

Media Studies / 6th – 7th Grade

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FYI – I have set up these lessons/unit on media studies for a 6th or 7th grade class. I have not intended to make these lessons “a surface study only” of media, but I am not sure what a 6th grader can fully understand. So, in some areas I have gone into a lot of in depth detail and in other lessons I have just brought up topics for discussion/information. I plan to begin each area with an overview and see where my students are before I go on. I plan to use some of the ideas and activities from the Tapped in and the Modules you have provided but I do not always specifically mentioned all of them until I can see what they can handle and what type of internet access I will have. From my experience teaching some of this to 7th graders – it was all brand new information and something they had never even thought about before.

Media Studies Unit

- I. Why study Film? Media? Internet?
- II. Basic Cinematography
- III. Characterization Text/Film
- IV. Audience Analysis/Types of Audience
- V. Media Representations
- VI. Positioning
- VII. Genres
- VIII. Persuasion and Advertising
- IX. Propaganda and Advertising
- X. News and Print News

I. Why would we study film, media, or the internet in our language arts classroom?

1. Discussion in small cooperative learning groups then share with whole class. List reasons on board.
 - Kids are tuned into film that interests them
 - World is full of media/film/internet
 - Film reflects the culture we live in – explain
 - Special effects- virtual experience
 - Characters
 - Examples of plot, climax, setting, conflict, resolution (literary terms)

- Book/film comparisons
 - Different perspectives from different people
 - Film can teach you lessons without you having to go through it yourself (cause effect relationship)
 - Film begins with writing – to describe a scene, character, setting
 - Help us decide what information is good from tv/internet/film
 - Teach us to analyze or question what we see and not just watch passively – Critical Viewers
 - Be aware of what advertisers do to get our attention
 - Responsibility advertisers/film producers have if any?
 - Form of expression
2. Goals for this Unit: Each group will be given a goal on an index card and discuss the goal and then explain it to the class with an example of how we might reach this goal.
- Learn to watch and read critically
 - Become Active Viewers
 - Organize and make sense of information from various sources
 - Communicate using a variety of media texts
 - Evaluate information
 - Identify techniques and technologies use to persuade, make impressions on viewers
 - Create non text media

II. Basic Cinematography

1. What is cinematography?
2. Cooperative learning groups of 4 or 5 will each be given several basic styles or terms of cinematography and explain/discuss them among the groups while taking notes. Whole class will then discuss.

(Terms from Module 3: Frames, Extreme Long shot, Long-shot, medium shot, close-up shot, wide angle lens, telephoto lens, low angle shot, high-angle shot, pan shot, zoom shot, point-of-view shot)

3. Students will then explore on line trailers, or trailers at the beginning of video tapes or CD's to identify different uses of techniques to share with class.

III. Characterization

1. Definition of Characterization – 5 elements of characterization review
2. Characterize by using quotes and descriptions from a text.
3. How are characters “characterized” in film?
4. Teacher would show several clips of movies and have students write a matching description/ characterization of the character from the movie or clip and discuss how cinematography and other tactics are used to characterize. Also – discuss how one’s own perceptions affect view of the character. Relate to members of the class, film director, and experiences. Are you supposed to feel a certain way toward the character? How do you know? Why might that be done? For what purpose?
5. Discussion and activity – Choose a character from a movie you like. Half the class will do the assignment in one direction, and the other half will go the other direction. Count of by 2’s.
 - A. Write a detailed description of a character from a film you like using the 5 elements of characterization. Then, show a film clip of your character that matches what you have describes and point out to the class how the film visually SHOWS your written description. OR
 - B. Do this activity in the opposite direction. Show the clip of your character and then read your detailed description that matches the true characterization of the film clip.

IV. Audience Analysis/ Types of Audiences

1. Audience (analysis)/Types of Audiences- Teacher will provide several different medias and ask the class the following questions:
 - Who is the intended or target audience?
 - Who is the text/film written for?
 - What signs, images, language or social practices are present that imply that audience?
 - Am I being “positioned” to think or feel a certain way while watching or reading certain media?
 - How would this have value or importance?
2. Four Types of Audiences

Each cooperative group will be given an audience type and a loose definition. The groups will discuss and identify examples and questions to present to the class. Whole class will take notes and add info. and ideas to the presentation.

(Definitions in notes)

- Simple Audience
- Mass Audience

- Fantasy Audiences (Diffused Audience/Mediascape)
- Specialized Audiences (Niche Audiences)

3. Journal: Where do you find yourself? Explain.

V. Media Representations

What are media representations?

1. Pose questions to class...

Imagine you are watching a cops and robber movie. The mean, sketchy looking villain enters the room, robs the place at gun point and takes off in his car. The police chase after the criminal in their car red and blue lights flashing.

- Describe what the villain looks like in your journal in 4 or 5 sentences.
- The cops? The people in the background?
- Was the villain a woman? Why not?
- Where the cops latino? Black? White? Why?
- Why do you think you picture certain characters in a story like the one I told the way you do? Is it from your experience? The films you watch?

2. Tell joke. A father and son were in a car accident driving along the highway. Two ambulances come to the scene and take each to a different hospital to be treated. The boy is wheeled into the operating room and the doctor looks down at him and says, "I can't operate on this boy, he's my son." How is this possible?

Discuss.

4. Give working definition. {Media representations shape adolescent and adult views (perceptions) of experience, belief about gender, class, race and what is valued - notions of urban, suburban and rural life. You can resist them. }
5. Media Representation Activity - Students will **find three** different movie clips and/or texts that describe a cultural group such as: Indians, teachers, middle school students, blacks, Latinos, Asians, athletes, singers, men, women, aliens, etc. and present to the class with a short description of how the different medias portray the same cultures differently and suggest ideas on how that might effect viewer during and after them see or read the media.

VI. Positioning

Goal of activity: Students will be able to challenge interrogate, oppose how they are being positioned by a text or film.

1. Begin by showing an AD or clip from a film
2. Have students identify how/what ways were are being positioned to adapt certain beliefs or attitudes (give specific examples of images, objects, language, etc.)
3. Ask if students if they accept or reject the intended message or idea.

Consider:

Note patterns in ads or films similarities, and stereotypes

Note assumptions – such as who is powerful, weak, who solves problems

Note what is missing

Consider possible influence of stereotype of gender, class, race and age.

VII. Genres

1. Genres are types of movies – if you could put movies in groups that are similar those would be like genres. Can you name a few? LIST: (See notes)
2. What do you use to create a genre or decide which genre it is? LIST:

Setting, typical characters, plot, mood, symbols
3. Activity – choose a genre with a partner and present to the class typical setting, typical characters, plot, mood, symbols etc. with 2 movie clips.

VIII. Persuasion and Advertising

SEE ATTACHED 2 WEEK PLAN and ASSESSMENT TASK

IX. Propaganda and Advertising

Detailed lessons attached with handouts.

X. News and Print News

1. Pose question to the class- What is news? List responses on board.
2. Pass out news magazines, newspapers, and articles printed off the internet and let student investigate for about 15-20 minutes and ask question again.
3. Criteria to determine news: (see notes)
 - Significance
 - Relevance

- Unusualness/sensational
 - Practical
 - Threatening audience beliefs
4. News Activity - Watch and take notes on the news this evening. Note the stories covered, the time spent on them, commercials, and repetitions.
 5. Discuss activity – what does that say about news? Us as viewers? So..... what is news today?
 6. Newspaper sections and Functions - Students visit Minneapolis Star Tribune’s “Walk Through the Newspaper”
 - Different kinds of news
 - Different levels of news
 - Editorial and commentary
 - Sports
 - Comics
 - Business and Stocks
 - Advertising
 7. Have class visit several online news sites and discuss what is different and how it makes the news different for the viewer than a newspaper or tv broadcast.
 8. Write in journal 5 things you learned about newspapers and online news. What questions do you still have?
 9. Discuss.