skill or ability transferable to other areas of your life? If so, cite an example.

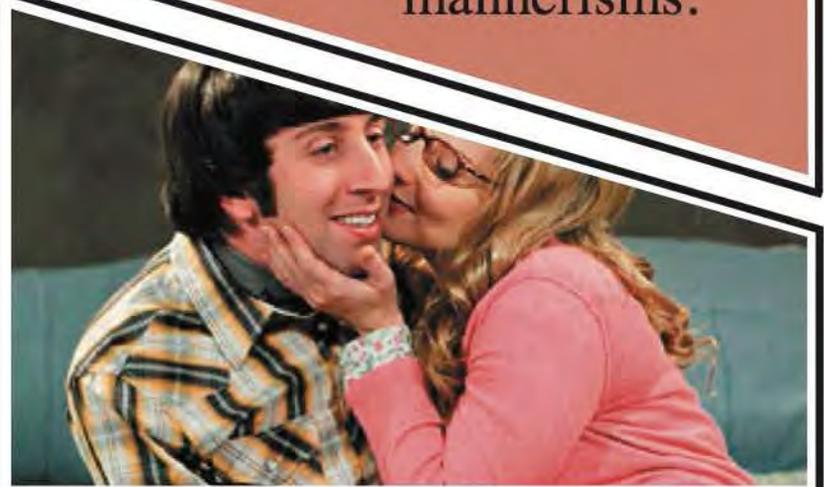
**"Relationships are the way
two or more objects or
people are connected..."**

Individual Activity:

For your individual and group activities, consider how stereotypes are constructed in the Big Bang Theory and how they are supported and challenged. Consider using the following resource for these activities:

<http://www.bitstrips.com/create/comic/>

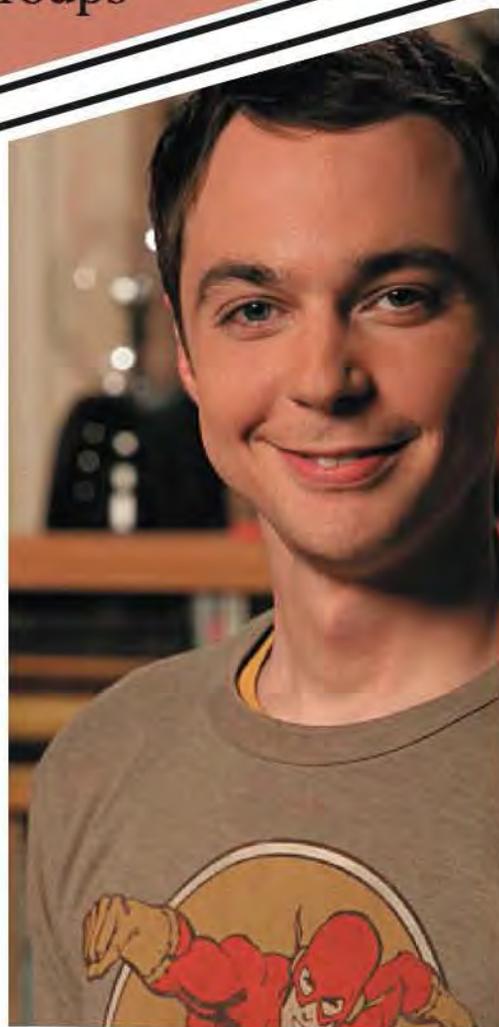
Think about a stereotypical group at your school. Create (either digital or hand-drawn) a comic-strip character based on someone in this group. Think about what they wear, what they say, how they act. Some ideas might be to focus on how stereotypes are portrayed through clothing, physical attributes, interests, or mannerisms.



Group Activity:

Although Big Bang Theory stereotypes geek culture, there are many other social groups that are formed in a school setting. Think about stereotypical groups who value the arts (music, acting, animation, etc.), athletics (playing or watching sports), social values (being liked), or counterculture (being more radically different).

Focusing on stereotypical groups of your choice, work in a small team (3 or 4 students) to create a comic strip based on your individual characters. Try to incorporate all the different groups represented by the characters. Think about how different groups interact with each other in school settings.



Resources for further study:

More on stereotypes:

FAST program (Fighting Anti-Semitism Together)
<http://www.fightingantisemitism.com/>

Choose Your Voice (Part of the FAST Program) Testimonial
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_aah3-iG84

Against the use of BBT Stereotypes
<http://theageofdvr.wordpress.com/2013/05/07/dull-big-bang-theory-uses-easy-stereotypes/>

BBT Stereotypes keeping women out of science
<http://motherboard.vice.com/blog/stereotype-and-the-big-bang-theory-are-keeping-women-out-of-science>

For a religious perspective:
<http://www.thesource4ym.com/out-reach/topic.aspx?id=260>

Credits:

This media study guide was created for Dr. Franc Feng, EDST 531

By:

Anthony Pauk

Colleen Ruddy

Alanna Williams

