

UNDERSTANDING FILM

Description

This course is not about viewing films for a few months; it is about spending a few months of preparation for a lifetime of viewing films with a critical eye and an intelligent mind. Because we live in an information culture that is increasingly dominated by the image, students need to develop habits of perception, analysis, judgment, and selectivity which improve their capacity of processing, analyzing, and evaluating visual data. Because movies, videos, and DVD's are such a part of the students' lives, it is important that students acquire visual literacy. In order to gain this visual literacy, students need to learn how to read a film, to understand the art of watching a film, and to recognize the rhetoric of visual language. Understanding Film uses the medium of film to teach the strands of the English curriculum. Writing, reading, viewing, researching, discussion, and critical thinking occur on a daily basis. Fictional and non-fictional reading will be required. Students must pay careful attention to the correct use of grammar as they produce writing that is well organized, coherent, and supported. The elements of character development, imagery, thematic structure, and point of view will be explored through the medium of film. Students will view films to understand human behavior so that they can make better choices in their own lives. Students will also complete an Independent Study Project in the spring.

Course Overview

Course Goals

Students should:

- become visually literate by developing skills in "reading films".
- examine and question their own assumptions, assumptions implied within films, and assumptions of the culture which produced the films, in order to develop new perceptions or ways of seeing.
- critically analyze and evaluate the artistic and cinematic value of films and recognize film as an art form.
- analyze films within historical or cultural contexts of particular times in American history.
- develop sensitivity for cultures, traditions, and values other than their own through the study of foreign films.
- analyze, synthesize, and make correlations while they are reading, discussing, and writing about films in order to interpret

Essential Questions

- How do we understand what we read?
- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Assessments

Common Assessments

Skill Assessments

<p>films and evaluate the ideas which films offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write in expository modes of compare/contrast, cause/effect, fact/opinion, and illustration. • conduct research about films. 		
<p>Content Outline</p> <p>I. Unit 1 - Building the Foundation for Film Study</p> <p>II. Unit 2 - Evaluating Our Beliefs</p> <p>III. Unit 3 - Film Writing Strategies</p> <p>IV. Unit 4 - Silent Films Say So Much</p> <p>V. Unit 5 - Censorship Restrictions</p> <p>VI. Unit 6 - Traveling Through American History with Films</p> <p>VII. Unit 7 - Studying Film Genres</p> <p>VIII. Unit 8 - Beware of the Documentary</p> <p>IX. Unit 9 - Learn About Our World Neighbors Through Film</p> <p>X. Unit 10 - Novels to Films</p> <p>XI. Unit 11 - Utilizing the Teacher</p>	<p>Standards</p> <p>State of Connecticut English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks</p> <p>Connecticut State Standards are met in the following areas:</p> <p><i>Reading and Responding</i> Students read, comprehend and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts in both print and multimedia formats.</p> <p><i>Exploring and Responding to Literature</i> Students read and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.</p> <p><i>Communicating with Others</i> Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express, develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.</p> <p><i>Applying English Language Conventions</i> Students apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.</p>	<p>Grade Level Skills</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Pacing Guide										
1st Marking Period					2nd Marking Period					
Month 1	Month 2		Month 3		Month 4		Month 5			
Unit 1 <u>Building the Foundation for Film Study</u> 1 week	Unit 2 <u>Evaluating Our Beliefs</u> 1 week	Unit 3 <u>Film Writing Strategies</u> 1 week	Unit 4 <u>Silent Films Say So Much</u> 3 weeks	Unit 5 <u>Censorship Restrictions</u> 1 week	Unit 6 <u>Traveling Through American History with Films</u> 4 weeks	Unit 7 <u>Studying Film Genres</u> 1 week	Unit 8 <u>Beware of the Documentary</u> 1 week	Unit 9 <u>Learn About Our World Neighbors Through Film</u> 3 weeks	Unit 10 <u>Novels to Films</u> 1 week	Unit 11 <u>Utilizing the Teacher</u> 2 weeks

Unit 1 - Building the Foundation for Film Study, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.

Communicating with Others

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will:

- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explore their prior knowledge about film.
- identify reasons for studying film.
- identify the fictional and dramatic elements within a film
- practice film-reading strategies.

Essential Questions

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?

Focus Questions

- Why study film?
- How does one read a film?
- What is the art of watching a movie?

Assessment

- Written responses

Skill Objectives

Students will:

Unit 2 – Evaluating Our Beliefs, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- discuss how the experiences of a reader influence the interpretation of a text.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify their tastes in films.
- analyze and recognize their own assumptions and question their own thinking.
- demonstrate their knowledge about paradigms.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- How can recognition of our attitudes and belief system allow us to change our assumptions?

Assessments

- Paradigm model, demonstrating initial tastes and assumptions
- Written reflection

Skill Objectives

Students will:

Unit 3 - Film Writing Strategies, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge of the structure and organization of a formal analysis of a film.
- demonstrate knowledge of the elements of a film history paper.
- demonstrate the knowledge of the elements of an ideological essay.
- demonstrate knowledge of appropriate sources of auteur criticism
- shape and explore questions about the filmmaking, its historical context, and the responses of critics and scholars.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Questions

- How does one write about films?
- How can one respond in writing about films in order to connect to the films and develop critical thinking skills?

Assessments

- Create questions for future use in the auteur criticism paper
- Create questions to be used in an analytical study

Skill Objectives

Students will:

Unit 4 - Silent Films Say So Much, 3 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.
- analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.
- evaluate the effectiveness of the choices that authors, illustrators and filmmakers make to express political and social issues.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- understand and appreciate the art form of silent film, its era, and its star, Charlie Chaplin.
- demonstrate an understanding of the factors that label a film “controversial”.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- How can viewing past and present American films deepen our understanding of our own country?

Assessments

- Character study
- Personal reflection

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- demonstrate sentence variety (coordination and subordination; use of sentence fragment) in their writing.

Unit 5 - Censorship Restrictions, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- discuss how the experiences of an author influence the text.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.
- evaluate the effectiveness of the choices that authors, illustrators and filmmakers make to express political and social issues.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explore the reasons, causes, and effects of censorship.
- analyze their own thinking on censorship.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- How has censorship impacted movies and how do these restrictions reflect a society's values and morals?

Assessment

- Create and implement survey; record data

Skill Objectives

Students will:

Unit 6 – Traveling Through American History with Films, 4 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- discuss how the experiences of an author influence the text.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.
- evaluate the effectiveness of the choices that authors, illustrators and filmmakers make to express political and social issues.

Communicating with Others

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will:

- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will:

- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- research information about the time in which a movie was made and the historical time period of the film's story.
- identify the values of Americans portrayed in film.
- demonstrate knowledge of the literary elements within the film (character development, conflict, point of view, thematic structure, and imagery).
- compare and contrast the subject matter

Essential Questions

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?

Focus Question

- How can viewing past and present American films deepen our understanding of our own country?

Assessments

- Write an auteur criticism on a director such as Elia Kaza or Peter Fonda
- Write a comparison/contrast essay on Orson Welles and William Randolph Hearst with text support, critical analysis, and correct citation
- Write a cause and effect essay from one of the films with text support, critical analysis, and correct citation

<p>within the films with emphasis on censorship restrictions as well as historical events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrate textual support to illustrate their thesis statements. • demonstrate effective expository writing which contains an honest voice, unity, coherence, and completeness. 		<p><u>Skill Objectives</u></p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the Internet effectively for research. • cite sources appropriately (MLA). • demonstrate consistency of voice.
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Unit 7 – Studying Film Genres, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- identify the various conventions within a genre and apply this understanding to the evaluation of the text.
- analyze literary conventions and devices an author uses and how they contribute meaning and appeal.

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- identify the elements of a type of film (e.g. film noir, combat films, westerns, social problem films, etc.).
- examine the fictional and dramatic elements within a film.
- identify the values of Americans portrayed in films.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- How can viewing past and present American films deepen our understanding of our own country?

Assessment

- Test about the genre and the ideas in the film

Skill Objective

Students will:

- punctuate restrictive and non-restrictive clauses correctly.

Unit 8 – Beware of the Documentary, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate the basic beliefs, perspectives and assumptions underlying an author's work.
- interpret, analyze and evaluate the influence of culture, history and ethnicity on themes and issues in literature.
- evaluate the effectiveness of the choices that authors, illustrators and filmmakers make to express political and social issues.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- “read” a documentary by understanding the message implied and articulate divergent positions.
- analyze the effectiveness of a documentary, the reliability of data, and its impact on the audience.
- analyze humor, graphics, music, and statistics used to present as well as alter facts.

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- What can movies tell us about the world we live in?

Assessments

- Data analysis
- Written reflection on their changed assumptions about documentaries

Skill Objective

Students will:

- demonstrate appropriate diction by avoiding clichés, jargons, slang, and colloquialisms, using vivid language.

Unit 9 – Learn About Our World Neighbors Through Film, 3 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize and appreciate that contemporary and classical literature has shaped human thought.

Students will:

- discuss, analyze and evaluate how characters deal with the diversity of human experience and conflict.
- compare/ contrast and evaluate ideas, themes and/or issues across classical and contemporary texts.
- create responses to texts and examine each work's contributions to an understanding of human experience across cultures.

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- analyze and evaluate themes and connections that cross cultures.

Communicating with Others

Students use descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive and poetic modes.

Students will:

- listen to or read a variety of genres to use as models for writing in different modes.
- use the appropriate features of persuasive, narrative, expository or poetic writing.

Applying English Language Conventions

Students use knowledge of their language and culture to improve competency in English.

Students will:

- read, listen to and tell stories from a variety of cultures, and identify the similarities and differences in the way language is used.

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- deepen an awareness of cultures, traditions, and values other than their own as they analyze themes.
- compare and contrast another culture and society to America.
- analyze and recognize their initial

Essential Questions

- How does literature enrich our lives?
- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Question

Assessments

- Exploratory essay
- Comparison/contrast essay

Skill Objectives

Students will:

- demonstrate consistency of voice.

<p>assumptions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the assumptions made within the film. • evaluate their initial assumptions. • reflect on their new conclusions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can viewing and understanding international films help us deepen our awareness of other cultures and societies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read English subtitles while understanding the action within the film.
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Unit 10 – Novels to Films, 1 week [top](#)

Standards

Exploring and Responding to Literature

Students recognize how literary devices and conventions engage the reader.

Students will:

- explain and explore their own and others' aesthetic reactions to texts.

Students recognize that readers and authors are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts.

Students will:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the choices that authors, illustrators and filmmakers make to express political and social issues.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- compare and contrast a novel to its film version.
- analyze the reader's reaction and the viewer's reaction

Essential Question

- How does literature enrich our lives?

Focus Question

- What happens when a novel is made into a movie?

Assessment

- Tests on novels

Skill Objectives

Students will:

Unit 11 – Utilizing the Teacher, 2 weeks plus [top](#)

Standards

Communicating with Others

Students prepare, publish and/or present work appropriate to audience, purpose and task.

Students will:

- determine purpose, point of view and audience, and choose an appropriate written, oral or visual format.
- apply the most effective processes to create and present a written, oral or visual piece.
- revise texts for organization, elaboration, fluency and clarity.
- research information from multiple sources for a specific purpose.
- evaluate the validity of primary and secondary sources of information to authenticate research.
- publish and/or present final products in a myriad of ways, including the use of the arts and technology.

Applying English Language Conventions

Students use Standard English for composing and revising written text.

Students will:

- demonstrate proficient use of proper mechanics, usage and spelling skills.
- use resources for proofreading and editing.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- incorporate knowledge gained through the curriculum of the Understanding Film course
- form individual inquiry.
- evaluate and synthesize information.
- research print and non-print sources.
- connect new knowledge to the focus questions of the course.
- present information to an audience.

Essential Questions

- How do we write, speak, and present effectively?
- How do we use the English language appropriately to speak and write?

Focus Question

- How can one respond in writing to films in order to connect to the films and develop critical thinking skills?

Assessments

- First semester course: Instruction in writing the college essay
- Second semester course: Senior Independent Project

Skill Objectives

Students will: