



RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
Course Overview

Film Analysis I
Course # 05010171



General Information:

Credits: .5
Weighted: N/A
Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation

Length: 1 Semester
Format: Meets Daily (or Cycle Day)
Grade: 10-12
Instructor:

Course Description:

Lights! Camera! Action! This course exposes students to the greatest movies, the most influential directors, and the most respected actors and actresses of the film era. It offers a behind-the-scenes look at classic films, old and new. Classic directors (who may include Alfred Hitchcock, Frank Capra, Orson Welles, and Billy Wilder) and modern directors (who may include Mike Nichols, Mel Brooks, Steven Spielberg, Spike Lee, Ridley Scott, and M. Night Shyamalan) are studied, as are films representing a variety of genres and styles. Students will learn and apply film terminology and vocabulary to sophisticate their understanding and analysis of films. The course also addresses such issues as censorship and discrimination in the movie industry. Students will also learn how to appropriately and effectively incorporate viewing and reading strategies so the focus remains on the academic development of critical reading, writing, and thinking all the while promoting an appreciation for film and filmmaking. Classes involve lecture, viewing, discussion, presentations, and written analysis of the films. This course is suited to all academic levels.

Course Objectives:

In this course the student will be able to:

- Apply techniques of analysis to viewing and reading independently (mostly nonfiction) to understand film at a more in-depth level.
- Understand and analyze why the director made conscious decisions in the filmmaking by mastering film terminology: film shots, camera angles, camera movement, sound, editing, lighting, literary aspects and more.
- Understand and examine characters and themes, and to understand literary aspects incorporated in film.
- Gain an understanding of major trends in the film industry, and be able to articulate this understanding and evaluate it.
- Dissect and analyze selected scene(s) of a film and be able to explain why and how that scene(s) is significant to the film as a whole all while using film shots, camera angles, camera movement, sound, editing techniques along with other film terminology as support.

- Structure thought precisely with language to produce and refine: claims (argument about a topic), paragraph development with the inclusion of evidence, transitions, introduction, body, and conclusion.
- To develop a substantial idea with careful control of both language and composition techniques throughout an essay by selecting and using substantial evidence, working in class both with guided instruction and in independent application.
- To apply conventions of English grammar, syntax, and sentence construction and develop structure in composition.
- To cultivate fluency and voice in written work with reflective, persuasive, informative, analytical writing..
- To develop and apply film terminology and new vocabulary skills.
- To sharpen discussion skills of listening, speaking, and responding to the ideas of others to evaluate film and philosophical text/argument organization and content to determine the director's purpose and effectiveness according to the director's style, theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic and reasoning.

Common Assessments:

Common Course Assessment:

1. Students will need to conduct a scene dissection analysis and/or mise-en-scene. Students will select a scene and develop a claim as to why that particular scene is important to the film as a whole and analyze and evaluate the scene using film shots, camera angles, camera movement, sound and editing techniques, lighting along with other film terminology to support the claim.
2. Students will read an article from *Film Informatics* entitled "Elements of Suspense" and apply the article and elements of suspense to a the film all the while incorporating film terminology (see above) as support.

Analytical Prompt:

Students will be given thematic essential questions for each film unit and need to develop an argument and defend their rationale by citing specific evidence from the film and by applying and analyzing film shots, camera angles, camera movement, sound and editing techniques, lighting along with other film terminology. Students will write the essay as a writing assessment.

Other Possible Assessments:

Discussion Activities, Individual and Group Presentations

Students will be given a cold passage to read to test their knowledge of nonfiction reading
Reflective, Analytical, Expository, Didactic Essays

All courses in Radnor High School will use the following grade scale:

A+	98.50% to 100%	4.6667	4.3333
A	92.50% to 98.49%	4.3333	4.0000
A-	89.50% to 92.49%	4.0000	3.6667
B+	86.50% to 89.49%	3.6667	3.3333
B	82.50% to 86.49%	3.3333	3.0000
B-	79.50% to 82.49%	3.0000	2.6667
C+	76.50% to 79.49%	2.6667	2.3333
C	72.50% to 76.49%	2.3333	2.0000
C-	69.50% to 72.49%	2.0000	1.6667
D+	66.50% to 69.49%	1.6667	1.3333
D	62.50% to 66.49%	1.3333	1.0000
F	0% to 59.49%	0.0	0.0

Major Units of Study:

- I. "Introduction to Film Terminology" Unit
This unit will introduce film terminology so the terms can be identified and analyzed accordingly. Film terminology in this unit will include film shots, camera angles, camera movement, sound and music, editing techniques, lighting along with other film shots. Scene dissections or entire films will be used as content.
- II. "Techniques of Suspense" Unit
This unit will examine the different techniques, styles and approaches used to create suspense in film.
- III. "Coming of Age and Bildungsroman" Unit
This unit will examine how film portrays "coming of age" in the cinematic experience. Students will recognize some films that incorporate the "bildungsroman" model of growth as well.
- IV. "How to Tell a Story, Point of View, and Narrative Theory" Unit
This unit will examine how a director chooses to tell a story. Students will analyze and evaluate the conscious decisions of the director in creating a film: plot development, character development, and point of view along with film techniques and terminology.
- V. "Race, Gender, and Film" Unit
This will focus on the socially constructed realities of race and/or gender and its impact on character and character development within a film.

Materials, Texts, Films, & Equipment:

- Handouts and additional reading materials to be provided by the instructor as needed
- Class website (complete with links to online reading materials) to be produced and maintained by the instructor
- Film Notebook and bound journal to be provided by the student
- DVD player and VCR (as well as remote controls to navigate)
- Excerpts from Louis Giannetti *Understanding Movies*.
- In addition, other excerpts and articles will be critically read and discussed. Excerpts can include the following works:

- a. "Introduction to Film Terminology" Unit
 - i. Excerpts from Louis Giannetti *Understanding Movies*
 - ii. Any other relevant readings decided by the instructor

Film options include: M. Night Shyamalan films: *Unbreakable*, *The Sixth Sense*, and *Signs*, *Braveheart*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Citizen Kane*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, and any other relevant films decided by the instructor

- b. "Techniques of Suspense" Unit
 - i. "Elements of Suspense" from *Film Informatics (common text)*
 - ii. Any other relevant readings decided by the instructor

Common Film: *Psycho*

Film options include: *Jaws*, *Speed*, *The Hurt Locker*, any other relevant films decided by the instructor

- c. "Coming of Age and Bildungsroman" Unit
 - i. Excerpt from Hardcastle, Anne, Roberta Morosini and Kendall Tarte. *Coming of Age on Film: Stories of Transformation in World Cinema*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
 - ii. Excerpt from Jones, Leisha. "Contemporary bildungsromans and the prosumer girl." *Criticism* 53.3 (2011): *Student Resources in Context*. Web. 25 June 2014.
 - iii. Any other relevant readings decided by the instructor

Film options include: *Boyz n the Hood*, *A Bronx Tale*, *Good Will Hunting*, *The Graduate*, any other relevant films decided by the instructor

- d. "How to Tell a Story, Point of View, and Narrative Theory" Unit
 - i. Excerpt from Cook, David A. *A History of Narrative Film*. New York: W. W. Norton, Inc., 4th Edition, 2004.
 - ii. Any other relevant readings decided by the instructor

Film options include: *The Usual Suspects*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, *Atonement*, *The Departed*, any other relevant films decided by the instructor

- e. "Race, Gender, and Film" Unit
 - i. Wilderson, Frank B., III. *Red, white & black: cinema and the structure of U.S. antagonisms*. Duke University, 2010.
 - ii. Any other relevant readings decided by the instructor

Film options include: *Silence of the Lambs*, *Precious*, *Crash*, *GI Jane* any other relevant films decided by the instructor