



Reavis High School

Curriculum Snapshot for Film Genres



Unit 1: What is Film Genre?

2
Weeks

This unit introduces characteristics of the various genres in film (horror, sci-fi, comedy, etc.) Students will explore the connections between literary genres and genres that exist as visual texts. Students will view a wide variety of clips of films from all over the world and work to define the characteristics of each genre and what it means when a film goes "against genre." The unit will culminate in a group presentation on a specific genre.



Unit 2: Reading a Film

3
Weeks

Students will learn about the three guiding categories of reading a film: Thematic Content, Narrative Form, and Artistic Style. Students will be immersed in the concept of *mise en scene* by exploring the nuance of how filmmakers combine the technical elements of their craft to convey deeper meaning. We will view our first whole class film (a selection which will blend multiple genres), and the unit culminates in a Socratic discussion geared toward discovering what makes a film "good."



Unit 3: A Rapid History of American Film

4 Weeks	Students will explore a history of American Film. We will highlight the development of unique film "characters" such as Buster Keaton's Tramp, analyze the westward migration of the film industry, pinpoint key developments in filmmaking related to economic and social issues that birthed the Golden Age, and make connections between key Golden Age Movies and modern Hollywood. Students will produce a collaborative research paper comparing one Golden Age movie to one modern movie, and our whole class movie will be a Stanley Kubrick film which demonstrates the innovation that led to 1970's Hollywood.
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Unit 4: Film as Social and Political Commentary

3 Weeks	Students will explore the thematic content of selections from drama and thriller genres. Using their skills of "reading a film," students will discover the rich history of film's capacity to reflect and enact social and political change. We will explore subjects such as American political corruption, the media's capacity to manipulate the public, and corporate irresponsibility. Students will complete a second graded discussion and a project related to the exploration of how information is "spun" by a variety of parties through an examination of the news and social media.
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Unit 5: Film as a Mirror for Human Joy and Suffering

3
weeks

Students will, through a more detailed exploration of musicals, comedy, and romance, discover how the narrative structure of a film can inform society about life, love, and happiness. We will view two films from the musical, comedy, and/or romance genres. Students will complete a comparative analysis project in which they compare both texts in order to determine similarities and differences associated with elements of narrative structure.



Unit 6: Film as Visual and Visceral Escapism

3
weeks

Students will explore the artistic elements of film related strongly to *mise en scene* and special effects through a deeper look at horror and science fiction genres. We will discuss the line between art and entertainment as it relates to American film as we explore how the technical aspects of film (editing, sound, costuming, set decor) relate to narrative form and thematic content. This unit will culminate in an exam which is intended to serve as a precursor to the final.