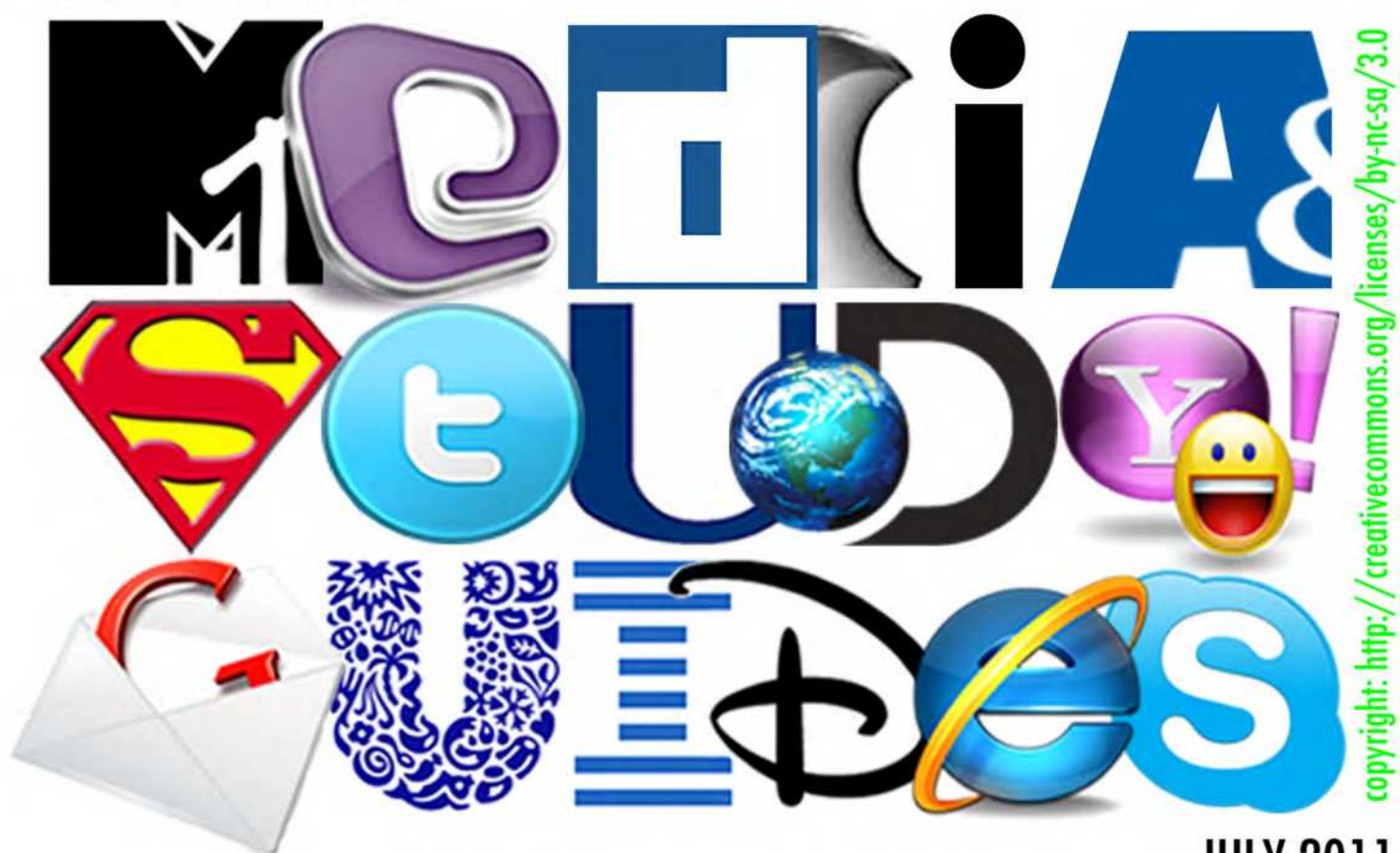


EDCP 481 TEACHERS



JULY 2011

Media Study Guides

by
Teachers in EDCP 481

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Preface & Acknowledgements

This text represents the work of a group of 56 teachers enrolled in a Media Studies course at the University of British Columbia in the summer of 2011, designed and taught by Dr. Stephen Petrina. The group was challenged to author Media Study Guides that appeal to students in a range from grades 6 to 12 and provides teachers with an interesting 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 Media Studies or Media Education courses in secondary school.

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 PJ Rusnak, a graphic designer and scholar who created the cover, and Lana Trey, for helping to organize the book.

We hope you are inspired by insights within each section and encourage you to continue learning about media and technology.



MA VIE EN ROSE

Un Guide d'étude

Document préparé par : Lucas Mann et Marie-Anne Hellinckx

Réalisateur – Alain Berliner

Date de production: 1997

Introduction

« Ma vie en rose » est un film belge dirigé par Alain Berliner et produit par Carole Scotta en 1997. Ce film gagna plusieurs prix dont le Golden Globe du meilleur film étranger.

Ce film raconte l'histoire d'un garçon pré pubertaire qui aime s'habiller en fille et est convaincu qu'il est une fille enfermée dans le corps d'un garçon. Son entourage réagit négativement à sa recherche d'une identité sexuelle et ses parents, autres adultes ainsi que ses amis le forcent à se comporter comme un garçon.

Les garçons manqués sont un phénomène commun plus au moins accepté. Il n'y a pas de stigmatisation sociale associée à une fillette qui s'habille comme un garçon, qui joue des jeux sauvages, qui est fière de ses bleus, qui porte des pansements sur ses genoux écorchés comme des trophées d'honneur, et qui préfère jouer aux billes que de sauter à la corde. C'est vu comme un développement normal.

Renversez la situation, – un garçon qui adopte les traits d'une fille – c'est le scandale. Un garçon qui joue à la poupée, se maquille, se déguise en

C'est le thème qu' Alain Berliner explore dans "Ma Vie en Rose."



Intention

Ce guide d'étude à propos du film « Ma vie en rose » a été conçu pour des lycéens. On y trouve de l'information et des suggestions d'activités d'apprentissage pour des cours de français, d'hygiène et de santé, de développement humain, et de média.

Résultats d'apprentissage prescrits

- Illustrer une compréhension de l'intrigue du film.
- Les élèves seront capables d'identifier les messages controversés présentés dans le film
- Les élèves exploreront leurs attitudes et valeurs associées avec le message présenté dans le film.
- Les élèves emploieront la pensée critique pour exprimer et appuyer leurs opinions.
- Les élèves participeront à des discussions approfondies sur les sujets présentés dans le film.
- Les élèves produiront une annonce publique contre l'homophobie et de ce fait appliqueront leurs connaissances en production médiatique.
- Les élèves démontreront leur habilité d'utiliser une caméra numérique et un logiciel de trucage et de montage.

Questions avant la séance

A discuter en groupe de 4

- A quoi vous fait penser le titre ?
- Quels sont les jouets, activités et couleurs que vous associez avec les garçons ?
- Quels sont les jouets, activités et couleurs que vous associez avec les filles ?
- Pensez-vous que les enfants ont le droit de choisir les activités auxquelles ils veulent participer ? Sinon, pour quelles raisons ?
- Dans un sport violent, quelles qualités recherche-t-on parmi les joueurs ?



- Quelles qualités ou façon d'être définissent une fille ?
- Quelles qualités ou façon d'être définissent un garçon ?
- D'après-vous, que veut dire le mot homophobie ?
- Qu'est-ce qui a été dans votre école pour adresser le problème de l'homophobie ?
- Quelle serait votre réaction si un de vos frères, cousins ou amis se comportait en fille ?

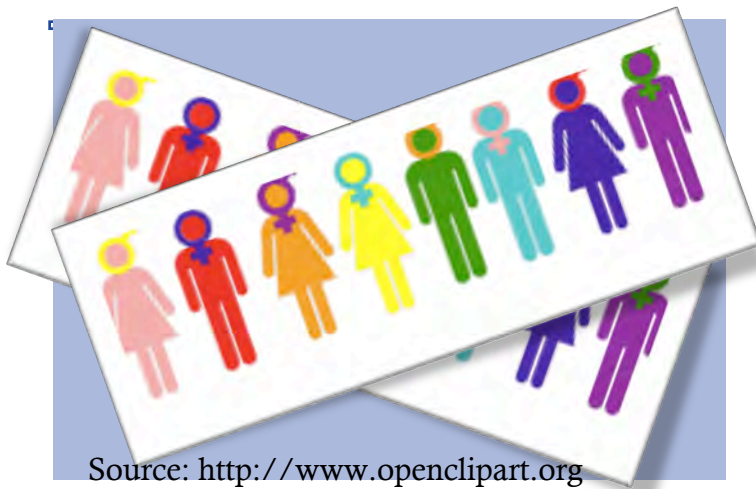
Questions après la séance

- Comment les adultes réagissent-ils au comportement de Ludovic?
- Quel adulte d'après-vous réagit le mieux? Illustrer votre réponse à l'aide d'une des scènes.
- Quelle serait d'après vous la réaction de vos parents? Qui serait la personne la plus indulgente dans votre entourage?
- Que pensez-vous de la question de la psychologue : « Quel enfant désiriez-vous? »? Cette théorie est-elle fondée?

- Que pensez vous de la phrase du père « à sept ans on ne se déguise plus en fille? »
- C'est la première fois que l'homosexualité est abordée dans une histoire d'enfant. Cela a-t-il influencé votre perception du sujet? Comment?
- Dans ce film, les adultes sont incapables d'expliquer à Ludovic pourquoi vouloir devenir une fille est inacceptable. Comment expliqueriez-vous la situation à Ludovic sans le blâmer ni le persécuter?



Dans une des scènes les plus poignantes, la maîtresse d'école dit aux camarades de classe qui se moquent de Ludovic « Certains de vos camarades de classe sont différents de vous. Vous êtes tous différents. Vous devez accepter les gens comme ils sont et vous respectez les uns et les autres. A votre âge vous vous recherchez encore. » Avez-vous déjà entendu cette leçon de morale? Dans quelles circonstances?



Activités

- Créer une annonce publique contre l'homophobie.
- Analyser une scène critique du film

Création d'une annonce publique

Critères du projet:

- Le métrage sera d'une durée entre 30 secondes et une minute.
- Participation égale des membres du groupe.
- Exprimer un message clair et pertinent.

1. Développer un story-board et un brouillon du script.

2. Filmer les scènes avec une caméra numérique.

3. Usage du logiciel de truchage et de montage.

4. Analyse critique des présentations des autres groupes.

Analyse de scène

Analyser la scène du renvoi de l'école de Ludovic.

- Avec un partenaire, faites une chronologie des éléments de cette scène.
- Discuter avec votre partenaire les comportements adultes qui ne prennent pas en considération le bien-être de l'enfant.
- Rechercher dans la charte des droits humains et dans la loi qui gère les écoles si on y fait mention du droit à la scolarité de tout enfant.
- Ecrire un paragraphe sur ce que vous pensez de ce renvoi.







Activité

Système de classement des films

Lisez les définitions des classements de film ci-dessous.

D'après vous, où placeriez-vous ce film dans le système de classement ?

Cochez la bonne case et justifiez votre choix dans un paragraphe.

			
Justification			



Général

La catégorie « **visa général** » signifie que le film ainsi classé peut être vu, loué ou acheté par des personnes de tous âges. En attribuant le « **visa général** » à un film, la Régie n'indique pas pour autant que ce film convient nécessairement à un jeune public. Cette catégorie signifie plutôt que le film n'est pas susceptible de perturber qui que ce soit. Le cas échéant, le déterminatif « **pour enfants** » indique que le film convient tout spécialement aux jeunes enfants.



13 ans et plus

La catégorie « **13 ans et plus** » indique que le film ainsi classé ne peut être vu, loué ou acheté que par des personnes de 13 ans et plus. Toutefois, les personnes de 12 ans et moins sont admises à la présentation d'un film ainsi classé lorsqu'elles sont accompagnées d'une personne majeure.

Pour les films classés « **13 ans et plus** », les examinateurs accordent une attention particulière à :

- certaines manifestations de violence (destruction aveugle, atteintes physiques percutantes, scènes de violence au réalisme trop brutal, etc.) ;
- la représentation de la sexualité (scènes d'intimité trop détaillées, valorisant des relations de pouvoir ou des situations troubles, etc.) ;
- certaines thématiques (suicide, éclatement de la famille, équilibre mental, pratiques marginales, etc.).



16 ans et plus

La catégorie « **16 ans et plus** » indique que le film ainsi classé ne peut être vu, loué ou acheté que par des personnes de 16 ans et plus.

En ce qui a trait aux films classés « **16 ans et plus** », ils peuvent comporter des séquences complexes incluant des éléments de violence ou d'érotisme ou aborder des thématiques auxquelles le monde adulte doit faire face. Les examinateurs sont néanmoins contraints à une réflexion rigoureuse devant :

- les images détaillées et complaisantes d'agressivité gratuite et de violence soutenue ;
- les thématiques particulièrement dérangeantes ;
- la manière dont la sexualité est représentée.



18 ans et plus

La catégorie « **18 ans et plus** » indique que le film ainsi classé ne peut être vu, loué ou acheté que par des personnes de 18 ans et plus.

Les films réservés au public adulte contiennent, pour la plupart, des manifestations sexuelles explicites. Les films de grande violence qui contiennent des scènes de torture, de cruauté, d'horreur hyperréaliste, rehaussées par un recours à des effets spéciaux qui en intensifient l'impact global, entrent également dans cette catégorie de même que ceux qui font l'association entre l'érotisme appuyé et la violence.

Conclusion

Ce film est un film avant-coureur car c'est la première fois que l'on traite du sujet de l'homophobie parmi les enfants. La citation ci-dessous nous parle de la controverse de la censure du cinéma.



[Alan A. Stone](#)

Boston Review, December 1997/ January 1998

"Ma Vie en Rose" ("My Life in Pink") is, to my knowledge, the first cinematic exploration of gender identity in young children. It is about Ludovic, a seven year old French boy who is convinced he is meant to be a girl [The film] has no action, no violence, no romance, no aliens, no natural disasters -- not even a recognizable star. It is certainly no comedy and, though it is a film about children, many conventional parents will not want their children to see it. In sum, it has no targeted audience

Yet in a world that genuinely prized and did not just tolerate difference, this film would have been made by Disney. It marks a new, truthful departure in cinematic understanding of difference in human sexuality and gender identity in children

Think of all the "sinister" stereotypes that have traditionally been associated with left-handedness, and the unnecessary discipline and punishments we visited on left-handed children. We may someday come to think about children like Ludovic in much the same way. "Ma Vie en Rose" is an enlightened beginning of that process.

Ressources:

Charte canadienne des droits et libertés

Charte des droits et libertés de la personne
Chapitre 1.1, Chapitre 4

La Convention Internationale des droits de l'enfant

Réseau éducation-médias

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/francais/index.cfm>

School Act. Section. 74.1

Ressources supplémentaires pour l'enseignant :

Athanases, S. Z., Comar T. A.. (2006) The Performance of Homophobia in Early Adolescents' Everyday Speech. *Journal of LGBT Youth*. 5(2) 9-32

Graham, S. & Juvonen, J. (2002). Ethnicity, peer harassment and adjustment in middle school: An exploratory study. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 22(2), 173-199.

Martin, N. (2010, October 20). School division accused of sex-ed muzzle. Winnipeg Free Press.
Retrieved from <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/>

Martino, W. & Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2005) *Being normal is the only way to be: Adolescent perspectives on gender and school*. Sydney: University of South Wales Press.

Ryan, B. (2003) *A New Look at Homophobia and Heterosexism in Canada*.
Retrieved from Canadian AIDS Society:
<http://www.cdnaids.ca/web/repguide.nsf/cl/cas-rep-0188>

Autres films du même réalisateur :

Le mur (1998)

Passion of the mind (2000)

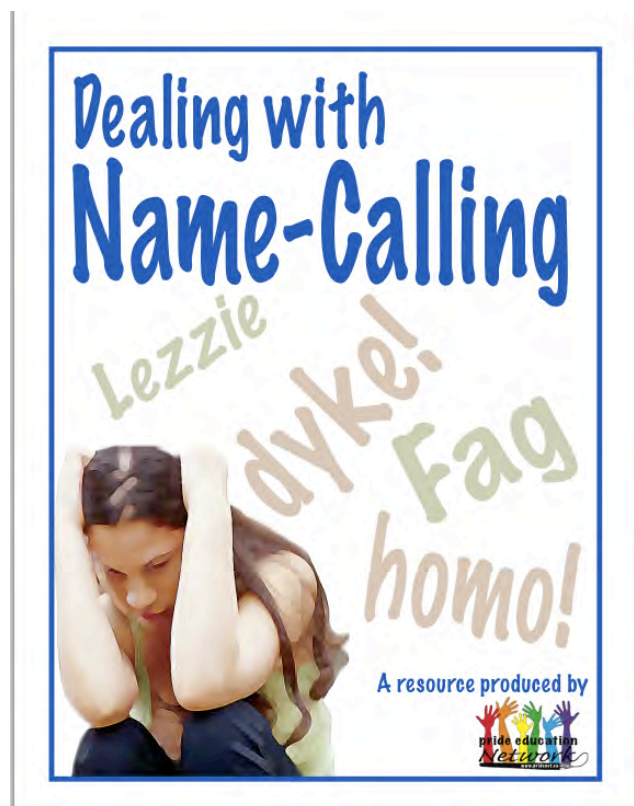
J'aurais voulu être un danseur (2007)

Ressources supplémentaires pour les ados :

Prideline BC (Helpline)
1-800-566-1170

Qmunity
<http://www.qmunity.ca>

Dealing with name-calling.
<http://www.gayvancouver.net>



Tackling Bullying through Comedy:

Mean Girls

A Study Guide

This study guide to accompany *Mean Girls* has been written for senior secondary students. It provides information for learning activities in HACE, Planning, Media Studies, and English.

Introduction

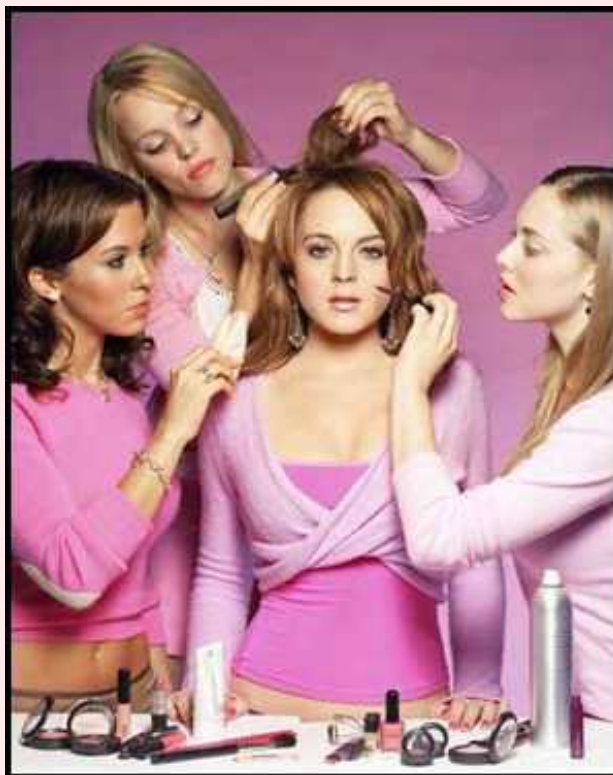
The Paramount Pictures film *Mean Girls* was directed by Mark Waters and released in 2004. The film's writer, Tina Fey, was nominated for a WGA Award in 2005 for Best Adapted Screenplay. The film was produced by Jennifer Gunier, Jill Messick, Lorne Michaels, Louise Rosner and Tony Shimkin.

Based on Rosalind Wiseman's book "Queen Bees and Wannabes", *Mean Girls* is a teen-movie that uses satire to showcase the world of high school cliques. Cady Heron (Lindsay Lohan) is a previously home-schooled girl whose family has moved from Africa to a stereotypical American suburb. The movie chronologically follows Cady through her first year of public high school, including all of the social and ethical decisions she encounters. Cady is encouraged to infiltrate the Plastics, 'high school royalty', led by Regina George (Rachel McAdams) but succumbs to their glamorous yet nasty ways. The film adeptly discusses teen bullying, exclusion, peer-pressure and manipulation in a form that is recognizable to anyone who attended their local public or private high school.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Analyze the ethical, moral, and legal considerations associated with using media arts technology to send messages about bullying
- Identify roles that film has in reflecting, sustaining, and challenging beliefs and traditions
- Consider audience in the analysis of media arts technologies
- Use vocabulary appropriate to audience and purpose
- Develop and defend their opinions on adolescent bullying
- Reflect on the ability of media to send messages about bullying
- Engage in critical analysis about the plot, characters, themes, and messages of the film
- Engage in production to respond to the film and make use of text, image, and sound



Key Concepts

- Understand the issue of relational bullying, stereotypes, conformity and their consequences
- Develop textual analysis skills to be able to understand major themes, symbols, character development and the effect of genre
- Analyze the intended audience and consider why the film is effective, including appeal to culture, gender, textual competence, psychology and social function
- Engage in production through an original PSA to respond to the film and the issue of bullying



Focus Questions: Before viewing the film

Discuss the following questions in the classroom before viewing *Mean Girls*:

- What constitutes "bullying"?
- Why does bullying occur?
- What is a "mean girl" like? What does a "mean girl" do?
- Who engages in bullying more? Boys or girls?
- Relational bullying is the engagement in gossiping, talking behind another's back, excluding people, etc. Have you seen this kind of relational bullying in school so far? Who engages in it?
- High school students are often represented in movies and television as being divided into cliques (such as, "the jocks," "the cheerleaders," "the band geeks," etc.). Is this accurate?
- Should schools enforce dress codes?
- Who decides who is "cool" and who is not?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of homeschooling? What are the advantages and disadvantages of public schooling?

- Survival of the fittest is a Darwinian concept used to explain how evolution takes place. It argues that animals that are best adapted and best suited to their environment will survive and those that aren't will eventually die off. How does this concept of survival of the fittest fit into a high school environment? Is it an accurate way to describe a high school student body?

Focus Questions: After viewing the film

Discuss the following questions in the classroom after viewing *Mean Girls*:

- Which group from the movie do you see yourself fitting in with the most? Why? How does that make you feel?
- How did you feel after watching the movie?
- Why was this movie popular?
- There were many references to the animal kingdom throughout the movie. Discuss how the animalistic theme relates to the relationships between people in high school.
- Which character would you want to be friends with? Explain your reasoning.
- How is the movie *Mean Girls* relevant to your life, if at all?
- Put yourself in the parents' shoes. What would it be like to raise a teenager like Regina? Cady? Janis? Damian? How would you try to communicate with your teen and help guide them through life?

“What the young ladies in this grade need is an attitude makeover”

Themes and Issues

Working in small groups, fill in as much of the table below as possible, and then share your findings with the rest of the class.

Theme/Issue	Examples from the film which illustrate the theme or issue
Survival of the fittest	
The corrosive nature of gossip	
Karma	
Relational bullying	
The animal kingdom	
Conformity	
Gender stereotypes	
High school cliques	
Any other themes?	

First Impressions: The Opening Sequence

All of the titles and initial credits are presented on a black screen before any image relating to the movie. The instrumental music during these initial credits is significantly different from the background music of the first scene in the movie.

- What does the music say about the upcoming film? What did it lead you to believe? Was the film true to what you expected? Would you have chosen a different song? If so, which would you have chosen and why?

After the title is shown it immediately cuts to a scene that quite obviously portrays two people, assumed to be a married couple, sending their child off on their first day of school.

- How do you know this represents a child's first day at school? How do the camera angles help you form an opinion? What does this say about Cady? How do her parents frame your viewpoint of Cady at the beginning of the movie? What does Cady want you to know about her character?

The next scene is showing Cady crossing the road on her first day of high school. As she turns away from her parents to use the crosswalk, a school bus nearly hits her. She replies to her parents' concerned looks by promising she is fine and she will be more careful.

- The school bus shows up numerous times during the movie. What does the school bus symbolize? Why did it almost run Cady over?



Structure of the film: Three Acts

Find as much material as possible to complete the table provided.

Act	Main Events	Opening	Closing/ Transition	Progression of plot and themes	Dominant symbols and motifs
1					
2					
3					

Act 1

It is the beginning of the school year and Cady Heron has just transferred in to the school. The Plastics ask her to sit with them at lunch and Cady agrees. Janis Ian and Damian want Cady to hang out with the Plastics as a fun joke. Cady admits to having a crush on Aaron Samuels but Regina George steals Aaron away from her. Cady vows to get revenge on Regina.

- Why did Cady initially agree to eat lunch with the Plastics?
- What are Janis and Damian's different motives for asking Cady to hang out with the Plastics?
- What does Cady learn about "girl world" during this act? How is this similar/different to what she has experienced before?

Act 2

Cady, Janis and Damian use many tactics to try to seek revenge on Regina. Many of their initial ventures are unsuccessful but they eventually turn Aaron and all of the Plastics against Regina. Cady now becomes the new Queen Bee but it all comes crashing down at her house party when Aaron storms out and Janis and Damian find out that Cady did not invite them.

- Why did the tactics used to get revenge on Regina fail in the beginning?
- Why did Cady succumb to becoming a Plastic? Was it just to win Aaron or were there other factors? Did she not like Janis and Damian anymore?
- How does the house party scene escalate? How do you feel when watching that scene?

Act 3

Cady's parents ground her for throwing the party while they were away and everyone at school shuns her. She competes with the Mathletes in a competition and realizes that good looks and popularity aren't as important as she once thought. After the competition she attends the Spring Fling and wins Spring Fling Queen. In her acceptance speech, she apologizes to everyone she has hurt and shares her revelation with the school. Everyone accepts her apology.

- Why was Cady allowed to compete in a math competition when she was grounded? What does that infer?
- When each team has to choose a representative from the other team, each team chooses the only girl on the team. What does this suggest?
- How does the very final scene mirror the opening scene? Where else has the school bus been referenced? What resolutions have been made?

"Never in my 14 years as an educator have I seen such behavior, and from young ladies"

"I want you to raise your hand if you have ever said anything about a friend behind her back"

Learning Activities

Complete the following activities with your class:

Headlines

Many articles and reviews have been written about *Mean Girls* in the media, such as, "Mean Girls: Watch Your Back," "What Parents Need to Know," and "Female Trouble"

- In pairs, discuss which of these headlines is the most appropriate in representing *Mean Girls*.
- Create your own headline (making sure you choose a type of journalism, e.g. serious, sensational etc.)

Scenes for close analysis

The high school cafeteria

- Janis lists all of the cliques in the cafeteria: Freshmen, Preps, JV jocks, Asian Nerds, cool Asians, Varsity Jocks, unfriendly Black Hot-ties, girls who eat their feelings, girls who don't eat anything, desperate Wannabees, Burnouts, sexually active Band Geeks, and Plastics.
- What advantages and disadvantages do each of these groups have in the high school culture?
- Do people naturally group together in this way or do we alter our behavior to suit how we – and others – think we ought to behave?

The mall as animal kingdom

- When Cady and the Plastics go to the mall, Cady envisions the people at the mall acting like wild animals at a watering hole. How are teenagers like wild animals? Why do you think the director would make this connection?

Regina's bedroom

- In Regina's bedroom, Regina, Karen and Gretchen are complaining about their self-perceived flaws, such as their hair line, pores, and nail beds. Cady consequently feels pressured to put herself down as well. What has contributed to young girls' distorted perceptions of their appearance?

Music

There are two kinds of music used in *Mean Girls*: African and pop...

- Describe when the film uses each type of music
- How does each type of music reinforce the meaning of the scenes in which they are used?

Symbols and motifs

Pink

- What does pink represent in the film? Who wears pink? What are the connotations of pink in our culture?

Wild animals

- What are wild animals used to represent in the film? Who and what do they symbolize?

Math

- What does math represent in the film? How does it mimic Cady's experience in high school?





Script

There are three kinds of dialogue: witty one-liners, "mean girl" talk, and Cady's inner monologue

Witty one-liners

- How does the comedic relief help deal with a serious issue like bullying?

"Mean Girl" talk (shut up, biotch, love ya, fugly, fetch, etc.)

- Trace Cady's use of "Mean Girl" talk throughout the film. What is the trend? What does this reveal about her character development?

Inner monologue of Cady (first person perspective)

- What effect does this internal monologue have on the film? How does it help us understand her thought processes and decision-making?

Topics for extended response

- In the film, Cady says, "in girl world, all the fighting had to be sneaky." Argue for or against the truth of this statement using specific examples from other films, TV shows, or your personal experiences.
- Damian and Janis subvert the rigid gender roles. Make a case for or against them being the true heroes of the film.
- What is worse? Physical or relational bullying?
- What message does *Mean Girls* send about stereotypes? Which stereotypes are included in the film? Are they ultimately supported or subverted?
- How would the effect of *Mean Girls* change if it were a drama instead of a comedy? Argue for or against using comedy to deal with such a serious issue.

Production

In groups of 4, create an anti-bullying PSA that is between 30 and 60 seconds in length. Be sure to include text, image and sound in your production. Consider agency, category, technology, language, audience, and representation when creating your PSA.

Further reading and viewing

Wiseman, R. (2002). *Queen Bees and Wannabees*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

You Tube. (2011). *Mean Girls – the politics of girl world* (Rosalind Wiseman). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06UNf8Cc_C0

Bright, R. M. (2005). It's just a Grade 8 girl thing: aggression in teenage girls. *Gender and Education*, 17(1), 92-101

"In girl world, all the fighting [is] sneaky."

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Common Sense. (2011). *Mean Girls*. Retrieved from <http://www.common Sense media.org/movie-reviews/mean-girls>

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LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE



film study guide

QUICK FILM FACTS:

Release Date: 2006

Starring: Toni Collette, Greg Kinnear, Alan Arkin, Steve Carell, Abigail Breslin, Paul Dano

Director: Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris

Screenplay: Michael Arndt

Distributor: Fox Searchlight Pictures

Release Date : August 18, 2006

Tagline: Where's Olive?

Genres: Adventure, Comedy, Drama

INTRODUCTION:

This study guide has been developed so students (grade 11-12) can actively and critically engage with the valuable content present in Little Miss Sunshine.

By using this study guide educators will be able to help their students meet the following learning outcomes.

Students will be able to:

- discuss the strengths and weaknesses of independent films.
- explain and give examples of satire within the dialogue.
- evaluate the film to distinguish the genre.
- articulate and show developed understanding of the films themes.
- apply the films themes to their own life creating relevance and understanding.

Synopsis- The Hoover family is comprised of odd and unusual characters. From the head of the family Richard (Greg Kinnear) - a motivational speaker whose philosophy of success has yet to manifest itself into fruition, his wife Sheryl (Toni Collette), who's patience with Richard and his philosophy is running thin; their teenage son Dwayne, who, having been inspired by the writings of Nietzsche takes on a vow of silence until he becomes of age to become a fighter pilot; to their seven-year-old daughter Olive, who refuses to let her quirky nature, and pooch of a belly stop her from attaining her goal of winning the Little Miss Sunshine pageant. Then there's the extended family. Brother Frank (Steve Carrell), a Proust scholar whose broken career is only matched by his broken relationship with a former lover and failed attempt at losing his life; and Grandpa (Alan Arkin) who wasn't good in the nursing home, but makes up for it by being Olive's dance coach. Together, in a broken down VW bus, this band of misfits, unified at times only by a mutual love of Olive attempt to overcome a host of obstacles preventing Olive from achieving the title of "Little Miss Sunshine".





BEFORE VIEWING

Have you heard of Little Miss Sunshine before? What have you heard about it?

Little Miss Sunshine covers some serious topics and it's a good idea to have some concept of how you feel about them before you see the movie. At the end of the movie we can see how your feelings on these topics are supported or challenged by the viewing of the film.

Topic:	Define:	Feelings Towards this Issue
Gender		
Body Image		
Suicide		
Teen Angst		
Substance Abuse		
Beauty Pageants		
Innocence		

What do you think of when you hear the title of the movie Little Miss Sunshine? What does it make you think of?

Little Miss Sunshine was well received and is critically acclaimed, why do you think this may be?

COMEDY

Little Miss Sunshine is marketed as a comedy. Comedy allows us to explore topics in a way that you never could by being serious. It is said humour is most effective when it goes where it shouldn't - What do you think this means?

Can you think of a situation where you or someone else used humour effectively to talk about a topic that was otherwise serious?

What effect did using humour have on the situation?

Have you seen this technique fail?

As you watch the movie pay attention and write down the moments you find funny. Try to think about WHY you find them funny and write them down. Be prepared to share your thoughts.









INDIE FLICK

Indie- Short for "independent film", is a feature film that is produced mainly outside of a major film studio. Indie films tend to be different both in their style and content when compared to mainstream films which are mass marketed towards larger audiences. This differentiation affords filmmakers more freedom in what they say, and how they say it.

THEMES AND ISSUES

Although couched in satire, many of the themes raised in *Little Miss Sunshine* are no laughing matter. Each individual character has both external and internal struggles, and these issues range from drug and alcohol addictions to self-image issues. The theme of family conflict runs throughout the course of the movie, however it is this unifying theme that draws the characters together after the passing of the grandfather. Along with the issues of self-image, drug addiction, and suicide, there are also other prevalent themes that are addressed through this film.

Using the following chart and in the first column describe the character (think Facebook bio questions). In the second column list what you believe to be the central concern or conflict for that character as well as the outcome.





How do you define family?

What does a “normal” family look like?
Do the Hoover’s fit your definition?

In what ways can we see that the Hoover family genuinely cares for each other?

Describe the dynamic between the characters (use your chart). What pair do you feel have the most functional relationship and which pair do you feel have the most dysfunctional relationship?



The loss of a dream

is explored throughout the movie. What are some of the dreams that fail during the movie? Do you feel more empathy for some characters than others?



“There are two kinds of people in this world - winners and losers. Inside each and everyone of you, deep inside the core of your being is a winner waiting to be awakened and unleashed upon the world.”

(Richard)



How do you define beauty? What is your reaction to seeing Olive on stage with her competitors?

When you think of beauty pageants what kind of images come to your mind?

Why do you think Olive remains so unaffected by the obvious differences between her and her competitors?
Do you think this is realistic?

The girls in the pageant are all dressed up in highly feminine clothes, and they are wearing more makeup than most women three times their age. They are enacting an extreme form of what their **gender** expects.

Why do you think Olive’s performance causes such a stir among the judges and the audience?

Some people are clearly offended - Why? Is their reaction hypocritical in any way?



Do you want that a la mode? Why wouldn't you?

How does Olive's family react to her having ice cream?

Do you feel that the advice her father gives her is in her best interest? It is apparent that her father is more concerned with her **body image** than she is herself.



'A real loser isn't someone who doesn't win. A real loser is someone so afraid of not winning they don't even try'
(Grandpa)

How are **winners** and **losers** viewed differently by Richard and Grandpa?



Angst - what teenager doesn't have it?

What do you think the meaning of this conversation is between Frank and Dwayne? Are we meant to learn something from suffering?

Dwayne: I wish I could just sleep until I was eighteen and skip all this crap – high school and everything – just skip it.

Frank: You know Marcel Proust?

Dwayne: He's the guy you teach.

Frank: Yeah. French writer. Total loser. Never had a real job. Unrequited love affairs. Gay. Spent twenty years writing a book almost no one reads. But he's also probably the greatest writer since Shakespeare. Anyway, he gets down to the end of his life, and he looks back and decides that all those years he suffered, those were the best years of his life, because they made him who he was. All those years he was happy? You know, total waste. Didn't learn a thing. So, if you sleep until you're eighteen . . . Ah, think of the suffering you're going to miss. I mean high school? High school! Those are your prime suffering years. You don't get better suffering than that.



Post-view Questions -



Were you satisfied with the movie's ending? Where do you think the characters will be in a years time?

Comment on the banner above's statement "everyone pretend to be normal". What is normal?

How is beauty defined through the movie?

Would you consider this a family film? Consider the ratings the film received below?

RATINGS:

Canada (AB,BC/SK, ONT): 14A
Canada (Quebec): G
Canada (Home Video)): 14A
Germany: 6
United Kingdom: 15
United States: R

SAY WHAT????

Why do you think LMS gets a 14A rating everywhere in Canada, but Quebec? It gets a G rating, what other movies do you know that have a G rating? Compare the topics and themes of that movie to LMS, how are they different?

The film brings up the themes of family and culture. In your opinion, which force ends up being stronger? Explain.

What was the most interesting character for you? Why?

Lets review and see if your opinions have changed:

Topic:	Feelings Towards this Issue Now
Gender	
Body Image	
Suicide	
Teen Angst	
Substance Abuse	
Beauty Pageants	

Extension Activity → addressing the issues.

Little Miss Sunshine takes a light hearted look at the world of child beauty pageants. The real life experience for the girls involved is often not as beneficial to their self esteem.

Students could research the TLC program "Toddlers & Tiaras" and compare and contrast the content of the TV reality show against the fictional character of Olive. The topic of gender would be the most apparent theme to explore, especially in relation to the production of identity and body image.

A Warrior's Religion

A Study Guide

Developed by: Paramjit Koka & Rupinder Grewal

Introduction

A Warrior's Religion is a documentary created by a Vancouver local, Mani Amar. Concerned about gang violence problems in Vancouver, Amar directed and produced a documentary based on gang violence in the Indo-Canadian community. Amar grew up in a small town on Vancouver Island, and arriving in Vancouver he found the problems inflicting the South Asian community concerning. His concern primarily was the involvement of so many young South Asian males in the drug trade. Distributing statistics, such as the death of over "100 South Asian males in their 20s over the last 19 years," led him to pursue his idea.

This documentary explores this issue in depth and distinguishes varying underlying issues which are the cause of this problem among South Asian youth. Amar examines key themes which he feels are pivotal when exploring the cause and rise of South Asian gang violence in Vancouver, B.C.

The title of the film reflects the "bravado" attitude of South Asian men and in turn how this attitude creates a self-portrayal of a warrior. Religion is used in the title to represent that religion holds a significant importance for many young men who are involved in these activities, whether its through religious tattoos or visiting temples, religion plays a pivotal role among most of these young men.



Pre-Viewing Background Information

The following information is for clarification prior to seeing the film, or for after you see it:

- ◊ When Amar refers to Indo-Canadian males or South Asian Males, he is referring to those individuals whose families have immigrated to Canada from parts of India.
- ◊ The religion which is primarily depicted in this film is Sikhism. This religion is prominently practiced among individuals who reside in the Punjab region of India and who have immigrated to other countries from that region. The place of worship for Sikhs is called the Gurdwara.
- ◊ Indo Canadian Gang violence came to the forefront in the early 21st century in Vancouver with the popularity of a young Indo-Canadian male, Binky Johal. During the early 1990's Johal ran an organized and influence drug organization in B.C. He was regarded as an influential mobster and he inspired many young Indo-Canadian youth to join the drug trade.
- ◊ Bal Buttar was another popular organizer of the drug trade in the Lower Mainland, he is seen in this documentary as the paralyzed man on a wheel chair. Bal Buttar arranged the murders of Indo-Canadian rivals in a brutal, drug-fuelled underworld.

“Like it or not, the majority of gang related deaths in the South Asian community in the Greater Vancouver area over the age of 19 years belong to the Sikh community, specifically young men aged 18-25.”

Pre-Viewing Questions

In groups of two or three discuss the following questions:

- 1. What is a gang?**
- 2. What are the strongest influences on youth today?**
- 3. Why do you think individuals join gangs?**
- 4. Why do you think youth are the primarily at risk for involvement in gangs?**
- 5. What are some signs of gang involvement?**
- 6. Is gang violence an important concern in Vancouver? Why or why not?**
- 7. What importance does materialism hold in our society and in the lives of youth?**
- 8. Do you think a film or documentary on an issue can create change?**
- 9. Do you think activism can help? Do you believe an individual can make a difference in the world?**
- 10. If yes, what forms of activism can be used to solve the widespread problem of youth involvement in gangs and drugs?**



Who/ What is to Blame?

****Focus on issues that Amar discloses that are to blame for Indo-Canadian males joining gangs and choosing the gangster lifestyle****

Factors	Examples from the film

“The research of one community’s issue with gang violence and applying it to other communities, will surely bring us closer to agreeing upon factors that cause youth to become involved with gangs.”



“My goal is to bring awareness to anyone who has misconceptions about this culture, including those within the South Asian community itself”

Synopsis: This documentary provides an in depth analysis of the issues which are arising in the Indo-Canadian community and how these specific issues can be interrelated to youth violence in that community. Amar discloses key issues within this documentary as the cause of the disturbing statistics on the involvement of Indo-Canadians in gangs and the drug trade. “Be Heard,” is the primary message underlying this work, Amar is hoping through this film and community activism a line of communication will be developed among parents and their children as well as among youth and their community. By including the voices of many prominent Indo-Canadians within this documentary Amar attempts to reaffirm the importance of community in creating change. He creates this poetic documentary to bring to light the importance of creating change in varying facets of the Indo-Canadian community, change which will in turn reduce the numbers of youth joining criminal organizations.



Post-Viewing Discussion/Activities

Learning Activities:

In groups of two or three complete two activities from the list

- ⇒ Produce an awareness poster for the school or community against gangs and youth violence.
- ⇒ Produce a Public Service Announcement against gangs and youth violence.
(Cameras available)
- ⇒ Using the film as an inspiration create and present a motivational speech for youth involved in gangs or wanting to join gangs.
- ⇒ Develop an action plan on how to keep our teenagers away from drugs and gangs and what needs to be done if someone is already involved. What steps are needed?
- ⇒ Using the film develop twenty interview questions you may ask someone that was involved in gangs. You could use someone from the film.
- ⇒ Develop strategies to manage and prevent gangs in schools. Develop ten different methods and provide an explanation why each strategy would be effective.



Topics for Extended Discussion:

- Students could develop a debate on the questions:
A) Do you think its fair to focus on one community's struggle with gang violence and not society as a whole.
- Students could look into other works produced by the director, Mani Amar, and assess his genre of film writing.
- Students can relate issues of bullying to gang membership. Explain the connections between the signs and behaviours of each.
- Students can examine newspaper articles or footage of the repercussions of joining gangs and getting involved in the drug trade.

Resources

- Amar, Mani. (2009). A Warrior's Religion: Stop the gang violence. Films of Fire Productions.
- Amar, Mani "A Warriors Religion" Website. (2009).<http://www.warriorsreligion.com/>



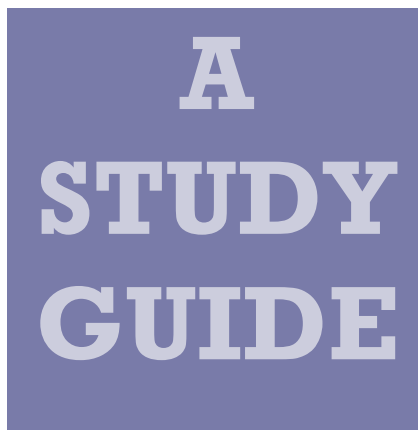
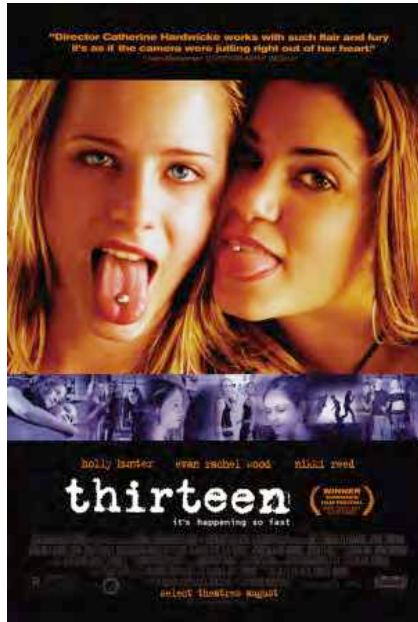
Kash Heed: Head of the Indo-Canadian Gang task force

Curriculum Context: This study guide can be used to create understanding and discussion about this documentary produced and directed by Mani Amar and Films of Fire Productions. It provides information and incorporates instructional activities which can be used in a Punjabi 12, Media Studies 12, or Social Studies classroom 11.

INTRODUCTION:

Thirteen was directed by Catherine Hardwicke and released in 2003. This film was nominated for an Oscar along with 35 other awards, 13 of those awards were won. *Thirteen* was written by Catherine Hardwicke and Nikki Reed. It is an autobiographical film based on Reed's life and experiences at age 12 and 13. It stars Evan Rachel Wood, Holly Hunter and Nikki Reed.

Thirteen is the story of a thirteen-year-old girl's teen years as she shifts into a life of small petty crime, drugs and sexual activities. Tracey (Evan Rachel Wood) suffers from the emotional pains of having an absent father and a mother recovering from alcoholism. She considers herself unpopular and desires a friendship with the most popular girl in school. When she gains that relationship her life dramatically changes.



CURRICULUM:

PLANNING 10:

Thirteen is a film that can be used to teach many of the learning outcomes from the health section of the Planning 10 IRP. Some examples of the learning outcomes include:

- C1 analyze factors that influence health (e.g., physical activity, nutrition, stress management)
- C3 demonstrate an understanding of skills needed to build and maintain healthy relationships
- C5 evaluate the potential effects of an individual's health-related decisions on self, family, and community (e.g., effective communication, problem solving)

MEDIA STUDIES:

This Guide will offer opportunity for students to understand and apply the 8 key concepts of media literacy.

Scenes with sexual content and/or nudity:

49:01, 1:00:17, 1:04:55

"Well, what do you think? Are we hot or what?"



BEFORE VIEWING THE FILM:

- Work in pairs and then be able to discuss with the class what you think this movie is going to be about. (Use the film poster to make your predictions.)
- Who influences your decisions in life the most? The least?
- How much freedom should teenagers have?
- Do you have a curfew? Do you think curfews are important for teens? Why or why not?
- Until what age do you think teens should have a curfew?
- Do you believe that drugs and alcohol have a negative effect on teenagers? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had a friend with a drug or alcohol addiction? If so, how did you deal with it? If not, what would you do if you found out a close friend was in trouble?
- Have you ever felt peer pressured? If so, how did you react? Do you wish you had reacted differently?
- Do you communicate well with your parents? If so, what makes for a successful communication environment? If not, why do you think there is a lack of open communication?
- How can you foster open communication between friends and family?
- What does a healthy relationship look like with your parents? Friends? Boyfriend/Girlfriends?
- Is having trusting relationships important to you?
- Is honesty an important virtue to you?
- What does it mean to be popular? What does popular look like? Is popularity important to you?
- Would you sacrifice friendships, family relationships, school success or your health in order to be popular?
- Does popularity mean you are successful? Does popularity lead to happiness?



“You don't necessarily have to be a parent to get the shivers from Hardwicke's detailed delineation of one young girl's shocking descent from perfect daughter/honor student to incorrigible rebel/disruptive influence.”

AFTER VIEWING THE FILM:

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Write an individual personal reflection on how this film made you feel...

Did you enjoy viewing this film? Why or why not?

Could you relate to this film in anyway?

Did you feel uncomfortable watching this film in class? Why or why not?

AGREE/NEUTRAL/DISAGREE CIRCLE:

Use tape, different coloured pylons or another way to represent 3 circles of different sizes. The closest circle can represent DISAGREE, the middle circle can represent NEUTRAL and the outer most circle can represent AGREE. Have the teacher read out the following statements and after each the students should move to the circle they want to represent (AGREE,

NEUTRAL, DISAGREE). Have selected individuals explain why they chose their specific location. Have a discussion after each of the statements.



- “All teenagers experience some form of peer pressure.”
- “Being a teenager is tough!”
- “Fighting with your parents is normal.”
- “All teenagers experiment with drugs and alcohol.”
- “A teenagers should have a curfew.”
- “Abuse & assault can cause you to feel confused, angry, ashamed and lead to depression and suicidal thoughts.”
- “It is worth sacrificing relationships with friends and family in order to become ‘popular’ at school.”

TRANSFORMATION



Think, Pair, Share:

Tracey's character changes significantly throughout the film. What changes occurred? Create the chart below on a blank piece of paper and fill out as much as you can (be specific):

	Prior to Hanging Out with Evie	After Hanging Out with Evie
Appearance		
Attitude		
Family Relationship		
Activities		
Friend Relationship		
Values		

Share your ideas with a partner. Add anything you didn't have that your partner included in their chart.

MAKING DECISIONS

Questions:

- What type of audience would experience a feeling of fear during this film?
- What makes this film scary?
- Would you feel comfortable watching this film with your parents? Why or why not?
- Do you think that this film is realistic? Why or why not?
- Do you think this film represents the issues teenagers deal with? Why or why not?
- Read over your prediction of what the film was about. Was your prediction accurate at all? What parts of the movie were you surprised by?
- List the ways in which the film's poster and case cover gives you an accurate portrayal of what the film is about.
- What services are available for people with addictions?
- What services are available for people with mental illnesses such as depression, self-mutilation and suicidal thoughts?
- Do they exist in your community?

Help is out there!

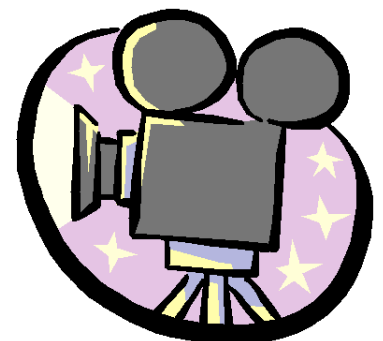
In 2009, the
Crisis Centre
impacted more
than 45,000 lives
across BC

<http://www.crisiscentre.bc.ca/>

Research Project & Video:

In pairs, facilitate a 3 to 5 minute informative video about a health agency within the Vancouver community that works to promote health and delivers health information and education on one of the following topics: Family Counseling, Substance Abuse, Addictions, Mental Illness (Depression, Anxiety, Self Mutilation, Suicide, etc.) Peer Pressure, Sexuality and Sexual Health (STI's /HIV). Include the following information about the agency:

- The overall mission
- Intended recipients/target market
- What is an overview of the health education services they offer?
- Is it for profit or non-profit?
- Are there any fees associated with the services they offer?
- Do they employ paid staff, volunteers or both?
- Is there training for the volunteers? How intensive is the training? What age do you have to be to volunteer?
- What volunteer opportunities are there?
- Where are they located? Are they part of a national body?
- How can students use this agency?
- What is the benefit, if any, to the community from this agency?



Meaning Making!

Key Concepts of Media Literacy:

1) All media are constructions.

- This film is partly autobiographical. Does this play a role in how reality was constructed in the film? How so?
- Do you think the autobiographical construction was beneficial to the overall effect of the film? Why or why not?
- How do you think the film would have been different if it was entirely written as fiction?

2) The media construct reality.

- How does this film reinforce the fact that media influences our understanding of the world? Give examples.
- Does this film reinforce stereotypes created by the media?
- Does this film break down any stereotypes created by the media?

3) Audiences negotiate meaning in media.

- How did your individuality influence how you perceived this film? (family and cultural background, moral standpoint, circle of friends, etc.)
- Find someone who negotiated the meaning of the film differently than you and discuss why this could be.
- What audience do you think this film is directed at?

4) Media messages have commercial implications.

- Do you think the controversial content influenced the film's profits? How so?
- Do you think the director left anything out of Nikki Reed's story in order to increase profits? Why or why not?

5) Media messages contain ideological and value messages.

- What value messages do you think this film conveys? (family dynamics, socio economic status, sexuality, substance abuse, mental illness etc.)
- How does the film portray the 'American way of life'?

6) Media messages contain social and political implications.

- Can you think of any social or political implications that could come from this movie?
- Why do you think this film was considered controversial?

7) Form and content are closely related in media messages.

- Can you think of an example where another type of media covered the same issues in this film, but did so in a different way? How so?
- How might the issues this film confronts be approached differently?

8) Each medium has a unique aesthetic form.

- Did you enjoy watching this film?
- What film techniques made it pleasurable or not to watch?



Websites:

www.sexualityandu.ca

<https://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/>

<http://www.qmunity.ca/>

<http://www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/en>

<http://www.covenanthousebc.org>

<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com/>

<http://heretohelp.bc.ca/>

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>



The BC Crisis Centre has 3 Core Programs:

1) 24/7 Distress Phone Services:

The Distress Phone Services provide confidential, non-judgmental, free emotional support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

2) www.youthinbc.com:

An online chat service.

3) Community Education:

- Mindful-Based Stress Management Workshop + Suicide Awareness and Response Workshop
- Professional Development
- Choices2: Reaching
- Resources

16 AND PREGNANT A MEDIA STUDY GUIDE

Introduction: “Reality” TV?

Does “Reality” Television wrongly inform the views and understanding of our own reality?

To answer this question, this study guide aspires to advance our media literacy while at the same time engaging in a dialogue around this serious topic. In our exploration of media, we will be studying MTV’s popular reality TV series **16 and Pregnant**. This series documents the lives of six teens that have become pregnant while still in high school. It shows the various conditions under which teens can become pregnant and how their surroundings affect the nature of their pregnancy and parenting. It also documents the reaction of those closest to the teen, including peers, parents, and partners.

Teen pregnancy is a major social issue being grappled with in homes and schools throughout North America. **16 and Pregnant** provides audiences a raw look at the trials and tribulations of teen pregnancy and, in doing so, serves as a cautionary tale to those who may be at risk of going down the same road.

Or does it?

MTV has come under attack recently from critiques who want the cameras to stop rolling. They assert that, far from cautionary tale, **16 and Pregnant** has only served to glamourize teen-pregnancy by making stars of troubled young women. They maintain that MTV is acting unethically by selling North American teens a false image of teenage pregnancy in the name of profits.



Key Concepts and Learning Outcomes

- *Who is producing this series and why:* **16 and Pregnant** is produced by people that have opinions and objectives that will shape what is presented in the show.
- *How the show is categorized:* All media is packaged and presented in a certain way. This can tell us a lot about the intentions of the producer. **16 and Pregnant** is categorized as “Reality” Television. This can tell us a great deal about the intentions of the producer and way in which it is likely to be interpreted by the audience.
- *How the intended audience influences the format:* The way in which **16 and Pregnant** is presented can tell us about its intended audience. Individuals interpret media differently depending on past experience. We will explore how **16 and Pregnant** is interpreted by its audience.
- *Media as reality:* Reality is always interpreted. We will explore the extent to which **16 and Pregnant** is able to accurately represent the lives of its subject.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



Sixteen year old Maci from Chattanooga, TN was the show's first teenage mother-to-be in Episode 1 of the first season.



Corey and Leah from Season 2 contemplate marriage after the birth of their twin daughters. They only knew each other for a month when they conceived their children at Leah's prom.

"I couldn't talk to my best friends because they had no idea what I was going through... nobody did"

-Maci, Season 1

Guiding Questions after First Screening

- 1) Do you identify with any of the characters?
- 2) Do you think their real lives are accurately portrayed?
- 3) Do you suspect they act differently when the camera is off?

Guiding Questions after Second Screening

- 1) Considering what we have learned about framing, is "Reality" TV possible?
- 2) Has Reality TV ever brought you to change a perspective on something in your own life (an event, a relationship, and opportunity)

Guiding Questions after Third Screening

- 1) a) Do celebrities have the responsibility to behave as role models?
b) Should reality TV stars be considered role models?
- 2) Do producers have an ethical responsibility to portray "reality" to the best of their ability?
- 3) Do you think MTV is genuinely concerned about the issue of teen pregnancy? Why or why not?
- 4) Should there be a regulating body that oversees Reality TV to ensure it acts ethically?

Guiding Questions after Fourth Screening

- 1) Aaron Sorkin, creator of the movie The Social Network, said "Facebook is to socializing what reality TV is to reality". What do you think he meant?

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Reality TV Show Pitch

In groups of 4-6, students are to create a pitch for a future documentary-style reality television show based on an issue that affects adolescents in high school. They are to produce a formal write-up to be handed in for approval, and present their idea to the class. Students are required to prepare a presentation using at least one form of digital media, such as PowerPoint, MovieMaker/iMovie, music, etc.

After the pitch, the rest of the class acts as the television network executives and offers praise and advice for the presenters on their pitch. Students are encouraged to offer ideas to improve the show or share their insights on the issue at hand.

Suggested topics include: teen pregnancy, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, racism, gay and lesbian issues, teen anxiety, depression, disabilities, peer pressure, etc.

Activity 2: Reality TV Show Pilot

In the same groups as Activity 1, students now have the opportunity to create a pilot episode based on their previous pitch to the class. Groups should have access to recording equipment and software in order to complete this assignment.

Depending on the issue being discussed, students may opt to produce a fictional documentary (in other words: students may need to simulate the circumstances related to their issue, such as acting as if a teen is pregnant when in fact they are not). Students can use current reality TV shows as a reference point, but their pilot should be both unique and creative.

The pilot must include an introduction piece, interviews with different individuals, editing, music, and production value. It is suggested that students have ample class time to complete this activity.

“Unlike a documentary, it’s a TV show that takes on a whole life of its own, so the girls become celebrities in a new way through reality TV. That’s almost antithetical to what the show is trying to do, which is to show how hard it is to be a mom at that age.”

**-Mary McNamara,
Television critic for the
Los Angeles Times**



Dr. Drew discusses each episode’s specific issues and challenges in the “Life After Labor” episode. The open discussion provided a platform to address many controversial topics, such as birth control, adoption, abortion, marriage, religion, gossip, finances, high school graduation and employment.



THE CAST OF 16 AND PREGNANT

These six young women have gained almost celebrity statues since their appearance in MTV's first season of **16 and Pregnant**. To what extent did MTV "help" these women with their respective situations? What was MTV's motivations in helping them? In what ways are these women role models in our society?

SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Aaron Sorkin – "Facebook is to socializing what reality TV is to reality." *Mediaite*
<http://www.mediaite.com/online/aaron-sorkin-on-the-view-facebook-is-divisive/>

Michael Venture – "Is it time to turn the cameras away from „Teen Moms“?" *MSNBC Today*
<http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/43798702>

Kelefeh Sanneh – "The Reality Principle: The rise and rise of a television genre." *The New Yorker*
http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2011/05/09/110509crat_atlarge_sanneh?currentPage=1

Suzanne Pinter – "How Media Constructs Reality Television Shows: Do They Depict Real Life or Fiction?" *Suite 101*
<http://www.suite101.com/content/how-media-constructs-reality-television-shows-a98159>

CREDITS

16 and Pregnant

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My Sister's Keeper



SENIOR FILM STUDIES

//

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate - a life and a role that she has never questioned... until now. //

Introduction to the Film

This study guide is for the film adaptation of Jody Picoult's acclaimed novel "My Sister's Keeper". This study guide will lead students through the film's many themes, including strained familial relationships, teenage romance, and the struggle for self-identity.

Synopsis:

"My Sister's Keeper" tells the story of 13-year old Anna, who sues her parents for medical emancipation when she is expected to donate a kidney to her terminally ill sister, Kate. Anna was conceived as a perfect genetic match for Kate, to provide medical donations in order to keep Kate alive. The film follows the Fitzgerald family through their struggle with Kate's illness and Anna's litigation, through various viewpoints of the family members.

Throughout this film study, students will be expected to:

- personally respond to the film through various activities
- critically engage in controversial topics
- actively participate in group discussions
- question personal views and approach content with an open mind

Together, in small groups and individually, students will work through the film and various resources.

Key Concepts

Audience: This film is intended for a wide range of people--because of the numerous narrators it is able to speak to various ages, from a mother to an 11-year old child. It speaks to families and any person who has been touched by illness.

Representation: One of the reoccurring messages throughout the film is the importance of free will. Viewers experience families struggling to stay together while simultaneously being independant. The conflict between the family and the individual ensues throughout.

Language: This film speaks to the importance and significance of organ and blood donation and the complicated processes and decisions that surround it.

Technology: This film is based on the novel "My Sister's Keeper" and has been adapted into a major motion picture.

Pre-Viewing: Focus Questions

1. Would you donate blood to your sibling if they needed it? Why or why not? Would you donate a kidney? Why or why not?
2. Would you donate blood to a stranger if they needed it? Why or why not? Would you donate a kidney to a stranger? Why or why not?
2. Look up "Savoir Sibling" and "Designer Baby" on the internet (try Google, Wikipedia, etc). What results do you find?

Important Definitions

Emancipation is a broad term used to describe various efforts to obtain political rights or equality, often for a specifically disenfranchised group, or more generally in discussion of such matters.

A **power of attorney** (POA) or letter of attorney is a written authorization to represent or act on another's behalf in private affairs, business, or some other legal matter.

Platelets are small, regularly shaped clear cell fragments. Platelets are a natural source of growth factors. They circulate in the blood of mammals and are involved in hemostasis, leading to the formation of blood clots.

Genetic engineering, also called genetic modification, is the direct human manipulation of an organism's genome using modern DNA technology. It involves the introduction of foreign DNA or synthetic genes into the organism of interest.

Lukemia is a type of cancer of the blood or bone marrow characterized by an abnormal increase of white blood cells.

Remission is the state of absence of disease activity in patients with a chronic illness, with the possibility of return of disease activity



Real Life: Molly Nash

Tests in the United States on 6 year old Molly Nash, who received an umbilical cord blood transplant from her newborn brother, Adam, have shown that she is carrying bone marrow cells from her sibling.

The results of the bone marrow aspiration came three weeks after specialist Dr John Wagner at the University of Minnesota carried out the transplant to treat Molly's Fanconi's anaemia.

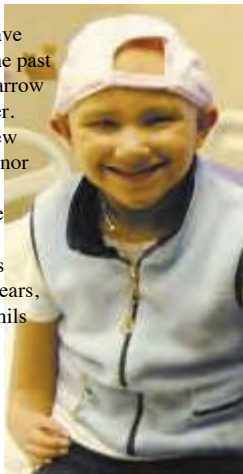
The transplant triggered controversy because it was the first time preimplantation genetic diagnosis has been used for the express purpose of ensuring a perfect stem cell donor.

"Molly's blood counts have steadily increased over the past week, indicating bone marrow recovery," said DrWagner.

"The tests over the last few days showthat there is donor cell engraftment and that the cellularity of the bone marrow is phenomenal.

What we know for sure is that for the first time in years, Molly is making neutrophils and platelets."

Roger Dobson Abergavenny



Pre-Viewing Activity: Predicting

Before watching the flim, read students the Prologue of the novel and show students the official film trailer (found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP4NxUFgFrs>).

Have students work in groups to predict what the movie is going to be about. Students may either create a poster, or a short video clip about each of the students' predictions.

After viewing the entire film, check to see who's predictions were correct!

Viewing Activity: Pro-Con Chart

students, throughout the film study, complete a Pro-Con chart on the genetic engineering (designer babies/savoir siblings). Include 3 levels of Pro-Con:

1. Evidence from medical articles
2. Evidence from the movie
3. Personal experience

This chart can help students orgnaize their feelings and thoughts on genetic enginnering and develop both pro and con arguements.

Viewing Questions: Responding

These questions can be used as discussion questions throughout the movie, prompts for quick writing/responses or as exit slips to focus students throughout viewing.

1. "My Sister's Keeper" is narrated from various viewpoints. How did hearing from each character change your view of them and your opinion of the situation?

2. Sara's viewpoint almost always takes place in the past. What is the significance of this?

3. Do you think Sara is a good mother? Do you sympathize with her? How does she affect the rest of the family?

4. Is Sara and Brian's choice to conceive a child as a genetic match for Kate morally justified?

5. Are Brian and Sara equally good parents to all three of their children? Have they treated them equally?

6. What is the significance of the story of Taylor Ambrose, and why is Sara the one that tells it?

7. Discuss the ways each member of the family deals with their situation. How are each of their identities affected by Kate? How does this affect Kate?

a) Brian

b) Jesse

c) Anna

8. Why did Kate ask Anna to sue for medical emancipation? Was Anna right to listen to her wishes?

9. Do you feel it was unfair of Kate to ask Anna to refuse to donate her kidney, even though it seemed to be the only way for her to avoid a transplant?

10. Discuss the consequences of the trial other than the ruling. In what ways does it force people to deal with issues in their relationships? Sara and Brian? Anna and her



The Ambiguous Line Between Right and Wrong

"The answer is that there is no good answer. So as parents, as doctors, as judges, and as a society, we fumble through and make decisions that allow us to sleep at night—because morals are more important than ethics, and love is more important than law."

The quote raises a recurring theme in the film: that no clear distinction always exists between right and wrong. As Judge DeSalvo also says, Anna's quality of life is inextricably tied to Kate's sanctity of life. In other words, the more Anna must act as Kate's donor, the more Anna's quality of life deteriorates. She has to suffer through painful procedures like bone-marrow extraction and has to give up things she wants, such as hockey camp. But without Anna making these sacrifices to serve as Kate's donor, Kate would die.

Discuss the questions:

Does keeping Kate alive justify causing Anna to suffer, and at what level of Anna's suffering does that tradeoff become invalid?

Judge DeSalvo, in her ruling, admits that no good solution exists, and that ultimately people make imperfect decisions based not on ethics or law but on personal morals and the love we feel for the people we care about. How does this make you feel? Do you agree? Disagree?

Teenage Love: Kate & Taylor

The relationship between Kate and Taylor Ambrose is significant. Notably, their relationship is told through Sara's narration, not Kate's. How does this change how we see the relationship?

Students must create a fake Facebook wall of conversation between Kate and Taylor. The "Facebook wall" must be printed off on a poster to be hung in the classroom.

Ask yourself the following questions before completing the assignment:

1. How do you think Kate and

Taylor's relationship differs when we experience them from their own perspective, not Sara's?

2. What do they talk about? How do they help each other through their illness? Do they even discuss their illness?

3. How do Kate and Taylor help one another? (This must be clear in the Facebook wall 'discussion')

facebook



Activity: Create a PSA

Your assignment following the movie is to create a 30-45 second Public service announcement on the value of being an organ donor or a blood donor. A public service announcement is typically part of a public awareness campaign to inform or educate the public an important issue often regarding health or safety. In the movie sister's keeper, Kate was sadly not able to live despite the many treatments and donors she received but there are many people out there who have survived because of people who have made an incredible act of charity and compassion and donated their own body to help the life of someone else. The goal of your public service announcement is to create awareness on the importance of being an organ donor and the life changing impact a donor can have for someone else. Use your creativity in the making of the public service announcement. Be sensitive and appropriate at the same time. This is a serious issue and is not to be taken lightly. You will have 2 classes to work on your PSA and then will present it to the class.

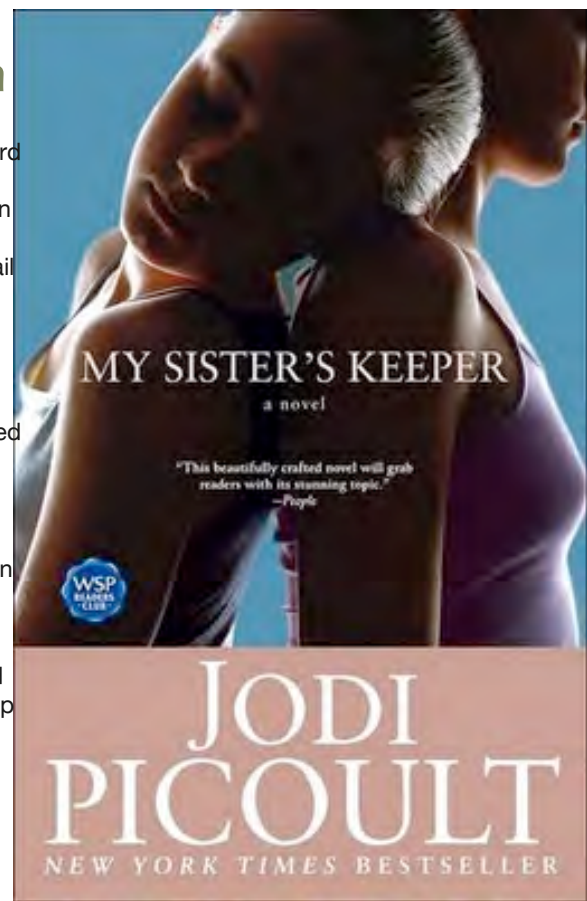
From Novel to Film

"My Sister's Keeper" is based on an award winning novel by Jodi Picoult. The novel was released in 2004, and 5 years later, in 2009 was released as a major motion picture, starring Cameron Diaz and Abigail Breslin.

The novel and the film have significant differences, notably that the director altered the ending of the film against Picoult's wishes-in the novel, Anna is killed in a car crash and her organs are harvested and Kate is saved.

Other differences include the character Julia Romano, who in the novel acts as an advisor to Anna as well as a love interest of Campbell.

As well, different subplots are highlighted or deemphasized, such as the relationship between Jesse and Brian and Jesse's arson.



Follow-Up Questions

1. Which character changes the most? Which changes the least?
2. After Kate dies, how does the family grieve? How do they survive? In what ways did Anna give life back to the family, not just Kate?
3. Do you feel it is ethical to conceive a child for genetic requirements? Has your view changed as the story progressed? Why or why not?
4. Has this movie changed any of your opinions about other conflicts in bioethics like stem cell research or genetically manipulated offspring? If not, do you believe that there should be specific exceptions, such as the purpose of saving another person's life?

Further Reading

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Nicholl, Desmond S.T. An Introduction to Genetic Engineering. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Shanks, Peter. Human Genetic Engineering: A Guide for Activists, Skeptics, and the Very Perplexed. New York: Nation Books, 2005.

Shannon, Thomas A. Made in Whose Image? Genetic Engineering and Christian Ethics. Amherst: Humanity Books, 2000.

DVD Source:

"My Sister's Keeper" New

Line Cinema: 2009



J&S Study Guides

Created by
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ONE WEEK

A STUDY GUIDE

Curriculum Guide:

This guide has been produced as an accompaniment to *One Week* and is intended for senior secondary students. The guide provides information and activity suggestions suitable for English, Family Studies, and Media Studies classes.



Introduction:

One Week is a 2008 film from writer-director Michael McGowan. The film was released by Mongrel Media and earned Joshua Jackson the Genie Award for Actor in a Leading Role at the 2010 awards, which followed a 2009 DGC Craft Award for Michael McGowan's directing.

One Week is a distinctly Canadian coming of age story. Centered on Ben Tyler (Joshua Jackson) – an average young Torontonionian – the viewer is taken on a journey of self-discovery following the revelation that Ben has an aggressive cancer. Rather than obtaining treatment as soon as possible, Ben shuns the normative thought process and begins a cross country journey in search of something he can't define. Using the Canadian landscape as a co-star, the film takes the viewer through the moments that shape a person's life. Although a serious cancer is the driving force behind Ben's actions, the film avoids melodrama and pity; the film asks the viewer to focus on life, not death.

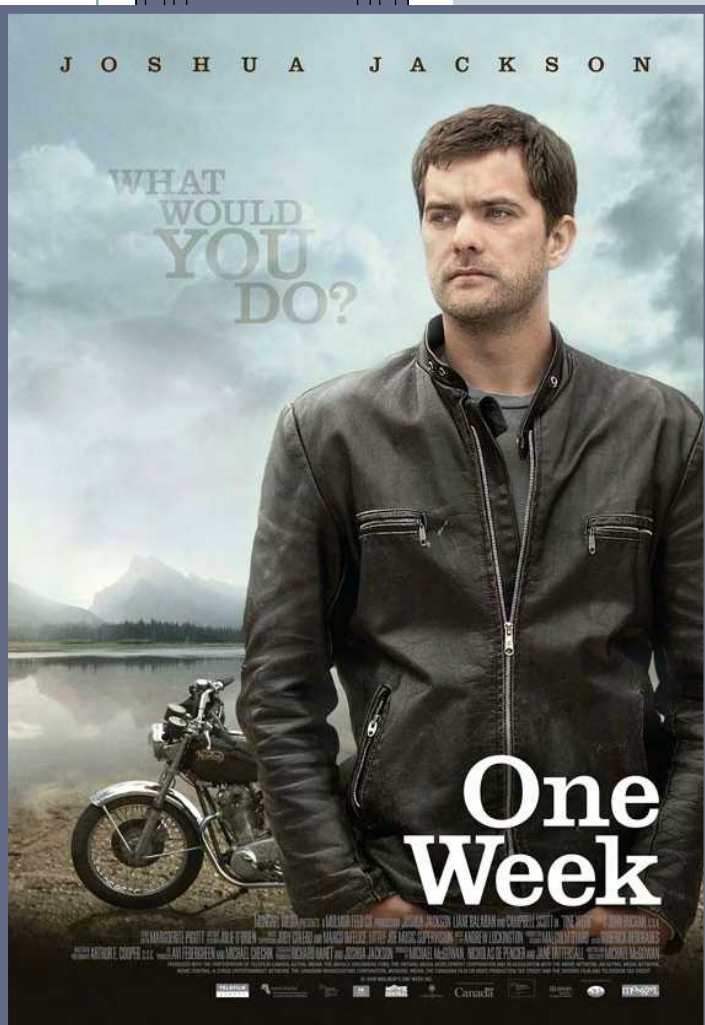
*What would you do
if you knew you
had only one day, or
one week, or one month
to live? What wish
would you fulfill?*

“To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield” - Lord Alfred Tennyson

Pre-viewing Guide

Discuss the following questions prior to viewing the film:

1. What would you do if you knew you only had one day, or one week, or one month to live?
2. Michael McGowan comments that “I think, as Canadians, sometimes we only embrace our patriotism in the start of hockey games [...].” Do you agree? Why or why not?
<http://youtube.com/user/MongrelTrailers#p/search/7/hNiaLkE-Q48>
3. What does it mean to be Canadian?
4. What elements identify a film as Canadian?



5. Analyze the movie poster. What does the text lead you to expect? How do the non-verbal selections (colour, photos, composition, etc...) set up the movie?
6. *One Week* was released by Mongrel Media. What is a Mongrel and what type of film would you expect a company with this name to release?
7. Has your family been through a medical scare? What kind of impact does that have on the family unit?
8. Is the individual or the collective more important?
9. Have you ever done things that you didn't want to– or didn't even care about– just because it was expected that you do them? What kinds of things? How did doing them make you feel?
10. How would your family react if you left home? How would you react if a family member did the same thing?

Film Structure Activity

Using the road map, find as much information as possible to answer the “What?” (what literally happens) and the “So what?” (what impact it has on the story) below.

Taking the long road home...



Toronto

What?

1. Starts in media res
2. Ben is diagnosed
3. Diagnosis motivates him to re-examine his life
4. Why has his life turned out the way it has? How do people decide which path to take?
5. Doing what's right for him impacts the world in positive ways
6. Swimming in “that famous river in Egypt”
7. Decides to spend some time alone

So what?

1. The viewer is immediately drawn into the thick of the plot; this is an effective way to invest or hook the viewer

- 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
- Students should continue to deduce the “So what” of events that occur throughout the film, which are broken up by region.

So what?

1. Ben meets some daring cyclists.
2. The cyclists open his mind to ideas that he would have previously dismissed as impossible.
3. He is inspired to step out of his comfort zone.
4. What does Grumps represent?



Perry Sound

Ranchmen Hotel

1. How we see ourselves vs. how we see others.
2. Samantha doesn't ask what Ben compromised on with her.
3. Meets a wise man.
4. Ben learns about love.
5. Ben is still seeking external affirmation.
6. Wisdom comes from experience, not age.
7. "That which we are, we are." - Ulysses quote in a blank Bible.
8. Ben's health starts to catch up to him.



Manitoba

1. Stumbles upon the Stanley Cup
2. Meets Derek Vincent
3. Learns that you don't always know what impact your actions will have.
4. The notion of bringing the dream home.

*"That which we
are, we are."*

- Alfred Lord Tennyson



Travel to Alberta

1. Dinosaur park forces Ben to take stock of his own significance.
2. Is Grumps (or that which Grumps symbolizes) extinct?
3. Ben runs over road kill and crashes his bike.
4. Ben is re-energized by his survival.

Saskatchewan

1. Ben's bike breaks down.
2. Ben meets Fran.
3. Fran feels rooted in place, but she's not bitter.
4. What's right for one person isn't necessarily right for another.
5. Having roots doesn't preclude you from trying new things and living in the active sense.



Banff

1. How is Ben brought back to reality? How does he feel about it?
2. How does meeting Tracey at this crucial time affect his future?

Tofino

1. His health is catching up to him and his bike gets crushed, but he perseveres and goes surfing anyway. What does this say about his character and values?
2. The German couple reminds the viewer to take joy in the little things and in memories.
3. Ben finds Grumps. Can Grumps be defined?

3. "Many of life's failures are people who didn't know how close to success they were" - Edison.
4. Ben is able to articulate what he's looking for (he's searching for moments).
5. "It's not about us, it's about me." The conflict between the collective and the individual comes to a head.

Toronto

1. Ben hasn't let go of reality—he has just reshaped his perspective of it. Discuss.

“Many of life’s failures are people who didn’t know how close to success they were”

- Thomas Edison

Post-viewing Guide

Discuss the following questions after viewing the film:

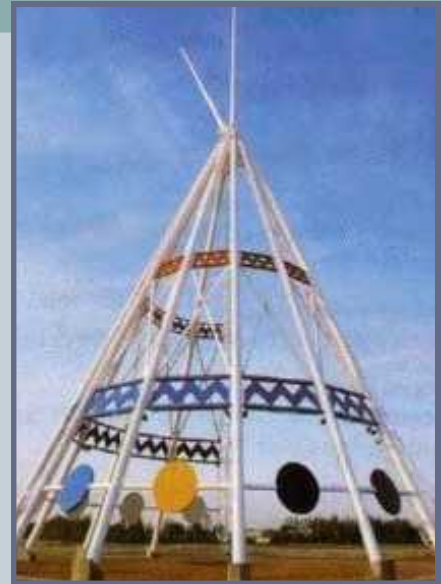
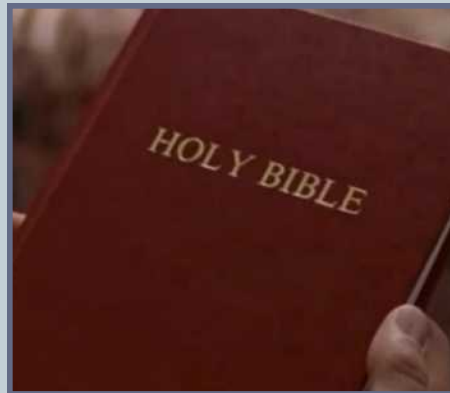
1. Did you enjoy the film? Explain your reasoning.
2. How did the cinematography influence you as the viewer?
3. Have your ideas about what you would do if you only had one day, or one week, or one month to live undergo any changes?
4. Is Ben selfish, or is his family?
5. How does the narration enhance the storytelling?
6. Write a letter to Ben in which you tell him what you think about his actions.
7. Script an alternative ending to the story. What would have happened if Ben woke up to find that his adventure had just been a dream?
8. Would you have made any changes as director? If so, what would you have changed, and why?
9. Make a list of all the decisions Ben had to make throughout the film. What elements impacted his choices?
10. Is the movie what you expected it to be based on the promotional materials? How so?



Symbols & Motifs:

What purpose do the following symbols and motifs serve? What could they represent?

- Searching for the “World’s Biggest”
- The motorcycle
- Grumps
- Hotel Bible
- Terry Fox statue
- The Stanley Cup
- Road kill
- Getting lost in the woods



Themes:

- The individual vs. the collective.
- What is real?
- How we see ourselves vs. how others see us.
- Taking chances.
- The difference between living and being alive.
- Free will.

MUSIC

The soundtrack to *One Week* is an homage to Canadian music. In a film which includes long sequences wherein only one actor is on screen, the music serves a vital role in establishing the tone of the scenes and the film on the whole. In addition, Canadian musicians Gord Downie, Joel Plaskett, and Emm Gryner all make an appearance in the movie.

1. Analyze the lyrics for the songs included on the soundtrack. How do the themes in the songs related to the theme in the film?
2. An English version of “Un Canadien Errant” exists. Why might the director have opted to use the French version of the folk song?
3. Would the viewer’s impression of the movie change if the soundtrack included non-Canadian musicians?

SCRIPT



The script has two types of writing: the dialogue between characters and the narrator.

1. The script includes many quotes from famous people. What purpose do they serve?
2. Which lines from the film did you find most striking? What do these lines tell you about your own values?
3. The director was also the scriptwriter. What are the pros and cons to this arrangement?

QUESTIONS FOR EXTENDED RESPONSE

1. Compare and contrast *One Week* and *Juno* with regard to decision making and film making.
2. *One Week* has the potential to be a very depressing story. How does the film avoid this?
3. *One Week* is a fictional tale that reads like non-fiction. How does Michael McGowan achieve this?
4. What risks does Ben take while pursuing his journey? How might things have ended differently for him?

SCENES FOR CLOSE ANALYSIS

Ben is a nihilist

While discussing their plans for a wedding ceremony, it becomes apparent that Ben and Samantha do not share the same views on religion. How does the editing and symbolism show the audience Ben's thoughts? Samantha has trouble processing what she sees as new information, and Ben is not too sympathetic. What does this tell the viewer about their relationship?

Terry Fox Memorial

Ben had pulled over to admire a monument to Terry Fox. The narrator tells the viewer that this is as far West as Terry Fox reached, and a clip of Terry's own voice is played. These are the only lines in this scene, yet it is a pivotal part of the movie. How do the audio and visual clues work together in order to eliminate the need for dialogue?



Ben meets Tracey

After losing his way in the forest, Ben spends the night with Tracey. How do the setting, music, and flashbacks all contribute to an overall atmosphere? During this

scene, Ben strays in his commitment to Samantha. However, it can be argued that this brief encounter is more genuine –more real– than Ben's years (and multiple scenes) with Samantha. Why is that?

Further reading & viewing:

One Week Press Kit

<http://www.mongrelmedia.com/data/ftp/One%20Week/One%20Week,%20Mongrelized%20press%20kit.pdf>



One Week Production Stills

http://www.mongrelmedia.com/press_info/?id=1441



About Mongrel Media

http://www.mongrelmedia.com/about_us/

mongrel



**“What Makes a Film Canadian?”
– Compare *Juno* and *One Week* –**

<http://www.canada.com/vancouver/news/business/story.html?id=1954f523-77b3-4c28-8829-29bcdca9f99&k=2754>



Schindler's List

Study Guide By: Paul & Rhonda



Introduction

Created in 1993 Schindler's List is an American made biographical drama about Oskar Schindler, a NAZI businessman who works tirelessly to save the lives of over 1000 Jewish refugees in Poland during the Second World War. Directed by Steven Spielberg this film was based on Schindler's Arc, a novel by Thomas Keneally. The movie stars Liam Neeson as Schindler, Ralph Fiennes as SS Officer Amon Goth and Ben Kingsley as Schindler's Jewish assistant Itzhak Stern. With production costs of twenty two million it proved to be a huge box office success, bringing in over three hundred million dollars and seven academy awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Original Score. Since its release it has consistently been included in the top 10 rankings of best American films of all times.



Curriculum

This study guide has been created to serve in conjunction with the cinematic epic Schindler's List, within the secondary classroom. This guide focuses on themes and issues that are primarily encompassed within the curriculum of Social Studies, History, English, and Social Justice. Give yourself five classes to work through this guide.

Historical Context

In 1939 Nazi Germany, led by Adolf Hitler, set out to spread their ideas of racial superiority through war. Their journey to world domination began in Poland, where they quickly took control and began to implement their racial policies against the European Jewish population, who they saw as inferior and dangerous enemies. Although most Germans supported their government, a courageous few stood against tyranny.

Before Viewing

In groups discuss the following questions:

- ◆ By examining the movie advertisement on page one - what can you conclude about the movie?
- ◆ What do you know about WWII?
- ◆ Who was involved?
- ◆ What were the reasons behind the conflict?
- ◆ What does NAZIS stand for or mean?
- ◆ How were ethnic groups treated differently during the war?
- ◆ What is your current knowledge about the Holocaust? Does the word have any meaning to you?
- ◆ How are persons of Jewish ancestry stereotyped in our world?



During Viewing

While viewing the movie students should consider the following:

- ◆ The progression of severity of German treatment towards the Jewish population.
- ◆ Evolution of characters?
- ◆ How did the Jewish population respond to their ordeal?
- ◆ What segment of the Jewish population was seen as essential to the German war effort?

At appropriate times during viewing pause the film and discuss as a class:

- ◆ Beginning of WWII
- ◆ German/Jewish relationship pre WWII
- ◆ Ghettos
- ◆ Final Solution
- ◆ Ktallnacht or Night of Broken glass
- ◆ Auschwitz
- ◆ Selection
- ◆ Plaszow
- ◆ European Jewish population



Characters

Each character in this movie is dynamic. Describe the characteristics of the following people in the film:

- ◆ Oskar Schindler
- ◆ Itzhak Stern
- ◆ Amon Goth
- ◆ Helena Hirsch

Who are they? What is their quest? How do they change throughout the film? Why?

Explain the following relationships between:

- ◆ Oskar and Itzhak
- ◆ Oskar and Amon
- ◆ Helena and Oskar
- ◆ Helena and Amon
- ◆ Oskar and his wife





After Viewing

Now that you have viewed the movie this is a good opportunity to investigate how Spielberg made use of media aspects and other concepts in order to tell the story of Schindler's List.

Topics for Discussion

In groups discuss the following aspects of media. Be prepared to share your thoughts on one aspect with the class.

♦ Agency

Who made the movie and why?
Who wrote the book and why?

♦ Category

What kind of movie is Schindler's List?

♦ Technology

How do you think the movie was made?
Where do you think the movie was made?

♦ Language

What languages are used?
How do you make sense of it?

♦ Audience

Who do you think the intended audience for this film is?

How do you think the concept of audience affected the making of this movie?

♦ Representation

What does this say about NAZIS?
Holocaust
Jewish experience
Second World War
Germans

♦ Symbolism

Use of color throughout
National and religious symbols
Guilt/Justice

Perspective

Here students can have an opportunity to investigate the perspective from which the story is being told. Students can focus their investigation on director Steven Spielberg and his possible motivations behind creating this film and telling it the way he did.

What is Left Out?

Every perspective has a bias, what do you think the biases of Spielberg were?

- ♦ Whose story is not being told?
- ♦ What are you left wondering about?
- ♦ Which people and groups of people are being privileged in the making of this movie?

Themes

During the film there are a number of themes that illustrate both the human atrocities of the time and human courage of both Schindler and the oppressed Jews. Once you have watched the film, review the various themes found within it and give examples of how they were illustrated throughout movie.

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| ♦ War | ♦ Indoctrination |
| ♦ Nationalism | ♦ Survival |
| ♦ Identity | ♦ Death |
| ♦ Genocide | |



Learning Outcomes

- ◆ Students will gain and understanding of the multiple perspective on the Holocaust.
- ◆ Students will be able to explain what the Jewish population went through during WWII.
- ◆ Students will be able to identify key media aspects found within the film.
- ◆ Students will be able to present their findings within a classroom

Activity Extensions:

- ◆ Write a one page journal reflection from the perspective of a German Nazi OR a Jewish Holocaust survivor.
- ◆ Create a skit that portrays a situation or event during the Holocaust.

Topics for Extension

In a film such as this there are numerous areas in which an educator can extend certain themes and topics found within the movie into the school curriculum. Below are some suggestions and resources which may help you .

Topics:

- ◆ Human rights violations
- ◆ Genocide
- ◆ Japanese Internment
- ◆ Racism

Resources:

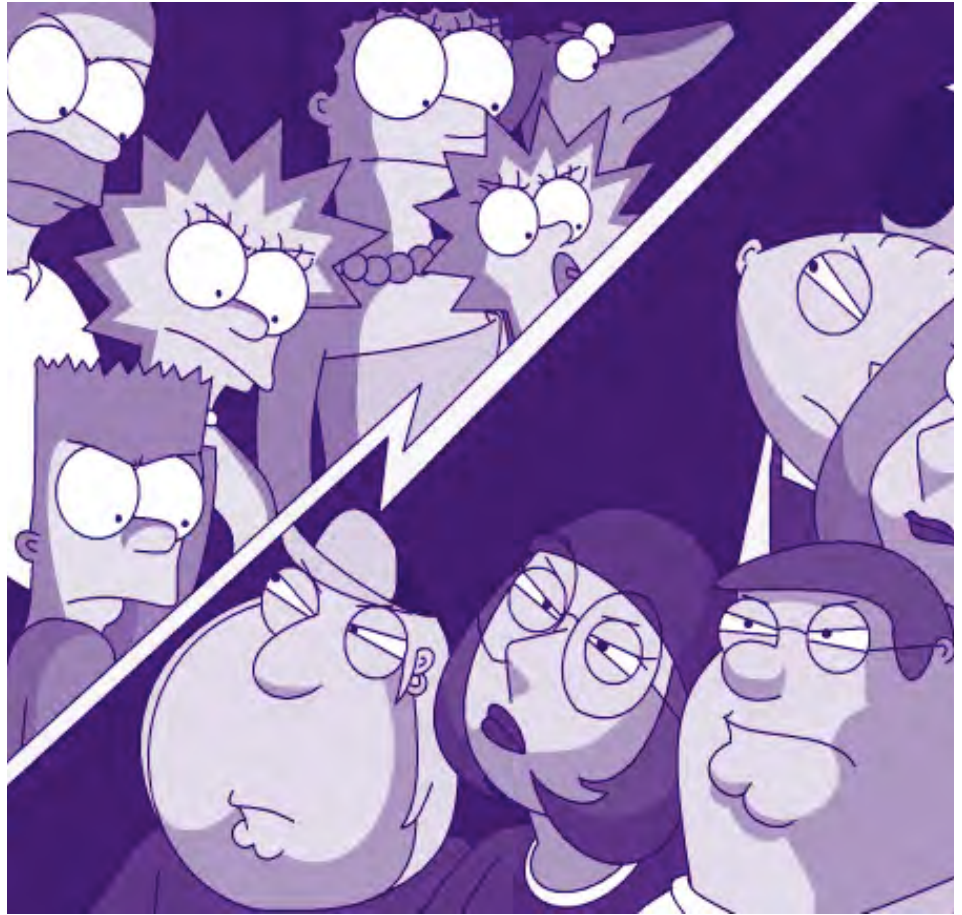
- ◆ *Night* by Elie Weisel
- ◆ *Survival in Auschwitz* By Primo Levi
- ◆ Survivors of Shoah Visual History Foundation: <http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi/>
- ◆ Film: *Hotel Rwanda* (2004)
- ◆ Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre: <http://www.vhec.org/>



“One person can make a difference”

Oskar Schindler

Stereotypes



A Case Study on *Family Guy* and *The Simpsons*

What are stereotypes?

Because most television programs are quite short, the identities of characters must be established as quickly as possible. To do this, television writers often use stereotypes. A stereotype is a fixed or conventional image of a person or group of people. Stereotypes generally conform to a pattern of dress and behaviour that is easily recognized and understood. Often, a judgement is made about the person or group being stereotyped. That judgement may be positive or negative.

Generally, stereotypes are less real, more perfect (or imperfect) and more predictable than their real life

counterparts. A typical male stereotype, for example, is of a "real man" who is adventurous, masterful, intelligent, and unshakeable. Such sex role stereotypes are intended to present viewers with a character they can easily recognize and relate to. Their danger, however, is that if seen often they can affect the way a viewer perceives men in general. Male stereotyping can narrow one's notion of what men can be and do; it can affect women's and children's expectations of men; it can even shape men's and boys' own views of themselves and how they should behave.

While commercial television has improved in its portrayal of females, many of the women featured on TV

continue to be depicted as someone's wife (apron-clad) or girlfriend (barely-clad). Television children are generally cast in gender-related roles with the girls playing with dolls while the boys play at sports. All are "cutesy" and talk as though they were insightful adults. Similarly, the characterization of mothers-in-law, the elderly, gays, police officers, and truck or taxi drivers tend to be stereotypical.

Culture and class stereotypes are also prevalent in television. Traditionally, blacks were portrayed as either happy-go-lucky servants or dangerous criminals, and while these stereotypes linger, we are now seeing what might be described as upright, intelligent,

Key Concepts

- What are the different forms of media?
- What are stereotypes?
- How can we be more educationally aware while consuming media?
- How does media affect our view and judgements about people and the world?

Activity

Discuss the following questions in groups of four. Write down your answers on a separate piece of paper.

1a. What stereotypes are prominent in your high school?

1b. Are these stereotypes accurate or inaccurate?

2. How do these stereotypes affect your lives?

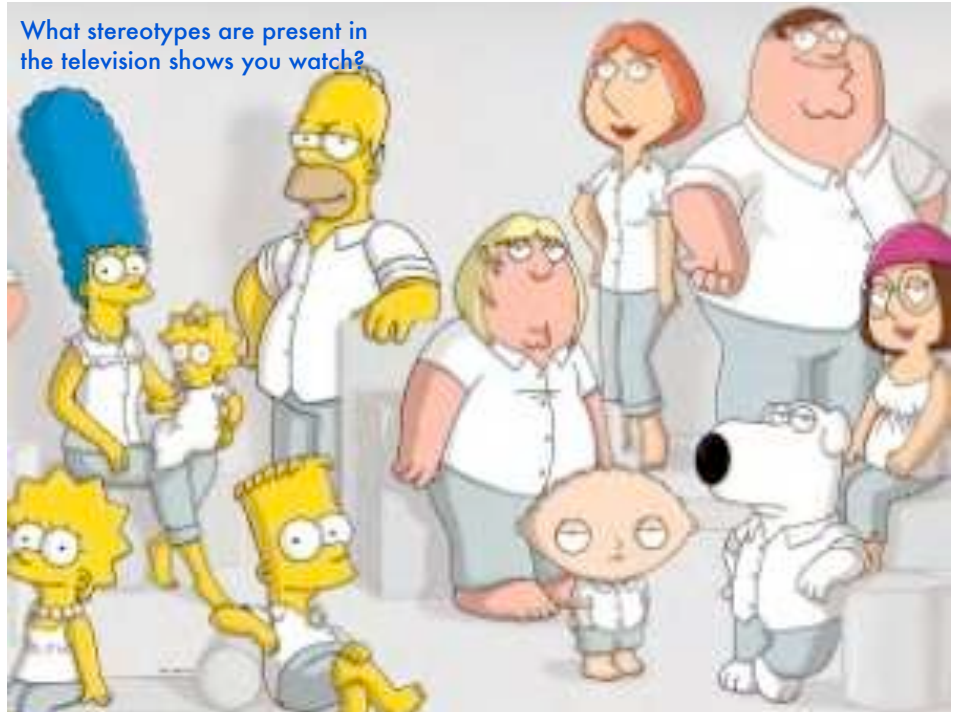
3. Attempt to describe your student body by categorizing the different groups of students.

4. Does your description require you to stereotype your classmates?

STEREOTYPE

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

What stereotypes are present in the television shows you watch?



middle class black characters as well. Similarly, North American native peoples are now being portrayed as something other than buckskin-wearing teepee dwellers. Too often, however, minorities are portrayed stereotypically and almost never as powerful or rich as the white majority.

Because stereotyping can lead children to form false impressions of various societal groups, it is important that students recognize stereotypes and understand the role they play in television's portrayal of life. To become television-wise students must tune in to the ways television treats people, recognize how they themselves relate to TV characters, and understand how these characters can influence their ideas about real people in their communities.

ACTIVITY

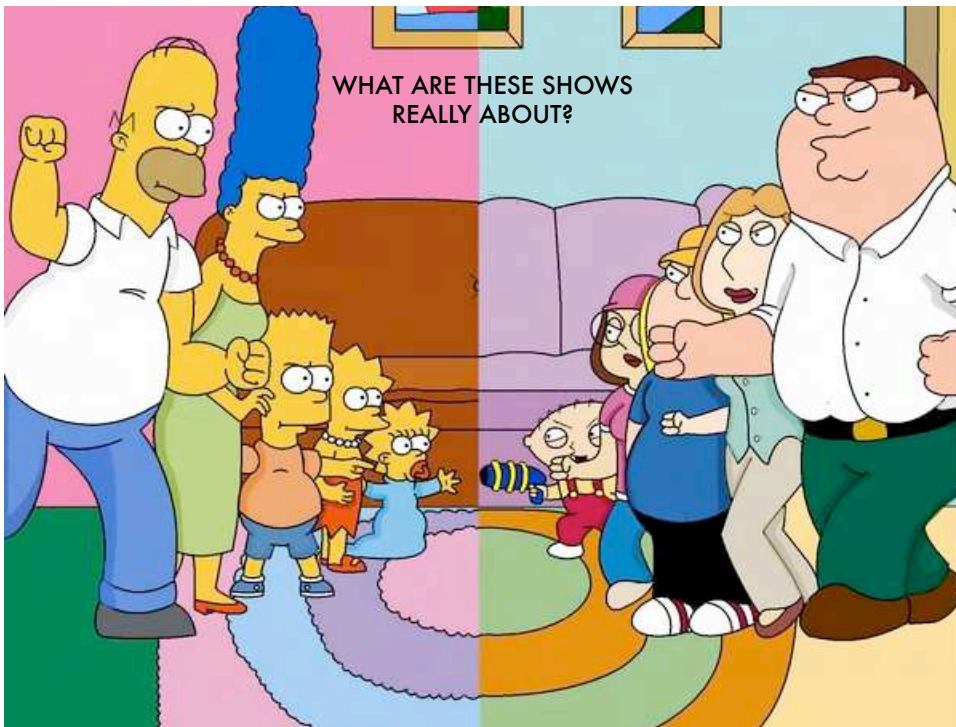
After reading about stereotypes students will look at the images on the following page and complete the following tasks:

1. Record all the adjectives that come to mind when viewing these images.
2. Are these adjectives representative of the people in the photo? Why or why not?
3. To what extent does the media influence our stereotypes of people in these photos, our friends, and ourselves?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to understand the effects of stereotyping on minority groups and society's perceptions and attitudes towards them.
- Students will be able to understand how media "represent" people and events to viewers from a specific point of view.
- Students will be able to identify the importance of equitable representation in media.
- Students will be able to recognize the effects of media representation in society.
- Students will be able to identify the role of stereotypes in media and the possible negative consequences of stereotyping.





"Homer is one of the most influential fictional characters on TV"

"Homer embodies several American working class stereotypes: he is crude, overweight, incompetent, clumsy, lazy, and ignorant"

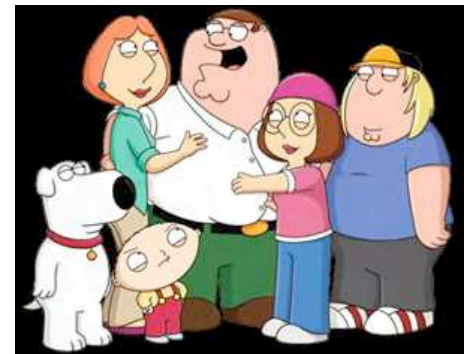
The Simpsons

The Simpsons is an American animated sitcom which was created by Matt Groening for the Fox Broadcasting Company. It is a satirical parody of the middle class American lifestyle epitomized by its titular family, which consists of Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Maggie. The show is set in the fictional town of Springfield, and it lampoons many aspects of the human condition, as well as American culture, society as a whole, and television itself.

Family Guy

Family Guy revolves around a dysfunctional American family in a less than normal town of Quahog who are thrown from one crazy scenario to another. The family consists of six members: Peter the father, Lois the mother, Stewie the homicidal baby, Chris the son, Meg the daughter, and Brian the dog who is often the smartest out of all of them.

Text from Wikipedia



VIDEO CENTRE

WARNING: SOME MATERIAL MAY BE OFFENSIVE



THE SIMPSONS

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aBaX9GPSaQ>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhrfhjLd9e4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4i8SpNgzA4&fe>

FAMILY GUY

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBLDBDFRp6E&f>

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

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1IAN4xq4hE&f>



After watching clips from *The Simpsons* and *Family Guy* fill out the chart below identifying the stereotypes being made and whether it is a positive or negative representation of that group. Provide specific examples and record possible effects it may have on the group being stereotyped.

[illegible]

FINAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

GROUP VIDEO PRODUCTION



In groups of four you will prepare a script that corrects a stereotype depicted in *The Simpsons* or *Family Guy*.

Step 1: Choose a Stereotype

Select one of the stereotypes represented in either *The Simpsons* or *Family Guy*

Step 2: Plan a Scene for the Stereotype

Write a script that shows that stereotype in a similar way it was shown in the television show.

Step 3: Plan a Scene to Correct the Stereotype

Write a script that then corrects the incorrect ways that stereotype was represented.

Step 4: Choose the Settings and Characters

Determine the best setting and characters to accurately create your scene.

Step 5: Film Your Scenes

Film your two scenes and be conscious of how the camera angles and filming techniques used will appeal to your audience and present your scene in the best possible way.

Step 6: Edit Your Film

Edit your film using iMovie, MovieMaker or any software of your choice.

Step 7: Present Your Edited Film

Present your final product to the class. Explain why you chose the setting and characters you did and be sure to mention the filming and editing techniques you used to design the final product.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Are the stereotypes in *The Simpsons* and *Family Guy* accurate representations of reality?

Why do you think these shows have become so popular?

How are the stereotypes from the shows represented in our own society or school?

What can you do to help your friends understand the effects of stereotyping?



RESOURCES USED IN MAKING THIS GUIDE AND FOR FURTHER STUDY

YOUTUBE: <http://www.youtube.com>

WIKIPEDIA: <http://www.wikipedia.org>

MEDIA AWARENESS: <http://www.media-awareness.ca>

ADBUSTERS: <http://www.adbusters.org>

Bright Star



Ben Wishaw Abbie Cornish

Introduction

Bright Star is a film by Jane Campion that portrays the romance between Poet John Keats and his lover Fanny Brawne. Love between them though, meets with challenges of economics, death, and rivalry. These harsh realities that conflict with Keat's love also commonly occur in his poetry, and literature in general. It is the intention of this study guide to investigate the poems in

this movie to analyze Keat's poetry as portrayed by Campion.

The film has won awards for cinematography, Sound, and Best Supporting Actor at the British Independent Film Awards, Heartland Film Festival, and National Society of Film Critics respectively.

Being the artistic representation that *Bright Star* is, this guide asks students to think about literature alongside Campion's interpretations to explore analytical avenues of film critique.



Prescribed Learning Outcomes addressed

It is expected of the students to:

- ◆ Demonstrate a willingness to reassess their understanding of a topic on the basis of responses from others and new ideas and experiences
- ◆ Compare different sources of information on the same topic.

Questions to ponder before watching the film:

- What messages do you feel that Keat's tries to make with his poetry?
- How is love commonly portrayed in movies?
- What tones (if any) do you feel come across in Keat's poetry?
- Is the dilemma in *Nightingale* joyful or somber? What about compared to *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*?
- How do you feel about the way Keats feels about love?
- What do you feel the purpose of dreams are for humans? Are they meant to be achieved?
- Is it ok to live with uncertainties in life, like Keat's poetry suggests, or should humans strive to perfect them?
- Is there a 'dreaminess' to Keat's poetry? If so, can this be produced in film?



Poems Studied:

- La Belle Dame Sans Merci
- Ode to a Nightingale
- Bright Star



La Belle Dame Sans Merci



*"Oh what can ail
thee, knight-at-
arms, Alone and
palely loitering?"*



What significance does this poem have in the movie's plot?

Is there a way in which Keats resembles the Knight in *La Belle*...

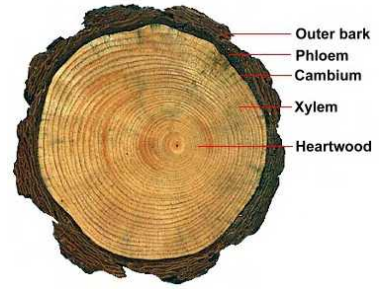
How does Fanny's mother feel about the possible love developing between Fanny and John?

Is there a way in which another's avowal or outcry affects the people who love each other?

What economic factors play a role in Keat's abil-

ity to fully love Fanny—does this show forth in the Knight in *La Belle*?

Dendrochronology: It can be fun to think of tree science when reading this poem. In the same way that rings in a tree reveal a tree's history, so to, do quotations give us a telescoping in/out of a story. How many layers do we get in *La Belle*; that is, how many shifts in narrative perspective take place? Who are the people that represent these

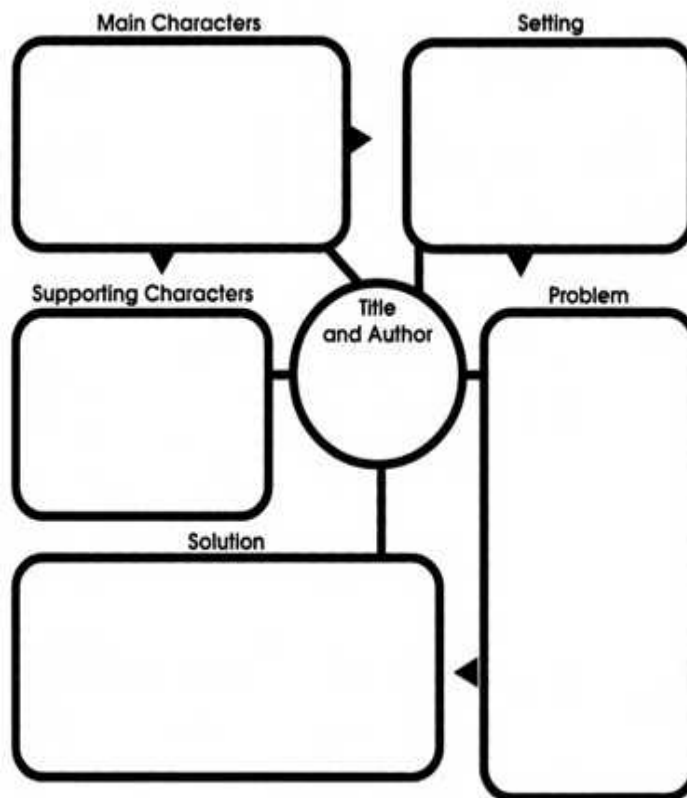


shifts in narration?

Perhaps Campion selected this poem precisely for its 'devil on the shoulder' sort of vibe.

Is there then, a villain in *Bright Star*; and if so, which character do you think this is and why?

Story Map



Activity:

In groups of two, work together to complete the 'Story Map' chart to identify the characters and their consequent perspectives: what are the contrasting problems and solutions?



Ode to a Nightingale



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAfpx-HrsdI>

Listen to the above clip of a nightingale: The nightingale triggers Keat's transcendent reflection in this poem, a journey which Campion also depicts in this film. Is there a soothing, transcendent quality in listening to the music of a nightingale?

In *Bright Star*, Keats becomes captivated by the singing of a nightingale as he takes a seat at breakfast to listen and pen his thoughts, even sitting atop

the branches of the trees. What physical qualities of this position by Keats might have helped him to be inspired by the nightingale? Keats even suggests in the poem that this same song was heard "in ancient days by emperor and clown;" so, it becomes a transcendent experience for him as he imagines connecting across generations through the "immortal bird." What sort of imaginative power is contained within this? Keat's says to the bird that: "tis



not through envy of thy happy lot / But being too happy in thine happiness." What about the bird's happiness makes Keats envy?



The Poem's Conclusion

Ode to a Nightingale concludes with Keat's famous lines: "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music—do I wake or sleep?" How do these final thoughts 'resolve' Keat's tension throughout the poem— or does it? Further—

more, do you feel that there is any particular reason that Campion chose to end the film with Keat's character (Ben Wishaw) reading this particular poem with the credits? What final message does this leave with you as a viewer? How does Wishaw's

reading of the poem match with your own reading? Often another's voice can open up the poetic experience— or conversely muddle the feeling of how it is heard through a 'reading voice'— which one works for you, or do they both?

"The poet is the least poetic thing of all— it has no self—it is everything and nothing"

F.L.S.R.T. with an Ode

Analyze the poem with a friend under the following poetic rubrics!

F orm	
L anguage	
I magery	
R esponse	
T one	



Conclusion



Official Website: www.brightstarthemovie.co.uk



Further Viewing:

- Dead Poet's Society
- Shakespeare in Love
- Sylvia



Like Poets:

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- William Blake
- Percy Shelley
- William Wordsworth



Bright Star

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art--
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors--
No--yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever--or else swoon to death.

Scene Analysis

The departing scene features Fanny Brawne reciting *Bright Star* from memory. Here are some concluding thoughts for you to ponder:

- How does the reading of *Bright Star* comply with your expectations of love?
- Though it seems that the movie presents *Bright Star* as a love poem, there can be some parallels drawn to the other Keat's poems used in the movie that color it with a more somber tone. In your opinion, is there a tension in the love be-

tween Keats and Brawne, and if so, what do you feel is the cause?

'got it right' with Keats message as it is in *Bright Star*— the movie?

- There seem multiple explanations for this, evident in both the movie and Keats poetry. In this same line of thinking, do you think that Campion



Freedom Writers: A Study Guide

Synopsis

When the passionate and idealistic Erin Gruwell takes on a teaching assignment at Wilson High School she initially finds more than she bargained for. Her class was deemed a 'problem' class because many of the students were struggling academically, and with life in general.

This class was racially diverse (students of African, Asian, European, and Latino descent), and some of the students were actively involved in criminal activities. For these and other reasons many of the other teachers at Wilson High had given up on these students. They were deemed hopeless and already lost to the difficult lives they were leading.

Despite not having the support of her colleagues, and being fiercely challenged by the students themselves at first, Ms. Gruwell soldiered on. The perseverance both she and the students show throughout this film highlight what is possible when people commit to working together positively, regardless of which colour or creed they come from.



Introduction

Cultural and racial interactions are a crucial part of everyday life in many parts of the contemporary world. In North America this reality is especially prevalent, and this issue is highlighted in this film.

Racial inequalities have continued despite the valiant efforts of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and all those who fought in the civil rights movement. Progress has been made in Canada and in the United States, but as will be seen in this film, much work remains to be done to bridge misunderstandings between different racial groups.

This film is set in 1994, just after the 1992 Los Angeles riots, a time when questions around race came yet again to the forefront of North American discourse.

Key Concepts

Language – How people converse with each other tells us much about how people think about others and their world. Pay attention to the language used throughout the film. How do the students talk? How do the teachers talk?

Representation – We must always remember that movies are constructed visions of the world. They are representations that may contain many different versions of truths. How are the characters represented in this film? Are these representations accurate or inaccurate?

Racism - Acting in a way that makes it seem as if one group of people is better than another group of people based on their genetic and cultural backgrounds.

Poverty/Class distinction – All societies have hierarchies of class: those who live in poverty, those who do not, those who are rich, etc. These differences play a large role in determining how we act, live, etc.

Discrimination – An act that negatively impacts another person or group of people.

Discussion Questions

Curriculum Relevance (IRPs)

This film and guide is suitable for Socials Studies 10, 11, 12, Humanities, English and Media and Film studies.

Some specific curriculum PLO connections include:

Social Studies 10

- Apply critical thinking skills, including: Questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, defending a position

Social Studies 11

- Apply critical thinking—including questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, and defending a position—to make reasoned judgments about a range of issues, situations, and topics.
- Demonstrate skills and attitudes of active citizenship, including ethical behaviour, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, and collaboration

Discussion Questions: Before Viewing

With a partner or in small groups, discuss the following questions before viewing the movie.

- When you heard the word “racism” what comes in mind?
- What different cultural groups are present in our school?

- What are some stereotypical names used to describe these (and other) groups?
- Have you ever experienced racism in your life?
- What is respect? How does one earn the respect of another?

**“AN F? WHAT, ARE YA
TRIPPIN’? ”**





The 1992 LA riots brought race-related issues to the forefront of North American discourse.



Racial tensions in schools often lead to bullying and/or ganging up on those who are different.

**“MY FRIENDS ARE SOLDIERS.
NOT OF WAR, BUT OF THE
STREETS. THEY FIGHT FOR
THEIR LIVES.”**

After Viewing

Discuss the following questions in partners or small groups:

- What are some differences and/or similarities between our school community and the school community in the movie?
- What key issues are the filmmakers trying to highlight in this movie?
- Who is the intended audience?
- This film was set in the 1990s, have these issues changed by 2011? If yes, how? If no, what can be done to start positive change?
- What does it say about high school students in LA's inner city? How is this an accurate or inaccurate depiction?
- What genre of film would you categorize this as? Why?
- The freedom writer diaries gave students in Ms. Gruwell's class a chance to have their voices heard. Can you think of other ways to do this in our classes?
- Does the language used in the film contribute to positive/negative stereotypes of the students?

Activities

The Line Game

During one of the classroom scenes, Ms. Gruwell played the Line Game with her students. The purpose of this activity is to clearly show students their differences and similarities amongst each other. In the end of the game, after they realized their peers had experiences that were parallel to their own, they began to show respect and understanding toward one another.

Randomly divide the class into two groups. Lay a strip of tape in the middle of the room between the two teams. Instruct them to stand next to the tape if the answer to the question is “yes” then step back to original position for the next question. Use the questions below as a guide to constructing others that are relevant to the class. As the game progresses, prepare students before asking more personal or sensitive questions.

1. How many of you watched _____ movie?
2. Step on the line if you like _____ song.
3. How many of you have siblings?
4. Who here have gotten into a fight before?
5. How many of you know someone who was bullied before?
6. How many of you have been a victim of bullying or discrimination?

Filming a PSA

Film production allows students to have hands-on experience with scripting, storyboarding, acting, filming and editing, etc. Students can apply their knowledge in media and film education by producing a short video on a theme that relates to those found in Freedom Writers.

Brainstorm with students some of the themes in the movie. In filming a public service announcement, students in groups of 4 or 5 chooses one theme they would like to address in their announcement.

A lesson or two on filming techniques and technology is necessary before students begin filming. Students should understand how to safely operate equipment(s) and film editing basics.



Ms. Gruwell introduces the Line Game in class.



Sindy and Eva finally shows each other respect.

Involve the students in setting guidelines, expectations and criteria for the finished PSA product. It should be short and concise, no more than 1:50 minutes in length.

Some examples of themes from the movie:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Class distinction
- Bullying
- Poverty

**“BUT TO GET RESPECT YOU
HAVE TO GIVE IT”**



A Toast for Change

**“IT’S A SIGN OF
RESPECT...FOR YOU”**

**“WOW...YOU USED YOUR
LIBRARY CARD?”**

“NAH..”



Ms. G and the Freedom Writers

**“YOU ARE THE HEROES. YOU
ARE HEROES EVERY DAY”**



Sources for Further Study

National Anti-Racism Council of Canada

<http://narcc.ca/index.html>

Stop Racism and Hate Collective

www.stopracism.ca

Victims of Violence

www.victimsofviolence.on.ca

Bullying Canada

www.bullyingcanada.ca

Stop a Bully

www.stopabully.ca

Soundtrack video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBa55sDTiIA>

Schindler's List

A study guide

By Jennifer Olson

Sarah Kharikian

and Jennifer Mansour

Historical Context

In 1933, the year Adolf Hitler took power in Germany, the Jews of Germany and later of continental Europe, faced isolation, emigration, ghettoization, deportation, and, in the end, mass murder. By 1945, the end of the Second World War, approximately 11 million people were exterminated in German occupied Europe; approximately six million were Jews and five million consisted of Gypsies, Serbians, Polish intelligentsia, political opponents, resistance fighters, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, the physical disabled and the ill. This was what we call today, The Holocaust.

Despite the intense control the Nazi regime had over citizens not targeted in the Holocaust, there were stories of rescue; one of which was the plan of Oskar Schindler.

Learning Objectives:

Develop critical thinking skills.

Demonstrate skills and attitudes of active citizenship including ethical behavior, respect, empathy and individual responsibility.

Recognize the importance of individual and collective action in addressing human rights issues.

Identify key terms and concepts that are relevant to the film's story and overall message.



Introduction:

Schindler's List tells the story of a German businessman, Oskar Schindler. Schindler transforms his successful factory in Poland into a refuge for the Jews during the Second World War, by hiring them to work for him. His actions saved 1,100 lives during the Holocaust. The 1993 Steven Spielberg film won seven Academy Awards. The film has been described as Spielberg's best film. Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, and Ralph Fiennes, among others, captivate the audience with superb performances.

Key Concepts



Through the study of Schindler's List, students will analyze the power of individual action during large scale atrocities. Furthermore, students will analyze how the study of history has the possibility of giving lessons to society for a better future.

More specific to the content of the film students will develop an understanding of what life was like under the Nazi regime, the conditions Oskar Schindler lived under in comparison to European Jews and use such information to analyze what motivated the actions of the characters in the story.

Students will also study film techniques used throughout the film as well as the agency used by Steven Spielberg by making this film.

Focus Questions:

- 1. What is the significance of making this film in black and white?**
- 2. How does Steven Spielberg use accent color in the film?**

What impact did it make?

- 3. Who is the intended audience for Schindler's List?**
- 4. What was your emotional response to the film?**

What emotions did the film intend to evoke?

- 5. What is the significance of the music played in this film?
How did this music contribute to the mood of this film?**

- 6. How is Oskar Schindler portrayed in the film?**

- 7. How does Schindler's relationship with the SS influence your impression of his overall character and what motivations are guiding his actions?**

Is he portrayed as a Hero or a Villain?

- 8. What is moral responsibility? How does this film incorporate moral responsibility of the individual as a lesson in history?**

Pre Viewing Activities



Consider the definition of genocide.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, genocide is defined as

Acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Question:

Study examples of genocide and consider what conditions are present in a society in order for genocide to occur?

Develop a greater understanding of the historical context.

Documentary of the Holocaust throughout the Second World War:

5 http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_nm.php?MediaId=7827 (6:34 min)

Post Viewing Activities



1. Discuss the Focus Questions
2. Complete the following forms:

Theme Analysis

Theme	Examples from Film
Identity	
Stereotypes	
Racism	
Anti-Semitism	
Conformity	
Denial	
Power	

Symbol Analysis

<i>Symbols</i>	<i>Meaning/Interpretation</i>
The girl in the red coat	
Road paved with Jewish headstones	
Piles of personal belongings	
Trains	

Character Analysis

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Personality Traits</i>	<i>Behaviour</i>
Oskar Schindler			
Itzhak Stern			
Amon Goeth			
Emilie Schindler			
Helen Hirsch			

Activities for Further Study:



Interview with Holocaust Survivor

Rena FINDER

Rena FINDER was one of the 1,200 Jews who was saved by Oskar Schindler.

In this interview she describes her life before the war, her thoughts on this film, and her experiences during the war and being saved by Schindler. The interview is 42:30 minutes long; therefore, you have the option of selecting clips or showing the entire interview to your class.

<http://www.facinghistory.org/video/interview-holocaust-survivor-rena-finder>

After the interview, ask students how they felt watching it, and how it added to their understanding of the Holocaust.

Student Projects

Research one concentration camp.

Media project can be presented in many media forms.

Make a video about your own reflection on what you thought of the video or about the themes.

Sources for Further Study



Information on Oskar Schindler

http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_nm.php?ModuleId=10005787&MediaId=3170

http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/gallery_ph.php?ModuleId=10005787

<http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/survivor/schindler.html>

Holocaust Memorial Museums

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/schindler/>

http://www.vhec.org/images/pdfs/schindler_jews.pdf

Survivors & Memorials

<http://www.yadvashem.org/>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7377765.stm

Additional Lesson Plans

<http://www.thesource4ym.com/movieclipdiscussions/discussion.aspx?id=89>

<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/solguide/VUS10/vus10e02.html>

<http://www.wcupa.edu/academics/holocaust/teach.htm>



The Television has drastically changed the way families function and interact with each other.

The Television Family

By Melissa Evans and Shaun Beach

Introduction

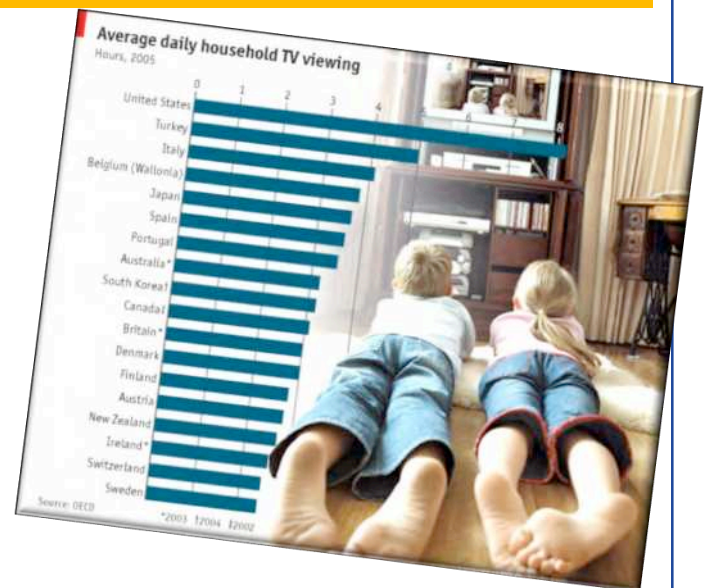
The popular TV shows have historically reflected societal values of the time, but have rarely represented audiences reality. One aspect of the television that is perpetu-

ally changing is the representation of families. In an age of increasing divorce rates, single parents, blended families gay marriages, interracial couples, stay – at – home dads , adoption, common law marriages and overall delay of marriage or children, *Leave it to Beaver* seems a far cry from today. Current TV shows, such as

Modern Family, have attempted to bridge the gap between reality and sitcom by featuring numerous diverse family structures. In this section, students will be able to discuss compare, analyze and produce representations of families that have been



seen on TV between the 1950s and now.



Did you know?

The average Canadian household watches just over three hours of television per day, compared with the United States' eight hours per day.

Key Aspects

Agency: Various values or shifts influence the television industry and their representations of family. The screen writers, producers, directors and actors are all influenced by what is happening around them, which is then shown on screen.

Audience: The intended audiences of sitcoms and TV shows also have a major influence on the depiction of family structures. The audiences of TV shows are dependent on the decade, the day of the week, and even the time of day the show is aired.

Representation: Family structures are represented in different levels of reality. Shows that are dependent on drama may represent a greater sense of reality than a show focused on comedy. Reality is also correlated to the content and context of each episode or series of the different TV shows.



Focus Questions

- ✓ How would you define your own family structure?
- ✓ What does it mean to have a “normal” family?
- ✓ Do you watch television shows that reflect your own life?
- ✓ Do you think that the media often represents reality accurately?



Revolutionary Modern Family

Think about this!

- ✓ What are the advantages of portraying multiple different family structures on tv?
- ✓ Do you notice any consistencies between all tv show families?
- ✓ Why have more diverse family structures become more popular on tv in recent years?

ACTIVITY 1

Critical Analysis of TV families through the decades

1. Have students choose two different tv shows to compare; be sure the shows are from different decades.
2. Students are to create a chart comparing the two shows and decades based on agency , audience and representations (See example below)

Comparison Chart

Topic for comparison	TV Show A		TV Show B
Decade			
Major societal events (i.e. wars, laws, economy...)			
Societal values			
Intended audience (i.e. age range, SES...)			
Family structure (i.e. number of parents, parental relationship, number of children...)			
Reality of family structure			
Reality of family situations (i.e. marriages, pregnancies, school, work...)			

Try these shows:

I love Lucy, Petticoat Junction, My Three sons, The Beverly Hillbillies, Happy Days, Brady Bunch, Partridge Family, The Facts of Life, Different Strokes, The Cosby Show, The Fresh Prince of Bel -Air, Friends, Everybody Loves Raymond, Reba, Two and a Half Men, Modern Family, Friends

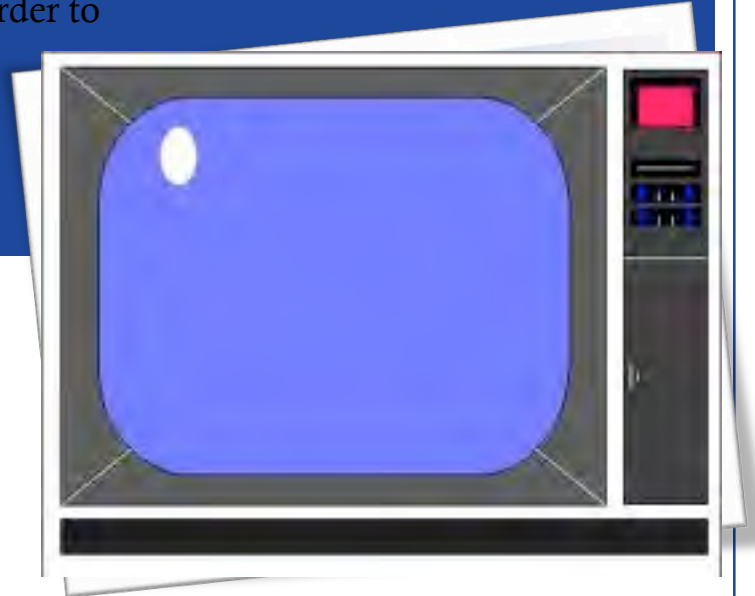


Activity 2

Based on the general findings of activity #1 students will take this information and create two 2-4 minute clips portraying what they feel would be a typical sitcom that is representative of the decade of their choice. Students are free to make up their own show title and characters and portray them in appropriate ways. It is recommended that each clip have the same characters in order to better observe the differences of their behavior between decades.

! page explanation

Using the topics for comparison chart, note the different issues that you felt important to include in your clips and explain why you feel these issues have arisen over the years, also be sure to discuss some of the changes you felt that the individual characters have gone through, as well as the family as a whole



Study guide

LORD OF THE RINGS

Prepared by Lance Peters & Alex McKillop



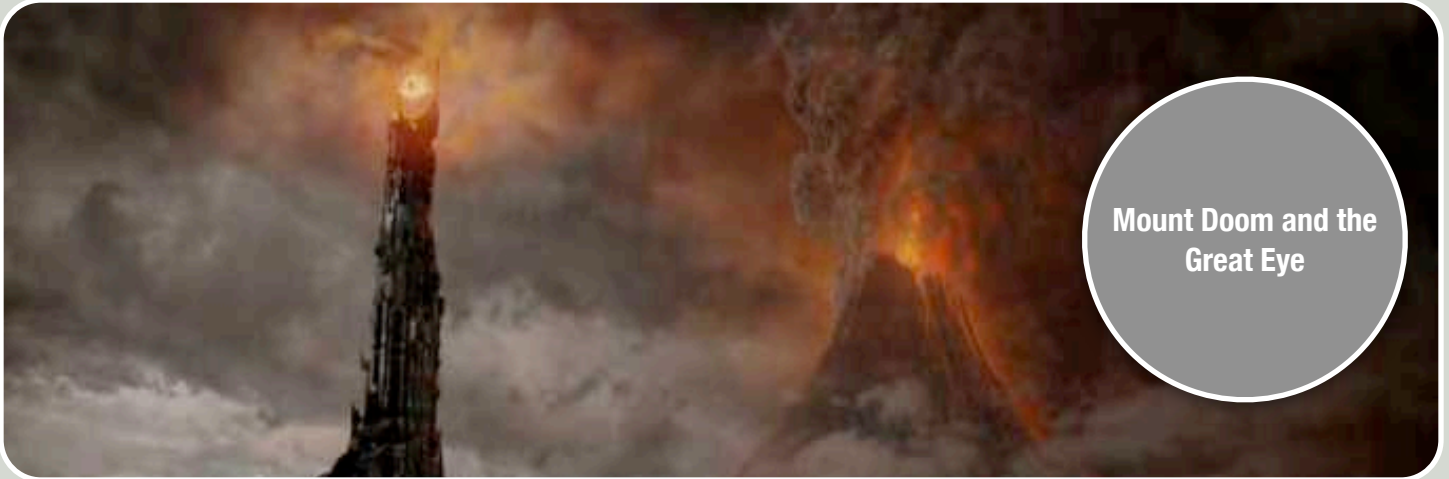
Epic Battle
between
Archetypes. Which
ones are present in
this scene?



Unit 5:

WORLD MYTHOLOGY IN MEDIA

This unit looks at the influences of world mythology in literature and in film. The focus is on the Lord of the Rings Trilogy and the Hobbit and their use of mythology as a storytelling device.



Mount Doom and the Great Eye

TOLKIEN'S HIDDEN AGENDA?

"He has a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment. And now it is clear that he is a black traitor." --Treebeard



Tree of Tales

Tolkien said that all tales are leaves of what he called the Tree of Tales.

What do you think Tolkien wants to emphasize with this quotation? What do you think his opinion is?

According to Tolkien, He did not try to compel the reader to feel a certain way, rather, he tried to write engaging stories that captured the imaginations of the reader. Do you feel that he achieved this? Was he able to hide his bias(es)?

Discuss these questions with a group and write a 1-2 page reflection sharing your thoughts.



The Ring of Power

Can you think of any other stories involving an item that has similarities to the Ring of Power?

ARCHETYPES



Thought Question:

Do you think that Peter Jackson has done the books justice? Do you feel that his remediation has accomplished Tolkien's Vision?

Archetypes Assignment

Define the archetypes as laid out by Joseph Campbell in his work, "The Hero with a Thousand Faces". Use this material to analyze the following characters and how they exemplify a particular archetype and discuss why you feel this is the case.

FRODO
BALROG
SAURON
GOLLUM
GANDALF
PIPPIN AND MERRY
BOROMIR
ARAGORN
ELROND
GALADRIEL

You may present your assignment in whatever format you decide conveys your information best (text, audio, video, powerpoint etc.)

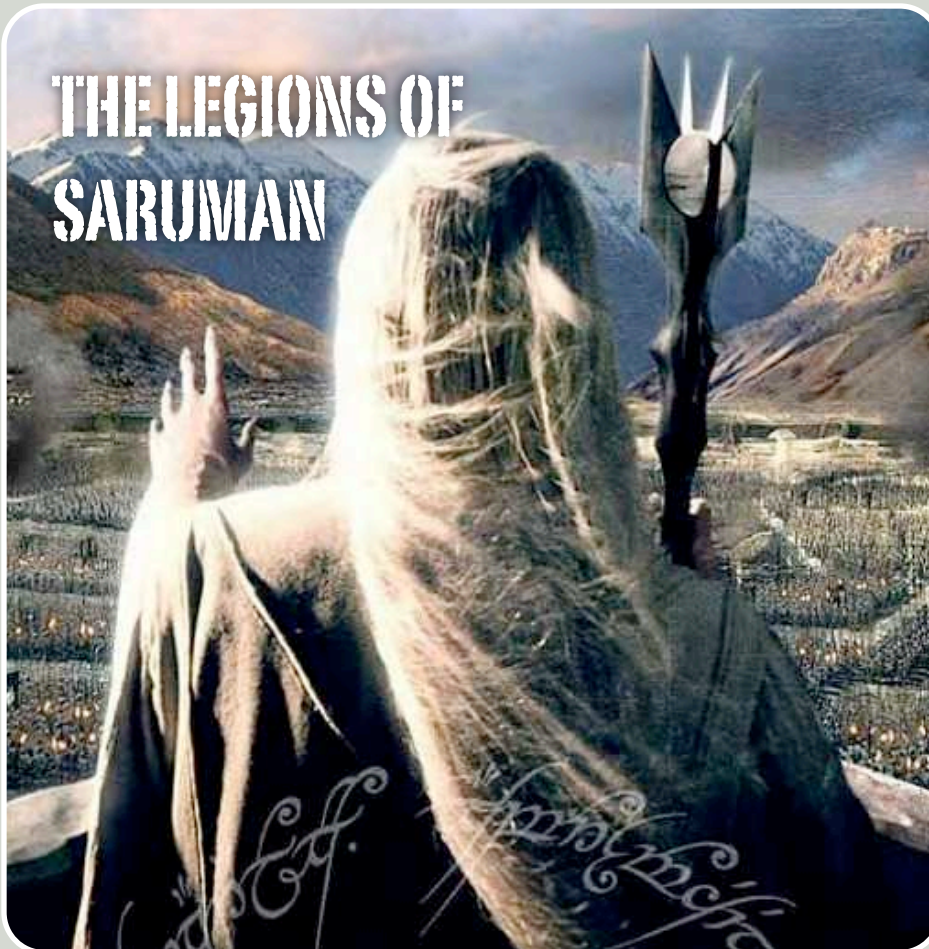
Follow the link below to find:



THE HERO WITH
A THOUSAND FACES

[http://
0775776.student.wdka.nl/
heroathousandfaces.pdf](http://0775776.student.wdka.nl/heroathousandfaces.pdf)





Gandalf vs Saruman

Watch the scene where Gandalf confronts Saruman. In a small group, discuss Saruman's motives for betraying the White Council and the Free People of Middle Earth. Why did he align himself with Sauron? Was he right to do this? What would you have done in his position? Discuss and share your ideas with the class.



Themes in Literature Project- Groups of 3-4

Present a creation that explores one of the major themes of the Lord of the Rings. You may choose your own theme, but it must be approved by your instructor. You may create a poster, video, slideshow, audio track, etc. It must be a multi-modal representation of the theme(s).

Your group must present the project to the class and facilitate a 10-15 minute discussion of your chosen theme.

You will be marked on:

Level of teamwork

-One person doesn't do the whole assignment

Quality of production

-Looks and sounds like you put significant effort into your project


Self and Peer Analysis

-Reflection on your effort and that of your group

Quality of class discussion

-The class is engaged and contributing to discussion

Remember
to use at least
2 forms of
media!

MAIN THEMES	INDUSTRIALIZATION	CAMARADERIE	ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY	HEROISM AND LEADERSHIP
	Watch the scene where Saruman has his orcs destroy the forest around Isengard. Do Tolkien/Jackson portray this in a positive or negative light?	After watching the end of 'The Fellowship of the Ring', think about the sundering of the fellowship. How far will people go to aid a fellow...ship?	Watch the scene which shows Boromir trying to take the ring from Frodo. Do you feel that there is truth to the statement above?	There are many scenes in the film which show various characters taking leadership roles. Who is the hero of this story? Who is the leader?

Unit 5 Prescribed Learning Outcomes:

Image- compare the effect of images developed using two or more media arts technologies

Context- explain personal interpretation of and preferences for selected media artworks

Visual Elements and Principles of Art and Design- compare the application of particular visual elements and principles of art and design in selected media artworks

Materials, Technologies, and Processes- demonstrate an understanding of the evolution of media arts technology used to make images

World Mythology Project

J.R.R. Tolkien bases much of his work on myth from different parts of the world.

Find out what his sources and influences were and talk about some of the mythological origins of his work, characters, places and view of the world.

Present your findings in a multimodal format (more than just one method). You may use video, audio, text, powerpoint, etc.

You will be marked on the following: Quality of production

-Looks and sounds like you put significant effort into your project

Self and Peer Analysis

-Reflection on your effort and that of your group

RESOURCES



The Great Eye of Sauron

http://lotr.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page
<http://www.tolkienprofessor.com/>
Additional features available on DVDs and online.
Joseph Campbell's 'Hero With a Thousand Faces'
<http://www.tolkienociety.org/>

NOT YOUR AVERAGE SUPERHERO MOVIE:

THE DARK KNIGHT

A STUDY GUIDE

STUDY GUIDE

CONTENTS:

Introduction/ Before Viewing	1
After Viewing	2
Themes Analysis	3
The Characters	4
Cinematography	5
Music	5

Curriculum Box

This study guide to accompany *The Dark Knight* has been written for senior secondary students. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, SOSE, Health and Human Development, and Media.

Introduction

The Warner Brothers film *The Dark Knight* was directed by Christopher Nolan and released in 2008. The film won two Academy Awards in 2009, one by Richard King for Best Achievement in Sound Editing, and the other by Heath Ledger for Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role (who passed away in 2008). The movie is a sequel to *Batman Begins* (2005), and continues to follow the story of Batman/Bruce Wayne and his fight against crime in Gotham City.

This movie is one of the highest grossing movies of all time – as of December 2010, the movie had made more than 1 billion dollars worldwide. Although *The Dark Knight* is a superhero movie based on a comic book character, it was unusual in that it received almost universal acclaim from film critics with some even saying that this was a film that could “change comic book movies forever”. Like its predecessor, *The Dark Knight* centres on Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) and his secret identity as Batman, his fight against crime in Gotham City, and his struggle to maintain order and preserve good against the psychopathic criminal known only as The Joker (Heath Ledger). Although on the surface it seems to be a typical comic book movie with plenty of action, this film tells a dark story with compelling characters that contains poignant themes relevant in today's society.

Before viewing the film

Discuss the following questions in the classroom before viewing *The Dark Knight*.

- What is your opinion on vigilantism? Would you want a masked vigilante in your neighbourhood? Why or why not?
- In society, who decides what is considered “good” and “bad”?
- How has Batman been portrayed throughout his history in comic books, movies, video games, etc.?



- Have you seen this movie's prequel, *Batman Begins*? What kinds of storylines are you expecting from this sequel? Which characters are you looking forward to seeing develop?
- Batman's origin story revolves around the murder of his parents and how he sets out to “strike fear in the hearts of criminals”. His origin story has a slightly vengeful tone. What are your thoughts on revenge?
- Search for *The Dark Knight* movie posters online. Pick one or two that you like. Why do these stand out to you? Why do you think these posters were so effective in marketing the movie?

After viewing the film



The Dark Knight, as mentioned earlier, is not your average superhero movie. It does not sacrifice the spectacle and bombast of the usual action movie, but the film really centers around the story—a chilling narrative that outlines what it means to be a human being living in the 21st century.

As Batman and Lt. Jim Gordon (Gary Oldman) enlist the help of new District Attorney Harvey Dent (Aaron Eckhart) in their war against organized crime in Gotham City, the mob bosses are becoming increasingly anxious. Their response to this re-energized assault on their business dealings is to turn to The Joker to deal with the problem of Batman, who has openly endorsed Harvey Dent to be the “White Knight” of Gotham City as the hero that the city needs. Bruce Wayne sees this as an opportunity to perhaps phase out Gotham’s need for Batman as a hero so that he can pursue a relationship with his life-long friend, Rachel Dawes (Maggie Gyllenhaal).

The introduction of The Joker, however, makes things more difficult for both Bruce Wayne and Batman. He introduces an element of chaos into crime, with seemingly no motive behind his attacks on Gotham’s citizens; Batman struggles to come to terms with this ‘new class of criminal’ who makes him question his own rules and ethics. This story of Batman versus Joker, of good versus evil, and of order versus chaos, provides a backdrop for the variety of themes that this movie explores, making it a comic book that goes beyond the conventions of its own genre.

Discuss the following questions with the class:

- Which scenes did you find memorable? What about these scenes (besides the action) made it easy to remember?
- What are some of the themes that this movie seems to be presenting?
- How does the movie poster below address some of these themes?

They Said What?

“Sometimes the truth isn’t good enough, sometimes people deserve more.

Sometimes people deserve to have their faith rewarded.”

- Batman



Media Production

Make your own marketing poster for this film. Be sure to incorporate elements of colour and text that help convey a message or theme of the movie.

Themes

One of the reasons why this movie is powerful and resonates with many people is because it paints a bleak picture of life in the 21st century by bringing in meaningful and relevant themes that challenge the viewer. Some of these themes include:

- good vs. evil
- Law and order vs. chaos and terror
- Terrorism, its uses and impact
- Importance of justice in society

The table on the next page will help us organize these themes with specific examples from the film itself.



Working in small groups, fill in as much of the table below as possible, then share your findings with the rest of the class.

Theme	Examples from the Film
Good vs. evil; hope vs. cynicism	
Batman's moral vision	
Morality and ethics	
Importance of justice in society	
Vigilantes and the legal system	
Order vs. chaos	
Terrorism; uses and impact	
Duality of characters	
Violence as a solution?	

Exploring a few more themes

Morality and Ethics

Many of the characters in the film face difficult decisions that challenge their moral values.

Two scenes in particular illustrate this issue:

- Batman must choose between saving Harvey Dent or Rachel Dawes
- The people on the ferries must make a choice between saving themselves by destroying others or face the risk of all being destroyed.

Why do you think the character decided to make that particular choice? What would you have done in that particular situation?

Vigilantism, Violence, and the Legal System

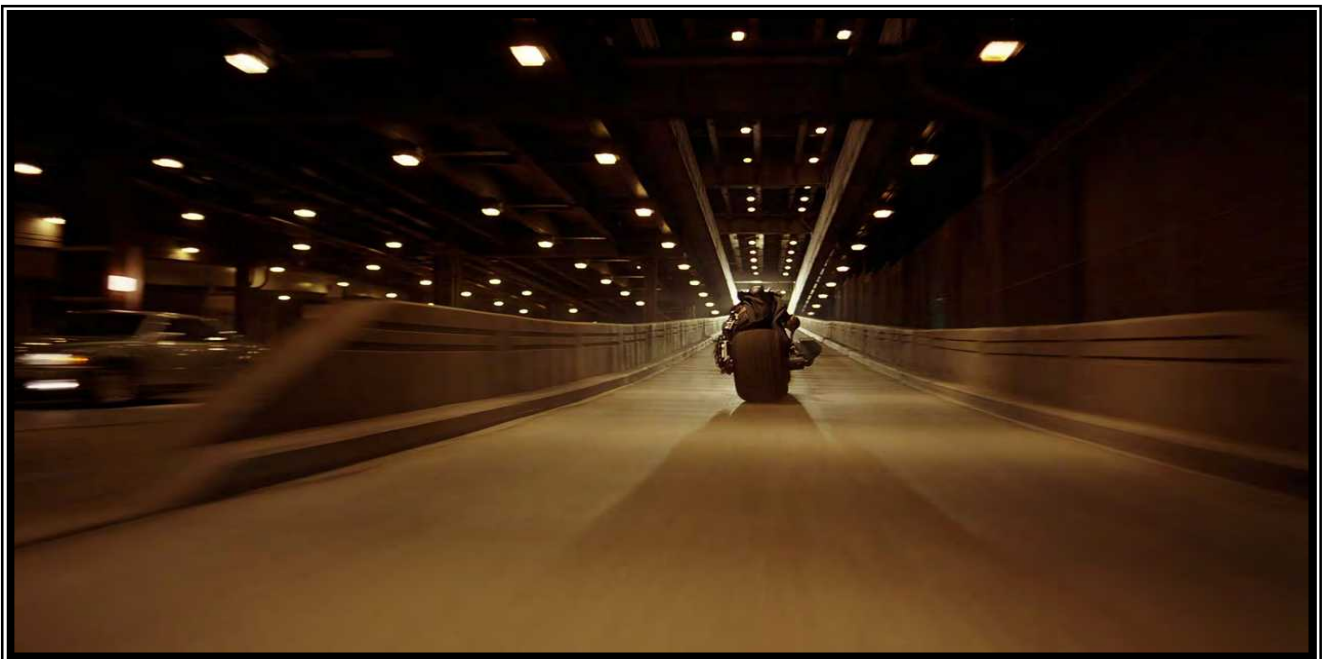
Batman takes matters into his own hands when he sees that the legal system is unable to clean up the streets of Gotham. Violence is his solution, but as a personal code of ethics, he does not kill.

- Do you agree with the actions of Batman?
- List some of the causes that drives Bruce Wayne to be Batman.
- What is the role of corruption in the movie?
- Should prisons serve as places of punishment or places of rehabilitation?
- Is violence as a solution ever justified?

Terrorism

The reason why Batman has difficulty dealing with the Joker is that he is not the sort of criminal Batman is used to dealing with. The Joker is not interested in money or control, but rather in instilling fear and chaos in the citizens of Gotham. Why?

- What does he gain in the dynamic of creating chaos that money or control fail to provide?



The Characters: A Closer Look



"I'm not wearing hockey pads"

The rich themes and symbolism in *The Dark Knight* are really brought to light through the characters and their

interactions with one another. Each character can be thought to represent certain facets of Gotham City, and on a deeper level, facets of the human nature which are present within all of us.

- Work with a partner to fill in the chart below with as much information as possible relating to the characters, and what you think they represent in the movie. Remember there are no wrong answers!
- Compare and discuss your chart

with another pair.

Additional Activity:

- On a large piece of paper or poster, work in small groups and create a mind map which links all the characters, their qualities, and their relationships with each other. Start with names in large writing, and add detailed notes around each. Connect characters and main ideas/themes/plot points with arrows and words to show how they are related.



"In Gotham, you either die a hero, or you live long enough to see yourself become the villain."

- Harvey Dent



"Madness is like gravity.. All it takes is a little push."

- The Joker

Character	Main goals/desires/ driving forces	Represents in society../ A symbol of..	Examples /supporting evidence from the film
Batman			
The Joker			
Commissioner Gordon			
Harvey Dent/ Two-Face			

Batman vs. The Joker

- Remember the interrogation scene with Batman and the Joker. What specific aspects of that scene illuminate some of the larger themes of the film?
- The Joker says to Batman, "You complete me". Discuss what this means in relation to the themes and character archetypes.
- In what ways is Batman not your typical superhero? How is he shown to be a hero? An anti-hero?
- Do you think the Joker is insane? Why or why not?

Read the two quotes above which were repeated several times throughout the film.

- How does the 'prediction' made by Harvey Dent play out for himself? Jim Gordon? Batman?
- How does The Joker's statement apply to the mob bosses? Bruce Wayne? Harvey Dent? The ferry passengers?
- Can you think of any other stories that demonstrate truth of the Joker's statement? Can you apply his statement to any of your own life experiences?

Cinematography

The Dark Knight is unique in that certain parts were filmed on different types of film. The opening scene, and some of the outdoor scenes were filmed on IMAX film, giving both a wide and high perspective. The rest was filmed on regular 35 mm widescreen.

- Why do you think Christopher Nolan chose to film certain scenes in IMAX?
- What kind of psychological effect does experiencing transitions between each type of film have on audiences?
- What general differences do you notice between scenes that are shot outdoors and those shot indoors?
- How does the director make use of light and dark in the film? What effect does it have on audiences experience?



Opening scene (IMAX)



Regular scene (35 mm)



Movie cinematographers use hand-held cameras when they want audiences to feel the excitement of a scene, e.g., in fights or battles. *The Dark Knight* uses hand-held cameras during its many fight scenes, but it uses them at other times as well. One example is the scene in which the Joker invades Bruce Wayne's Harvey Dent Fundraiser. The camera is hand-held when The Joker is terrorizing the guests, but

not when Bruce Wayne disarms a henchman or disappears behind a panel in the wall.

- Why might the cinematographer have used a steady camera for Bruce Wayne but a hand-held camera for The Joker?
- What other scenes did you notice hand-held camera use, and why was it effective?
- Make a list of other scenes from the film where you found that cinematography and/or the use of light and dark was used effectively, and why.

"Upset the established order, and everything becomes chaos. I'm an agent of chaos. Oh, and you know the thing about chaos? It's fair!"
- The Joker

Batman and The Joker have different musical themes. Batman's theme has rapid-bowed, regular strings with strong drumbeats. The melody moves slowly, step-by-step through the scale. The Joker's theme is very unusual. It has no beat and no discernable melody. The theme starts with a low buzz and gradually slides up the scale, moving through notes as it crescendos (gets louder and louder).

Music

- How does Batman's theme music make you feel? How does the music represent Batman's character? Does the music inspire audiences to like Batman?
- How does Joker's theme music make you feel? How does the music represent Joker's character? Does the music inspire audiences to fear the Joker?
- Can you think of other types of musical sounds or structures that might better represent either character?

Advertising and The End of the World

Introduction

Sut Jhally is Professor of Communication at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Founder. His practice has made him a leader in the field of media literacy and visual culture, publishing multiple books and documentaries on the subject. He is critical of the influence the media has over us in every aspect of our lives and strives to engage us in this dialogue to make the general public aware of its dangers.

***Advertising and the End of the World* touches on the major impact of advertising, not only on society but the future of our planet. He offers**

his insight into how advertising influences us to act selfishly, and short-sightedly, ignoring social aspects and environmental consequences of our actions. Our ability to look and plan for the long term is confused by continuous sensory bombardments keeping us thinking of the now. We are encouraged to ignore much of what is important and to prioritize the consumption of goods and services as our primary means of expression, fulfillment and achieving self-worth.

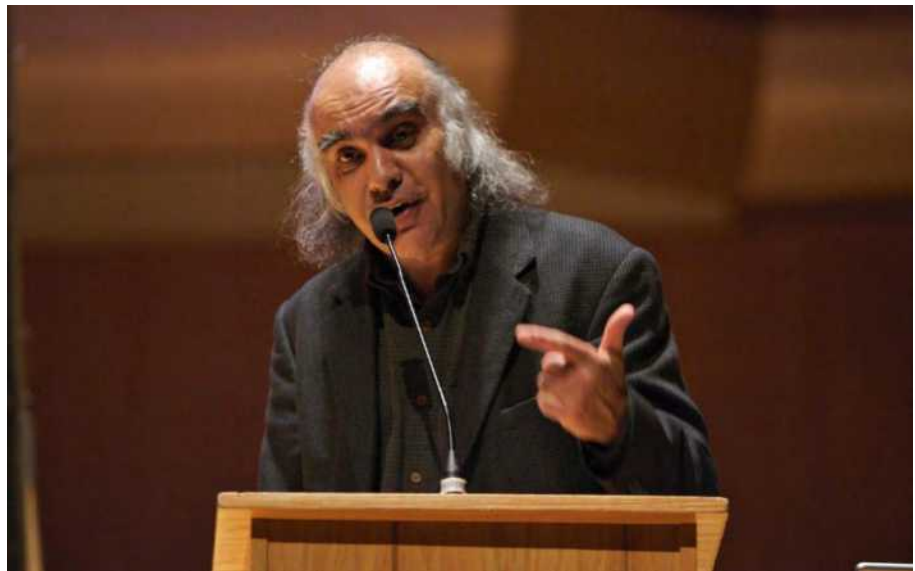


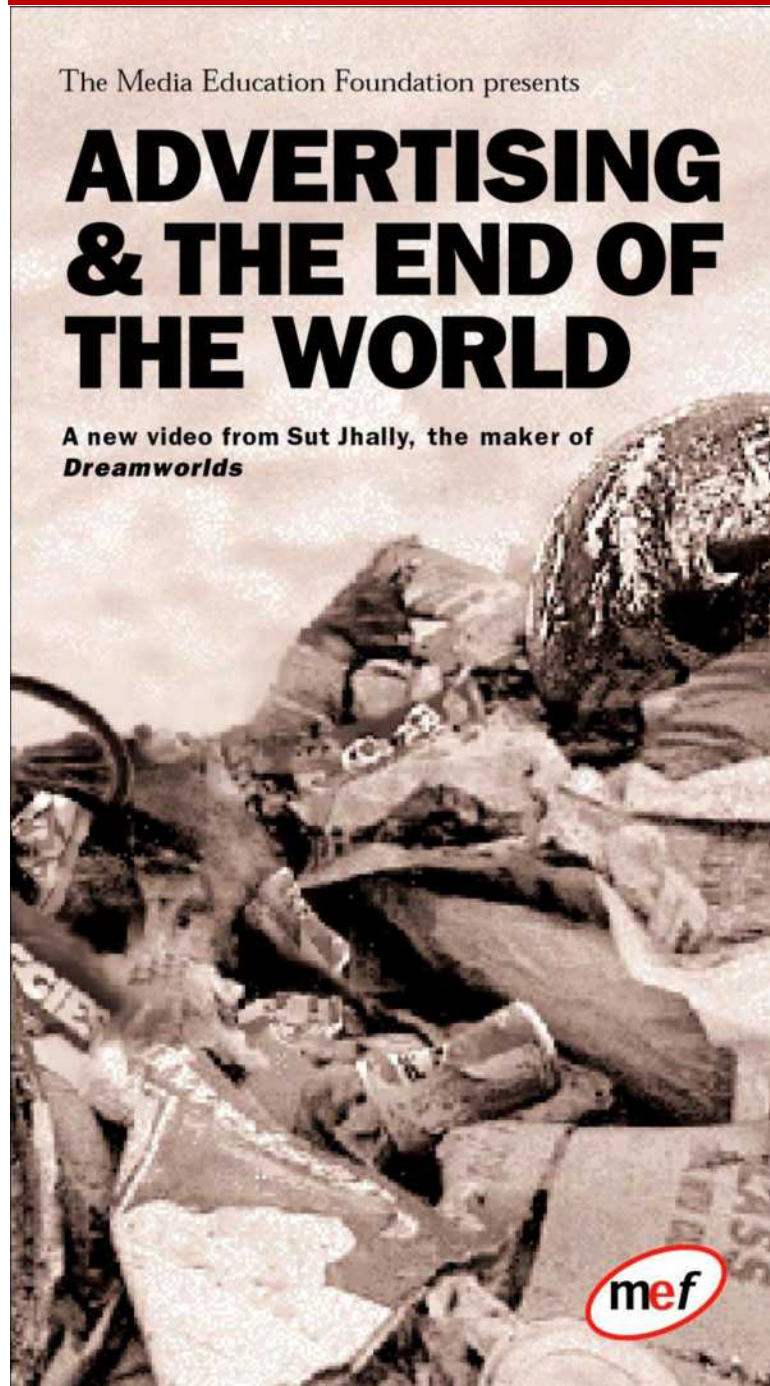
Figure 1 Sut Jhally

Before watching the documentary:

What do you think this documentary is going to tell us?

During the documentary:

(Answer these questions throughout the viewing)



What kind of an impact does advertising have on how we see/perceive the world?

What impact does advertising have on culture?

What are the consistent stories told by the whole range of advertising?

Which values does advertising stress?

If an alien were to come down to earth and analyze what was most important in our culture, what kind of conclusions do you think he would come to?

How was communism critiqued in the *Wendy's* commercial?

Does happiness come from the acquisition of material things?

Do we get happier as a society as we get richer?

With respect to 'quality of life' what is important to most people?

What kind of values does advertising put forth?

What kind of an impact does advertising have on our sense of identity?

Does advertising talk to us as individuals or as a collective?

Does advertising appeal to our sense of individuality or does it speak to our sense of collectivism?



How far into the future can we think?

What strategies do advertisers rely more and more on to make their advertisements stand out?

Why does advertising rely more and more on reaching us on a visceral level and not on a cognitive one?

Why does advertising try to appeal to our emotions?

Does advertising live in the past, the present, or the future?

Questions:

Document what you notice about advertisements and consumption for 2 days. Write down what you notice in television series' or in movies.

How much product placement is there?

How many activities do the characters do that is free and how much requires money?

What about in your own life? Document the unexpected places you find advertisements, and what they are marketing for.

What advertisements promote things we really can't live without or do ourselves?

What are the most outrageous goods being advertised for? What are the most useless frivolities or just wastes of money?

How were they made to look like good purchases?

What are the most environmentally damaging goods you've seen advertised for? What are the alternatives?



Figure 2 Transformers/GM Ad, 2007

Give examples for each question.

How do we become happy?	How does advertising suggest what will make us happy?
What is society?	How does advertising tell us what society is?
What is the future like?	How does advertising portray the future?

“Man's efforts, even at their mightiest, were tiny compared with the size of the planet- the Roman Empire meant nothing to the Arctic or the Amazon. But now, the way of life of one part of the world in one half century is altering every inch and every hour of the globe.” -Bill McKibben

Don't let the Media Fool You:

8 things to keep in mind

This applies to (but is not limited to) television, internet, movies, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, billboards, radio, public forums and so on.

- 1) All media are constructions. Everything you see or hear has been created to impart a certain point of view on a subject. It is often calculated to help enforce an over-arching agenda.
- 2) The media constructs reality. Remember that most of what we know about the world and how it works has been taught to us by the media. This extends from, for example, our concept of beauty to the state of affairs in other countries.
- 3) Audiences negotiate meaning in media. Our “personal baggage” plays a role in how we interpret the media. We will all understand it and internalize it on an individual level.
- 4) Media messages have commercial implications. It is important to keep in mind that media outlets are businesses like any other company: they make money by

selling us their own goods and ideas or by promoting the goods and ideas of others. Large multi-national investment groups own most media sources along with numerous other businesses which they promote through their media outlets.

- 5) Media messages contain ideological and value messages. In different parts of the world media outlets extol certain ideologies which help to maintain a status quo which people generally accept as the norm.
- 6) Media messages contain social and political implications. Certain interests are privileged over others according to who controls the media influencing the outcome of elections, social values and representation. This means that there are other groups who are not being seen or heard such as the poor and the marginalized.
- 7) Form and content are closely related in media messages. The media used to put forth an idea has its own way of portraying an issue.
- 8) Each medium has a unique aesthetic form. Each medium is appealing in a different way.

**Can you come up with examples for each of the rules?
Brainstorm in small groups for each.**

**What would society look like if it wasn't as saturated in advertising?
Express your ideas in at least 2 Paragraphs.**

Think about your values, the way you spend your time, the things you acquire and so on.

Works Cited:

Jhally, Sut (Producer). Advertising and the End of the World [Motion picture]. United States, Massachusetts. 1997. DVD. University of Massachusetts.

Pungente, J. & O'Malley, M. *More than meets the eye: Watching television watching us*. New York: Martin McClelland & Stewart. 1999. (<http://www.medialit.or/reading-room/candas-key-concepts-media-literacy>)

THE OFFICE

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Life After Grad: a Media Study Guide

INTRODUCTION

The Office is a comedic television series on NBC, constructed as a mockumentary on daily office life. It is a comedy based on the BBC series, also called *The Office*. It will begin its eighth season in the fall. The office in the show is a paper company, Dunder-Mifflin, and is set in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The cast is comprised of a host of unique and quirky characters that represent 'typical' people. The format of mockumentary means that the characters are being filmed by a single camera, as if they are being followed by a real documentary crew. The show features one-on-one interviews with the characters, reflecting on the action of the day. *The Office* is currently widely popular, oft quoted, and enjoyed by all ages.

"It's like we're touring Willy Wonka's chocolate factory and dropping off, one by one... Well, guess what? I'm not falling in a chocolate river."

- Andy Bernard



Pam and Jim are on their honeymoon, so there's not the usual balance between 'sane' and 'others.' Toby has mentally checked out since June. It's a very dangerous time. The coalition for reason is extremely weak."

- Oscar Martinez



Learning Outcomes

We will be studying *The Office* in Planning 10, for the next 2 weeks! By the end of this unit you will be able to evaluate how leadership functions in a work setting, how men and women are portrayed in the media in a work setting, and you will work to debunk the stereotypes portrayed in this comedic portrayal of office life.

Before Viewing the Episodes:

Discuss the following questions in the classroom, before viewing *The Office*:

- ▶ What do you plan to do after you graduate from high school?
- ▶ Do you think men and women are treated differently in the workplace? Explain.
- ▶ What is a mockumentary? What is its purpose? How does that differ from a documentary?
- ▶ Is there truth to some stereotypes? Explain.
- ▶ Which stereotypes do you have to face? Are they accurate portrayals of who you are?
- ▶ Would you ever take a job you are not interested in, just for the money? Why or why not?
- ▶ Would you ever agree to be on a documentary? Why or why not?

“Right now, this is just a job. If I advance any higher in this company then this would be my career. And uh, well, if this were my career, I’d have to throw myself in front of a train.”

-Jim Halpert

Meet and Greet

The characters of *The Office* are all unique; each one brings a different element of comedy to the show. Meet the four main characters, and their fellow co-workers at Dunder-Mifflin.

As you become familiar with the characters, fill out this chart with information about each person. The physical description does not have to be detailed, but describe key traits. The character traits should be a list of the most dominant traits, that are unique to the character. The job description should list their title, and some of their duties (and perhaps whether they actually do their duties!). You may choose any quotation you like, that you feel represents the character well. After you have completed the chart make a list of the rest of the office staff.



	MICHAEL SCOTT	DWIGHT SCHRUTE	JIM HALPERT	PAM (BEESLY) HALPERT
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION				
CHARACTER TRAITS				
JOB DESCRIPTION				
FAVOURITE QUOTATION				

Other staff members:

“Guess what? I have flaws. What are they? Oh, I dunno, I sing in the shower? Sometimes I spend too much time volunteering. Occasionally I’ll hit somebody with my car. So sue me - no, don’t sue me. That is opposite the point I am trying to make.”

-Michael Scott

Activity #1: Gender in the Workplace

“IF PAM WANTS TO SHOW MORE CLEAVAGE, SHE SHOULD BE ABLE TO. I ENCOURAGE THAT.”

- MICHAEL SCOTT

Introduction:

Watch two episodes of *The Office*: (“Boys and Girls” – season 2; “Women’s Appreciation” – season 3) In “Boys and Girls,” Jan decides to hold a ‘women in the workplace’ seminar for the ladies at Dunder Mifflin. Michael becomes jealous and upset when he is excluded from the meeting, so he decides to hold his own seminar for the men.

In “Women’s Appreciation,” Phyllis has been flashed by a man in the parking lot. Everyone in the office, except for Michael, becomes quite upset by the incident. Michael finds it humorous. When his employees turn on him for being insensitive, he decides to take the women shopping for what he calls ‘women appreciation.’ Ironically, Michael evokes female stereotypes when he asks the girls for advice.



Let’s Get Thinking:

During the ‘women in the workplace’ seminar in “Boys and Girls,” we have an opportunity to take a deeper look at the women of ‘Dunder Mifflin.’ How are these women different? How are they the same? What is Michael’s view of women and their conversations?

In other episodes, Dwight refers to himself as an ‘alpha-male.’ What characteristics does he have that fit with this description? In “Women’s Appreciation” how do the writers exaggerate these qualities? Now, from the same episode, reflect on Michael’s depiction of his relationship with Jan. What does Michael’s approach to his relationship tell us about him? Compare the two men.

Activity:

The addictive element of this series is its ability to mimic and exaggerate real life situations or attitudes to the point of hilarity. However, it makes one wonder: how much truth is there in these representations of life?



Sit near a group of people during lunch hour or after school and take notes on the conversations and the behaviours of the guys and/or gals. What are they talking about? Feel free to write down a few quotes. (Please do not use actual names or physical descriptions. Your subjects should remain anonymous). What unspoken conversation is happening through facial expressions and eye contact? What is their body language like? On *The Office* we learn more about the characters through what they don’t say. How do these observations of reality relate to the episodes you watched? How does *The Office’s* portrayal of men and/or women match up with what you notice in school? Use PowerPoint or Prezi to present your findings to the class.

Activity #2: Leadership in the Workplace

“THIS MAY BE THE FIRST TIME THAT A MALE SUBORDINATE HAS ATTEMPTED TO GET A MODEST, SCHEDULED RAISE BY THREATENING TO WITHHOLD SEX FROM A FEMALE SUPERIOR. IT WILL BE A GROUNDBREAKING CASE WHEN IT INEVITABLY GOES TO TRIAL.”

-TOBY FLENDERSON

Introduction:

These episodes are part of season six of the series. They both feature power struggles between employees, because of Jim Halpert's recent promotion. Dwight believes that he should have received the promotion to co-manager over his nemesis, Jim. The episodes focus on Dwight's attempts to bring down Jim's leadership. Both episodes also focus on family dynamics, and the battle that the Halpert's have to stay professional in their workplace. We will find out that Pam doesn't always keep it together!



Let's Get Thinking:

Promotion:

► Jim and Michael are given the power to decide how much of a bonus the employees receive.

Do you think that Michael is responsible enough to have this much power? Why or why not? Do you think that Jim is responsible enough to have this much power? Why or why not?

► Make sure you think about what leadership is, and what qualities of leadership that the two men display.

► If you were the boss, how would you have decided to give bonuses? Make a plan, and defend why you made your choice. What qualities of leadership did you display when you made your plan? Which qualities of leadership are the most important to display?

The Lover:

► Dwight attempts to discover a way to get Jim fired, by placing listening devices in his office. He was hoping that this would allow him to take Jim's job, but his plan backfired. Do you think that this was a professional action for Dwight to take? How do you think these actions would make Dwight look to the rest of the office.

► If you really wanted a new job, or a new position at your job, what would you do to gain a promotion? In small groups, make a one page plan and explanation of how you would obtain a promotion.

Production:

In the style of a mockumentary, *The Office* does interviews with the cast each episode. The characters make comments on the events that have occurred that day. In small groups, create an interview segment parodying *The Office*. You should create an interview for at least 2 different characters, commenting on the same situation. It should be between 1 and 2 minutes. Your interviews should show that two different people will have a different outlook on an event. You may use your own creativity to create an event or issue to discuss. Have fun!



After Viewing the Episodes

“THAT SEEMS AWFULLY MEAN. BUT SOMETIMES THE ENDS JUSTIFY THE MEAN.”

- MICHAEL SCOTT

For eight seasons *The Office* has captured millions of viewers with its witty satirical writing, off-beat yet relatable characters and deliciously mundane plot.

Which character are you most like? Why?

What does *The Office* teach you about

* Leadership?

* Romantic relationships?

* Jobs versus careers?

* Friendship?

Explain your answers.

What themes can be found in the episodes you watched? Do you think these themes are applicable to real life?

Would you recommend this series to a friend? Why or why not?

Don't forget what you learned about life in the office, as you go into the work force.



Resources for Further Study:

1. The Office and Philosophy: Scenes from the Unexamined Life. ed. Jeremy Wisniewski.
2. The Office Episode Guide. <http://www.tv.com/the-office/show/22343/episode.html>.



The Corporation:

A Study Guide

Michael Wuensche and John Ames



Learning Outcomes

- Describe concepts of law, including moral vs legal issues
- Describe principles of law, including: rule of law, rule of precedent, and justice
- Evaluate principles of criminal law, including elements of a criminal offence, parties to an offence, and types of offences
- Describe the need for, and the elements of, valid contracts
- Apply critical thinking skills, including questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, and defending a position
- Demonstrate skills and attitudes of active citizenship, including ethical behaviour, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, and collaboration
- Assess environmental challenges facing Canadians
- Describe social, economic, and political developments in the United States in the 1920's

Introduction

The Brick, Wal Mart, Shell Canada when you see these words does the word person come to mind? No? Well *The Corporation* sets out to reveal that in fact these corporations and many others are in fact by law, legal people. In this riveting documentary, world renowned experts and film makers like Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore set out to reveal the history and characters of the corporations that we run into during our lives. The Corporation sets out to prove that the history and characterization of theses “persons” is one closely associated with someone who would be certified mentally dangerous. A person who cuts every corner and tries every thing imaginable to obtain a better bottom line. Everything imaginable to make more money.



Questions to contemplate before watching :

1. Thinking back to what you know generate a list of acts of charities that you know of that were committed by major corporations?
2. From what you know in your local community or neighbourhood describe an event or act that a major corporation has conducted that caused harm or a negative effect on you or your community? Why was it a negative thing?
3. Either by yourself or with other people, come up with as many major corporations as you know and what do they do? Than go through your list and think back to the last 10 years how much or in what capacity have you supported these corporations?
4. From your own understanding do you believe that Canadian Corporations are as prevalent in Canadian society and why?
5. Can we go through life without having any interactions with corporations and can society exist without corporations? Why or why not?

The Corporation

Key Concepts



Categorization

Before, the first scene is even over in The Corporation, people will have placed the generic analysis of categorizing it as a documentary. The automatic assumption with documentaries is that “it’s so boring” or “Nothing happens” but the Corporation really tries to change that generalization. The Corporation is a documentary and does not try to push the boundaries of the documentary genre in any way. However, The Corporation does take the expectations of a typical documentary and push them to there limits. The Corporation brings on heavy hitters like Noam Chomsky and familiar faces like Michael Moore and Phil Knight, CEO of Nike to lay out the facts. For instance, one scene in particular outlines how major corporations set out to control children's frames of mind. So, the major companies go as far as launching studies on nagging and what makes children's nagging the most effective. The Corporation as a documentary really paints a complete picture of the development of the corporation from just a group of people getting together into what its become today a legal person which would be certified insane by human standards.

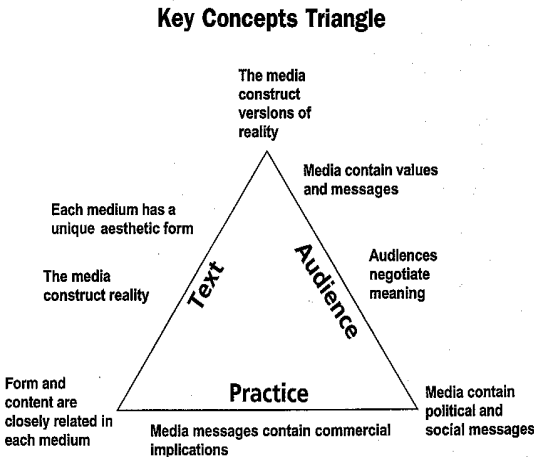
Language

The language in The Corporation is focused and determined. If there was a single premise to the language used in describing The Corporation its “evil”. The mood of the documentary through the audio, images, and information presented is damning and narrates a gloomy story as The Corporation unfolds. By the end of this documentary audience will come away with thoughts and notions that the major companies that dominate our lives today are not there for us but for money and



Representation

Just living major corpora- twice about it. tion another real- The major corpo- ing more and bet- facet of our lives. that distorts and wards this under- like Wal-Mart run power and money watching this get sucked into line between real- presented in The



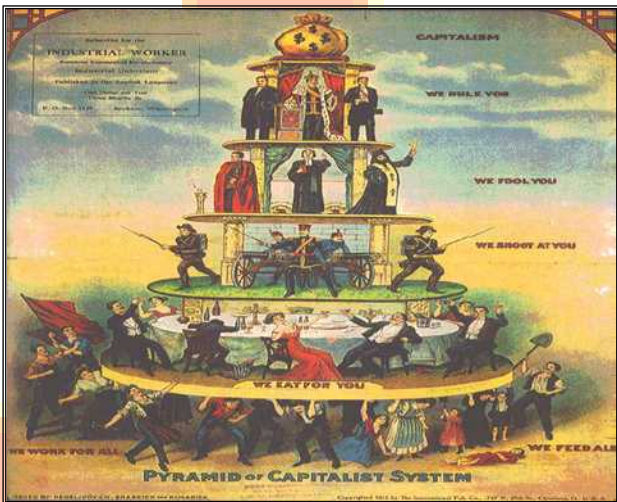
our lives everyday we run into tions and never really think After watching The Corpora- ity is constructed of our lives. rations of the world are seek- ter ways to dominate every Every scene is setup in a way manipulates our thinking to- standing that corporations on the understanding of and we are there fuel. While documentary at times you will this dark reality that blurs the ity and what the producer has Corporation.

The Corporation

Activities

Prosecution of a corporation:

As a class, select a scenario wherein a corporation has harmed society and formulate class action the form of a tribunal to be a judicial panel prosecution and decides each role), a litigants (four class representing the corporate directors), reporters / research- the class action will rough scripting and proceedings of the then, through a se- choice, a 15 minute



criminal charges. In nal, chose students (three judges), fence (two advo- jury (twelve jurists), action citizens rep- munity, and two cor- and media (five re- ers). All parties in contribute to a participation of the criminal charges, lection of any media documentary report

Skype conference call with directors and producers: In groups of six, students will generate 2 to 3 expert subject matter questions for the directors, producers, and / or contributors to The Corporation to shed greater detail on the creation of the film.

Such questions may include subjects such as: 'why the film was made'; 'is there an alternative model to laws which empower corporations'; 'does 'fair trade' matter'; 'what would a sequel movie to The Corporation look like'; and etc. Be inventive – ask illuminating detailed questions.

Using a web cam, projector, and amplified speakers, students will self-direct themselves to organize on how.

to contact and make arrangements to conduct a Skype conference call with one or two of the film's directors or producers - Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott, Joel Bakan - and / or main chael Moore, Barlow, Niomi tions generated be used to gen- no means limit



After the Skype student will write a how the call in- their under- Students will tion which was

conference call each stu- personal reflection on formed or did not inform standing of the topic. ask one additional ques- not treated in the confer-

Questions After Viewing

1. What freedom from liability does the term “limited company” give to contemporary corporations?
2. In groups of three to four students, identify five or six main features and responsibilities an 'ideal' corporation should hold.
3. Discuss with a class what functions modern corporations serve in society; are corporations necessary for societies and people to live? Do they do more harm than good? What changes could be made to improve them?
4. How comfortable or what level of support did you feel knowing that corporations have patented living organisms and specific genes? What would you do to change?
5. During the movie we learn that major corporations hire “spies” to plant subliminal messages and product placements in our everyday life? Do you support this practice? Why or why not?

The Corporation

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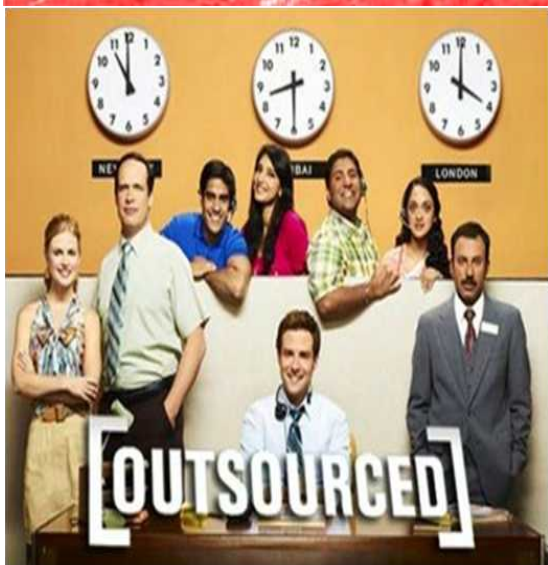
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MICHAEL BUI & JENNIFER NEFF

“Outsourced”..Laughs at whose expense?

Curricular Box: This study guide is designed to accompany episodes 1-5 of NBC’s sitcom “Outsourced”. The materials are designed for grade 11 and 12 students. There are curricular connections to: Socials 11, Social Justice 12, Tourism, Sociology, Psychology, Business, Marketing and Media Studies.

Introduction:

“Outsourced” debuted on NBC in September 2010 as a 30-minute sitcom. Upon completion of 22 episodes in May 2011, NBC did not renew the series for another season. The basic premise of the show was from a film by the same name produced by ShadowCatcher Entertainment that was shown at numerous film festivals in 2006. The show has been described as a single American trying to explain American culture as he tries to understand Indian culture. Elements from the sitcom include perpetuation of stereotypes, culture shock and ethnocentrism that comes about from a North American perspective.

A study of the series includes close examination and viewing of the following episodes:

Episode 1: Pilot

Episode 2: Measure of a Manmeet

Episode 3: Party of Five

Episode 4: Jolly Vindaloo Day

Episode 5: Touched by an Anglo

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to recognize the perpetuation of cultural stereotypes, the concept of culture shock and what it means to be ethnocentric
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of media literacy, production, and the concepts associated with different forms of media
- Students will analyze the impact of globalization and corporate outsourcing in the Third World

Before viewing the shows:

Ethnocentrism/stereotypes

- Where do we learn to act/behave (how do we know what is right and wrong)?
- Is this the same anywhere in the world?
- Ethnocentrism is when one believes that their own culture is essentially better than another’s and views the world through this lens. Brainstorm examples of when you have been ethnocentric.
- America is said to be a „melting pot” of ethnicities. What does this say about Americans’ expectations of immigrants? Does Canada expect the same?
- What is „uniquely” American? What is „uniquely” Canadian?

Media

- How do you choose a TV show to watch?
- What do you expect out of a 30 minute comedy?
- Brainstorm what other popular sitcoms have exaggerated representations?

Globalization

- Outsourcing is an economic term that refers to work that could be done by employees being contracted out to a 3rd party for a significant period of time. In recent years, many American companies have outsourced their call centres/customer support to 3rd parties in locations outside America. Brainstorm pros and cons of „outsourcing”.
- How is the idea of outsourcing related to the concept of globalization?





After viewing the episodes

At first, the show may seem to be about using racial and cultural stereotypes for humour and jokes but in actuality, the sitcom does well in educating the “western” audience of Indian culture. As the character of “Todd Dempsy” begins to understand a different culture and shed his own perceptions about others, so too does the audience.

“Outsourced” is set in Mumbai, India and the show is an example of the reach of globalization through outsourcing of employment, the growth in technology and media, and the expanding role of large corporations.

Ethnocentrism/stereotypes - Discuss

- Did you find the episodes funny?
- Did the humour require background knowledge?
- Were the laughs at someone’s expense?

A number of stereotypes are presented in the show—explain how each is presented to the audience

India	Sacred cow Indian Food Arranged marriages Caste divisions Crazy traffic/taxis The nerd	
America	Football Guns Promiscuous women Meat obsession Alcohol abuse	
Aussie	Alcohol abuse Partying Flirtation	



Themes & Issues

Working in groups of 4, compile a rough character sketch in the boxes provided

Character	What stereotypes does each character portray? Provide examples.
Todd Dempsy	
Rajiv Gidwani	
Manmeet	
Asha	
Gupta	
Madhuri	
Charlie Davies	
Tonya	

- Was there misunderstandings between people of the same culture?

First Impressions & Opening Credits

- After viewing the opening credits – how does it compare to the opening credits of other American sitcoms?
- What kind of text and images are visible or stand out to you?



After viewing continued

Media

- What audience do you think this sitcom targets?
- What about the technology/techniques impacted your viewing? How did you make meaning of what you saw?
- How does this show represent different groups of people?
- What kind of music is heard in this show? How does that impact the audience?

Globalization

- How did the show deal with the loss of American jobs due to the outsourcing to India?
- How does outsourcing affect living standards of the everyday Indian population?

Episode Analysis

Episode 1

Religious difference: In this scene, Todd is surprised to see a cow outside his office on the street. The other people at the office do not seem to think of this as out of the ordinary.

- What are some other examples of religion seen throughout the episode?
- Are these strictly examples of the Hindu religion or are there examples of other religions as well? If so, list some examples.
- Do any of the religious and cultural differences surprise you? Why or why not?

Episode 1 & Episode 4

Social Stratification: In the scene where someone from the "A Team" group of Indians uses a country American accent, it is shown as an example of how the "A Team" is different from the "B Team." This is seen further in the competition between groups in episode 4.

- What other factors might differentiate the people in the "A Team" from the "B Team?"
- What do the different accents used by the "A Team" say about them?
- A number of large corporations are listed in these scenes as part of the "A Team's" employment. Explain how these corporations might have ended up in India. What kind of impact does this have on the working population of Third World countries?

Episode 2

The Head Shake: Throughout the second episode, different characters make use of what is described as the "Indian Head Shake." By the end of the episode, Todd has incorporated the "Indian Head Shake" into his own interaction with others.

- Why might many employees use the "Indian Head Shake" with Todd? Would you consider this as specific to interactions with Todd or anyone in India?
- Consider the explanation provided by Asha for what is known as the "Indian Head Shake." What might this explain to you about Indian society and people?
- Can you think of any similar gesture or movements in your own culture that has the same meaning? Explain.



Episode 3

Arranged Marriage: Consider the scenes where there are discussions over Asha's arranged marriage. Todd has a difficult time comprehending how Asha's character can be a part of such an arrangement.

- The character of Asha is seen as the most "western" of the regular Indian coworkers. Does this have an impact on how arranged marriages are perceived from the show?
- Compare and contrast the characters of Asha and Tonya in their stance on marriage and dating. How are they similar or different?
- Why might people support or be opposed to arranged marriages today? Explain.

Episode 4

Jolly Vindaloo Day: In these scenes, Todd's employees trick him into believing that there is a religious holiday when there is no such holiday. It is made in an attempt to provide Rajiv's character time to impress a future in-law.

- Why did Todd so readily believe that there was a religious holiday?
- What possible problems might appear if western corporations do not adhere to religious holidays in the countries they operate in?
- Judging the scene in which Rajiv's future in-law was inspecting his workplace, what might this tell you about social class and marriages in India? How accurate do you believe this depiction to be?

Episode 5

Sexual or Cultural Harassment: In these scenes, Todd is accused of sexual harassment as he tries to raise awareness about the issue. The complaints stem from Todd's physical contact with employees, often a hand on the shoulder.

- What might the differences between American and Indian comforts with physical proximity and touch tell you about India? Consider the different reactions from people when they watched the video on harassment.
- When Todd was trying to figure out who was making the sexual harassment complaints, why do you think he called only the female employees?
- With expanding corporations and international offices, how important is it to understand different cultural norms? Why?

Activities:

Renaming

After having watched the episodes, based on your observations, rename each of the 5 episodes into a title you feel better represents the theme or focus of the episode. After having done so, share your titles with the person sitting beside you and explain the reasoning you used to come up with the titles. Be prepared to share with the class!





Ethnocentrism PSA

In “Outsourced,” you notice a great deal of ethnocentrism at play from Todd as well as other characters. Stories repeatedly focused on the cultural misunderstandings between characters and the situations they found themselves in. In groups of 4-5, you will need to create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) geared towards reducing ethnocentrism and correcting cultural misunderstandings. Be careful how you decide to portray cultural misunderstandings.

Requirements:

- 30-60 seconds
- A digital camera or camcorder (if lacking, this might be done as a live performance)
- Computer video editing software
- A cultural misunderstanding/ethnocentric idea to be approved prior to filming
- Create a script
- Extension – turn the script into a storyboard

Before embarking on this activity, you must ask yourselves:

- What is a PSA?
- What makes a good PSA? (refer to http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/docs/policies/public_service/index.shtml)
- What is the purpose of a PSA? What matter are you trying to shed light on?

Activities continued

Canadian Novelties

As “Outsourced” is focused on the selling of American novelties, apply your own “Canadian” spin to things by creating your own Canadian Novelty Catalogue. In groups of two, create an online catalogue of 6 different “Canadian” novelties and a commercial

You must include in your assignment:

- A picture or drawing of each novelty accessible online
- A minimum of 2-3 sentence description of what the novelty is and why it is a novelty
- 1 video commercial between 30-60 seconds of a single novelty of your choice

Before embarking on this activity, you must ask yourselves:

- What is a novelty
- What makes a good novelty?
- Who would you sell this novelty to? (Know your audience, target and how your novelty is represented)

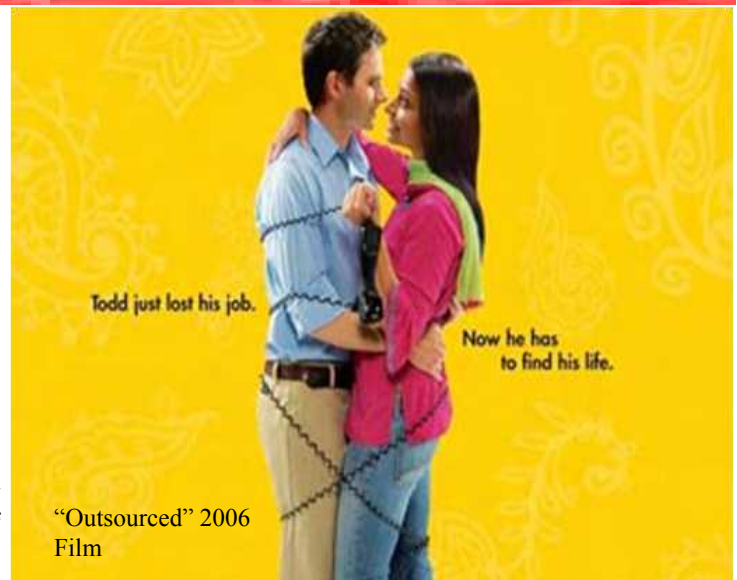


Topics for Extended Responses.

- “Outsourced” was not renewed for a second season with NBC. Discuss the reasons why television shows are not renewed. Can it sometimes have to do with more than ratings? Explain.
- If “Outsourced” were a training video for other multinational corporations looking to outsource departments to different countries, explain how this could be used as a tool for learning for companies and employees.
- Brainstorm what technologies made it possible for companies to “outsource” their work to foreign countries. What consequences might this have on the employees and economy of the home country?
- Today, corporations exercise a great deal of control over the Third World countries they operate in. Create a list of pros and cons to the presence of corporations in Third World Countries.
- How does the show represent the issue of “outsourcing” to the audience? What does it do well in explaining to viewers and what might it leave out? Discuss.
- Offensive or comedic? Based on what you have seen, explain how this can be offensive or comedic?

Further Viewing and Exploration:

- “Mumbai Calling” - British sitcom with similar premise



- NBC “Outsourced” website
<http://www.nbc.com/outourced/>
- Novak, Peter. “Canadian-made games and the question of Outsourcing.” *CBCNews*.
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/story/2011/02/04/f-video-game-developers-subsidies.html>
- “Outsourced” - 2006 film in which the sitcom is based
- “The Corporation” - Film Documentary that takes a close look at the growing power of corporations, including the dark side of outsourcing





Teacher's Notes

- This study guide is designed to accompany the documentary Food Inc.
- It contains activities, critical thinking questions, and suggestions, which can be used in a variety of courses including social studies, planning, foods, media studies.



Introduction

The movie Food Inc. (2008) directed by Robert Kenner describes how food products are grown and processed in the complex food industry dominated by a few multinational corporations. The film focuses on the production of beef, chicken, pork, corn, and offsetting of certain practices by the growing organic industry. The filmmakers interview the farmers who work for the big corporations as well as independent farmers who seek change in the way we produce our food. Food safety and the dangers of E. Coli are addressed as more cases pop up each year despite the existence of technology capable of regulating such contamination. There is a great emphasis on animal, worker, and consumer rights as well as advice on how to make you consumer habits make a difference.

Learning Outcomes and Goals:

- Identify and apply appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes when making choices and defending decisions
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward lifelong health and well being
- Demonstrate a willingness to participate independently and interdependently in a productive environment
- Use appropriate vocabulary when discussing issues in the film
- Use product labels to identify and compare the nutritional value of a variety of food products
- Identify sources of food-borne illnesses (e.g., salmonella, botulism, E. coli 0157:H7, staphylococcus)
- Gain an understanding of how the food industry works
- Identify what actions can be taken to effect change

Before watching the film...

[Teacher's Notes](#)

- Before watching the movie, take the group to a supermarket or food store near the school.
- This activity can also be assigned for homework or you can ask students to bring one item of food from home with a label indicating country of origin.

Activity 1. Where does our food come from and what is it made from? Scavenger Hunt

Task 1: find food items from 5 different countries

Task 2: find 5 (non-perishable) food items containing corn or corn syrup

Task 3: go to the fresh and frozen meat section – try to determine what specific locations or regions the chicken, beef, and pork products come from.

Discussion: What do your findings tell you about the food we consume? What effects does this have on production, distribution, and consumption of food?

[Teacher's Notes](#)

- Food Inc. is divided into sections with titles. After each title pause the movie and review discussion questions and preview the next set of questions
- Or have students be responsible for different sets of questions to answer in groups after the film.
- Try to have one student per section in each group.

While watching the film...

Chapter 1 - **FAST FOOD TO ALL FOOD**

1. Describe what you would find in your supermarket
2. What products would not have been on the shelves 50 years ago?
3. How did McDonald's change the way people eat?
4. Which food companies control the American beef industry? How much of it do they control?
5. Do you think it is misleading for meat companies to use the image of traditional farms on their packaging? Why or why not?
6. What does the following statement mean to you? "In a way we're not producing chickens, we're producing food."
7. Why did so many people in the south switch to chicken farming?

Chapter 2 - **A CORNUCOPIA OF CHOICES**

1. Name 5 products you did not know contained corn.
2. Why had corn become the main feed for farmed animals?
3. What does CAFO stand for?
4. What are some consequences of feeding farm to cattle?

Chapter 3 - **UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES**

1. What is e. coli?
2. Have you ever heard of a recall on any product? What product? Why was it recalled?
3. According to the film, who controls the food regulatory industries in the US?
4. Have food safety inspections increased or decreased over the last few decades? Why do you think this is?
5. What is your opinion of the slaughterhouse machines? Do you think they have changed greatly from 100 years ago? 20 years ago?



Chapter 4 - **THE DOLLAR MENU**

1. What are some of the reasons people shop on the "dollar menu" at fast food restaurants?
2. Why is fast food cheaper than fruits and vegetables?
3. The film says that fast food being cheaper than fruits and vegetables is not an accident. What does this mean? Who benefits from this situation?
4. What are the 3 tastes people now seek out?
5. Of those people born after the year 2000, how many people will have diabetes?

Chapter 5 - **IN THE GRASS**

1. How have working conditions changed in the meat industry over the past 100 years? Why?
2. What does "they have the same mentality towards workers as they do towards hogs" mean to you?
3. The film shows illegal Mexican workers being arrested and deported. How does this effect workers' lives?
4. Why are there no repercussions for the people hiring illegal immigrants?

Chapter 6 - **HIDDEN COSTS**

1. What are some environmental, societal, and health impacts of the current factory farming system?
2. How does Gary Hirshberg justify selling his product to Walmart?
3. What is your opinion on food companies like Coke and Colgate accumulating organic food based companies?
4. Do you buy organic food? Why or why not?



Chapter 7 - **FROM SEED TO THE SUPERMARKET**

1. Why does Monsanto not allow farmers to save their seeds?
2. What impact does this have on farmers?
3. What impact does this have on our food supply?
4. How was Monsanto tied to both the Clinton and the Bush administrations?

Chapter 8 - **THE VEIL**

1. What do food companies gain from not putting labels on food?
2. Explain how it is illegal to criticize food companies in the US
3. Why was Oprah Winfrey sued by the beef industry?
4. What are the cheeseburger bills?



Chapter 9 - **SHOCKS TO THE SYSTEM**

1. How has the US food industry affected world food supplies?
2. Can you think of any world current events that have been brought on by food shortages?
3. Do you think there is enough food to feed everybody? If yes, why are there so many hungry people? If no, what can be done to make sure there is enough food for everybody?
4. How do your consumer habits effect change?

After watching the film...

Activity 2:

ORGANIC vs NON-ORGANIC FOOD TASTE TEST!

1. Decide on a definition for the term organic
2. You'll need enough fruit of the same variety for the whole class (or you can have a couple of volunteers). Half the fruits should be organic and the other half should be non-organic.
3. Label one "A" and one "B".
4. Pass the fruit around and have the students inspect them. Which one has a deeper color? Which is heavier? Shinier? More uniformly shaped?
5. Have students think it over, and based on what they've learned about organics, decide which apple they think is the organic one. Write down the results and the justifications.
6. Next, slice the apples and have everyone try a bite of each. Again, write down any observations. Besides the subjective question of which tastes better, try to decide objectively which is juicier, and how the color inside differs, how many seeds are present, etc.
7. Have students guess which apple is organic
8. Reveal the organic apple and see who was right!

Discussion: What has the taste test taught you about organic foods?
What are the pros and cons of buying organic food?

Activity 3:

To help you make responsible changes in food consumption:

- In pairs write a list of the fruits and vegetables you consume the most
- Use the Internet to determine their season
- Create a one-day meal plan for each season

Winter	Spring
Fall	Summer

Further study...

To learn more about the issues brought up in Food Inc. or to read what companies like Monsanto had to say in response, visit these websites:

<http://www.foodincmovie.com/>

<http://www.foodincmovie.com/spread-the-word.php>

<http://www.monsanto.com/food-inc/Pages/default.aspx>

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE OUR FOOD SYSTEM

1. Drink fewer sodas and other sweetened beverages.

Fact: If you replace one 20 oz soda a day with a no calorie beverage (preferably water), you could lose 25 lbs in a year.

2. Eat at home instead of eating out.

Fact: Children consume almost twice (1.8 times) as many calories when eating food made outside the home.

3. Support the passage of state and local laws to require chain restaurants to post calorie information on menus and menu boards.

Fact: Half of the large chain restaurants do not provide any nutrition information to their customers.

4. Tell schools to stop selling sodas, junk food, and sports drinks.

Fact: Over the last two decades, rates of obesity have tripled in children and adolescents aged 6 to 19 years.

5. Meatless Mondays....Go without meat one day a week.

Fact: An estimated 70% of all antibiotics used in the United States are given to farm animals.

6. Buy organic or sustainable foods with little to no pesticide use.

Fact: According to the EPA, over 1 billion pounds of pesticides are used each year in the U.S.

7. Protect family farms, visit your local farmer's market.

Fact: Farmers markets enable farmers to keep 80 to 90 cents of each dollar spent by the consumer.

8. Make a point to know where your food comes from – READ LABELS.

Fact: The average meal travels 1500 miles from the farm to your dinner plate.

9. Tell Congress that food safety is important to you.

Fact: Each year, contaminated food causes millions of illnesses and thousands of deaths in the United States.

10. Demand job protections for farm workers and food processors, ensuring fair wages and other protections.

Fact: Poverty among farmworkers is more than double that of all wage and salary employees.

www.takepart.com/foodinc



Media Study Guide:

AMC’s Mad Men



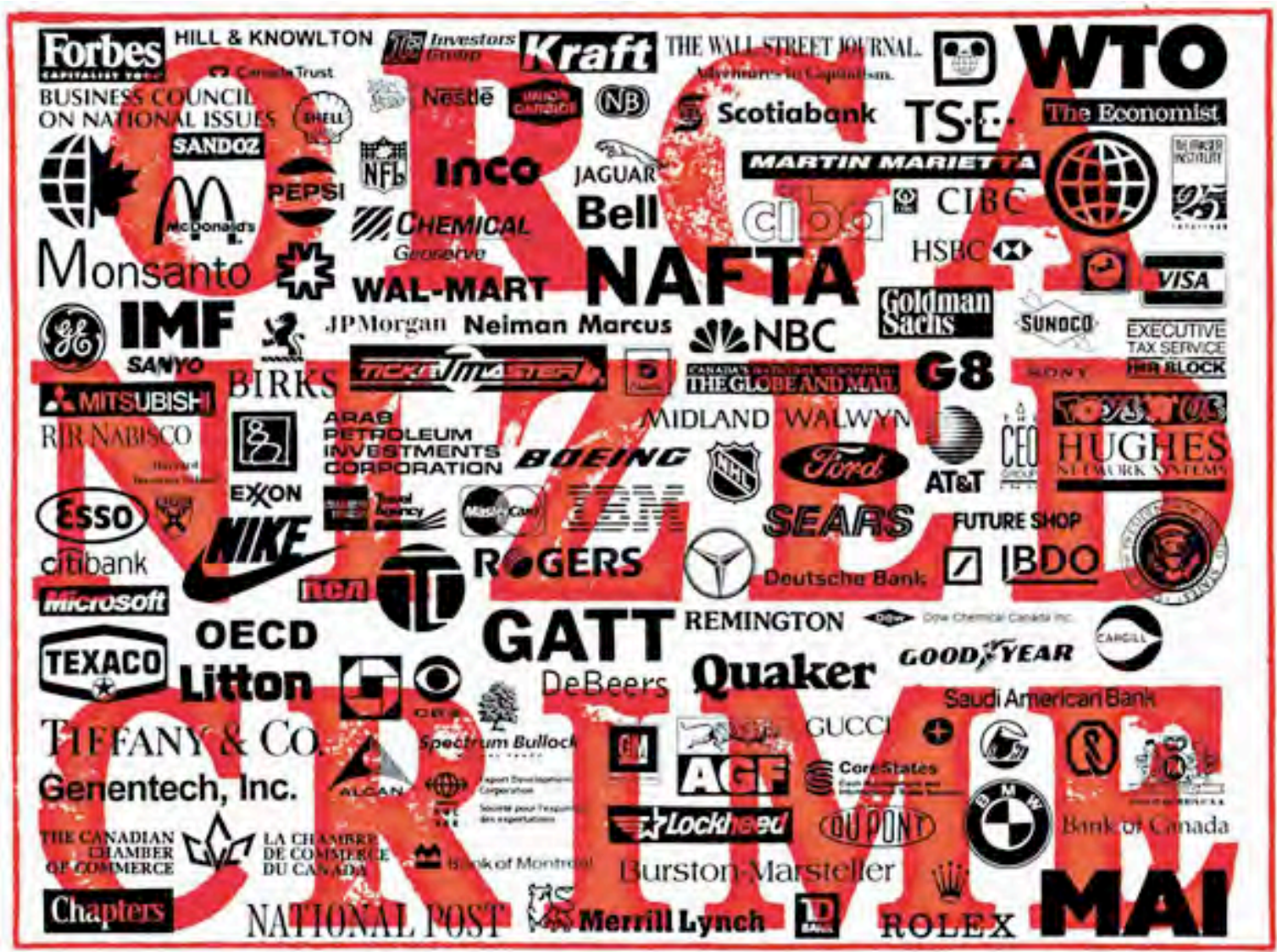
A. introduction: Mad Men follows the fictional ad agency of Sterling – Cooper, in 1960's New York. During the hey-day of advertising, the characters live and breath in the world of make believe, researching, constructing and selling complex campaigns to some of the world's biggest companies. Watching the thought processes, skills and techniques used by protagonist Don Draper and his team of ad-men, students can learn a lot about how ads and ad campaigns are derived. By following the 4 season series, not only do the characters become more and more conflicted from the selling of commodities, the advertising business becomes more and more convoluted. This blast from the past, award winning television series shows the inner workings of the advertising machinery. Youths are exposed to advertising in various forms over a thousand times a day, thus learning about their construction becoming an integral part of any young media students' curriculum and essential learning outcomes.

B & D. Key Concepts & Focus

Questions: Advertising – what goes into producing an ad? What goes into producing an ad campaign? What is creative about advertising? What are advertising standards ? What is a conflict of interest? Ads as small stories. What is the difference between various types of media (print, radio, TV)? How do we buy advertising? What are ads really saying? Who gets the final say and what is in or who makes the ads? Advertising as a business trying to sell us things we don’t need, why..? What concepts can be used to enhance or make an ad more effective (sex, increased status, adventure, thrill seeking, health, wealth and wisdom, happiness in acquiring things).



Advertising as story telling. Advertising as modern myths and fables. Why is Don Draper conflicted, and what does the advertising featured in the show say about the social norms of the time period & of OUR time period?



Why do Don Draper’s strategies appeal to advertisers? What do Pete Campbell’s compromises say about his character and the ‘new era’ of advertising? What do Peggy Olson and Joan Holloway’s roles within the company say about women in advertising and gender roles in advertising?

Activities:

E. 1) Students will produce their own ads (in partners) and can be either print, tv or radio ad based on the myths and story telling techniques of advertising learned in the course. Then students will then be assigned one of their classmates ads and do a 'ad-busters' style parody of the ad.



1. What do you think Coke means by the "Real Thing" Slogan? Discuss in partners.

2) Students will choose a corporation or company that has been around since the turn of the last century (Gillette, Coke, Ford, etc.) and track how advertising was done during Bert Coopers Time (20's – 30') Don Drapers time (50's – 60's) Pete Campbells Time (70s – 80's) and modern times (90s – 2000s). What has changed in the narration of the product? What has changed in style? What is the message being portrayed?



2. Who do you think is the target audience of this Gillette ad? why?

Further Resources:

Ad Busters

Adweek Magazine,

adstandards.com (Canadian advertising),

AMC.com (show website),

Book (guerilla advertising),

Book (advertising on the internet),

Copyranter (blog),

Adrants (blog),

Book: *Buying In: The Secret Dialogue Between What We Buy and Who We Are.*

Don't forget that our students can also serve as a valuable resource to us. Ask them what they are interested in, as media consumers, give them an opportunity to provide feedback to you to help you shape the content, lessons, and course for the future.



“People tell you who they are, but we ignore it - because we want them to be who we want them to be.”

-Don Draper (Mad Men)

AVATAR

A Study Guide

This study guide to accompany *Avatar* has been written for secondary students. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Social Studies, Planning 10, Media Studies, and Biology.

About *Avatar*

Avatar is a Twentieth Century Fox film written and directed by James Cameron. With an estimated budget over \$200 million, *Avatar* brought in more than \$77 million in the opening weekend, and more than \$2 billion in the first month. In 2009 *Avatar* received 3 Academy Awards including Art Direction, Cinematography, and Visual Effects (www.imdb.com).

Jake Sully is a paraplegic former marine who replaces his deceased twin brother in a mission on the distant planet of Pandora. The mission has him using an 'avatar' body to connect to the locals in order to discover their weaknesses and motivations and exploit them to gain access to the valuable minerals that are located beneath the Na'vi's most sacred places. In return for this valuable information Jake is promised the expensive surgery to repair his spinal injury and gain him back the use of his legs. During his undercover mission Jake falls in love with Neytiri the daughter of the clan's chief and their spiritual leader. Neytiri guides Jake through learning about the Na'vi culture and way of life resulting in a moral dilemma for Jake when the greedy, destructive military industrial complex starts bombing the home of the Na'vi people.

Curriculum Connections

Viewing film and completing assignments will cover many learning outcomes from the Oral Language, Reading and Viewing, and Writing and Representing sections of the Language Arts curriculum at any grade level. The structure of this study guide follows the curriculum requirements that students select and use strategies for developing understanding before, during, and after viewing. The steps in this study guide were adapted from Smart Reading. For more information refer to www.smartreading.ca.

Themes discussed in this film are closely connected to learning outcomes in Social Studies 10 and 11 about Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the development of natural resource management in British Columbia. Some of the extension projects can be connected to subjects such as Biology, Planning 10 and Media Studies.

Before Watching Film:

Important Note: Before viewing activities will be more effective if students do not know which film they will be watching. This will eliminate the problems of preconceived notions and of students who have already seen the film not fully engaging in activities. After completing the Pre-Viewing activities it is important to ensure that students understand what the term 'avatar' means.



Setting Personal Viewing Goals

Students should be given a clear purpose for viewing the film. They can select a strategy that will help them to focus their thinking. Students should select strategies that they have previously practiced, and that are appropriate to their learning style, the specific film, and the purpose for viewing.

Examples of Goals

- I will make connections and ask questions to understand the main themes and ideas in the film that are most important to me.
- I will use images and new ideas to understand the main themes and ideas in the film that are most important to me.

Accessing Prior Knowledge

Students should discuss the following questions as a class or in small groups before viewing *Avatar*:

- Think of a time when you tried to communicate with someone who didn't speak English. How did you manage? What was easy? What was hard? How did you feel about the interaction?
- Think of a time when you felt pressured to do something that you didn't feel right doing. How did you react to the situation?
- Have you ever disobeyed a directive, from a parent or teacher, because you thought that it was wrong? Explain how you justified your actions to yourself and others.
- When is it okay to do something that hurts another person or group of people?
- Have you ever betrayed, or been betrayed by, someone that you cared about? Why did it happen? How did it make you feel?
- With what groups do you identify most (family, club, friends, nationality, species...)? What do you have in common with others in this group? What might make you reject that group?
- Think of a time when you went into a situation with preconceived ideas, which were eventually altered. Describe how the situation surprised you and how you responded.



“This is how it’s done. When people are sitting on shit that you want, you make’em your enemy. Then you justify taking it.”

- Jake Sully, *Avatar*

Making Predictions & Asking Questions

Students should work in pairs to sort these words related to the film into groups, and justify their sorting decisions to the class. Based on the questions they have answered, and the justifications of their sorting, they can make predictions and ask questions about the events and themes in the movie.

Military	Scientist	Savages	Biology
DNA	Aboriginal	Alien	Spirit
Sacred	Connections	Warrior	Outcast
Dreams	Enemy	Species	Ancestors
Tree-Hugger	Ethics	Promise	Betrayal

While Watching Film:

Processing

While watching the movie, students should use the strategy that they chose when creating their personal viewing goal to process the ideas in the film and develop and deepen their comprehension. Students could use a Blackline Master or set up their own page. Examples are below.

Connections	Questions		

Images	Questions



“I was a warrior who dreamed he could bring peace. Sooner or later, though, you always have to wake up.”

- Jake Sully, *Avatar*

Responding

Students should express their understanding of the film at the end of each viewing period by completing one of the following responses:

- transcript of a video journal for any of the main characters by reflecting on what has happened so far, and what is to come
- sketches or journals depicting the aesthetic highlights of the day's viewing.

After Watching Film:

Synthesis

After viewing the movie, students should complete a project that shows they have met their goal of understanding the themes and ideas in the film that are most important to them. Students could create a media form of choice that expresses the themes or ideas that were most important to them, showing how they personally negotiated meaning in the film. Examples of media could be Painting, Collage, Interview with Character, Short Story, Diorama, News Broadcast, Sequel/Prequel, Music Video, etc.

Reflect on Learning

Students should look back at the entire learning process and reflect on what was effective, challenging, and what they would do differently next time. This metacognitive step is an important part of the process of building student competence in media literacy.

“There is a network of energy that flows through all living things. All energy is only borrowed, and one day you have to give it back.”

- Jake Sully, *Avatar*



Resources

For more information on structure of reading guide visit www.smartreading.ca

Extensions

- Students could complete independent research projects into concepts that connect to the film such as:
 - coming of age rituals
 - matriarchal societies
 - impact of natural resource extraction
 - environmental impact of technology development
 - food webs & animal and plant adaptations
 - connections between Ocean life on Earth and Forest life on Pandora
 - belief systems
 - impact of contact and settlement on Aboriginal societies
- Students could create propaganda posters/pamphlets/commercials selling a value or a political message that was featured in the film.
- Students could create a set of parallel illustrated timelines that connect the events of the film with Aboriginal-Caucasian relations.
- Students could select, analyze, and remediate important, dramatic scenes from the film.
- Students could view the film *Pocahontas* in class and compare the effectiveness of the two films in communicating their message to their respective intended audiences.
- Students could view the film *District 9* (Warning: Restricted Rating requires special considerations) and discuss parallels between movies and the treatment of different cultures/races.

“Hey Sully, how does it feel to betray your own race?”

- Colonel Quaritch, *Avatar*

Media Study Guide

WALL-E

The heart
warming animation
story with a powerful
message

created by:

Rachel Fales & Jennifer Visser
2011



- **Title:** WALL-E
- **Company:** Disney/Pixar
- **Rating:** PG
- **Length:** 103 minutes



CURRICULUM

This study guide to accompany the Disney film Wall-E has been written for secondary students. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Health and and Media. It will touch on issues of citizenship, media, and symbolism.

INTRODUCTION

The Walt Disney Pixar Film WALL-E hit theatres in Canada on June 27, 2008. The film was written and directed by the acclaimed team Jim Morris and Andrew Stanton (Toy Story, Monsters INC, Finding Nemo). Wall-E grossed 63.1 million during its opening weekend. The film also won the 2008 Golden Globe Award for Best Animated Feature as well as being nominated for 5 Academy Awards. New York's David Edelstein calls it "one for the ages, a masterpiece to be savoured before or after the end of the world ... a sublime work of art." Receiving great reviews and awards was not as important as the message that the creative directors managed to integrate into the heart warming adventure of a lonely Robot.

The story takes place in a distant but no so unrealistic future where the human race has

left earth due to over-consumerism polluting the planet. Their plan was to leave behind robots, WALL-E, to clean up the mess before their return. Over the years, WALL-E has developed a personality and discovers he is in dire need of companionship. His routine life turns upside down when EVE, a robot sent by the Axiom, shows up looking for proof that life is once again sustainable on earth. With the discovery of a single plant their adventure takes them up to space to join the evacuated humans who have been stuck on the space cruise for the last 700 years. The socialization of the human race has deteriorated leaving themselves obliviously at the mercy of technology. WALL-E and Eve fight back to try to return the people back home to earth.



LEARNING OUTCOMES:

PE

- Assess the positive implications of active living (8)
- Formulate a rationale for active living (9)
- Demonstrate understanding of health related components of fitness (10)

Social Studies 11

- apply critical thinking—including questioning, comparing, summarizing, drawing conclusions, and defending a position—to make reasoned judgements about a range of issues, situations, and topics
- demonstrate skills and attitudes of active citizenship, including ethical behaviour, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, and collaboration

Planning 10

- analyse factors that influence health (e.g., physical activity, nutrition, stress management)
- evaluate the potential effects of an individual's health-related decisions on self, family, and community

English 8

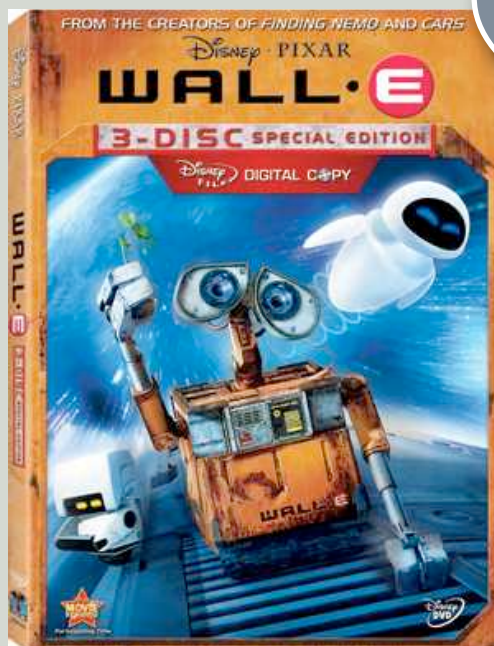
- Interact and collaborate in pairs and groups to: support the learning of self and others, explore experiences, ideas, and information, understand the perspectives of others, comprehend and respond to a variety of texts, and create a variety of texts (8)
- view, both collaboratively and independently, to comprehend a variety of visual texts, such as: broadcast media, web sites, graphic novels, film and video, photographs, art, visual components of print media, student-generated material

BEFORE VIEWING THE FILM

Discuss the following questions with the class before viewing Wall-E:

- How do you picture the world in 2800? What is technology like? what are the people like?
- Issue of environment and pollution are important topics in the news and schools right now. What are they trying to do to combat pollution and preserve the planet? Why do you think it is important? How do you think it affects or will affect your lives?
- What role does technology play in your life? What are some of the benefits? Are there any disadvantages?
- What would be the perfect invention, how would it make your life better?
- What constitutes living a healthy life?

- What is the purpose of PE (Physical Education) class and DPA (Daily Physical Activity) program?
- What sorts of activities do you enjoy doing? Does technology increase, decrease or not play any role in the amount of activity you do? Do you do it on your own or with friends?



AFTER VIEWING THE TRAILER:

- After watching the trailer, who do you think the video is meant for? Does the animation make you automatically assume it is for children and therefore is there any purpose to older people watching besides for amusement?
- Messages often hidden in animation films, name a couple others. Explain the hidden messages.

"One for the ages, a masterpiece to be savoured before or after the end of the world ... a sublime work of art"
- David Edelstein





"an enthralling animated film, a visual wonderment, and a decent science-fiction story"

– Roger Ebert

AFTER VIEWING THE FILM

After viewing the film, we discover that it has many messages intertwined into the entertainment it provides; touching on issues that affect all generations. Within this sweet story, the creators use music, special effects, and symbolism to create a powerful message that creates everyone who sees it to evaluate their life and how they are treating their planet, bodies and civilization and what role technology exactly plays in their society, is it aiding it or removing it.

Discuss the following questions with the class:

- Which age group do you think the film is made for?
- Why do you think they chose to animate this film?
- Did you enjoy the film? Would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- Would you have seen this film on your own just based on the trailer or the DVD cover?

"We'll see who's powerless now!"

- What are some things you enjoyed about it? What are some things you would change?
- What are the major themes or issues in the film?
- How does the film present our future?
- How would you categorize or classify this film?
- What does Wall-E's truck, filled with all of his treasures, represent? Why does he collect these things?
- What does Wall-E long for and how does that relate to his function?



THEMES & ISSUES:

There are some major issues that are addressed throughout the film. After the students have discussed which ones they recognized go into further discussion on these three main topics: *Pollution/Environment, Health & Technology.*

Pollution/ Environment:

The copious amounts of damage done to the earth is blamed on the mass production and consumption brought about by very advanced technology. As humans experience much advancement, they might have forgotten the importance of the environment in order for the future generations to survive.

Show the clip of the opening scene. During the clip have students to think about the following questions:

- Compare the music and feel of the opening scene to the moment you start to realize they aren't buildings but piles of garbage and the destruction. What is message is the director sending through the transition between the music and view of the opening scene to the garbage scene?
- Look for recycling bins and garbage cans throughout the scene, are there any? What is the film blaming the pollution on?
- What is this film saying about consumerism?
- What is the answer to the problem of pollution in the movie?
- In the movie, the Buy n' Large CEO says, "Rather than try and fix this problem, it'll just be easier for everyone to remain in space." What message is this sending? Is this the same attitude we have today about our planets survival?

Wall-E on Earth



Health

Health & wellness are broken down into 5 components: spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual; working together to create a healthy life. Define the 5 components and help the students give at least one example for each and how they contribute to us having a well rounded healthy life.

The director explained that when portraying the humans he wanted them to resemble large babies completely reliant on technology for all aspects of life. Show the students clips from when WALL-E first arrives on the Axiom, with the people in hover crafts, watching TV, drinking food in the form of slushy's and of the man falling off his chair and having to wait for someone to put him back on.

Have students complete the following chart, deciding whether the humans aboard the Axiom practice the 5 components of wellness that lead to a healthy life:

Health Aspect	Example on the Axiom	Example from your own life
Social		
Physical		
Emotional		
Intellectual		
Spiritual		

Show the students the clip of the different captains on the ship over the years:

- Looking at the pictures of the all the different captains, what is it showing us?
- What does the lack of a healthy diet and no activity lead to? What kind of life is it?

Answer the following questions after viewing the clip of WALL-E turning off Mary's TV:

- What is the significance of WALL-E turns off the Mary's TV? What does Mary notice once her TV is off?
- What does the Captain mean when he says "I don't want to survive, I want to live"?
- Are we on the road to becoming these people? What is going on today that could lead to a similar life that is portrayed in Wall-E? How are some ways in which we could prevent this?
- How important are the 5 components of wellness now that you see what life would be like without them?



"I didn't know we had a pool!"



Technology

Technology played a part in both the health and pollution issues. Along with those two issues it was generally playing a part in hindering the development of society, at least for the humans. Technology has often been described as the “complicated villain” in the movie getting people to re-evaluate its role in their life.

Students will answer the following questions:

“Foreign Contaminant”

- Re-mediation is defined as “creating something, but in the process losing the original idea” what is an example of this in the movie?
- On earth how is the technology portrayed? The TV and radio, the old robot down on earth?



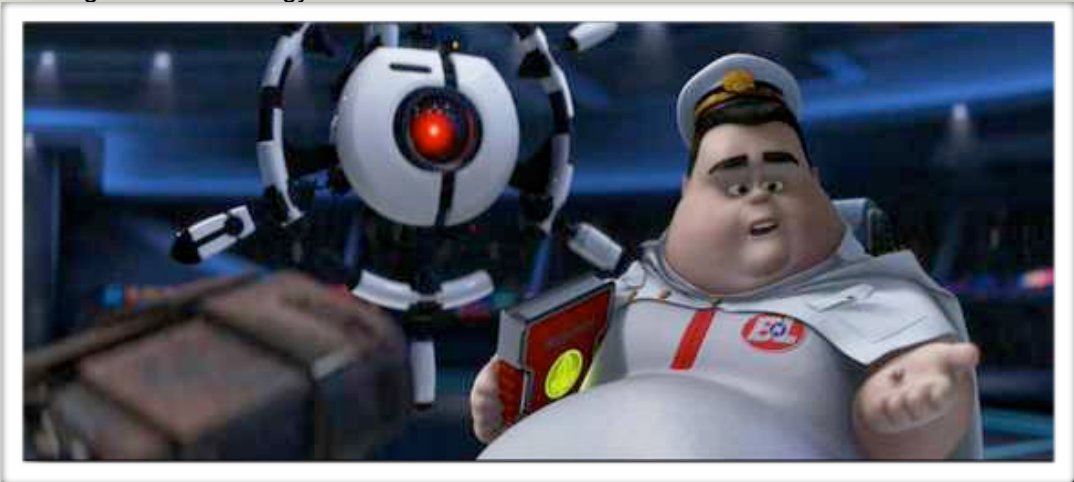
Show the clips of WALL-E going to work, having his lunch box, wanting to hold hands, the robot police force, M O the cleaner robot, the robot “psych ward”, humans being told it’s bed time, and then get the students to fill

Robots chores/ responsibilities	Human’s chores/ responsibilities

out the chart:

Discussion Questions:

- What role do the robots play in society? Who was running the show?
- What constitutes a human - what are their responsibilities and daily routines? Who were the “humans” in the movie?
- Give some examples on how the robots have almost created a society paralleling what use to be human society.
- Was the way WALL-E was living along on earth any different from the way the people were living on the spaceship?
- Does technology make life easier?
- What are the “dangers” of technology?



Symbols:

Throughout the film there are objects and obscure names all with deeper meanings. Discuss these symbols with your students:

Symbol	What it means/represents	Clip from movie that supports your idea
The Plant		
Cockroach		
WALL-E		
The Axiom		
AUTO		
Buy-N-Large		

*"Too much garbage in your face?
There's plenty of space out in space! BnL StarLiners
leaving each day. We'll clean up the mess while you're
away."*



Music:

This film has very little dialogue. Emotions and messages are revealed through music throughout the film. After addressing the lack of dialogue, discuss the following questions:

- What might be the deeper meaning behind the lack of conversation and dialogue throughout the movie?
- How does WALL-E use his music?

Play the theme song for WALL-E "Hello Dolly", have students look over the lyrics and answer the question

- Why was this an appropriate song to be the theme song?



LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- 1) Apparently in the future we'll be too fat and lethargic to even chew our food. Everyone has his or her meals "in a cup." Drive through a few fast food places and purchase meals (burger, fries, shake or sub sandwich and a Dew), put these in a blender and see if any of your students will give the food of the future a try. Have students create a comic strip (on paper, using comic life, using toonlet.com or pixton.com) explaining "the food of the future".
- 2) Students will research a company that is producing hazardous materials for the environment or an unhealthy food product. Once research is complete, students will write a letter explaining the issues they have with the product and what they feel will be the long term repercussions of this product.
- 3) Using clips from Youtube, Wall-E or clips you have filmed yourself, create a PSA about saving the environment OR using clips from Youtube, Wall-E or clips you have filmed yourself, create a PSA about staying healthy and fit. Try to use tips from Wall-E and use no words, only sounds and music.
- 4) Make a video promoting a health day/ environment day fundraiser. Students will come up with a proposal to give to the administration about the purpose of the day and how it would benefit the student body. Create a video promoting the day to show students and advertise the fundraiser.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- The film touches on important topics that will affect our future, whether exaggerated or not they are important to review, what other issues might we be concerned about for the future as the future leaders of the country?
- Watch or read other future films, and compare to Wall-E. What are some key differences or similarities? Which story is the most accurate portrayal of our future?

FURTHER READING & VIEWING:

- An Inconvenient Truth (Davis Guggenheim, 2006)
- The Fifth Element (Luc Besson, 1997)
- The Road (John Hilcoat, 2009)
- Addicted to Plastic (Ian Connacher, 2008)
- Taking Root (Alan Dater & Lisa Merton, 2008)
- National Geographic: Human Footprint (Clive Maltby, 2008)
- The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins ISBN: 0439023483
- Brave New World by Aldous Huxley ISBN: 0-06-080983-3
- Cradle to Cradle by McDonough ISBN-13: 978-0865475878



ENDNOTES:

The Internet Movie Database (IMB), WALL E (2008) Retrieved from: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/>,

Movie Segments for Warm-ups and Follow-ups (2010). Retrieved from: <http://warmupsfollowups.blogspot.com/2010/05/fifth-element-wall-e-road-future-trends.html>.



“There is a pleasure in the
pathless woods;
There is rapture on the
lonely shore,
There is society, where
none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and
music in its roar,
I love not man the less,
but nature more.”

–Lord Byron



And now we walk

Into The Wild

“Some people go looking for adventure, Christopher McCandless was looking for himself.”

Introduction: *Into the Wild* (Paramount Vantage & River Road Entertainment, 2007), is a biographical drama directed by Sean Penn and written by Lisa Kelley, which documents the travels of Christopher McCandless across North America from Virginia to Alaska in 1992. It is an adaptation of the fiction novel written by Jon Krakauer in 1996. The film stars Emile Hirsch as McCandless, Jena Malone as his sister Carine and Marcia Gay Harden and William Hurt as his parents. The film was nominated for two Academy Awards for best supporting actor and editing.

Film Synopsis: Upon graduating from Emory University as a top student and athlete Christopher McCandless abandons all of his possessions, leaves his family, gives his entire \$24,000 savings account to charity and travels across the continent to Alaska to live in the wilderness. In his attempt to escape the reality of his life at home and seek the ultimate spiritual fulfillment, he encounters several people along the way that shape his journey and who he, in turn, impacts significantly. He is tested physically, mentally and emotionally in the fight for his life and the quest for the truth.

Learning Outcomes

- A. Students will engage critically with the film and supplementary texts through group discussion, individual written reflection, small group presentations and projects
- B. Students will examine the music, script and characters of the film
- C. Students will identify and examine the imagery, symbolism and motifs in the film
- D. Students will engage in discussion on themes such as heroism, conformity, values and power
- E. Students will explore and distinguish between various forms of writing and story-telling including fiction, non-fiction,

Curricular Connections

This study guide has been written for grade 11-12 secondary students and can be utilized for several subjects areas at various grade levels:

English: poetry, literature, creative writing, analysis of film

History/Social Studies: hunter & gatherer lifestyle, aboriginal history, American history

Geography Space, place, landscape, mobility

Physical Education: Outdoor environmental education, orienteering, hiking and survival skills

Art: imagery, sound, text

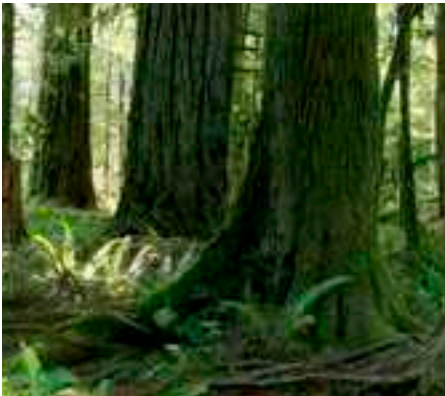
Theme/Issue	Example(s) from the film
Search/quest for personal & spiritual fulfillment	
Heroism	
Convention, norms, conformity	
Poetry and Literature	
Identity	
Values & priorities	
Possessions, materialism	
Family-Relationships with parents	
Confronting fears	
Judgement, control, power of modern society	
Solitude, self-reflection	
Freedom	

Pre-viewing questions:

- Analyze the publicity poster for *Into the Wild*. Who is the target audience? What ideas does the image bring to mind? What does the cover lead you to believe the film is about?
 - “If we admit that human life can be ruled by reason, then all possibility of life is destroyed.” (Christopher McCandless)
- Explain the meaning of this quote and discuss its relevance to you personally.
- What is your greatest fear and why?
 - Create a list if words or phrases that come to mind when you hear the word ‘wilderness’.
 - What does it mean to be ‘fulfilled’ in life?
 - What do you value more: power and money or freedom and happiness? Why?
 - What value do self-reflection and self-awareness have in achieving happiness?
 - In what ways do people conform to the norms of our society?
 - Discuss Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs in relation to Christopher’s experience at home and in the wild.

Post-viewing questions:

- What or who is McCandless escaping from?
- What is the “false being within” that McCandless refers to?
- How is Chris characterized? (What are his desires, thoughts, pet peeves etc..)
- What drives Chris to leave home and go into the wild?
- In the scene where Chris mother and father offer him a new car – what do their reactions tell you about what they value? What does it tell you about what Chris values?
- Take into consideration Chris’s goals and desires, do you think he was ultimately successful?
- Do you think Chris is selfish for abandoning his family?
- Which character in the film are most like? Most unlike? Describe characteristics of yourself and this person and use examples to support your answer.
- After viewing the movie two dominant streams of thought emerge: Chris’s parents and their desire for Chris to secure his future morphs into a desire for him to simply be safe and come home. Chris on the other hand is in search of something he cannot find at home or even within his perceived society. Which do you believe is valued over the other in the movie and why?
- How is *Into the Wild* relevant to you and your life? How do you connect to the movie and its characters?





Film Structure & Sequence:

The film begins in medias res, taking us directly to McCandless upon his arrival in the wilderness of Alaska. The film shifts back in forth between his experience in Alaska and his journey across North America to get there.

The film is split into 5 titled chapters:

Chapter 1: My Own Birth

Chapter 2: Adolescence

Chapter 3: Manhood

Chapter 4: Family

Chapter 5: Getting of Wisdom

Symbols & Motifs: (Image)

There are a multitude of powerful images persistent in *Into the Wild* as McCandless makes his way across America.

- A. His Car is a symbol of his connection to the commercial world
- B. Wild horses running-freedom, inhibition, what Chris wants to be
- C. Nature as bigger, greater, more powerful than man.
- D. City as the melancholy, dark underbelly of society.
- E. His parents arguing and fighting-symbolic of his internal struggle
- D. Hippie Van/Hippie community as another version of himself
- F. Chris holding an animal heart in his hands
- G. Scene where Chris is drowning: fighting for his life
- H. Old man climbing mountain
- I. Paralysis, weakness, people being paralyzed by their lives in modern society,

Learning Activity:

Analyze the lyrics to the song “Guaranteed” by Eddie Vedder. This was the central piece of music associated with the film that won a Golden Globe and was nominated for a Grammy.

Describe the connection between the lyrics to the song “Guaranteed” and the film *Into the Wild*:

On bended knee is no way to be free
Lifting up an empty cup, I ask silently
All my destinations will accept the one that's me
So I can breathe...

Circles they grow and they swallow people whole
Half their lives they say goodnight to wives they'll never know
A mind full of questions, and a teacher in my soul
And so it goes...

Don't come closer or I'll have to go
Holding me like gravity are places that pull
If ever there was someone to keep me at home
It would be you...

Everyone I come across, in cages they bought
They think of me and my wandering, but I'm never what they thought
I've got my indignation, but I'm pure in all my thoughts
I'm alive...

Wind in my hair, I feel part of everywhere
Underneath my being is a road that disappeared
Late at night I hear the trees, they're singing with the dead
Overhead...

Leave it to me as I find a way to be
Consider me a satellite, forever orbiting
I knew all the rules, but the rules did not know me
Guaranteed

Chapter/Title	Main Events	Character Profile	Symbols & Motifs	Emotions Explored	Quote
1-My Own Birth					
2-Adolescence					
3-Manhood					
4-Family					
5-Getting of Wisdom					

Learning Activity:The film is split into 5 chapters that are cleverly woven together to make a complete storyline. Each chapter has its own feel, tone, message and purpose. Complete the chart below with a partner and we will share our thoughts aloud with the class.

Main Events: Sum up the plot for each chapter by listing 3 major events from the film.

Character Profile: Select a character and write a brief physical description of the person, describe their personality and their purpose/role in the film.

Symbols and Motifs: Create a list of symbols and motifs present in the film and discuss the significance of each. (1 per chapter)

Emotions Explored: Create a list of emotion words that are present in the film.

Quote: Select 1 meaningful, interesting or relevant quote from each chapter of the film and explain the context.



”I read somewhere how important it is in life not necessarily to be strong but to feel strong. To measure yourself at least once, to find yourself once in the most ancient of human conditions, facing blind, deaf stones alone, with nothing to help you but your own hands and your own head.” (Christopher McCandless)



Scenes for Closer Analysis

Scene: Christopher and his sister arrive at a restaurant to meet their parents in celebration of his graduation from Emory University. His parents tell him they are going to buy him a new car. The dialogue for the scene is as follows:

Christopher: "A new car? Why the hell would I want a new car? The Datsun runs great. Do you think I want some fancy boat? Or are you worried about what the neighbors might think?"

Mother: "We weren't going to get you a Cadillac, Chris. Just a nice new car that's safe to drive. You never know when that thing's just going to suddenly blow up."

Christopher: "Blow up? Blow up? Are you guys crazy? It's a great car. I don't need a new car. I don't want a new car. I don't want anyTHING. These things, things, things. But thank you, I just don't want anyTHING."

Themes for discussion: Possession, materialism, identity, conformity, relationships with parents.

Scene: After a long journey across North America, Christopher arrives in Alaska, equipped with enough supplies to last him a few months in the wild. In this scene, Chris' adventure through Alaska is depicted as exciting, intense and heroic. At this point in the film he is strong, resourceful and curious. He stumbles upon an abandoned bus and

begins to set up his new life in the wilderness. He feels euphoric, fulfilled and connected to the landscape, the animals and the way of living outside of the confines of society.

Themes for discussion: Freedom, isolation, bravery, the journey

Scene: After frantically scrounging for food, Christopher consumes a potato root plant that is highly poisonous. He wakes up in the bus, paralysed from the waist down, grabs his plant identification guide and realizes the plant is inedible and if untreated can lead to starvation and eventually death. He is distraught and tries to force himself to throw up. He is extremely weak and is quickly deteriorating, both mentally and physically.

Themes for discussion: Human weakness, life and death, nature as greater than man

Scene: Christopher is on his deathbed. He lies alone in the bus and writes his final words: "Happiness is only real when shared." He cries, covers himself with a blanket, zips up his coat and takes his last breath.

Themes for discussion: Death, the journey, risk, legacy.

Did you know...

-Christopher McCandless lived in the bus in Alaska for 4 months from late April to August, before starving to death. When his body was discovered in September, he weighed only 67 pounds.

-The film was shot in Alaska 50 miles from the actual location of McCandless' death in a replica of the bus in which he lived

-Emile Hirsche (Christopher McCandless) performed all of the stunts in the film, including the scenes kayaking in the rapids



Music

Music: (Sound)

The music in this film is written and performed by Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam and Jerry Hannan and is composed by Michael Brook.

The music has a folk type feel and sound and Vedder said that he "realized the songs could now become another tool in the storytelling."

"Guaranteed": Eddie Vedder: The central piece of music associated with the film, won a Golden Globe and was nominated for a Grammy for this song.

Fact or Fiction?

Creative non-fiction also known as literary non-fiction is a blend between the fictive elements of literature and the non-fiction elements of traditional print journalism. In creative non-fiction



the author attempts to create a holistic view of the subject - he or she presents well researched material but also tells a story. In Into

The Wild, the original book by Jon Krakauer he tells a meticulously researched story - Chris McCandless was a real person, and the people who's lives he touched a long the way were also real. In fact the film version of the Alaskan man who was the last person to see McCandless alive is played by Jim Gallien, as himself! In the same way that Jon Krakauer carefully re-constructs the life of McCandless, Sean Penn closely follows the story line. Penn chooses to remain as authentic as possible to the real story of McCandless.

Activity: Does the fact that McCandless' journey is a true story affect your perception of the movie? Explain.

Controversy

In the film and book version of McCandless' story he is painted as a tragic hero however not everyone shares this view. In the film he is portrayed as abandoning his family to pursue his own goals, and he has real life critics as well.

Alaska park ranger Peter Christian wrote:

"I am exposed continually to what I will call the 'McCandless Phenomenon.' People, nearly always young men, come to Alaska to challenge themselves against an unforgiving wilderness landscape where convenience of access and possibility of rescue are practically nonexistent [...] When you consider McCandless from my perspective, you quickly see that what he did wasn't even particularly daring, just stupid, tragic, and inconsiderate. First off, he spent very little time learning how to actually live in the wild. He arrived at the Stampede Trail without even a map of the area. If he [had] had a good map he could have walked out of his predicament [...] Essentially, Chris McCandless committed suicide."

Activity: Do you agree or disagree with Peter Christian's point of view? Why?

Script (Text):

Lisa Kelley's writing is deep, powerful and relevant. She weaves together dialogue, narration and written text throughout the film while allowing moments of



complete silence in Christopher's solitude in nature. As an audience, we create our

understanding of the film through various mediums, including Chris' journal and the phrases he carves



onto wood in the bus. Chris' words are poetic and he often

quotes writers and poets to express his thoughts and feelings. In several parts of the film there is minimal dialogue and the film is driven solely by images and music. How are we able to construct meaning from music and images in the absence of dialogue in a film?

"The core of man's soul comes from new experiences."
(Christopher McCandless)

Additional Learning Activities:

-It has been suggested that McCandless was mentally unstable at the time of his departure for Alaska and it has been argued that this decision to go into the wild was not made with a sound mind. Based on the film and the storyline, do you agree or disagree with this idea?

-Write a journal entry from the perspective of Christopher McCandless when he is living in the bus in the wild.

-Compose a poem or lyrics to a song that reflects your views on a character, the plot or major theme of the film

Death

August 12, 1992, McCandless wrote what are assumed to be his final words in his journal: "*Beautiful Blueberries.*"

McCandless tore the final page from a book entitled *Education of a Wandering Man* the memoir of Louis L'Amour. It contained the following poem which was titled "Wise Men in Their Bad Hours."

*Death's a fierce meadowlark: but to die having made
Something more equal to centuries
Than muscle and bone, is mostly to shed weakness.
The mountains are dead stone, the people
Admire or hate their stature, their insolent quietness,
The mountains are not softened or troubled
And a few dead men's thoughts have the same temper.
On the other side of the page,*

Activity: What you think McCandless' final thoughts might be?

Sources for further study:

- Jon Krakauer
- Into Thin Air
- Mad Season
- Jack London
- 127 Hours (Film)
- Poetry- Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley

References

<http://www.intothewild.com/>

Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild*. Anchor Books, 1996.

Into The Wild media guide written and designed by:
Kady Huhn and Hannah Yu



"Two years he walks the earth. No phone, no pool, no pets, no cigarettes. Ultimate freedom. An extremist. An aesthetic voyager whose home is the road. Escaped from Atlanta. Thou shalt not return, 'cause "the West is the best." And now after two rambling years comes the final and greatest adventure. The climactic battle to kill the false being within and victoriously conclude the spiritual pilgrimage. Ten days and nights of freight trains and hitchhiking bring him to the Great White North. No longer to be poisoned by civilization he flees, and walks alone upon the land to become lost in the wild." (Alexander Supertramp)

Created by: Kara Troke and Taha Anjarwalla



WALL-E

Study Guide

Page 1

Introduction



The year is 2805 and Earth has been abandoned by humans as it's no longer viable habitat for natural life. However, that doesn't mean all life forms have ceased to exist, in fact artificial life forms are still hard at work cleaning up the mess left by its over-consuming human predecessors. That's where we meet Wall-E,



Because of its form and genre, this film appears to appeal to a younger demographic, however this film is actually a complex and insightful exploration into the relationship between the earth and its inhabitants while presenting deep philosophical questions surrounding the true nature of human beings and the purpose of life.



A curious trash compacting robot who surveys the waste and collects various artifacts and gadgets in an attempt to understand the world of old. One pivotal day, Wall-E comes across a seeding plant growing from the ground and that's where the story begins.



OUTCOMES & CONCEPTS

"YOU KIDS GONNA GROW ALL KINDS OF PLANTS! VEGETABLE PLANTS, PIZZA PLANTS!"



Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the salient features in this film.
- Students will explore the nature of audience as related to this film.
- Students will identify the key conflicts as related to this film.
- Students will explore the ideas of man and machine.

nnn

✕ Key Concepts ✕

The specific aims of our film study can be grouped into two categories: discourse and audience. In the former, we hope to encourage students to engage in meaningful conversation and debate regarding characters, themes, and motifs to develop deeper understanding. By audience, we stress that modern media targets specific audiences. We encourage students to practice identifying these nuances and their influence on film.

DISCOURSE AND AUDIENCE

Media Discourse:

Media Audiences:

- I. What factors affect the meaning in this film?
- II. How does this film draw on 21st century society to send a message?
- III. How would you illustrate the thematic framework of this film?



- I. Who is this film targeting and why?
- II. Are their multiple demographics?
- III. Who does this film leave out as an audience and why?
- IV. Does the message change for different audiences?

Before We Begin Try This Activity:

Watch the first 5 minutes of WALL-E and then pause the film. With a partner discuss what things stand out to you. Consider how the director chooses to tell the story. What elements are present? Missing?

5 Minute Quick-Write:
Individually, write what you think will happen next in the story.
Do not spend too much time thinking. Just write!

FOCUS QUESTIONS :

Group Questions:

1. Describe the initial setting of Wall-E. What year do you think this is set in and where?
2. Recall some of the items Wall-E has collected, how would you categorize these items? What do they represent?
3. Describe the characters of Wall-E and Eve.
4. What are the main conflicts in this film?
5. How are the humans portrayed in this film? How is this significant?
6. This film seems to have a number of messages, describe as many as you can.
7. What is the effect of the animation in this film? How would the themes and messages be altered if it were a live action film?
8. Is there a specific target audience for this film? If yes, describe the audience, if no describe how this film manages to pervade a specific audience.
9. Wall-E's opening scene presents a post apocalyptic landscape juxtaposed with a post-war "Put on your Sunday Clothes" from Hello Dolly, what possible statements is the film making by pairing these two aspects?

Extra-Practice:

10. How does Wall-E portray human beings in the film?
11. What is the relationship between humans and technology?
12. In terms of indicating the hero and the villain, does this film follow traditional character guidelines? Explain.
13. Wall-E's character has been compared to Prometheus, Sisyphus, and Adam. Research one of these figures to compare them with Wall-E's character.
14. What did you like about this film? What didn't you like? If you had the choice, what would you change?

SUMMER 2011

ACTIVITIES

Get together in groups of three or four and try working your way through these activities!



HUMAN VS. MACHINE

AN ACTIVITY DESIGNED TO GET STUDENTS TO ANALYZE THE SUBVERSIVE NATURE OF THE FILM WITH REGARDS TO THE SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND MACHINES.

This is an activity designed to get students analyzing the film's subversive approach to the relationship between human being's and their machines. The student's first brainstorm typical characteristics of human beings such as, "logical, free-thinking, empathetic" etc. as compared to traditional characteristics of robots or machines, perhaps like "artificial, controlled by humans, obedient etc." After they have filled out the first two squares, the students will rethink those categories in the context of the film and reflect on the


discrepancies between generalized characteristics and those specific to the film. A great follow-up activity could be a journal reflection on what it means to be human, or the purpose of life. Or additionally, as a class, students could brainstorm where the traditional aspects of humans and machines are manifested elsewhere in media. It would be a great opportunity to examine the current robotic climate and discuss the possible prophetic nature of Wall-E.



**What does it mean to be human?
To be robot?
Can robots have feelings? Why or why not?**

STORY BOARDING

AN ACTIVITY AIMED AT GETTING STUDENTS TO CONSIDER THE VARIOUS CHOICES MADE BY DIRECTORS AND CINEMATOGRAPHERS AND HOW THESE CHOICES AFFECT THE NARRATIVE QUALITIES OF FILM.



What role does silence play in the telling of the story?

The concept of storyboarding comes from both animation as well as live-action films. Animators frame characters and action in the same way as a cameraman might. With the film WALL·E, cinematographer Roger Deakins took on the role of a visual consultant to the animators. The producers of WALL·E wanted audiences to feel ‘as if there really was a cameraperson’. The visuals are essential in telling WALL·E’s story because there is very little dialogue in the film. The robots communicate using a range of bleeps and sound effects.

Understanding the purpose and effect of various camera angles and shot types can be a strong aid to helping students not only internalize elements of a narrative but in their own writing and comprehension. As a fun activity, ask students to storyboard their favorite scene from WALL·E.

Students should then storyboard an original short story featuring a robot they design themselves and use stop-motion or other animation software to turn it into a film.



SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Reading and Viewing:

The Road (2009)
V for Vendetta (2006)
The Matrix (1999)
Inception (2010)
Zombieland (2009)
Watchmen (2009)
Children of Men (2006)
A Scanner Darkly (2006)

Information:

<http://www.filmeducation.org>

<http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/wall-e-movie-study/>

<http://www.enotes.com/topic/WALL-E>

A TRIUMPHANT TRUE STORY

FROM THE ACADEMY AWARD®-WINNING DIRECTOR OF
SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE

JAMES FRANCO

127 HOURS

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

A STUDY GUIDE BY NICK DE SANTIS & NAM PHAM

EDCP 481 Media Studies Across the Curriculum

INTRODUCTION

127 HOURS IS A FILM about a young, outdoor, adventurer, Aron Ralston (played by James Franco), who believes he can successfully undertake any outdoor adventure on his own. The film focuses on April 25, 2003, where Aron goes on an adventure trek alone through the generally secluded Blue John Canyon in Utah. The film's title refers to the number of hours that Aron was trapped between a boulder and the crevice wall. Also, it is based on Aron Ralston's autobiography *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

Aron Ralston prepares for a day of canyoneering in Utah's Canyonlands National Park, where he bikes through the park, travels on foot, and guides two lost hikers, Kristi and Megan. He continues his adventure into Blue John Canyon, and unfortunately, falls down a crevice where his right hand becomes wedged between the boulder and the crevice wall.

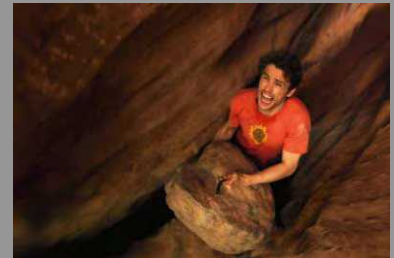
Ralston cries for help, but realizes that he is completely isolated from the outside world. He has access to his gear and his small supply of rations, where he attempts to move the boulder and chip away at it. A seemingly impossible task. As time goes on and he deals with not only the boulder and lack of rations, but also with extreme weather conditions, he records video diaries to maintain his sanity.

Ralston begins to dream about his relationships and past experiences with family and friends, coming to the realization that everything he has done has lead him to this moment, and that he was destined to die alone in the canyon.

After five days, Ralston decides to break and sever his arm, escaping from his entrapment and making his way out of the canyon, where he finally runs into a family on a day hike. Based on a true story, *127 Hours*, is an inspirational tale and testimony to courage, hope and an individual's will for survival.

"How would I behave in a situation that caused me to summon the essence of my character? The tragedy inspired me to test myself. I wanted to reveal to myself who I was: the kind of person who died, or the kind of person who overcame circumstances to help himself and others"

– Aron Ralston (Between a Rock and a Hard Place)



FILM FACTS

CAST

- *James Franco* as Aron Ralston
- *Amber Tamblyn* as Megan McBride (lost hiker)
- *Kate Mara* as Kristi Moore (lost hiker)
- *Clemence Poesy* as Rana (Ralston's lover)
- *Lizzy Caplan* as Sonja Ralston (Ralston's sister)
- *Treat Williams* as Larry Ralston (Ralston's father)
- *Kate Burton* as Donna Ralston (Ralston's mother)

Filmmakers

127 Hours, based on Ralston's autobiography *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, was directed by Danny Boyle, written by Boyle and Simon Beaufoy and produced by Christian Colson and John Smithson.



EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

Curriculum Relevance

127 Hours is an inspiring tale of survival told by Ralston, an honest and sincere narrator, who finds inspiration even in the face of a lonely death. There will be both relevance and appeal to middle and senior secondary students, particularly to students in grades 11 and 12. It should generate discussion about perseverance, friendships, solitude, the need for human contact, adventure, and outdoor survival. While many of these issues suggest a cross-curriculum approach, the film would be valuable for generating discussion in English, Social Studies, and Outdoor Education. The soundtrack was composed by two-time Academy Award Winner A.R. Rahman, which will appeal to all ages.



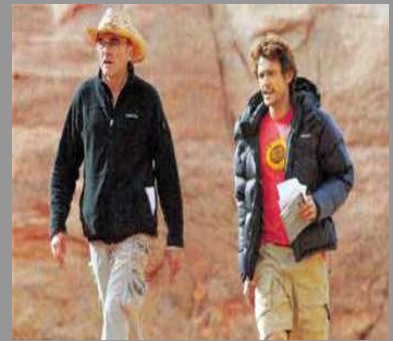
127 HOURS STUDY GUIDE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

It is expected that students will:

- ❖ Interact and collaborate in pairs and groups to gain insight into others' perspectives
- ❖ Examine the differences between two different kinds of media (book and film).
- ❖ Connect your own personal experiences with those of Aron Ralston's experience in the canyon.
- ❖ Analyze the effects of solitude and loneliness on human beings, specifically Ralston.
- ❖ Examine the importance of family that is emphasized in the film and the book.
- ❖ Compare and contrast the film's depiction of Ralston's ordeal, and the experience depicted in Ralston's book.
- ❖ Assess the connection between the film and the soundtrack, specifically, the Dido and A.R. Rahman song "If I Rise" which is featured in the film.
- ❖ Devise a journal depicting a real or fictional experience in which the student was alone and had to persevere over great odds.
- ❖ Create a song, poem, or short story regarding the experience depicted in the students' journals.
- ❖ Compose and edit your own piece of media that will depict the experience depicted in the journal.

*"This rock has been
waiting for me my
entire life."*



KEY CONCEPTS

- ❖ **Agency**: This concept plays a very large role in the analysis of the film. Large sections of the latter half are presented from the POV of Ralston's video camera that he brought into the canyon. He records his thoughts, his feelings, his regrets, and, what he thinks are, his final goodbyes (These recordings were taken from the real recordings that Ralston made while trapped in the canyon. The recordings were only made accessible to James Franco and Danny Boyle for the purposes of achieving authenticity). Due to the fact that a large majority of the film features one character alone on screen, agency becomes a very important concept to study. We watch Ralston's ordeal through Ralston's lens.
- ❖ **Technology**: The real Aron Ralston did not have a camera crew with lighting equipment to record his experiences. He only had a low-tech video camera with which he could use to document his ordeal. The images are very grainy and this blends very well with Ralston's own state of despair, disorientation, regret, and finally acceptance. With the class, we will discuss how technology becomes a vehicle for Ralston to somehow translate his experiences to his intended audience and how he uses it to ultimately say goodbye to his loved ones.
- ❖ **Language**: How we make sense of Ralston's ordeal, as depicted through his recordings, will be a very large topic of study while watching the film. How can we make sense of Ralston's various responses to his situation? How do we "read" the media that we are presented with? For example, a psychologist with specialized training in emotions and solitude may view the film differently than someone without that background. In other words, they project their own respective meanings onto Ralston's recordings.
- ❖ **Audience**: As mentioned above, the only intended audience for Ralston's recording were his family and friends. When he begins recording, he still has some semblance of hope, trying to chisel his way out of the canyon to freedom. As time progresses, he becomes increasingly manic, and begins to mock his own situation. Finally, he accepts his situation and begins saying his goodbyes. We will discuss how audience factors into how Ralston presents himself on camera. Would he have behaved differently if he claimed on the tape that he wanted it to be available for mass consumption? Audience plays a significant role in Ralston's recordings.

BEFORE WATCHING THE FILM



*"I thought I was going
to die."*

Activity #1: Students will create a journal in which they will include one entry a day depicting a situation, of their choosing, in which they are in complete solitude. In each entry, they will relate their feelings, experiences, and emotions. The final entry will give closure to their situation.

Focus Questions:

- 1.) Who do you reach out to when you are in a time of great need or distress? Why did you choose them? Do you think you need to be with certain people in order to enjoy life? Why?
- 2.) How do you feel when you are completely alone, with nobody else around for a long period of time? Why do you feel this way?
- 3.) How important is your family in your life? Explain your answer.
- 4.) Describe an experience in your life in which you had to persevere over great obstacles. Why was it so difficult? How did you feel once you had achieved your goal?
- 5.) When you hear the word "survival" what images or words are created in your head? Have you ever been in a life or death situation? Explain.

WHILE WATCHING THE FILM

Activity #2: Students will be given a copy of the lyrics to Dido and A.R. Rahman's song "If I Rise" which is featured in the film (<http://www.metrolyrics.com/if-i-rise-lyrics-dido.html>). Students will then listen to the actual song while reading the lyrics (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWMuo9Bc0ww>). After this, students will examine the lyrics and find links to the themes and events from the movie. Students will then write either a song, a poem, or a short story based on the journal they began at the beginning of the study.

Focus Questions:

- 1.) How do the two girls, Megan and Kristi, respond to meeting Aron Ralston? Why does he refuse their invitation to attend their gathering?
- 2.) As Aron chips away at the boulder that has locked his right hand, he can't help but reflect on his life before he found himself in this dire predicament, facing starvation and death. How does he cope with facing his own mortality?
- 3.) As the hours pass and he considers his choices, Aron concludes that he has only four options left. What is the option he ultimately chooses? Could you make a choice like this or would you continue trying to find another alternative?
- 4.) Aron's camcorder eventually acts like a small digital confessional. What are some of the things Aron begins to confess into his video camera? If you were to make a recording in similarly dire circumstances, what kinds of things would you choose to talk about?
- 5.) Explain how you think Aron feels when he makes the ultimate decision near the end of the film. What kind of emotions would be running through your head if you were put through a similar experience?

*"Judging by my
degradation in the last 24
hours, I'll be surprised if
I make it to Tuesday"*



AFTER WATCHING THE FILM

Activity #3: Students will compose and edit their own piece of visual media that will depict the situation that they first presented in their journals. The clip should be between 5 and 10 minutes and should accurately depict how you felt in the real situation or how you would have felt in the fictitious situation.

Focus Questions:

- 1.) Compare and contrast the experience related in your journal with Ralston's experience. How are they similar? How are they different?
- 2.) How do you think Ralston views his ordeal now that it is long ago in his past? Does he still feel frightened by it? Did it empower him? Use the interview with Ralston (http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/719253/aron_ralston_interview_127_hours_danny_boyle_simon_beaufey_and_more.html) to research his real feelings.
- 3.) What does the phrase "mind over matter" mean? Do you think Ralston experienced this phenomenon during his experience? Why or why not?
- 4.) What was the difference between reading Ralston's book and watching the film? Was one form of media more visceral or intense than the other? Why or why not?
- 5.) If you could meet Aron Ralston in person what are the top three questions you would ask him? Explain why you would ask your particular questions.



RELATED MATERIAL FOR FURTHER STUDY

BOOKS

- ❖ Ralston, Aron. *Between A Rock and a Hard Place*. Atria Books Publishing, 2004.
- ❖ Krakauer, Jon. *Into the Wild*. Villard Publishing, 1996.
- ❖ Krakauer, Jon. *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster*. Anchor Publishing, 1999.
- ❖ Simpson, Joe. *Touching the Void: The True Story of One Man's Miraculous Survival*. HarperCollins Canada Publishing, 2004.

FILMS

- ❖ *Into the Wild* (Sean Penn, 2007) – Based on a true story, this film depicts Christopher McCandless abandoning all of his possessions, giving his \$24 000 savings account to charity, and hitchhiking to Alaska to live in the wilderness. Through his adventure, we see perseverance and attempts for human survival, while emphasizing the importance of human relationships.
- ❖ *Buried* (Rodrigo Cortes, 2010)- The film revolves around Iraq-based American truck driver Paul Conroy (Ryan Reynolds), who, after being attacked, finds himself buried alive in a wooden coffin, with only a lighter, flask, flashlight, knife, glowsticks, pencil and a mobile phone to help him escape before the oxygen in the coffin runs out.
- ❖ *Cast Away* (Robert Zemeckis, 2000)- This is a drama film directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Tom Hanks as a FedEx employee stranded on an uninhabited island after his plane crashes in the South Pacific. The film depicts his successful attempts to survive on the island using remnants of his plane's cargo, as well as his eventual escape and return to society.
- ❖ *Moon* (Duncan Jones, 2009)- This is a British science fiction drama film about a man who experiences a personal crisis as he nears the end of a three-year solitary stint mining helium-3 on the far side of the Earth's moon.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- ❖ www.foxsearchlight.com/127hours/
This site provides a range of resources about the film *127 Hours* including the trailer, photo gallery, soundtrack, production notes, cast and crew interviews, downloadable version of the book, and much more. (Accessed 18 July 2011)
- ❖ aronralston.blogspot.com
This site provides a range of resources about Aron Ralston's incident, providing blogs, videos, and links to other resources. (Accessed 17 July 2011)
- ❖ http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/719253/aron_ralston_interview_127_hours_danny_boyle_simon_beaufoy_and_more.html
This site provides an interview with Aron Ralston discussing the movie and his actual experience. (Accessed 15 July 2011)

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LOST: A SURVIVAL GUIDE

A Study Guide for Grades 11 and 12.

Introduction

Lost is a medium through which students can explore issues such as the formation of society, bias and stereotypes in the media, and media acuity. Key concepts relevant to this show include audience, representation and agency.

This entertaining series can be shown throughout the course and analysed as parts of a whole season or series, or, as one or more episodes that act as a stand-alone text. This study guide can also be used in conjunction with a variety of society and dystopian units in the upper level humanities and contains both pre-viewing activities and post-viewing question sets.

Learning Outcomes:

- STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO CRITICALLY ANALYSE FORMS OF MEDIA.
- STUDENTS WILL APPLY THEMES EXTRACTED FROM LOST TO REAL LIFE SITUATIONS.
- STUDENTS WILL WORK IN GROUPS TO VIEW, RESPOND, EVALUATE AND CRITIQUE THE SHOW AND ITS THEMES.



Series Synopsis

The first season of Lost starts with the survivors of a plane crash trying to extricate themselves from the wreckage on a deserted island. The audience is treated to many fragmented and disjointed flashes of the crash and the people involved. As the series unfolds, the survivors of the crash struggle to live on the uninhabited island.

The background stories of some of the survivors are shown through a series of flashbacks. As the characters try to organize their survival on the island, certain characters become leaders and some followers. This series is an entertaining example of the creation of society and societal roles.

The Survivors: Jack, Kate and Sawyer



DR. JACK SHEPARD: As the only doctor among the survivors, Jack quickly emerges as the leader of the new island society.



KATE AUSTIN: The other survivors have a hard time reconciling the fact that Kate is wanted for murder with her personality and leadership skills.



JAMES SAWYER: Sawyer is a misunderstood conman with a dark past who alienates many of his fellow islanders with his sarcasm.

KEY CONCEPT 1: AUDIENCE SOCIETY

What happens when a group of strangers find themselves in a completely alien environment without the aid of technology? *Lost* shows how a society forms and lets students witness the different roles, technologies, personalities and rules that allow a society to develop and function. It also highlights what qualities, skills and supplies are needed in order to perpetuate and maintain a society once it is formed.

The key concept that the formation of society aspect of the show addresses is audience. This show is intended for North American viewers who are watching from the safety of their couches. The audience is emotionally engaged with the characters but is unable to relate to their circumstances. Further, the judgement between text and reality is convoluted. The circumstances the characters find themselves in are highly unrealistic.

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY 1:

Imagine you and your group members are the survivors of Oceanic Flight 815.

Considering your survival needs and personalities, create a societal charter that your group will live by for the next 3 months.

Rules:

- You must unanimously agree on all points in your charter. This will require compromise and diplomacy. Be patient!
- You must provide an explanation for each of your rules or regulations.
- You must present your charter to the rest of your class, along with your justifications for your choices.

Question Set 1 Society

- 1) What useful skills do the different characters on the island have to offer?
- 2) How are their skills discovered and used by the rest of the survivors?
- 3) What qualities does Jack possess that make him a leader?
- 4) Make a list of skills you have that would help you survive on the island.

★ Science Extension Activity:

Have students research technological recovery methods for plane wreckage (make sure it is age level appropriate).



QUESTION SET 2

BIAS AND STEREOTYPES

- 1) What stereotypes do you notice in the show? Think about more than only visible minorities; think geographic, cultural, and religious stereotypes.
- 2) What cultural stereotypes are visible in Sun and Jin's relationship?
- 3) What do the characters' occupations on the island (the fact that Jin is a master fisher, for example) tell you about the role that stereotypes and/or class play on the island?



KEY CONCEPT 2: REPRESENTATION

Stereotypes and Bias in the Media

Like most modern television shows, *Lost* makes a considerable effort to be inclusive of a number of visible minorities and different cultures. Sadly, some of the characters in *Lost* are little more than racial, cultural or gender-based stereotypes realized. Noticing, questioning, and evaluating the roles that these characters play opens a discussion about the representation of stereotypes in the wider media and about various social justice topics.

Wallpapers247.com

Pre-viewing Activity 2:

Bias and Stereotypes

There are many biases we don't realize we have, including class and occupational biases.

- With your group, decide on the ten most important occupations in modern society.
- Rank the occupations you've chosen from one to ten (ten the most important and one the least).
- Write an individual reflection on what occupations your group ranked the highest and lowest and why. Did you agree with your group's decision? Why or why not?

The Survivors: Sayid

Sayid Jarrah: When Sayid uses his formidable skills as a torturer to get something the islanders need, a dark part of his past is revealed to the survivors.



KEY CONCEPT 3: AGENCY

MEDIA MANIPULATION

Lost was produced by ABC, the American Broadcast Company and ran from 2004-2010. It was a highly successful, multi award-winning show. As it rose in popularity, the advertising fees it garnered skyrocketed. Therefore, the primary motivation for the creation of this show was financial.

In Lost, it becomes quickly evident that things are not always as they seem. The concept of media agency can be discussed through the character of Ben and the role of the Others. Ben and the Others constantly manipulate facts and situations and can be compared to political and media groups in our society who do the same.

Question Set 3: Media Manipulation

- 1) How does Ben manipulate the characters of Lost? Why?
- 2) What can we learn about propaganda and manipulation through Ben's actions?
- 3) Why do the characters of Lost manipulate the media when they return? Are they justified in doing so? What would you have done?

THE OTHERS



The Others have a secret housing settlement on the island and are much more familiar with the island's secrets than the survivors.



Ben is the leader of the Others and the main source of confusion and misinformation for the survivors.

ACTIVITY 3: MEDIA MANIPULATION

Jack and Ben are both running for President of the Island. Split the class in half. Each half will be either Jack or Ben's political campaigning team. Each group will produce one 60 second video campaign advertisement. The class will then vote to see who the winner of the "election" will be.

The Survivors: Charley, Claire and Hurley



CHARLEY PACE: Charley is a washed-up rock star struggling to beat his heroin addiction. He quickly becomes friends with Hurley and develops a close bond with Claire.



CLAIRE LITTLETON: Claire was on her way to LA to give her unborn baby up for adoption when her plane crashed. She delivers her son on the island and comes to trust and depend on Charlie.



HUGO REYES (HURLEY): Hurley is a sweet, goofy man who develops a fast friendship with Charley. Hurley won the lottery in LA using numbers he heard while incarcerated in a mental institution.

EPISODE GUIDE

Season 1: 25 Episodes

Season 2: 24 Episodes

Season 3: 23 Episodes

Season 4: 14 Episodes

Season 5: 17 Episodes

Season 6: 18 Episodes

Sources for Further Study

- Lost in 8:15: A comprehensive summary of the main events of the first five seasons of the show. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJ4MR5JtCX4>
- Lost can be used in conjunction with a dystopian novel study unit, such as Lord of the Flies by William Golding or Animal Farm by George Orwell.
- Information on everything Lost can be found in the Lost Encyclopedia. http://lostpedia.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page
- Many references to classical and modern philosophers, theorists and thinkers can be found in the show, especially in the names of the characters. <http://lostpedia.wikia.com/wiki/Philosophers>

Where Is The Love?

July 2011

A Music Video Message
Study Guide
By Jess Lee and Stef D



Introduction

Media holds a lot of power in today's society. It is impossible to subtract it from daily life. The message one may hear or see is of great importance and requires much focus to understand clearly. Media awareness is necessary in entering the world intelligently and openly. Strong messages are evident in a vast amount of sources including television, movies, music, newspapers etc. Music serves many purposes and one of them is to deliver a message. The combination of music and visuals creates an even stronger meaning by the artist and easily grabs the attention of the viewer. Some music videos are intended simply for enjoyment, but some have spread the word about pressing issues. One example of this is "Where is the love" by The Black Eyed Peas. This song alone raises awareness about racism, discrimination, terrorism, poverty and the list goes on. Along with powerful lyrics are powerful images. The connection between the two drives the viewer to listen more critically and view analytically.

Key Concepts to Consider

Media's influence on pop culture has grown drastically with the mass production of technology. It is crucial to learn the skills necessary to critically view and listen to material.

- Media does not always deliver positive messages to its audience
- Media messages contain social and political implications
- Connecting the message being delivered to the visuals being represented is important
- Demographics are targeted by the media
- Fusion affinity is visible throughout media deliverance



Make sure the lyrics to "Where is the love" are available as you watch this music video. Take time to closely analyze the images and their connection to the lyrics. As you watch, what sticks out to you? Is it a lyric? An Image? Or a combination of both? The important part is to view it in its entirety and then carefully analyze it, verse by verse.

Where Is The Love?

A Music Video Message
Study Guide



Chorus Analysis

*"People killin', people dyin'
Children hurt and you hear them
cryin'*

*Can you practice what you preach
And would you turn the other
cheek*

*Father, Father, Father help us
Send some guidance from above
'Cause people got me, got me
questionin'
Where is the love (Love)"*

Question 1) What do the Black Eyed Peas mean by "Where is the love?"?

Question 2) Do you relate to the question, "where is the love?" Why or why not?

Verse One Analysis

*"Overseas, yeah, we try to stop terrorism
But we still got terrorists here livin'
In the USA, the big CIA fightin'
The Bloods and The Crips and the KKK"*

Question 1) Explain how this statement pertains to Canada as well?

Question 2) Find and describe a recent media story, which could be related back to this statement:

- a) Who was involved?
- b) How was it covered and projected by the media?

*"But if you only have love for your own race
Then you only leave space to discriminate
And to discriminate only generates hate
And when you hate then you're bound to get irate, yeah"*

Question 1) Provide a written analysis of the above lyrics.



Video Analysis

Question 1) Which visuals were used to enhance the message of the artist in verse one?

Where Is The Love?

A Music Video Message
Study Guide



Verse Two Analysis

*"A war is goin' on but the reason's
undercover
The truth is kept secret, it's swept
under the rug
If you never know truth then you
never know love"*

Question 1) What war are they
referring to?

Question 2) What does truth have
to do with love?



Video Analysis

Question 1) What visuals were used
to enhance the message of the
artist in verse two?

Verse 3 Analysis

*"Wrong information always shown by the
media*

*Negative images is the main criteria
Infecting the young minds faster than
bacteria*

*Kids wanna act like what they see in the
cinema*

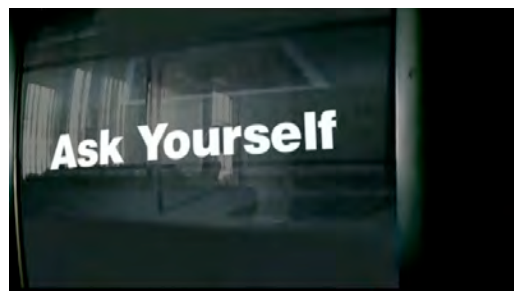
*Yo', whatever happened to the values of
humanity"*

Question 1) What message is being
delivered in this part of the song?

Question 2) Provide and describe an
example where medias is delivering a
negative message to the public. (Sources
include: newspaper, magazine, TV, radio,
etc..)

a) Where did you find this example?

b) What is the message being delivered
and why do you feel it is negative?



Video Analysis

Question 1) What visuals were used to enhance
the message of the artist in verse three?

WHERE IS THE LOVE?

JULY 2011

A MUSIC VIDEO MESSAGE
STUDY GUIDE

FINAL ACTIVITY:

- ⤴ WATCH ALL OF THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS.
- ⤴ CHOOSE ONE AND WRITE A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE LYRICAL MESSAGE.
- ⤴ EXPLAIN HOW THE USE OF IMAGES ENHANCES THE MESSAGE. IF YOU FEEL IT DOESN'T, EXPLAIN WHY NOT.

URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNJL6nfu_Q



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MS91knuzoOA>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bE2r7r7VVic>



<http://www.goodcharlotte.com/video/goodcharlotteholdonofficialmus-1>



Popular Music and Music Videos

Overview

Since the 1980's, music videos have been an important feature of popular music and popular culture. Music videos have been significantly influential in the image of artists and bands. Artists and bands such as Madonna, Michael Jackson and the Police were at the forefront of music video development. The beginnings of music videos can be connected to films made by earlier bands and performers like the Beatles and Elvis. Music videos play an important role within the music industry and within popular culture. Music videos originally were a form of song and artist promotion. However, now videos have an aesthetic and commercial value of their own.



Curriculum Box

This study guide is written for senior secondary students. It provides information and learning activities for English, Fine Arts, Music,



Music, text , and lyrics work together to create images, affect emotions, and deliver messages.

Learning goals:

- 1. Students understand imagery and meaning of song lyrics.**
- 2. Students analyze musical affect.**
- 3. How does music, video, and text connect as a holistic unit?**

Activity #1

Text, Image, and Sound

Students will be given a copy of lyrics (or use projector) to Michael Jackson's *Beat It*. After reading the text as a class, students will be put into small groups to answer the following questions:

- What is the subject matter or main focus of the lyrics?
- What images do the lyrics conjure up in your mind?
- What kinds of emotions are connected to the lyrics?
- What are some of the main themes in the lyrics?

Students then listen to the recording of *Beat It* without video and answer the following questions:

- What kind of emotional qualities are evoked by the music?
- Does the music match the emotive qualities of the lyrics?
- How does the music connect/relate to the subject matter of the song?

Students watch the video without sound for *Beat It* and answer the following questions:

- What does the imagery tell you about what is going on in the story?
- What imagery is thematic or repeated?
- What is the emotional content of the imagery?

Students watch the video with the sound and answer the following questions:

- How does the music, imagery, and text connect?
- Does the text match what is going on with the music and imagery?
- Do you think that there are weaknesses in consistency among how the text, imagery and sound connect?



"But you wanna be bad."

A person's choice of music often reflects one's values and beliefs. As well, people often personally identify with their preferred musical genres.

Learning Goals:

- 1. Students will articulate how they find meaning in music.**
- 2. Students will analyze common values and beliefs characteristic of different musical genres.**
- 3. Students will understand the relationship between music and its audience.**

• equipment:

Iphones, smart phones or computer lab, head phones

Activity #2

Music and Meaning

Have students individually reflect upon and answer the following questions:

- What music is meaningful to you?
- What is your favourite genre of music?
- What are some of your favourite songs?
- What are some of your favourite videos?
- Is there a difference between your preference in videos and songs? If so, why do you think this is the case?

As a class, discuss questions 1 and 2. After the discussion, break the class into groups of four or five based on their favourite genres of music. Once students are in groups based on their musical preferences, have them research four music videos (this can be done outside of class or during class time) and answer the following questions:

- What images are common across the selected videos?
- What common themes and messages are presented among your selected videos?
- Is there a shared political, social, or commercial orientation among the selected videos. If so explain.
- Is there a commonalities among how men, women, and different ethnic groups portrayed?

Groups will present their findings to the class.



are



Activity # 3

Production Time

*How the imagery of
a music video
relates to text and
music is often
decided by the
director.*

Learning goals

1. Students will play the part of screen writer, camera operator, director and editor and experientially learn about video production.
- 2. Students will decide how their imagery will fit, compliment or juxtapose the music and lyrics of a song.

Equipment:
Computer with imovie or movie maker,
video camera

Using a video camera, movie maker or imovie, have students, in their same groups, film video footage over a song of their choice. During and after the activity, have them reflect upon the following questions:

- Is the imagery within the video consistent with the imagery of the text? Or does it compliment/juxtapose it somehow?
- How does the video relate to the message and meaning of the text?
- Is the tone and emotive quality of the video aligned to the music and text of the song?
- How does the form of the video content relate to the form of the music?



*In our digital world,
Media creates our reality.
The media and popular
culture provide and
Communicate symbols and
messages that influence
our culture and identities.*

Learning Goals:

1. Students will analyze and articulate the relationship between music videos and popular culture.
2. Students will understand the role of music videos within the music industry.
3. Students will discuss the historical development of the music video

Activity #4

Final Discussion

As a class discuss the following questions:

- What was the original function of the music video?
- What roles and functions do videos presently carry out in the music industry?
- What kind of impact have videos had on music and popular culture?
- What influences do videos and music have on one's identity formation and expression?



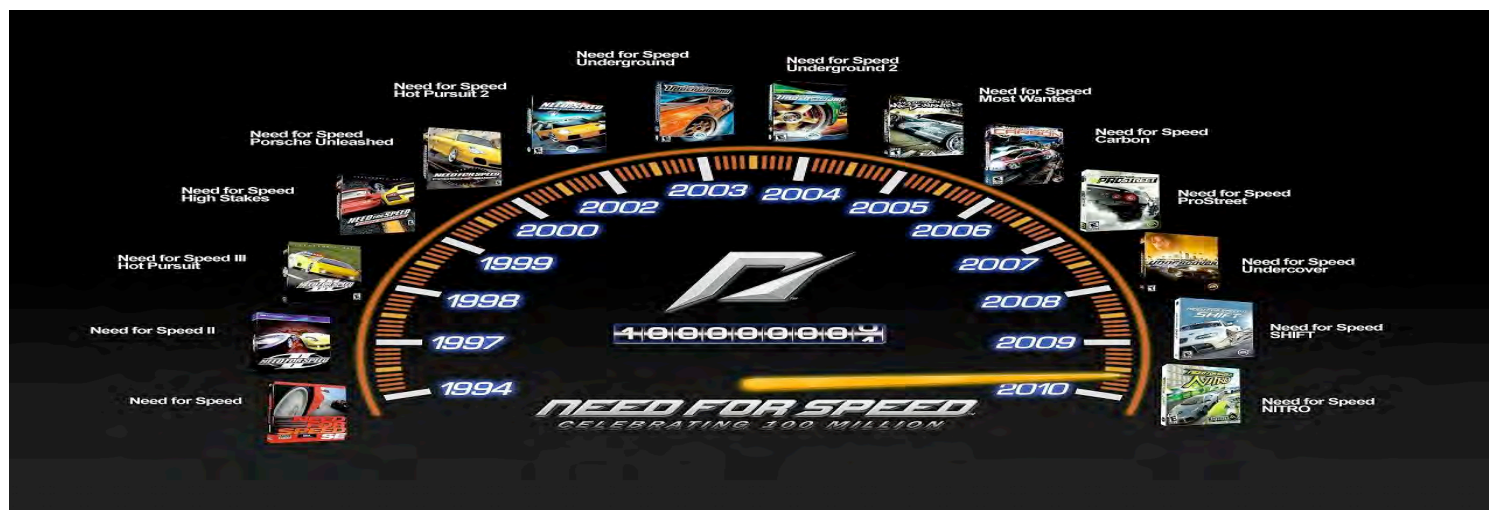
GAME ON! UNIT 4
NEED FOR SPEED: THE RUN



Introduction

Video games are an increasingly dominant force in the entertainment industry. The proliferation of video gaming can be attributed to its audience, youth of the last decade and more importantly up and coming youth. Video gaming possesses an entirely new set of issues that are oblique to previous issues experienced in media consumption due to its interactive nature. Furthermore, video gaming is an increasingly popular form of entertainment with today's students, and currently many students spend more time involved in video games than any other form of digital entertainment.

The unit will guide students in making healthy, responsible, and most importantly conscious decisions in their consumption of video games. Furthermore, this unit will facilitate students' understanding of why they play games, the effects of their gaming habits on themselves and society, and how games are designed to be particularly engaging.



Background

*The Need for Speed franchise started in 1994 with a small Canadian software developer named Distinctive Software which later became EA Canada. The original Need for Speed racing game was designed only for personal computers and was later developed for gaming systems. The history is easily visualized in the graphic above. In this course we will be playing and analysing the newest Need for Speed, **The Run**. In the history of the franchise some games have been simply driving simulations, while others have had a story-line that followed a character through levels to achieve some goal. The simulations only required you to drive and acquire cool new gadgets to soup up your car, but in the stories, players could role play the “exciting” life of a driver with a “need for speed”! **The Run** has a story. You will be required to drive across the United States to save your own life. You will encounter all manner of obstacles. What will you do?*

LET'S FIND OUT!!!!

Before playing or watching any of the game, discuss some of these questions about media, video games and specifically driving games.

Level 1

1. Have you ever played driving games before? How often?
2. Do you like driving games, why or why not?
3. Do you enjoy crashing cars in the game? Why or why not?
4. Which racing games do you play or know of, and what is the goal in each game?
5. How do you identify a racing game?
6. What do you admire about the characters in racing games and why?

Level 2

1. What are the ramifications of car crashes or accidents in real life? How about in video games?
2. Do you think racing games affect ones driving habits?
3. Are there any video games that reward safe driving habits?
4. How are the protagonist and antagonists in racing video games presented?
5. How is car racing depicted in the media and in society? Think about the differences between Sports racing vs. Illegal racing.



ACTIVITY: Entertainment Software Rating Board

Research the ESRB and its ratings systems for video games. Find examples of Racing games

Racing Game Examples	ESRB Rating	Rating stands for...
Not applicable	EC	Early Childhood
	E	
	E+	
	T	
	M	
	AO	

After playing and watching Need for Speed: The Run, discuss the following questions.

Level 1

1. What message does this game try to convey.
2. What lifestyle is depicted in this game, real or fantasy.
3. Why are the cops and the bad guys both trying catch Jack?
4. Was it acceptable that Jack stole a cop car? Why? Would you have done something else?
5. Was this game entertaining? What made it entertaining?
6. What brand names or product placement did you notice while playing the game? What other games that you have played have had advertising that you noticed?

Level 2

1. How does this game affect your view on racing in general? Give examples of events in this game that support your stance.
2. What are some of the key social issues that surface through playing this game?
3. Which laws did Jack break in this game?
4. Was the experience being Jack realistic or not? Visually and/or Realistically
5. In what ways was this character constructed to fit in with what a person in reality should be like?
6. Compare the reality of the game and the way the same topics are represented in other media.
7. How has this characters identity made you think about your relationships to laws and social practices whilst driving.



ACTIVITY: Analysis of similar media

Event	Consequence in game	Specific game examples	Consequence in other forms of media	Specific media example	Consequence in real life
Stealing a car	Points?				
Street racing					
Crashing a car					
Car modifications					



PENALTIES FOR STREET RACING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

BILL C-19

“it defines “street-racing”;

it creates five new street-racing offences;

for three of the new offences, it provides maximum prison terms longer than those currently provided for dangerous operation or criminal negligence in the operation of a motor vehicle;

it introduces mandatory driving prohibition orders for a minimum period of time, with the length of the prohibition increasing gradually for repeat offences.”

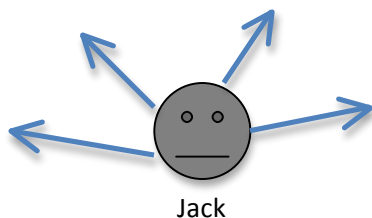
http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/LegislativeSummaries/bills_ls.asp?Language=E&ls=c19&source=library_prb&Parl=39&Ses=1

ACTIVITY: Mind Maps*Level 1*

Make a mind map of the relations between the main character, Jack, and the other characters he encounters in the game.

Level 2

On the same mind map as above, show the relationships between the events and places Jack goes through on his “mission”, and how those relate to the characters.

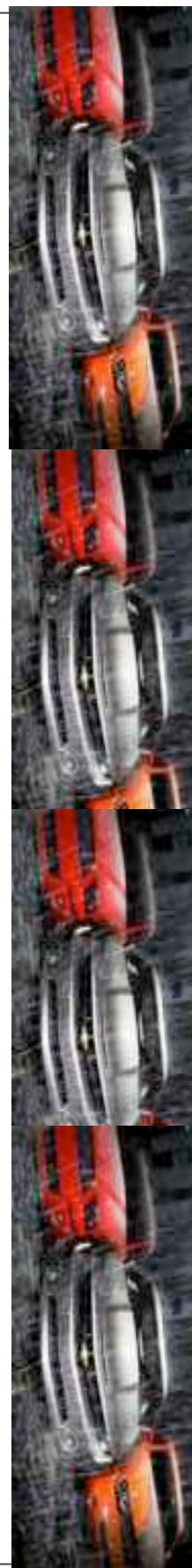
**ACTIVITY: Production***Level 1*

Create a PSA in prez! on street racing awareness in gaming. Include Image, Text, and Sound (ITS). Outline what you know about the line between fantasy and reality in video gaming.

Level 2

In your group, create a storyboard of the narrative action in the game. Choose one of the scenes to reinterpret and put into a more realistic context. Represent Jack and the forces against him and include some of the real consequences you researched earlier. Students create and perform skits about various lawbreaking scenarios involving a car. This will require adolescent students, most of whom just got their driver's license, to understand road laws and the punishments for breaking those laws. They will likely assume the role of cop or perpetrator.

Your output may be a short performance, video, animation, podcast or your choice after consultation with teachers.



ACTIVITY: Tracking Cross-Country

Cities and their Qualities	Main Events	Highway in between City	Plot and Theme	Symbols and Motifs
Chicago				
Los Angeles				
New York				
San Francisco				

Guide Questions:

San Francisco:

From the beginning of the game, how do cars associate with characters? Give specific examples of characters and their cars. What does this say about consumerism, in other words, how does your material possession affect who you are as a person?

How does Jack forge his own unique identity? Why do you think he is so defiant from the beginning in order to assert this identity?

Los Angeles:

Describe Jack's clash with the gangs in this city? What gang-characters does he encounter and how exactly do their identities differ from Jack's? (Thinks about their appearances and behavior)

What is significant about Jack standing alone in his fight against groups? (Versus gangs, mob, the Police)

Chicago:

How does the mob play a role in this city? What do they control and how do they control it?

What is the mob history in the city of Chicago? Search this on the internet and be specific.

What is the real meaning of the helicopters in this videogame, (both the police and criminal choppers)? What does this say about our inescapability from institutions and harm? Explain thoroughly.

New York:

The female roles are well-established by this point in the game; describe the agency of each female character encountered so far? How do they help Jack or prevent him from reaching his goal? What are their motives for helping or harming Jack? Do you think these female characters are given a fair depiction of their own agency? (Could we have a false impression about any one of the female characters, in terms of their agency or ill-intent? Which female-characters are given a fair depiction of agency and which are not? Be specific.

What can be said about the gun? Why does Jack take on everyone armed with automatic machine guns, with only his hand gun?

ACTIVITY: Level 2

Debate Activity

Students debate whether the content of these video games is ethical. This will require students to be familiar with the production side of the industry, to argue for the need for gory content, for the sake of entertainment value in an ultra competitive industry that is awarded financially for one-upping the violence in their game releases. For students arguing against the violent content, they will be challenged to come up with alternatives to some of the more violent videogame scenarios. In other words, how could a game of this genre keep its entertainment value while creating entertaining scenes without the illegal or violent content?

Sources for further studies :

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/crime/street-racing.html>

<http://www.yrp.ca/erase/>

<http://www.esrb.org/index-js.jsp>

Notes for the Teacher

Overview

This guide is designed to let students critically analyze a video game depicting a variety of youth issues such as identity, street racing, gender representation, consumerism, advertisements, and diversity. The game covers both role playing through its narrative and skill development through driving between events to achieve goals and reach higher levels in the game. It is strongly recommended that teachers play through as much of the game as possible before instruction, however, it should be understood with this kind of interactive media, not all content will be discoverable or known to either teachers or students.

Course Learning Outcomes

The following learning outcomes are part of the Media Studies: Game On! Course and were developed by situating the course around students' individual gaming behaviours and practices, so that they will come to a better understanding of the influence that video games can have over their everyday lives in the first level. In the second level, the focus of the course is expanded from students' individual gaming behaviours and practices to society at large, they will come to a better understanding of the influence that video games can have over the shaping of culture. Students will also learn how to critically evaluate the video games they play in relation to the world they live in.

Level 1

- identify moral/ethical decisions within the video game world.
- identify Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) ratings and their intentions.

Level 2

- identify the target audience of specific video games.
- evaluate the impact of their own gaming habits on their lives and society.
- evaluate the benefits and drawbacks associated with gaming.
- demonstrate how video games are rated and reviewed.

Cross Curricular Learning Outcomes

There are many other potential learning outcomes to be covered in this unit, including English Language Arts, Technology, Social Studies and Visual Arts. The purpose of the course, however, is explicit instruction of media studies and the cross-curricular potentials are not outlined in further depth.