# FY12

# Module 12: Integrating Film/Media into the Curriculum

One of the reasons for the marginalization of film/media in the language arts curriculum is that the overall curriculum is often defined in terms of separate components of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing, with priority given on reading and writing instruction given the emphasis on high-stakes reading and writing testing. “Viewing” is also perceived to be lacking intellectual or cognitive rigor associated with analysis of or production of print texts. However, the nature of the types of texts being analyzed—whether they are print or non-print, does not necessarily mean that such analysis is any less intellectual or cognitive rigorous.

This suggests the need for an alternative curriculum framework that is organized around helping students learn to acquire interpretative strategies employed in responding to and producing both print and non-print texts. Framing the curriculum according to interpretative strategies serves to integrate media texts into the curriculum as requiring the same types of strategies and approaches applied to literary texts. It also assumes the strategies involved in learning to interpret texts are employed in producing those texts. Learning to analyze the ways in which a text positions audiences is also involved in producing texts for those audiences.

This module describes this curriculum design approach in which you think about defining activities around helping students acquire both interpretive strategies for responding to and critiquing media texts and producing strategies for constructing media texts. It uses the example of studying the relationships between literature and film adaptations of literature to illustrate the use of these different interpretive strategies. The module therefore first presents some material on studying film adaptations of literature and theater as background to consider the use of different interpretive strategies.

Framing the curriculum according to interpretative strategies serves to define the goals and learning objectives related to what students *should learn to do* in understanding and producing texts. As discussed at the end of this module, they are then evaluated in terms of criteria specific to each of the interpretive strategies and critical approaches.

This focus on organizing the curriculum around strategies is consistent with media literacy curriculum development throughout the world. For example, the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation of the Canadian provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, in their "Foundation for English Language Arts for the Atlantic Provinces" blueprint for English Language Arts education

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_education/index.cfm>

formulate three basic strands associated with media education:

\* Visual Literacy is the ability to understand and interpret the representation and symbolism of a static or moving visual image—how the meanings of the images are organized and constructed to make meaning—and to understand their impact on viewers.

\* Media Literacy is the ability to understand how mass media, such as TV, film, radio and magazines, work, produce meanings, and are organized and used wisely.

\* Critical Literacy is the ability to understand how all speakers, writers, and producers of visual texts are situated in particular contexts with significant personal, social and cultural aspects.

This blueprint posits that notions of literacy have changed in recent decades:

What it means to be literate will continue to change as visual and electronic media become more and more dominant as forms of expression and communication. As recently as one hundred years ago, literacy meant the ability to recall and recite from familiar texts and to write signatures. Even twenty years ago, definitions of literacy were linked almost exclusively to print materials. The vast spread of technology and media has broadened our concept of literacy. To participate fully in today’s society and function competently in the workplace, students need to read and use a range of texts (p. 1).

For other Canadian media literacy curriculum:

Ontario media literacy curriculum, by grade level

<http://www.angelfire.com/ms/MediaLiteracy/>

Britain has placed considerable emphasis on media education in the past decade,

leading to the development of nation-wide Advanced Level examinations in media studies, film studies, and communication studies. All students are required to demonstrate proficiency in analysis of a media text.

The British curriculum is organized around certain concepts of “media language”—properties of texts, “genre,” “representation,” “institution” (control/ownership of production), and “audience.” This leads to questions such as the following:

\* How is the meaning produced?

\* How might the text be classified as a genre?

\* What kinds of representation are found in the text?

\* Who produced the text and for whar purpose?

\* How might different audiences understand and respond to the text?

\* What kinds of skills and understanding are required to produce such a text?

*Technology integration*. It is also important to envision any curriculum as involving the understanding and use of new digital technology tools in all areas of the curriculum. By engaging students in uses of analysis of digital texts and producing those texts in math, science, social studies, English, second language, arts, and physical education, students are acquiring essential skills those the use of technology tools.

Technology itself poses a major challenge to traditional school curriculum. Because students now have ready access to a range of digital texts in contexts outside of the classroom, raising questions about the need for teachers to incorporate and integrate these experiences into their curriculum. What you can add to these outside-of-school experiences is a critical perspective that serves to raise critical questions about the perspectives, biases, value assumptions, representations, discourses, and ideological agendas operating in these digital texts.

In the introduction to their book on this topic, *Digital Expressions: Media Literacy and English Language Arts*, Barrie Barrell and Roberta Hammett argues that digital technologies have also integrated media, necessitating a curriculum focus on uses of and production of media technology as no longer a traditional add-on training topic, but as a tool that serves to help students mediate, construct, create, and create knowledge through the uses of media technology tools:

As analogue technologies lose ground to digital newcomers, the computer monitor and the television screen become one and same, and films and television programs, like music, exist as comfortably on the computer network as in other technologies. Thus, the hypereality of the television and the virtual reality of the computer are blended as seamlessly as Internet and media cultures. The tools of cultural studies, supplementing Internet Computer Technology and traditional English classroom practices, become the necessary mans of critical of the multiple and varied texts surrounding young people in the 21st century. (p. 17).

**Drawing on Existing Media Studies Curriculum**

In this module, you will learn ways of formulating your own media studies curriculum as integrated into language arts, social studies, or second languages/cultures curriculum based on interpretive strategies and critical approaches. All of this involves adopting an interdisciplinary approach to organizing the curriculum, in which you are combining language arts, social studies, science, math, or second languages with media studies/art.

In doing so you may want to examine curriculum developed by others, curriculum, syllabi, and units available from the following sites:

Teach with Movies: ways of integrating movies into the curriculum

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

ScreenSite

<http://screensite.org/> (lots of college syllabi and resources

New Mexico Media Literacy Project

<http://www.nmmlp.org>

Media Education Foundation

<http://mediaed.org>

Center for Media Literacy

<http://www.medialit.org>

The Connecticut Media Literacy Project

<http://www.medialit.uconn.edu>

Media Working Group

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

Media Awareness Network

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

EnhanceTV: Australian site that provides information about video recourses, some of which can be downloaded

<http://www.enhancetv.com.au/>

**Studying Film Adaptations of Literature and Theater**

English teachers frequently employ film adaptations of literature, one example of integrating film into the English curriculum. In doing so, English teachers may bring a bias towards assuming that print or stage literature is somehow a superior form to film, while film teachers may assume that film is superior. These presuppositions having to with one form being superior to the other often lapses into discussions of whether the film or the text is “better”—failing to consider or judge the uses of specific techniques within a particular form.

The extent to which a film or text succeeds needs to judged according to criteria specific to that particular medium. Many early film adaptations were highly staged as no more than a faithful reproduction of the original theater production. These films did not succeed in terms of using the film medium itself to create highly cinematic versions of the original story that employs engaging film techniques. These films therefore did not exploit the differences between film and theater forms.

*Differences between film and theater*. In his textbook, *Understanding Movies*, Louis Giannetti (2002) <http://www.prenhall.com/giannetti>

describes some of the differences between film and theater:

*- time*. Film can be highly flexible, moving backwards (with flashbacks) or forwards, as well as compressing or speeding up time; time in the theater is continuous and limited to moving forward in time.

*- space*. Space in film is two-dimensional and viewers are positioned within that space through different types of shots—as close to a person or faraway from that person. Space in theater is three-dimensional and audiences can select what they and how they focus their attention. However, the space in a theater is a closed space—once actors leave the stage, they are forgotten, when film often uses “off-frame” action—the fact that we are aware of someone outside a frame.

*- language*. Film employs both cinematography and language to convey meaning, whereas theater employs primarily language, although some theater productions incorporate multimedia/videos as part of the production. Theater therefore focuses primarily on characters and their relationships within relatively small, limited spaces, while film can place people in a range of different, much more open spaces.

*- directing*. Film directors often have much more independence, control, and leeway to construct their own ideas and versions of the original screenplay, while theater directors are more limited to adopting the play. Film directors can redo a certain scene numerous times until it fits what they want to convey. While theater directors certainly will rework scenes, once the play begins its run, they have little control over the results.

*- settings*. Film directors can work with a lot of different aspects of settings and forms of space, music, editing, and now—computer graphics and simulations, while theater directors are limited to the stage space.

*- costumes.* In both film and theater, costumes are used to capture the historical or cultural contexts, using costumes to communicate the nature of the historical period; character’s class, gender, age, eroticism; attitude/style—often through colors or fit; or identity and personality—as eccentric, conventional, proper, elegant, etc.

# Different Modes of Adaptation

In adapting a print text or theater production to film, directors may vary in terms of the degree and nature of how they use the original content of the text or play. They can stick quite close to the original text to create a highly literal reproduction of the text, or they can create a totally different version of the original text. Giannetti (2002) describes three different degrees of fidelity to the original subject matter—“the loose, the faithful, and the literal.” (p. 406).

In a loose adaptation, a director may only use the original situation, story idea, or characters to create a film that bears little resemblance to the original text. He cites the examples of Kurosawa’s *Ran*—based on *King Lear*, and *Throne of Blood*—based on *MacBeth*, that use only the bear bones of the original story to create his own versions set in an entirely different cultural context. *Ran* (translated as *chaos*) takes the story of Lear’s tragedy, and places it in the midst of 16th century Japan, a time of political instability when feudal war lords battled for control of territory. When the Lear character, Hidetora, decides he wishes to retire, he attempts to divide his land between his three sons. The heirs in this case must be male, as Japanese culture forbids female succession. The sexual perversity and scheming of Goneril, Regan, and Edmund is personified by the Lady Kaede, who manipulates the two older brothers out of revenge for her father’s death at Hidetora’s hands. The other female character, Lady Sue, represents the innocent, silent suffering of a model wife. Even more compelling than the changes in characterization, is Kurosawa’s visual style. The visuals suggest Noh theater—a quiet, highly stylized Japanese dramatic dance form. Kurosawa utilizes a static camera, vibrant color iconology, as well as silence itself, to suggest a meditation on the death and destruction that ensues.

Similarly, the film, *Clueless*, was based on the storyline and comic, ironic wit of Jane Austen’s *Emma*, but it set in a contemporary world with quite different characters. The main character, Cher, employs contemporary language, but maintains Austen’s parody of dating/romantic rituals, as well as class differences.

Faithful adaptations attempt to recapture the original text as closely as possible, a careful translation of the original into film form that retains the characters, storylines, and most events. For example, *Tom Jones* (1963), *Emma* (1996), *Henry V* (1989), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993) are relatively faithful to their original material. In studying examples of these faithful adaptations, student could examine how the director adopted specific scenes, dialogue, or characters into a visual form.

Faithful adaptations may have difficulty when they attempt to adapt literary texts that rely on complex, highly metaphoric language or thematic material often are more difficult to successfully adopt to the screen in a literal manner, given the challenge of reproducing in a visual form the meaning of a text’s language. For example, the film adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, which contains a lot of rich metaphoric language, was considered to be marginal by critics because it attempted to literally reproduce the original language.

Literal adaptations are typically older video versions of play productions, with limited use of cinematic techniques, as was the case with the BBC for television versions of Shakespeare and *Emma* (1972).

Rachel Malchow, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, suggests some other

modes of adaptation:

#### *The displaced setting*. The film changes the time period, but maintains fidelity to all other major

#### aspects of original text including language, as in *Romeo + Juliet* (1996)—set in a contemporary

#### world of competing gangs and violence, sex, and drugs, an MTV visual style, and contemporary soundtrack. *Hamlet* (2000) is set in New York City in which Hamlet is trying to stop the uncle

#### who has usurped control of his father’s Denmark Corporation.

*Acculturated.* In the acculturated adaptation, the same characters, plot, and theme of the original text are retained, the film shifts its use of language and setting into new context, as in the previously mentioned *Clueless*, as well as *10 Things I Hate About You* (1998). *10 Things I Hate About You* (1998) is a modern version of *The Taming of the Shrew* set in a suburban high school.

#### *Politicized.* The politicized adaptation maintains general fidelity to literary aspects of original

#### text, but re-focuses theme in order to make a contemporary political statement, as in *Henry V*

#### (1944) and *Portrait of a Lady* (1997). *Mansfield Park* (1998) takes Austen’s most silent heroine,

#### ‘Fanny Price,and gives her a voice of her own. In this feminist/ Marxist approach to the text,

#### Fanny becomes a writer, and uses her literary talent to express her criticism of the hypocrisy she

#### sees around the world related to class and race.

*Hollywood-ized*. The Hollywood-ized adaptation alters the character, plot, and/or themes in order to appeal to a mass commercial audience, as in*The Most Dangerous Game* (1932) and Wuthering Heights (1939). Kenneth Branagh’s 1996 version of *Hamlet* includes every line of the text, but neglects to provide any unifying interpretation of the text as a whole. Instead, the interest in the film is supplied by cameo appearances by numerous American and British actors, opulent sets, and scenes replete with special effects, but it has no emotional or critical center, and becomes instead a typical action hero movie.

#### *The Radical Homage*. The Radical Homage involves a highly innovative, unconventional version of the original text through use of allusions to the original text, heightened awareness of cinematic techniques, often deconstructs both original and filmic text, as in *Prospero’s Books* (1991) and *Tempest* (1982). Al Pacino’s *Looking for Richard* (1996) is a fascinating film that blends documentary with a filmed dramatic version of *Richard III*. Pacino roams around New York City asking people on the street and people in show business to comment on their attitudes about Shakespeare. Then he gathers a group of famous actors together to create a staging of *Richard III* which will be accessible to the masses. He films rehearsals, location scouting, and arguments over interpretations of passages.

Students could also compare difference in adaptations of the same text. William McCauley (2003) has his high school students contrast different versions of The Scarlet Letter:

The excellent film version with Meg Foster and John Heard is not only true to the text, but it also fully exploits the text's references to color and the interplay of light and darkness. It also allows viewers to delve into the psyches of the four main characters, and it makes effective use of camera angles, such as when Dimmesdale is standing on a balcony but the low camera angle makes it appear that he is actually standing on the scaffold.

The more recent film with Demi Moore in the lead role is quite different. Although I don't show it in class, many students have seen it, and after a thorough discussion of the text, they often label it a comical parody of the novel. From the scene showing Pearl being conceived to a rifle-toting Hester defending her hearth and home, the film distorts the characters into unrecognizable shadows of Hawthorne's originals. Students understand this, and as they become more critically adept, they see that this distortion is inseparably interwoven with the technical aspects of the film.

In working with adaptations in the classroom, Rachel recommends, drawing on Teasley and Wilder (1997), that teachers avoid attempting to show entire films, as opposed to film clips in order to avoid taking up extensive class time to view hours of a film. She also suggests minimal use of literal adaptations which are really more filmed dramas than films. She recommends the use of faithful adaptations such as the1996 version of *Emma* starring Gwenyth Paltrow, Franco Zeffirelli’s 1968 *Romeo and Juliet*, Kenneth Branagh’s *Henry V* (1989) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993).

Teasley and Wilder (1997, p. 135) recommend pairing up texts and films in terms of:

- “a film set in the same country and period as the novel, but with a different focus”

- “a novel and a film adaptation of another novel by the same author” (the film, *Tess,* with another Thomas Hardy novel or the film, *Grapes of Wrath*, with another Steinbeck novel).

- “a novel and a film that share a similar situation or theme”

- “books and films from the same literacy genres, such as epic, tragedy, fairy tale, satire, or myths and legends”

At the same time, it is also important to recognize that not all film adaptations are successful, and that it may be more productive to select film and print texts based on similarity of themes, topics, issues, or problems.

For further reading on film adaptations:

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*Across media, genres and cultures*. New York: Palgrave.

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Burt, R. (Ed.). (2002). *Shakespeare after mass media*. New York: St. Martin's Press

Burt, R. & Boose, L. E. (Eds.). (2003). *Shakespeare, the Movie II: Popularizing the plays on*

*film, TV, video, and DVD.* New ork: Routledge.

Cartmall, D., & Whelehan, I. (Eds.). (1999). *Adaptations: From text to screen, Screen to text*.

New York: Routledge.

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*and fiction*. New York: Pluto Press.

Corrigan, T. (1999). *Film and literature: An introduction and reader*. Upper Saddle River, NJ:

Prentice Hall.

Coursen, H. R. (1997). Teaching Shakespeare with film and television: A Guide. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=15348490>

Elliott, K. (2003). *Rethinking the novel/film debate*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Erksine, T. L., & Welsh, J. M. (2000). *Video versions: Film adaptations of plays on video*.

Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=9785817>

Ferrell, W. K. (2000). *Literature and film as modern mythology*. New York: Praeger.

<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=26289455>

Glavin, J. (2003). *Dickens on screen*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lehmann, C., & Starks, L.S. (2002). *Spectacular Shakespeare: Critical theory and popular*

*cinema.* Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Lothe, J. (2000). *Narrative in fiction and film: An introduction*. New York: Oxford University

Lupack, B. T. (2002). *Literary adaptations in Black American cinema: From Michieux to Morrison*. Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press.

McFarlane, B. (1996). *Novel to film: An introduction to the theory of adaptation*. New York:

Oxford University Press.

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Miller, N. (Ed.) (2002). *Reimagining Shakespeare for Children and Young Adults*. Philadelphia:

Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Naremore, J. (Ed.) (2000). *Film adaptation.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Parrill, S. (2002). *Jane Austen on film and television: A critical study of the adaptations.* New

York: MacFarland & Co.

Pucci, S. R., & Thompson, J. (Eds.) (2003). *Jane Austen and co: Remaking the past in*

*contemporary culture*. Albany, NY: SUNY Pres.

Roberts, J. (2003). *The great American playwrights on the screen: A critical guide to film, TV,*

*Video, and DVD*. New York: Applause Books.

Seger, L. (1992). *The art of adaptation: Turning fact and fiction into film*. New York: Holt.

Sibley, B. (2002). *The Making of the Movie Trilogy* (The Lord of the Rings). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Starks, L S., & Lehmann, C. (Eds.). (2002). *The Reel Shakespeare: Alternative Cinema and*

*Theory*. Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Welsh, J. M., Vela, R., & Tibbetts, J. C. (2002). *Shakespeare into film* (Facts on File). New York: Checkmark Books.

The Academy Award winners for best adaptations (category was dropped after 2000)

2000 Traffic

1999 The Cider House Rules

1998 Gods and Monsters

1997 L.A. Confidential

1996 Sling Blade

1995 Sense and Sensibility

1994 Forrest Gump

1993 Schindler's List

1992 Howards End

1991 Silence of the Lambs

1989 Driving Miss Daisy

1988 Dangerous Liaisons

1987 The Last Emperor

1986 A Room with a View

1985 Out of Africa

1984 Amadeus

1983 Terms of Endearment

1982 Missing

1981 On Golden Pond

1980 Ordinary People

1979 Kramer Vs. Kramer

1978 Midnight Express

1977 Julia

1976 All the President's Men

1975 One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

1974 The Godfather Part II

1973 The Exorcist

1972 The Godfather

1971 The French Connection

1970 M\*A\*S\*H

1969 Midnight Cowboy

1968 The Lion in Winter

1967 In the Heat of the Night

1966 A Man for All Seasons

1965 Doctor Zhivago

1964 Becket

1963 Tom Jones

1962 To Kill a Mockingbird

1961 Judgment at Nuremburg

1960 Elmer Gantry

Film Adaptations for literature courses (recommended by Teasley and Wilder, 2001):

*The Dead* (John Huston, 1987, PG 82 min.)

This adaptation of James Joyce's short story from Dubliners, was John Huston's final film and beautifully captures the setting, characters, and mood of Joyce's story.

*A Room with a View* (James Ivory, 1986, NR, 117 min.)

In this magnificent adaptation of E. M. Forster's novel of Victorian England, Lucy Honeychurch is simultaneously horrified and thrilled when George Emerson grabs and kisses her in a meadow outside Florence, Italy. Nevertheless, when she returns home to England, she accepts the marriage proposal of the very dull Cecil Vyse. The film follows Lucy's dilemma: will she marry Cecil, or will she finally acknowledge her own passionate side and accept George?

*Sense and Sensibility* (Ang Lee, 1995, PG, 136 min.)

Of the recent Austen films this is the best--by turns funny, romantic, and poignant. The Dashwood sisters differ in their expectations of romance and marriage, but both are thwarted by their family's financial situation. Of course it turns out well in the end, but not before hearts are broken and happiness seems hopeless.

*Tess* (Roman Polanski, 1980, PG, 170 min.)

In this adaptation of the Thomas Hardy novel Tess of the D'Urbervilles, Tess is a farm girl who cannot have the love of her aristocratic employer and cannot love her working-class husband. The film is beautifully made with attention to the details of life in nineteenth century England.

*Tom Jones* (Tony Richardson, 1963, NR, 121 min.)

This fast-moving, bawdy adaptation of the Henry Fielding novel tells the story of Tom Jones, a playboy who is tenderhearted and a defender of the poor but unable to resist women. The film's attention to details of everyday life in 18th century England makes it a valuable source for teaching the social customs of the times.

*Wuthering Heights* (William Wyler, 1939, NR, 104 min.)

Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon star as doomed lovers Heathcliff and Cathy in this adaptation of Emily Bronte's novel. The film leaves out portions of the book but captures its romance and passion.

Ten Great Film Adaptations of Plays

*The Crucible* (Nicholas Hytner, 1996, PG-13, 123 min.)

Arthur Miller wrote the screenplay for this adaptation of his 1953 play about the Salem witch trials. Daniel Day Lewis portrays the flawed John Proctor, with Joan Allen as his steadfast wife and Winona Ryder as the wild and vengeful Abigail. Director Hytner, filming at the Massachusetts shore, insisted on strict period detail, so teachers using the play to teach about the Colonial Period can have some confidence in the film's portrayal of life in 17th century America.

*Cyrano de Bergerac* (France, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, 1990, PG, 135 min., in French)

In this lavish production of Edmund Rostand's play, Gerard Depardieu plays the large-nosed Cyrano. This soldier-poet is fearless in battle and loyal to his friends, but terrified to express his love to the beautiful Roxanne. Subtitles by Anthony Burgess give viewers a sense of the original French verse.

*Death of a Salesman* (Volker Schlondorff, 1986, NR, 135 min.)

This excellent adaptation stars Dustin Hoffman as Willy Loman, John Malkovich as his son, and Kate Reid as his wife. Originally made for television, the film earned numerous honors, including Emmys for Hoffman and Malkovich.

*A Man for All Seasons* (Fred Zinneman, 1966, G, 120 min.)

This compelling story of Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England during the reign of Henry VIII, chronicles More's conflict with his king and his unwillingness to approve of the king's divorce from Anne Boleyn. The film is particularly valuable in providing students with the cultural and political background of 16th century England.

*Much Ado About Nothing* (Kenneth Branagh, 1993, PG-13, 110 min.)

Filmed in Tuscany, this high-spirited romance about two couples: Beatrice and Benedick and Hero and Claudio, would win over the most apathetic high school student. Emma Thompson and Kenneth Branagh are excellent as the headstrong Beatrice and Benedick, and American actors Michael Keaton, Keanu Reaves, Denzel Washington, and Sean Leonard add interest for students.

*A Raisin in the Sun* (Daniel Petrie, 1961, NR, 128 min.)

Lorraine Hansberry wrote the screenplay based on her 1959 play, and seven members of the original New York cast repeat their roles for this adaptation. Sidney Poitier plays Walter Lee Younger, trying to provide his wife, son, and mother. With the impending arrival of his father's life insurance benefit of $10,000, family members debate exactly how they can provide the best future for the family.

*Romeo and Juliet* (Franco Zeffirelli, 1968, PG, 138 min.)

For over thirty years, English teachers have used this rich adaptation of Shakespeare's play. Title characters Olivia Hussey and Leonard Whiting were newcomers to film in 1968—and young enough to emphasize the lovers' youth. The supporting cast includes Michael York as Tybalt and Milo O'Shea as Friar Laurence.

*The Taming of the Shrew* (Franco Zeffirelli, 1967, NR, 122 min.)

Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor are appropriately over-the-top in another lavish Zeffirelli production of a Shakespeare play set in Italy. The wooing scene is a rough and tumble wrestling match to rival the WWF. Of course, students today won't appreciate the 1967 subtext of the actors' own tumultuous personal lives, but then they can watch 10 Things I Hate About You (see above) if they want contemporary relevance! One caution: be sure to locate a widescreen version of this film—the “pan and scan” video version shown on television often can't hold both actors in the frame at once and yields a very strange cinematic experience.

*Wit (*Mike Nichols, 2001, PG-13, 98 min.) Dr. Vivian Bearing is a professor of English literature who specializes in the metaphysical poets. In the first scene a doctor gives her the facts about her ovarian cancer and invites her to begin an aggressive regimen of experimental treatments. What follows is a riveting experience, both in its painful and emotional honesty and in its tribute to the human spirit. Emma Thompson, who also adapted the screenplay with playwright Margaret Edson, gives an extraordinary performance.

Other texts made into movies (from Ayers & Crawford, 2004, pp. 199-200):

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven (Smoke Signals).*

*A Clockwork Orange*

*Two Years Before the Mast*

*Do Android Dream of Electric Sheep?*

*Like Water for Chocolate*

*A Lesson before Dying*

*The Tin Drum*

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

*Seabiscuit*

*High Fidelity*

*The World According to Garp*

*Hoop Dreams*

*Girl, Interrupted*

*One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*

*Being There*

*Born on the Fourth of July*

*To Kill a Mockingbird*

*A River Runs through it and Other Stories*

*All the Pretty Horses*

*Master and Commander*

*East of Eden*

*Grapes of Wrath*

*The Joy Luck Club*

*Zoot Suit*

*The Piano Lesson*

*An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* (Robert Enrico)

*The Turn of the Screw* (Henry James)/*The Innocents* (Jack Clayton)

*Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley)/*Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Kenneth Branagh)

*Dracula* (Bram Stoker)/*Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola)

*Psycho* (Robert Bloch)/*Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock)

*Carrie* (Stephen King)/*Carrie* (Brian dePalma)

"Who Goes There?" (John W. Campbell, Jr.)/ *The Thing* (John Carpenter)

"The Forbidden" (Clive Barker)/*Candyman* (Bernard Rose)

*The Rocky Horror Show* (Richard O'Brien)/ *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Jim Sharman)

The film, *Adaptation*, about issues of creating an adaptation of a book, *The Orchid Thief*, by Susan Orleon, played by Meryl Streep) by two brothers (both played by Nicolas Cage) about a Florida man who is obsessed by a rare orchid (played by Chris Cooper).

<http://www.sonypictures.com/homevideo/adaptation-superbit/index.html>

Early film adaptations

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/railton/enam312/gallerys/movieindx.html>

The American Short Story series, Part II (videos)

<http://www.filmideas.com/stories2.html>

Cable in the Classroom: Shakespeare adaptations

<http://www.ciconline.com/bdp1/>

Tanya Gough, 10 Shakespeare DVD’s, *Shakespeare Magazine*

<http://www.shakespearemag.com/summer03/dvd.asp>

Mary Ciccone: teaching an on-line "Shakespeare in Film" course through Virtual High School, *Shakespeare Magazine*

<http://www.shakespearemag.com/summer03/summer03.asp>

Mr. William Shakespeare (lots of links to Shakespeare sites)

<http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/>

Shakespeare High (on-line discussion, student resources)

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

Complete works of Shakespeare

<http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/>

American Film Institute:

<http://www.afi.edu/showcase.asp>

examples of student-produced adaptations of *1984, Lord of the Flies, King Lear, Julius Caesar*, and *The Crucible*—includes storyboards, outlines, video clips, and reflections.

Fiction into Film

<http://fictionintofilm.trawna.com/>

*MacBeth* on Film: British Film Institute

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/resources/teaching/secondary/macbeth/>

**Sites on teaching of literature:**

Interactive Shakespeare Project

<http://www.holycross.edu/departments/theatre/projects/isp/>

Lesson Plans: Literature adaptations on A&E Channel

<http://www.aetv.com/class/teach/>

Literature lesson plans

<http://www.teachers.net/cgi-bin/lessons/sort.cgi?searchterm=Literature>

<http://members.aol.com/DonnAnCiv/Literature.html>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/cy912.html>

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/lit.html#9-12>

Web English Teacher: activities for texts organized by author

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/litmain.html>

Links to literature: activities for texts organized by author

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

Linda’s Links (12,000 books organized by title)

<http://www.richmond.k12.va.us/readamillion/LITERATURE/lindas_links_to_literature.htm>

Sparknotes: summaries organized by title

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/>

Larry McCaffery: 100 greatest works of the 20th century

<http://www.literarycritic.com/mccaffery.html>

Literature Classics (can be search by author or historical period)

<http://literatureclassics.com/>

Project Gutenberg: on-line texts

<http://www.gutenberg.net/>

Awesome Library: organized by author

Middle school literature

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org/Classroom/English/Literature/Middle_High_School_Literature.html>

College literature

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org/Classroom/English/Literature/College_Literature.html>

Poetry

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org/Classroom/English/Poetry/Poetry.html>

C-Span American Writers series

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

Electronic Literature Website: links to current on-line literature

<http://directory.wordcircuits.com/dir/sites.htm>

Rave-Reviews: Best Selling Fiction in American, University of Virginia

<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/speccol/exhibits/rave_reviews/>

The Folger Shakespeare Library

<http://www.folger.edu/education/teaching.htm>

Academy of American Poets

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

Voices of the Shuttle: hundreds of links

<http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=3>

Songs Inspired By Literature (SIBL)

<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/sibl2>

Perspectives on American Literature: organized by historical period

<http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/TABLE.HTML>

Literature of the Contact Zone: out-of-print literature that reflect a postcolonial perspective on the literature of empire

<http://www.atl.ualberta.ca/litcz/>

Film for the Humanities: On-line catalogue organized by topics:

<http://www.films.com/Films_Home/Categories.cfm?bMouse=off&type=all&s=1>

Early American Literature course, Geoffrey Grimes, Mountain View College

<http://www.mvc.dcccd.edu/ArtScien/Engl/INSTRUCT/grimes/2327/2327.html>

American Verse Project, University of Michigan, organized by poet

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?tpl=browse.tpl&c=amverse>

The Annenberg Learning Channel series on teaching literature includes some useful material and teaching techniques for interpreting literary texts:

Conversations In Literature

<http://www.learner.org/redirect/august/conversations7.html>

In Search Of The Novel

<http://www.learner.org/redirect/august/isonovel9.html>

The Expanding Canon: Teaching Multicultural Literature In High School

<http://www.learner.org/resources/resource.html?uid=178>

Literature courses offered at Virtual High

<http://www.govhs.org/Pages/Academics-Catalog> (search under language arts)

Ghost stories on film: British Film Institute

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/resources/teaching/secondary/ghoststories/index.php>

Course materials for studying science fiction

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/science_fiction/Science_Fiction_Guides.html>

American Studies/literature syllabus

<http://www.umsl.edu/~gryan/amer.studies/amstudies.syllabus.html>

Webquest: for studying individual children’s/adolescent literature authors

<http://www.elmhurst.edu/library/courses/edu/EDU315AuthorWebQuest.html>

**Interpretive Strategies For Organizing Curriculum**

In their book, *Understanding by Design*, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe argue that curriculum designers should employ a “backwards” design to initially define learning goals and objectives—what you want your students to be able to do. You can define the specific strategies or critical approaches students will employ by first unpacking your own interpretation of a media text and noting the particular thought processes you employed in constructing your responses to a text. In doing so, you should consider the differences how you respond and how your students’ respond. While you may be able to interpret the symbolic meaning of sign given your knowledge of the cultural codes, your students may have more difficulty doing so.

An alternative perspective on curriculum design frames the curriculum around the use and application of various interpretive strategies or critical approaches that are involved in understanding and producing all different types of texts.

Interpretive Strategies

Comparing differences in experiences of different reading and viewing modes

Defining narrative development

Interpreting characters’ actions, beliefs, agendas, goals

Contextualizing texts in terms of cultural and historical worlds

Defining intertextual/hypertextual links between texts

Adopting alternative voices and discourses

Judging quality of literature and media texts

By framing the curriculum in terms of these underlying interpretive strategies you can consider using both print and media/digital texts to helps students acquire these strategies and approaches.

# Comparing Differences in Experiences of Different Reading and Viewing Modes

One basic strategy has to do with comparing differences between the experience of different media types or texts. We often understand an experience A by contrasting it with experience B. One useful approach to having students understand and judge the nature of their experience with different experiences within and across different reading and viewing experience is to have them compare the differences in their experiences of different types of texts—print text, film, television, radio, computer, video-games, theater, multi-media presentation, particularly in cases when the different modes are portraying the same content or experience.

Students can make multiple comparisons between these types of media texts. In doing so, it is important that they focus on the nature of the differences between their experiences as opposed to attempting to define whether one type is necessarily “better” than the other type, as in judging a book as “better” than a movie based on the book.

*Nature and level of engagement with different types of media texts*. Students may also compare differences in the nature and level of engagement across these different types of texts. What types of emotions did I experience? How did these emotions shape my responses? In responding to texts, students experience a range of different emotions: sympathy, happiness, relief, apprehension, joy, anger, anxiety, etc.

Students may reflect on these emotions, by asking the questions: What are some reasons for my emotions? How did these emotions shape my experiences with the text? Formulating reasons for their emotions leads them to consider their beliefs and attitudes—the fact that they experienced anger about racism because they have strong ethical beliefs about racism. They may also expand on their responses by considering how their emotions shape their experience, for example, the fact that their anger about racism led them to judge negatively the institutions that were fostering such racism.

One of the differences between the experience of film and print texts is that film involves a multifaceted appeal to different senses than does a print texts. As Homicz and Dreiser (2003) note:

Film allows for a more immediate sensory experience than writing, a fact partially due to the greater number of stimuli (images, sounds, writing) acting on the movie viewer. The mere variety of sensory stimulation gives the person watching the film more indicators as to its possible meaning and so "simplifies" the process. At the same time, film (as well as photography, we might add) grants viewers greater freedom in assembling the message than writing does-the first employ a "two-dimensional" or spatial code, the latter a linear one. While written language thus forces us to proceed from left to right, or right to left as the case may be, to understand the meaning of its words, images, whether moving or stationary, allow the eye to wander at will to make out the visual whole.

  This difference may be related to differences in the kind of pleasure students may experience in viewing movies, something they may not associate with reading. As a result, as Homicz and Dreiser argue, they may resist study of film in the classroom as undermining the kinds of pleasure they associate with viewing films outside of the classroom. On the other hand, students may experience certain pleasures in producing or performing texts—for example, a drama production of a story, that entails a different kind of emotional experience than in viewing or reading a text.

Students could also compare the emotions they experience in viewing live theater or concert performance as opposed to reading a play or listening to a recording. They may noted that in the live performance, they may experience a sense of being caught up in someone’s performance as unique to that particular performance and as shaped by an audience’s response.

They may also compare their emotional response to viewing film in a movie house, in which they may become enveloped with the screen, with watching television, in which they are more aware of the surrounding context or with interactions with other audience members.

Students could also describe the degree to which they were highly engaged or found a particular media text compelling in terms of being caught up in a dramatic storyline. Selmer Bringsjord (2001) notes instances of texts that he finds to be “dramatically compelling,” noting that this does not include computer games:

Lots of computer games are compelling. E.g., I find even current computerized poker games quite compelling, and I find *The Sims* downright fascinating; doubtless you have your own favorites. But our planet isn't graced by even one *dramatically compelling* computer game (or, more generally, one such interactive digital entertainment). The movie *T2*, Dante's *Inferno*, *Hamlet*, Gibson's prophetic *Neuromancer*, the plays of Ibsen -- these things are dramatically compelling: they succeed in no small part because they offer captivating narrative, and all that that entails (e.g., engaging characters). There is no analogue in the interactive digital arena, alas. Massively multi-player online games are digital, interactive, and entertaining -- but they have zero literary power (which explains why, though *T2* engages young kids through at least middle-aged professors, such games are demographically one-dimensional). The same can be said, by my lights, for all other electronic genres.

And, students could compare the emotions with music and other forms related to music such as spoken poetry, drama, music videos, film/television soundtracks, musicals, etc. In doing so, they could describe the differences between simply listening to a song and experiencing that same song as performed as a poem, in a play, music video, or as a film/television soundtrack.

Youth Speaks: slam poetry productions

<http://www.youthspeaks.org/~youthspeaks/FlashSite/open.html>

Lesson plans from the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame that involve integrating music with other forms of literacy

<http://rockhall.com/education/resources/lesson-plans/>

*Level of interactivity/audience participation with texts*. Students could discuss how differences across the different types of media texts foster different modes of interactive participation. In reading a text, a reader constructs their own envisionments of characters’ and events, while in viewing a film adaptation, they are presented with the director’s envisionments, which may or may not be consistent with a reader’s versions of events being portrayed.

In experiencing a stage production of a play, an audience may select what aspect of the play they want to focus on by attending to a particular point or actor on the stage. In contrast, in film, the film director employs certain shots to guide the viewers’ attention in ways that convey their intended meaning. They use a close-up to focus the audience’s attention on a particular character or object, particularly objects that function in a symbolic mode.

The level of audience interaction is obviously much higher for Web sites, hypertext fiction, and computer games than is the case with print texts, film, or television. In participating in an on-line chat room or MOO, audiences are actively engaged in assuming roles and influencing the direction of events.

Print texts, film, or television generally involves a linear, defined movement through the text based on a set beginning, middle, and end. Digital texts such a Web sites, on-line games, or Hypertext fiction involve endless options for audiences to select. In their experience with selecting their own links, audiences may experience a sense of becoming lost or unsure as to their direction.

# Defining Narrative Development

A second strategy involves the ability to define the narrative or storyline development operating in a text, a process that varies according to differences in form. Interpreting literary texts requires readers to infer the relationships between specific events and, to construct the plot development, how certain events cause or can be explained by other events. They are also detecting conflicts between characters, and how those conflicts will be resolved. And, they are continually predicting subsequent events, predictions that help them determine the nature of the storyline based on their knowledge of prototypical genre types. If, for example, they predict that the ending will be a happy one, they know that they are operating in the familiar world of a comedy storyline.

In examining film adaptations, students may compare the differences between storyline development in the original text and the film version. In doing so, they may note instances in which certain events were omitted, added, or rearranged and reasons for these changes in the original text. In many cases, the film version cannot include all of the events of the text or certain events in a story may be truncated given lack of time. The film version of the nonfiction book, *Seabiscuit*, omitted events from the book that portrayed the several times the horse lost in a race with a hundred-thousand dollar purse.

Students could compare the storyline variation in the many different versions of *King Lear* (from *Shakespeare Magazine*):

<http://www.shakespearemag.com/handouts/lear.asp>

Students may note how shots and editing techniques are employed to help audiences make predictions. The use of an establishing shot serves to help audiences predict that a particular setting or context may play a role in subsequent events. Or, a close-up on a certain object or person may suggest that this object or person will play an important role in later shots. The use of off-frame action—in which a person may be lurking, suggests that an audience may eventually learn of that person’s identity. And, cutting to future events or flashbacks to past events serves to develop the storyline.

The film version will also rely on images, signs, and music to help audiences predict outcomes. Certain images, such as the changes in the boys’ face paint and behavior in *Lord of the Flies*, help audiences predict changes in the character’s behavior—the fact that the boys are going to become more war-like. And, in horror or mystery story adaptations, the use of eerie music implies that something untoward will occur.

Students may list different predictions they are making and the shots, editing techniques, images, and sounds they used to make these predictions.

Students could also examine how they construct narrative development in other

forms. For example, in hypertext or computer game forms, audiences construct their own narrative versions based on their choices of certain optional paths or directions. Students may keep track of the choices they make in navigating a hypertext or computer game and reasons for those choices based on their narrative knowledge.

This suggests that computer games may be used to teach narrative structures, particularly given the increasing popularity and increasing quality of computer games, which now outnumber DVD’s and videos in sales (Carlson, 2003). Zoeverna Jackson (2003) suggests having students identify certain games and their experiences in playing those games based on the following questions:

What character did they choose and why; What was their quest; How long did they play the game; How many times did they play the game; Did they play the game alone or with friends; etc. Was the narrative in the video game interesting? Why or why not?

She then suggests that students create their own video games by creating a narrative and a

storyboard for such a game, and, if possible, an actual web-site. Students would then reflect on the following questions:

How does your video game function as a storytelling device? What is the most powerful narrative aspect of your video game? What is the weakest narrative aspect of your video game? How does your video game relate to or interact with its intended audience?

Game Research

<http://game-research.com>

<http://www.joystick101.org>

<http://ludology.org>

*Game Studies*, a journal of computer game research

<http://www.gamestudies.org>

Games-to-Teach Project: educational game development at MIT

<http://www.educationarcade.org/gtt/>

For further reading:

DiSessa, A. *Changing minds: Computers, learning, and literacy.* Boston: MIT Press.

Gee, J. P. (2003). *What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy.*  New York:

Palgrave Macmillan.

Herz, J. C. (1997). *Joystick nation: How videogames ate our quarters, won our hearts, and*

*rewired our minds.* New York: Little, Brown.

Myers, D. (2003). *The nature of computer games: Play as semiosis.* New York: Peter Lang.

Prensky, M. (2000). *Digital game based learning.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

# Interpreting Characters’ Actions, Beliefs, Agendas, Goals

Another important strategy is students’ ability to interpret characters’ beliefs, agendas, and goals from their actions. Their ability to understand characters depends on their ability to go beyond the actions or dialogue in a story to infer what characters’ believe about each other, their agendas or plans, and the goals they are trying to achieve. Part of this involves the ability to infer actions as social practices represented by the characters’ actions, practices such as the following:

- *Establishing one’s position of authority or status.* Characters are continually negotiating their position of authority or status related to their rights to do certain things. Students could infer practices having to do with asserting or establishing their status or power as dominant or subordinate), independent or dependent), or intimate/loving or distant/hating).

*- Including or excluding others according to a social hierarchy.* As part of establishing their authority or status, characters include or exclude others according to a perceived social hierarchy. They often use language to label characters as the “other” or “different”--as being outside of one’s valued inner circle.

*- Maintaining and terminating relationships.* Characters are continually attempting to maintain their relationships through avoiding or mitigating conflicts that may undermine that relationship, for example, using face-saving strategiesto avoid embarrassing others.

*- Detecting signs of honesty and deception in a situation.* Characters are continually sizing up characters’ actions to discern signs of honesty, sincerity, or deception.

In studying film adaptations, students could examine the extent to which the film portrays their conception of a character by the choice of a certain actor or actress, as well as the type of acting performance and methods used to portray that character. For example, Bridget Pool

<http://www.nv.cc.va.us/home/bpool/dogwood/case/cuckoo.html>

describes the adaptation of the characters from Ken Kesey’s novel, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. In dropping the use of Chief Bromden’s first-person narrative perspective of the novel, to employ more of an objective perspective. The film also focuses on developing audience identification with the main character, McMurphy.

Another important aspect of characterization in film is the way in which the camerawork and music serves to portray certain character traits. In his book, *Teaching in the Dark*, which describes methods of integrating film into the literature classroom, John Golden (2001) describes the portrayal of Henry V in the film adaptation of the Shakespeare play in which Henry delivers the “Crispen Day Speech” to rally his troops to defeat the French:

As he begins, he is in the center, on the men’s level, but as he continues he

moves to a make-shift platform above the gathered crowd. The nonidegetic

music changes radically to a very light, then swelling and rousing, melody….

Throughout his speech , we cut from medium shots of Henry back to shots of

the soldiers who are clearly being deeply affects by his words. When Henry

says that “We few, we happy few” are the only ones to share in this glorious

victory, we the audience see the only close-up in the scene. The music reaches

its crescendo just as Henry shouts “upon St. Crispin’s day” and we see long

shots of the men shouting and pumping their fists in the air. (pp. 65-66)

*New York Times* Lesson Plan: Analyzing Fictional Characters

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/19990226friday.html>

# Contextualizing Texts in terms of Cultural and Historical Worlds

Another important strategy is the ability to contextualize texts in terms of the setting as cultural and historical worlds. This requires students to be able to perceive a media or literary text in relationship to the larger cultural and historical context it is portraying. It also involves defining the ways in which audiences perceive the setting related to point of view.

*Explaining or judging characters’ actions.* In explaining or judging characters’ actions or social practices, students need to recognize how these actions or social practices are shaped by purposes, roles, rules, beliefs, traditions or history operating in social world or cultures. Understanding, for example, Elizabeth Bennett’s social practices as a female in the early-nineteenth-century world of *Pride and Prejudice* requires some understanding of how social behaviors were perceived as appropriate for certain social classes--the aristocracy, the landed gentry, the mercantile middle class, the military, and the working class.

- *Purposes*. To interpret the purposes driving a social world, students are inferring what a social world is striving to achieve. Inferring this purpose requires going beyond just characters’ actions to perceive those actions as shaped by larger institutional forces. In studying the purposes driving these worlds, students may ask, “Why are people doing what they are doing? What are they trying to accomplish? What is driving their participation in an activity? Are there multiple, and possibly conflicting, purposes at work in the activity?”

*- Roles*. To interpret roles, readers use knowledge of the purposes or objects of an activity and consider how certain roles are designed to fulfill these purposes or objects. In studying characters’ roles, students may ask, “What roles/identities do participants or characters enact in a world? How do these roles/identities vary across different worlds? What practices or language do they employ to enact this role or identity? What are their feelings about being in a role/identity?”

*- Rules.* Readers also interpret characters’ actions in terms of whether those actions are appropriate or inappropriate given rules or norms operating in a social world. In studying characters’ or people’s rules or norms constituting what are considered to be appropriate, significant, or valid practices within a social world, students may ask: “What is considered to be appropriate versus inappropriate behavior? What rules does this suggest? Who do you see as following versus not following these rules? What do these rules suggest about the type of world the characters inhabit?”

In the late 18th century world of *Pride and Prejudice*, there are clearly defined rules constituting appropriate dating behavior, rules very much related to class distinctions and gender. None of the Bennett daughters could themselves initiate contact with members of the opposite sex. The reclusive Mr. Bennett had to make all contacts, and was reticent to do with aristocrats such as D’Arcy. Rules also serve the purpose or object of a system. The larger purpose or object operating in the late 18th century system was that females needed to marry in order to achieve some financial or social status beyond remaining dependent on their own familiar. The rule was that unless they could attract a male who himself had money, they were doomed, a theme that Jane Austen was continually playing with in her novels.

*- Beliefs.* Students also interpret characters’ actions or social practices in terms of the beliefs operating in a world or system. Inferring these beliefs helps readers define the relationships between characters—what characters believe about each other’s status, intent, power, sincerity, or motives within a specific context. In studying characters’ or people’s beliefs, students may ask: “What reasons do participants give for their practices in a world? How do these reasons reflect their beliefs about the practices operating a certain world? How do students’ own beliefs shape their perceptions of or responses to a world?”

*- Traditions/history*. And, students interpret characters’ actions or social practices based

on the traditions or history operating in a text world or system. They recognize that characters may be burdened by the forces of past traditions or historical forces that continue to shape their actions. Characters are often challenging traditions, creating tensions between principled, moral arguments for the need to change and a reaction in terms of the need to maintain existing community rules or conventions. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the townspeople were accustomed to a separate, but equal segregated world. Atticus’s principled defense of Boo Radley poses based on the vision of a new world of integration challenges the practices of a familiar segregated world. In a unit on *The Crucible* <http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/cruc/cructg.html>

students explore different background cultural aspects of the Puritan era, as well as the McCarthy period of the 1950s that shaped Arthur Miller’s writing of the play. Students could also examine how film and literature provides them with certain perspectives on certain historical periods. For example, in the following unit, Carl Schulkin,involves students in exploring how the Holocaust is depicted in history, film and literature:

<http://schulkin.org/classes/welchol.html>

You could provide background material about the cultural and historical contexts portrayed in a text through having students search the Web for relevant background material. For example, the following site provides selections from the DeWitt Clinton High School's Literary Magazine from 1929-1942 <http://newdeal.feri.org/magpie/> material students could use to consider how literary texts reflect high school students’ experiences of the Great Depression.

Students could then create their own Webquests about certain cultures or periods related to different media texts or literature for use by future students. Michael LoMonico**,** in a *Cable in the Classroom* article, “Beyond Character, Plot, and Theme,”

<http://www.ciconline.com/Enrichment/Teaching/learningwithtechnology/magarticles/Beyondcharacter.htm> provides some examples of student projects: <http://geocities.com/EGL440>

• Gina's poetry WebQuest includes video clips of a South Boston teen reading and discussing Gwendolyn Brook's "We Real Cool," and a Chinese-American teenager from Atlanta reading and discussing Emily Dickinson's "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?"

• Jill has her students read two news articles about parents who attempted to remove Catcher in the Rye from classrooms in an Alabama high school. Then they listen to two NPR programs about book banning and answer multiple-choice questions about these resources. Using what they learned, they write persuasive essays to be presented at a Board of Education meeting, supporting or opposing the parents' challenge.

• Kara introduces her students to the Harlem Renaissance by having them read online articles on the African American oral tradition and the history of jazz. Then they listen to audio clips of Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald's version of "It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing," Billie Holiday singing "Strange Fruit," and a jazz-accompanied version of Langston Hughes reading "The Weary Blues."

Webquest: Pop Goes the Culture: create a virtual museum of the culture of different decades

<http://www2.lhric.org/kat/culture.htm>

*Point of view*. You may also have students compare the point of view employed in a text and in a film—the perspective through which we experience the action in a text and film. This includes first person point of view (through the eyes of a narrator or character) as opposed to a third person in which audiences are not limited in terms of the adopting a certain perspective. It is often more difficult to employ a first-person point of view in film because a filmmaker must rely on camera work and voice-over to portray a narrator’s or character’s perspective. There are also instances of different versions of the same events recounted from different perspectives, as is the case of *Run Lola Run* in which the same events are portrayed in three different versions, or *Memento*, in which the events are portrayed in reverse order in time.

John Golden (2001) uses the concept of “focalization” to work with the differences in point of view with his students. The first type of “focalization” is “subjective”—similar to first-person point of view, in which the audience adopts the perspective or eye-line of a character. The audience perceives everything through the eyes of a character, or, the perspective may switch back and forth from the character’s perspective to a third-person perspective of the character. He cites an the example of a lion-hunter in the jungle:

Imagine, for example, that we see a man hunting lions in the middle of a jungle. We hear a sound and we see him looking around then we cut to what he sees: something rushing in the bushes. Then maybe we cut back to his face tensing up, and then we cut back to the lion leaping out. The lion is rushing directly towards the hunter, toward the camera, and thus toward us. We see what he sees and feel what he feels. (p. 73).

The second type of “focalization” is “authorial,” in which the director provides an audience with certain information that is not available to a character. Golden cites the example of the same shot of the man in the jungle, but now rather than cut to the man’s point of view, the director shows the lion behind the man who is unaware of the lion’s presence. In this case, the audience acquires information not available to a character—information provided for the audience by the director.

The third type of “focalization” is “neutral,” in which the there is no attempt to convey certain information either from a character’s or the director’s perspective. Thus, the same lion-hunter scene would include shots of “the hunt, then cut to the lion, and then cut back to the man as he runs away from the lion and the camera. We might not get an eye-line match, not might we see some dramatic low angle emphasizing the power of that lion” (p. 74). One example of effective use of a “neutral” focalization is the adaptation of the Shirley Jackson short story, “The Lottery,” which portrays the ritual of an annual small-town community event in which one community member is selected to be stoned to death. The film portrays this event in a highly neutral manner, creating an uneasy feeling in the audience that they are witnessing an event that involved little dissent from community members.

Students could take the same literary text and create different storyboard versions of that text employing different points of view or “focalizations” to portray the same events from alternative perspectives.

*Media history: Changes in the form over time*. This strategy also includes the ability to interpret media texts in terms of the historical development of that particular media form related to the cultural and historical forces influencing changes in that form. For example, students could examine how films of the late sixties and early seventies such as *Easy Rider, American Graffiti, The Graduate*, and *Alice’s Restaurant* represented a shift in films towards a younger audience both in terms of content and style given the rise of a new, large group of adolescents who were rebelling against the status quo institutions of that time.

Media History Project

<http://www.mediahistory.umn.edu/>

History of Media

<http://www.medialit.org/focus/hist_home.html>

National Museum of Photography, Film, and Television

<http://www.nmsi.ac.uk/nmpft/>

History of Photography

<http://academic.enmu.edu/gerf/>

*Film history*. Based on the material on film history in Module 3, students could examine how different films and film genres reflected the shifting values of a certain decade. For example, students could explore why certain genres or topics achieve popularity during certain times or decades. Comedy films were particularly popular during the Great Depression because they served as a mode of escape from the harsh realities of the time. And, they could examine how films influenced history, for example, how World War II propaganda films influenced peoples’ attitudes towards the war.

*Film and History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies*

<http://www.h-net.org/~filmhis/>

This journal examines the impact of motion pictures on our society and how films both represent and interpret history.

Museum of the Moving Image

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/>

UCLA Film and Television Archive

<http://www.cinema.ucla.edu/>

Film History: organized by decades

<http://www.filmsite.org/filmh.html>

*Television history*. Students could also examine how the rise of television in the 1950s changed the film industry, which then had to develop new, alternative content to lure people into the theaters. They could also examine how television influenced history, for example, how nightly news broadcasts of the Vietnam War resulted in the public’s increasingly negative attitude towards that war.

Television history

<http://histv2.free.fr/indexen.htm>

Television history

<http://www.tvhistory.tv/>

MZTV Museum of Television

<http://www.mztv.com/gallery.html>

Museum of Television and Radio

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

History of Television Technology

<http://members.aol.com/aj2x/oldtv.html>

Television History Archive: Center for the Study of Popular Television, Syracuse University

<http://libwww.syr.edu/information/media/archive/main.htm>

Student PowerPoint presentation by Jacob, “Beaver, Bunker, and Bart: A History of the American Family in Television” from Jim Burke’s English Companion site

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/assignments/exemplars/amfamilytv.htm>v

For further reading:

Roman, J. (1998). *Love, light, and a dream: Television's past, present, and future.* New York:

Praeger Publishers. <http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=58907195>

*Advertising history*. Advertising also changed in ways that reflected an increasingly image-conscious, consumer culture in which ads focus more on selling an image or an experience associated with a product, as opposed to specific aspects of that product.

American Advertising Museum

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

Ad Access Project, Duke University

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/adaccess/>

Media, Advertising, and Society, Barbara Breder, University of Iowa

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/advertising/>

*Digital/computer history*. As previously noted in several modules, the rise of computer use has resulted in the “re-mediation” (Bolter & Guerin) of television and print news, which, as did film, had to change its format. The computer has also had served to enhance globalization of the world by providing instant connection throughout the world. And, the increased use of digital photography has changed the speed and availability of photos in news. On the other hand, this increased speed does not necessarily enhance global understanding. As Ladislaus Semali argues in this readingonline.org article

<http://www.readingonline.org/newliteracies/lit_index.asp?HREF=/newliteracies/semali3>

images of other countries often contain certain biases that perpetuate myths and stereotypes about those countries, for example, the notion that African countries are all in a state of constant turmoil and political corruption.

History of the Web: different archive sites

<http://www.readingonline.org/newliteracies/lit_index.asp?HREF=/newliteracies/webwatch/wayback/index.html>

Center for History and New Media, George Washington University: history of digital media

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/assets/historyessays/essaystoc.html>

*Music history*. Students could also examine how changes in music mirrored cultural shifts, as was the case with rock music in the 1960s or hip hop music in the 1980s and 90s.

Rock, Pop, and Rap; Studies in Popular Music History and Culture

<http://www.drake.edu/swiss/Homepage_final.html>

Rock ‘n Roll Hall of Fame

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

History of Hip-Hop

<http://www.azcentral.com/ent/pop/articles/0603hiphophis03.html>

For further reading:

Gardiner, W. L. (2002). *History of Media*. New York: Trafford Publishing

# Defining Intertextual / hypertextual Connections Between Texts

Another important strategy involves defining intertextual and hypertextual connections between texts. Intertextual links are used to define connections between language, images, characters, topics, or themes based on similarities in languages, genres, or discourses.

Intertextuality may also involve connections built on social meanings in which participants make intertextual links in order to build social relationships or connections (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). For example, participants in conversation may allude to shared experiences to foster a social bond or an insider reference to exclude others. Participation in on-line chat exchanges engages early-adolescents in using intertextual links to foster social interaction (Beach & Lundell, 1997; Lewis & Fabos, 2000).

Given the high level of online marketing to kids, there is a need for students to critically examine the links made in online marketing campaigns; for lessons from the Media Awareness Network: <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/internet/online_kids_strategies.cfm>

Making intertextual links between disparate text types or genres helps students engage in what Semali and Watts-Pailliotet (1999) defined as “intermediality”—the ability to construct connections between different sign systems, concepts, and technology tools. Students are engaged in making intertextual links through multi-genre writing about a topic, an approach currently popular in secondary writing instruction (Romano, 2000). Multi-genre writing involves using a range of different types of genres—reports, poems, letters, diaries, stories, advertisements, field notes, photos, drawings, etc. to explore different aspects of and perspectives on a topic. Connecting these disparate genre types requires the ability to determine how different types of texts yield different perspectives on the same topic or phenomenon.

As noted in Module 2, digital media mediate the practice of making these multi-genre intertextual links. Hypermedia, Flash, or various web-page development tools are used to combine hypertext (texts linked together by multilinear nodes) and multimedia (photos, video, art, audio, text, etc.) to produce an interactive media experience for participants (Jonassen, 2000; Landow, 1997).

One of the pioneers of hypertext is George Landow, whose *Hypertext* site

<http://www.cyberartsweb.org/cpace/ht/htov.html>

is a useful introduction to the concept of hypertext as used in teaching, particularly teaching literature. His Victorian Web Site <http://www.victorianweb.org/>

represents a way of organizing a lot of different curriculum material around Victorian literature, and around postcolonial literature <http://www.postcolonialweb.org/>

Another important pioneer is Janet Murray, author of *Hamlet on the Holodeck* (MIT Press, 1998). <http://www.lcc.gatech.edu/~murray>

She argues that new digital media are changing narrative understanding and production by providing students with highly interactive ways of experiencing the same episode in a story from multiple different perspectives or the same storyline in terms of alternative storyline versions.

In his course on hypertexts at Oakland University,

<http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~mceneane/hc207/winter2004/>

John E. McEneaney has students complete projects that explore a particular topic or phenomenon through combining different media forms “including annotated videos, interactive games, works of fiction or nonfiction in hypertext with supporting media, or more visually oriented media that explore visual or performing arts.” One illustrative project combines music, choreography, and dance, to choreograph a dance by selecting and editing video clips of a dancer that represent a variety of positions and movements. This includes using iMovie to create a music video for a game on different elements of music and movement and a character animation to illustrate different types of movements and positions.

Digital media can also help teachers accommodate to individual differences in student learning by providing additional support for students or by varying instructional design to accommodate for individual differences in learning. In their book, *Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning,* (ASCD, 2002), on-line version: <http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/tes/>

David Rose and Anne Meyer argue that digital media can be used to alter the same material or texts to accommodate for these learning variations.

*QuicktimeProTM.*  Students can import video clips into the PowerPointTM presentations using QuicktimeProTM ($29.99). To import video clips, students first put their digital video into a QuickTime format on a CD. They then use QuicktimePro to edit clips from their CD to import into the PowerPoint template. In showing their PowerPoint, they also need to have the CD in their computer to run their presentation.

*VideoPaper Builder 2TM*  Students can also use a free program, VideoPaper Builder 2TM <http://vpb.concord.org> to important texts, images, and video files into a multimedia web document. This tool provides students with menus, links, frames, and slide show templates to help students organize their material on a web site. One advantage of this tool is that students can combine clips of their commentary about an image or video clip on the same screen so that they can demonstrate their interpretations of the image or clip. Prior to importing their material into VideoPaper Builder 2TM, students must first put their video into a QuickTime format, their pictures in a JPG format, and their Word documents into an HTML format. This tool can also be used with both Mac OSX and Windows.

*Inspiration*TM. Using these various tools to create hypermedia/hypertext links between different types of texts requires an awareness of the thematic and conceptual relationships between these texts. Students could use InspirationTM ($70.00)

<http://www.inspiration.com>

<http://www.tomsynder.com/products>

to create visual maps of their texts and materials according to different templates. For example, students can use the “thinking-skills” template to develop Venn diagram comparisons between different texts—noting ways in which they differ and ways in which they share certain features.

*Noodletools TM.*. One component of combining certain texts involves searching reference databases for different texts and then providing citations for those texts. One kid-friendly tool is Noodletools

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

that provides them with an easy-to-navigate set of category options to search for resources, as well as ways to provide citations.

*Learning objects*. Another development tool is the use of digital “learning objects” that are employed to support learning in all subject-matter areas. These highly visual “learning objects,” often created by tools such as FlashTM, combine visual and verbal modes of learning to engage students in interactive simulations. The Merlot site contains numerous examples of learning objects in all subject matter areas <http://www.merlot.org/home>

One example of a highly engaging learning object is “Who Killed William Robinson,” developed by Ruth Sandwell and John Lutz, University of British Columbia. This learning object is a simulation based on an actual historical person, William Robinson, a Black American who was murdered in British Columbia in 1868. An Aboriginal man named Tshuanhusset, also called Tom, was charged with the murder, convicted and hanged, but a closer look at the evidence challenges the guilty verdict. Students need to sift through various clues to determine who may have been the murderer. <http://web.uvic.ca/history-robinson/>

The following is a learning object related to brainstorming ideas for writing:

<http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/index.asp?objID=WCN2201>

All of this has profound implications for helping students learn to construct knowledge through the use of digital tools. Nancy Patterson has done extensive work with her middle-school students using StoryspaceTM, as tool developed by Eastgate Software <http://www.eastgate.com>

that is used by academics as well as writers to construct hypertexts. Patterson (2000) describes how she uses hypertext to help students define relationships in a poetry unit as well as a biography unit:

I want my middle school students to experience this texture of possible readings and see that text is not a fixed entity. Students work toward this goal by participating in hypertext projects throughout the school year. This article will discuss two of those projects--a poetry web where students annotate a poem of their choosing, and a biography web where students select a figure from American history, research that figure, and create a hypertext web designed to inform others about that person.

We start this project at the very beginning of the school year, before the computer lab is operational. And so we begin by simply reading a collection of poems written by Native Americans and discussing them. We use the traditional reference materials to start the annotation process. I also give students large pieces of paper and after showing them a hand drawn map of a poetry annotation, I ask them to draw their own concept maps of several poems. Ultimately, they will choose one to focus on in more depth. And, using an lcd display panel (our district has yet to purchase an lcd projector) and an overhead projector, I show them hypertext maps of several poetry webs from previous years. These maps are made using Story Space.

For other examples of Nancy Patterson’s use of Storyspace

[http://angelfire.com/mi/patter/america.hTMl](http://angelfire.com/mi/patter/america.html)

[http://www.npatterson.net/mid.hTMl](http://www.npatterson.net/mid.html)

At the high school level, Roberta Hammett (1999) describes the examples of a *Romeo and Juliet* hypermedia that involves a range of different types of texts simultaneously open on the same screen that allow students to perceive intertextual connections between these different texts in terms of thematic links having to do with suicide, first love, parent-child conflicts, or despair. These texts include:

print text (the Wordsworth sonnet, the student’s personal reflection (M.A.M), an introduction to the Styx song “Babe,” and the quicktime movie that shows scenes of ninth grade students reading *Romeo and Juliet*. The soundtrack is the Styx song: “Babe I’m leaving / I must be on my way … / I’ll be missing you” (Styx, 1987).These textual explorations of various moments of despair can lead the students to a deeper understanding of the Shakespeare text. Although, in composing hypermedia, they start with the Shakespeare text and bring in the media culture texts to illustrate it, in reading *Romeo and Juliet* they, rather, bring understandings formed in multiple experiences with media culture to the classic text.

In the Suicide strand of the hypermedia, clips from several videos and quotations from poems, novels and songs illustrate this: *My Darling, My Hamburger* (Zindel, 1969), “Wanting to Die (Edmund Vance Cook), “Grind” (Alice in Chains, 1995), *Dead Poets Society* (Weir, 1989), and several others have provided the students with understandings of suicide. Similarly in the Balcony, First Love, and Parental Conflict strands, popular culture texts demonstrate the variety and number of perspectives on the themes shared in songs and films that students bring to their reading of Shakespeare.

For Hammett, all of this involves the use of media texts to construct new knowledge:

In composing the *Romeo and Juliet* hypermedia, students learned how movie soundtracks affect and change the mood, reactions, and meanings of the visual images and scenes. They experienced the effects they can create in viewers when they replaced, with several different songs, the original soundtrack of the Juliet’s funeral scene in Zefferelli’s (1968) movie version of the play. Alice in Chains’ “Grind” (1995) and “Girlfriend in a Coma” (The Smiths, 1987), when used as soundtracks for the scene, seemed to completely change our reaction to and interpretation of the scene. Our attention was focused on different visual images, and the visual images appeared to be different (movement seemed faster, and so on.) By constructing these effects themselves, students will have a more practical understanding of how professionals achieve the effects that move them as audiences.

In the following essay, Jamie Myers describes further uses of hypermedia as a tool for

responding to literature: <http://www.ed.psu.edu/k-12/culture/>

Students can organize collections of digital texts found through search engines based on

certain themes, topics, or concepts. For example, Jeff Rice (2003) asked students to create a “handbook of cool” based on images of dress, behavior, artifacts, consumer goods, as well as texts from the 1950s to the present as a way of encouraging them to examine different cultural attitudes towards what was considered “cool” in different decades.

Students can also use digital texts to apply various critical approaches. In a unit on feminist technologies, Cari Carpenter (2003) created a learning simulation in which groups of students representing a “feminist foundation” had to made oral presentations convincing a board to donate a million dollars to the development of technologies that would enhance women’s lives.

And, Adrien Miles argues that Blogger sites allow for combining different forms of textual

links based on GoogleTM searchers and links to previous messages on a site as another way of constructing knowledge, as illustrated by the “OzBlog” site.

<http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/8.1/binder2.html?coverweb/vot/index.html>

*Accommodating for learning diversities*. CAST, The Center for Applied Special Technology, <http://www.cast.org/>

an organization focusing on the use of technology to address learning diversity provides teachers with various on-line tools for accommodating to these differences. For example, they noted that for students who need additional directions or support in reading texts, digital text can be used to separate the content from the display. As a result, the same content can be varied to, for example, for on auditory aspects for the visually impaired, or tactile aspects for the auditory impaired. And, digital texts can by “tagged” with various prompts to direct students to summarize, pose questions, or visualize. Features such as headers or sidebars as well as summaries and questions can be added to help students as they process texts.

<http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/presentations/digitaltext.cfm>

One of the CAST tools, eTrekker, provides varied formats or structures of the same material for different learning needs. The following on-line example displays two different examples of formats for an inquiry project for two different students.

<http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/tes/chapter5_7.cfm>

Developed for the students, and facilitators, of four Study Support Centres in Christchurch and Invercargill, New Zealand, wickED is a quality assured, lively learning environment, hosted by virtual characters Ed and Wiki, and full of student friendly activities and interactives.

<http://www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/literacy/newspaper.php>

<http://www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/themes/archive.php>

Another organization, MENO, Multimedia, Education, and Narrative Organization,

<http://meno.open.ac.uk/> provides similar assistance in terms of narrative support for differences in learners.

Other digital media sites:

Hypertext on the Big Screen

<http://www.eastgate.com/storyspace/film/Miles.html>

Course on hypertext and literature

<http://www.hypertxt.com/spring98/ets400/>

Inquiry unit on the Inquiry Web Site: How does hypertext change literacy practices?

<http://www.inquiry.uiuc.edu/bin/update_unit.cgi?command=select&xmlfile=u10326.xml>

Course on Reading and Writing in a Digital Age focusing on Hypertext

<http://www.drake.edu/artsci/hype/hypertext.html>

University of Iowa Communication Studies: lots of links on hypertext theory

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources/digitalmedia/digitaltheory.html>

Digital Narrative, University of Maryland

<http://www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/Colleges/ARHU/Depts/CompLit/cmltfac/mlifton/.rosebud/Digital/Pages/dn.html>

Center for Digital Storytelling

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

*Hyperhorizons*, Duke University site on hypertext fiction

<http://www.duke.edu/~mshumate/hyperfic.html>

Adaptations of Print to Hypertext

<http://www.duke.edu/~mshumate/print.html>

Introduction to the Visual Arts, Laura Ruby, University of Hawaii

<http://www.hawaii.edu/lruby/art101/visarts.htm>

Computer-Mediated Learning

<http://www.indiana.edu/~r547/syllabus.html>

English Through the Internet

<http://mofetsrv.mofet.macam98.ac.il/~elaine/eti/>

Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning

<http://www.edb.utexas.edu/resta/cscl2002/syllabus/>

A technology-infused English curriculum

Coogan, P. (2000). *International Electronic Journal For Leadership in Learning*, 4(13)

<http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~iejll/volume4/Coogan/>

Project-braced Learning: GLEF: The George Lucas Educational Foundation

<http://glef.org/PBL/index.html>

Ted Nellen’s Cyber English

<http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/>

Technology integration: GLEF: The George Lucas Educational Foundation

<http://glef.org/TI/index.html>

Hall Davidson, Meaningful Digital Video for Every Classroom

<http://www.techlearning.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=18700330>

Hypertext fiction

Stuart Molthrop, *Hegirscope*

<http://iat.ubalt.edu/moulthrop/hypertexts/hgs/>

Stephanie Strickland, *The Ballad of Sand and Harry Soot*

<http://www.wordcircuits.com/gallery/sandsoot/>

Deena Larson, *Stained Word Window*

<http://www.wordcircuits.com/gallery/stained/index.html>

Webquest: Hypertext fiction

<http://english.unitecnology.ac.nz/resources/webquests/hyperfiction/features.html>

For further reading on digital literacies, hypertexts, and hypermedia:

DeWitt, S., & Strasma, K. (1999). (Eds.), *Contexts, intertexts, and hypertexts* (pp. 65-116).

Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodel discourse: The modes and media of*

*contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.

Landow, G. P. (1997). *Hypertext 2.0: The convergence of contemporary critical theory and*

*technology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

Myers, J., & Beach, R., (2001). Hypermedia authoring as critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent*

*& Adult Literacy, 44*(6), pp. 538-546.

Myers, J., Hammett, R., & McKillop, A. M. (1998). Opportunities for critical literacy and

pedagogy in student-authored hypermedia. In D. Reinking, M. McKenna, L. Labbo, & R.

Kieffer (Eds.), *Handbook of literacy and technology: Transformations in a post-*

*typographic world* (pp. 63-78). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Myers, J., Hammett, R., & McKillop, A.M. (2000). Connecting, exploring, and exposing the self in

hypermedia projects. In M. Gallego & S. Hollingsworth (Eds.), *What counts as literacy:*

*Challenging the school standard* (pp. 85-105). New York: Teachers College Press.

Patterson, N. (2000). Weaving a narrative: From teens to string to hypertext. *Voices from the*

*Middle, 7* (3), 41-47.

Adopting Alternative Voices and Discourses

Another strategy involves adopting multiple voices and perspectives through making “double-voice” intertextual references or evoking or mimicking the languages or styles from other texts or worlds (Bakhtin, 1981; Knoeller, 1998). Speakers and writers employ these intertextual references to establish social relationships and identities (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). Through interaction with others, participants construct identities by performing in ways that position them in relation to others' positions--"it is in the connection to another's response that a performance takes shape" (McNamee, 1996, p. 150). As Bakhtin (1981) argued in his concept of "answerability," people's utterances reflect their relationships with others’ potential, anticipated reactions to their utterances.

As noted in Module 4, different voices reflect or evoke different discourses or ideological perspectives. Characters adopt the voices of science, religion, medicine, business, war, politics, romance, education, merchandizing, etc. Examining these different voices leads to understanding underlying ideological conflicts between characters’ ideological perspectives. In the novel and film, *The Great Gatsby*, Jay Gatsby adopts the voice of the Puritan Ethic—working one’s way to the top, regardless of the means to achieve that goal. In the novel and PBS production, *Great Expectations,* as in all Dickens’s novels, characters adopt a range of different voices reflecting business, political, religious, and family discourses.

Webquest: Charles Dickens

<http://www.perrysburg.k12.oh.us/hs/English/Drew/quest.html>

In participating with a range of diverse perspectives and voices in a computer-mediated context, students learn to consider alternative perspectives different from their own. The more open students are to experimenting with alternative ways of being and knowing, the more open they are to entertaining alternative values, as opposed to a rigid, monologic perspective on the world. Middle-school students engaged in synchronous exchanges employed parodies of peers, teachers, and school discourses, for example, mimicking the pedantic language of textbook “discussion questions.”

As we noted in Module 1, students can also employ Web chat rooms in tappedin.org or nicenet.org or MOO, AOL Buddy Chat, IM, or Blogger sites to adopt and explore alternative voices and discourses. In addition, Cynthia Johnson (2003, A Few Cool Ways You Too Can Use MOOs, *Kairos* *7*(2)) <http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/7.2/binder.html?sectiontwo/johnson/main.htm> discusses some ways of using MOOs to help students explore alternative perspectives/roles. One central component of many MOOs or computer games such as *Sims City,* is that students adopt different, alternative voices associated with their online roles.

For example, in a *Brave New World* MOO

<http://homepages.wmich.edu/~r1rozema/Fun/>

students assume the roles of different characters from the novel who inhabit different spaces or rooms they create based on their reading of the novel. In these roles, they must then solve problems and conflicts associated with the thematic tensions in the novel.

In their on-line book chapter, “The Individual Identity in Electronic Discourse:

A Portfolio of Voices,” Boyd Davis and Jeutonne P. Brewer, examine the ways in which on-line participants adopt a range of different voices associated with experimenting with different identities.

<http://wac.colostate.edu/rhetnet/rdc.htm>

In analyzing film adaptations, students could examine the ways in which the film captures the original “voices” or language of the text through how the actors perform those voices or perspectives.

Educational MOOs

<http://cinemaspace.berkeley.edu/%7Erachel/moolist/edu.html>

Webquest: *Call of the Wild*

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~bosc0036/BOSCHEE/cotw_webquest/>

Webquest: *Romeo and Juliet*

<http://cmcweb.lr.k12.nj.us/webquest/moran/rj.htm>

# Judging Quality of Literary and Media Texts

Another strategy involves the ability to judge the quality of literary and media texts in terms of specific criteria. This entails going beyond simply assessing a text in terms of one’s subjective reaction—as in “I really liked the acting,” to assessing the specific aspects of a text based on some pre-determined criteria. There is considerable debate in the field of aesthetics between those who argue that texts should be judged based on criteria and those who argue that one should consider the creator’s intentions in judging whether a text is successful. The latter group posits that it is difficult to formulate criteria in ways that are not artificial or based on traditional notions of what is “good art,” particularly in the case of contemporary art for which there is no clear understanding of the conventions constituting that art.

Rather than adopt this either/or perspective, students could rely on both predetermined criteria and their sense of imputed intentions of a text creator. To inductively derive some criteria for judging, for example, film quality, students could go on-line to some of the leading film review sites:

Rottentomatoes

<http://www.rottentomatoes.com>

Movie Review Query Engine

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

Internet Movie Date Base

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

Check the Grid

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

All Watchers

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

MetaCritic

<http://www.metacritic.com/film/>

They could the compare films that receive a high versus low ratings and attempt to discern the criteria reviewers are employing. They could also examine different reviews of the same film and note the underlying criteria. In some cases, the criteria may be somewhat subjective, but in other cases, reviewers may refer to the quality of the cinematography/editing, acting, directing, story development, setting authenticity, and portrayals of themes. And, students could formulate criteria for judging “literary quality,” based on the works of literature they have read to date.

Tim McCormick’s Literary Critic: an collaborative exchange site to engage in on-line critical analysis

<http://www.literarycritic.com/index.shtml>

They could then compare their judgments of a literary text with a film adaptation, recognizing the differences between the two forms. Rather than judging the film as “better” or “worse” than the book, they could then consider reasons why the film succeeds or fails in terms of the cinematography.

Students could also examine the ways in which judgments of quality are often reflect institutional biases or attitudes. For example, the Oscar awards tend to reflect the interests of the Hollywood film industry as opposed to the independent film industry. Students could review those films that have won Oscars and note what aspects of those films may have contributed to them being winners.

Oscar winners: organized by multiple categories

<http://www.oscar.com/legacy/pastwin_main.html>

<http://www.oscars.org/awardsdatabase/>

IMDB site: past best movie winners

<http://www.imdb.com/Sections/Awards/Academy_Awards_USA/>

*New York Times* Lesson Plan: “And the Winner Is…Exploring the Role of the Academy Awards and Film in American Society”

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000324friday.html>

*Judging television programs*. In addition to judging film quality, students could formulate those criteria they might apply in judging the quality of television programs, which leads them to contrast film and television production techniques. For example, television is often highly effective in focusing on the “talking head” in on-screen interviews, particularly when using close-ups of people’s faces on programs such as *Sixty Minutes*. As with film reviews, students could examine on-line television reviews to inductively discern the criteria employed by reviewers.

Pop Matters

<http://www.popmatters.com/tv/reviews/archive-v.html>

Students could formulate criteria for judging the quality of television journalism in terms of objectivity, accuracy, fairness, and balance. For criteria employed in judging student television productions:

National Student Television Award of Excellence

<http://www.nationalstudent.tv/judgingdet.asp>

They could also formulate criteria for judging prime-time television drama programs:

Helena Sheehan, “Criteria for Judging TV Drama”

<http://www.comms.dcu.ie/sheehanh/criteria.htm>

*Web-page quality*. Students could also judge the quality of Web sites both in terms of design and the objectivity of a site’s content. In doing so, they need to first formulate some criteria that will serve as the basis for judging web sites.

The Cornell University Library site

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/webcrit.html>

identifies the following five criteria as relevant:

Accuracy of Web documents

- Who wrote the page and can you contact him or her?

- What is the purpose of the document and why was it produced?

- Is this person qualified to write this document?

Authority of Web documents

- Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster?"

- Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document?

- Does the publisher list his or her qualifications?

Objectivity of Web documents

- What goals/objectives does this page meet?

- How detailed is the information?

- What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author?

Currency of Web documents

- When was it produced?

- When was it updated'

- How up-to-date are the links (if any)?

Coverage of the Web documents

- Are the links (if any) evaluated and do they complement the documents' theme?

- Is it all images or a balance of text and images?

- Is the information presented cited correctly?

American Library Association: Great Web Sites for Kids

<http://www.ala.org/greatsites>

Kathy Schrock’s educator sites: lots of links on evaluating web sites

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html>

Yahoo: criteria: accessible, accurate, appropriate, and appealing.

<http://www.yahooligans.com/tg/evaluatingwebsites.html>

University of California, Berkeley Library

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>

Students could also judge the content on Web sites in terms of issues of free speech and access. Sean Williams (2003) developed a writing assignment in which he had students make the case for or against the presence of hate sites on the Internet as well as the objectivity of these sites.

Students could also analyze the quality of the rhetorical appeals to audiences, judging the effectiveness of a site to gain an audience’s identification.

Rhetoric of Mass Media

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/Comm/Courses/sloop.htm>

Students could also judge a totally new form of art, “Web art,” by going to the Museum of Web Art <http://www.mowa.org/> and assessing examples of Web art at that site. While this may be a difficult challenge, simply attempting to formulate some possible criteria may lend itself to some interesting discussions about new forms of digital art.

Mike Morgan, Regent University, course on Aesthetics, Design, and Criticism of the World Wide Web

<http://www.regent.edu/acad/schcom/cmc/syllabi/cmc612-01su.html>

Webquest: Michael Day: Evaluating Webbed Sources for Research

<http://www.engl.niu.edu/mday/web/wmc.html>

Webquest: Art criticism: judging based on groups making presentations related to description, analysis, interpretation, and judgments

<http://coe.west.asu.edu/students/kpasinski/wq/>

Webquest: Art criticism: judging based on an art history approach

<http://ed.unc.edu/teach/twww_hs/projects_spring2003_session2/Dayton_Plyter_julie/>

## DESIGNING UNITS

# In designing units and classroom activities, you can therefore organizing activities around students’ use of these and other strategies. You are also organizing units in terms of some coherent, overall topic, theme, issue, genre, archetypes, historical/literary period, or production. In many cases, units combine different aspects of these alternatives; there is no pure prototypical example for each of these different approaches.

## *Topics*. Organizing your unit around a topic such as power, evil, suburbia, the family, etc., means that you are finding texts that portray these different topics. For example, you may select a series of texts that portray mother/daughter relationships in film, television, or literature. Students may then compare or contrast the different portrayals of the same topic across different texts. It is important to select topics about which students have some familiarity or interest, or one’s that may engage them.

## One advantage of a topics approach is that topics do not imply the kind of value or cultural orientation associated with a thematic or issue unit. Students may construct their own value stance related to a topic, for example, defining different attitudes towards the topic of mother/daughter relationships. However, without that additional value orientation, students may lack motivation to be engaged in a topic.

Webquest: The American Dream

<http://learning.loc.gov/learn/lessons/97/dream/index.html>

Webquest: Victims of Mass Hysteria

<http://kwhaley.20m.com/masshysteria.htm>

Webquest: Does Social Rank Matter?

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/webthewortja.html>

Webquests: teaching literature

<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/matrix/9-12-Eng.htm>

Unit: media and behavior

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/edtec596/Units/media/MediaandBehavior.html>

## 

## *Themes*. You may also organize your unit around certain themes portrayed in texts. A frequently used theme is that of individualism or conformity to society—the extent to which characters must conform to or resist societal norms. As we just noted, one advantage of thematic units is that students may become engaged with related attitudes or values associated with a theme. One disadvantage of thematic units is that they can readily become too didactic, in which you attempt to have students “learn” certain thematic lessons—the importance of not conforming to society or the need to be courageous.

# This problem of didacticism relates to how you organize your unit. You can organize your unit in both a “top-down” deductive manner, providing students with theoretical perspectives or frames for them to apply in a deductive manner. You can also organize your unit in a “bottom-up” inductive manner, encouraging students to make their own connections and applications. To avoid the didactic tendency of thematic unit, you can move more to an inductive approach, allowing students to make their own interpretations and connections that may different from any presupposed central thematic focus.

Planning a Themed Literature Unit

<http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/kschlnoe/TLU/overview.html>

Cyberguides: Teaching American literature

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/SCORE/cy912.html>

Thematic units

<http://lessonplanz.com/Lesson_Plans/Language_Arts/___Book_Activities/Grades_9-12/>

<http://www.edhelper.com/cat193.htm>

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/tab_lesson.asp?subcategory=0&grade=9-12&Display=Display>

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/learning.html>

<http://www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/lessons.cgi/Language_Arts/Literature>

PBS Teacher Resource: Teaching literature

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/arts_lit/high_amlit.shtm>

Designing thematic literature units: Kathleen Noe: Teacher Education 521, Seattle University

<http://classes.seattleu.edu/masters_in_teaching/teed521/professor/tlu.htm>

Webquest: True Love

<http://www.geocities.com/fperez52/>

Webquest: Good and Evil in *Lord of the Flies*

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/webgoodevira.html>

Webquest: Tragic Heroes in Literature and Life

<http://www.teachtheteachers.org/projects/JZarro2/index.htm>

*Issues*, *questions, dilemmas.* You can also organize your units are issues, for example, the issue of gender and power—the degree to which women may have to assume subordinate roles in a culture. One advantage of an issue is that students may adopt different, competing perspective about an issue, tensions that may create interest in that issue. One disadvantage of studying issues is that students may bring often rigidly defined stances on issues such as gun control or school vouchers, which may not allow for further development or consideration of alternative perspectives.

Framing units in this manner mirrors adolescents’ attempts to cope with the complex, ill-defined problems, issues, and dilemmas in their everyday lives (Beach & Myers, 2001; Short & Harste, 1996). Part of this involves the ability to pose “what if” hypothetical questions. For example, adolescents may be caught in a dilemma in which they have to decide whether to continue a relationship their parents don’t approve of or seek to please their parents by ending the relationship. Or, in responding to *Romeo and Juliet*, they may examine reasons for Romeo and Juliet being caught in the same dilemma of competing allegiances. Adolescents often have difficulty knowing how to cope with situations that do not lend themselves to simple, easy solutions. Rather than throwing up their hands in despair, they need some strategies for systematically and thoughtfully coping with ill-defined problems, issues, and dilemmas in their everyday lives. They need to learn how to step back and identify reasons why they have certain concerns or why certain solutions may not work.

Inquiry-based instruction is based on using the strategies of formulating questions, issues, or dilemmas; contextualizing those questions, issues, or dilemmas; defining how those questions, issues, or dilemmas are represented in a media text, critiquing those representations, and formulating alternative solutions (Beach & Myers, 2001). For examples of hypermedia inquiry project work by high school students cited in Beach and Myers:

<http://www.ed.psu.edu/k-12/socialworlds/>

<http://www.ed.psu.edu/k-12/teenissues/> (focus on issues of love, relationships, family)

For example, students may address the issue of suburban sprawl in terms of how suburban development and lifestyle is represented in the media or film. In such a unit, students could initially study examples of television programs or films that portray suburbia in a positive or negative way. They could then determine the ways in which these representations influence perceptions of issues of sprawl.

One of the most useful Web-based resources for devising inquiry-based instruction is the Inquiry web site at the University of Illinois <http://www.inquiry.uiuc.edu>

Not only does this site contain numerous examples of inquiry-based units, but the site itself represents an important media text as a place for a shared community exchange around teaching and learning, as well as addressing community issues.

Sites on inquiry-based learning:

YouthLearn: Inquiry-Based Learning

<http://www.youthlearn.org/learning/approach/inquiry.asp>

Institute for Inquiry: hands-on activities

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/activities/index.html>

How to Develop an Inquiry-Based Project

<http://www.youthlearn.org/learning/activities/howto.asp>

George Lucas Foundation: Project-based Learning

<http://www.glef.org/PBL/index.html>

National Science Foundation monograph about inquiry-based learning

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2000/nsf99148/>

Annenberg: frequently asked questions about inquiry-based learning

<http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/inquiry/faq.html>

28 questions that teachers can use to promote the inquiry process.

<http://tlc.ousd.k12.ca.us/~acody/inquiryquery.html>

Use of technology such as Inspiration mapping to foster inquiry

<http://www.biopoint.com/inquiry/ibr.html>

To foster inquiry-based learning, teachers employ what is known as “problem-based,” “case-based,” or “scenario-based”approaches to create situations in which students are faced with problems or difficulties they need to address and formulation alternative solutions. Randel Kindley, in “Scenario-Based E-Learning: A Step Beyond Traditional E-Learning” <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/may2002/kindley.html> argues that students are most likely to learn when placed in situations:

Scenario-based learning is similar to the experiential model of learning. The adherents of experiential learning are fairly adamant about how people learn. Learning seldom takes place by rote. Learning occurs because we immerse ourselves in a situation in which we're forced to perform. We get feedback from our environment and adjust our behavior. We do this automatically and with such frequency in a compressed timeframe that we hardly notice we're going through a learning process. Indeed, we may not even be able to recite particular principles or describe how and why we engaged in a specific behavior. Yet, we're still able to replicate that behavior with increasing skill as we practice. If we were to ask Michael Jordan to map out the actions that describe his drive, reverse, and back-handed layup, he would probably look at us dumbfounded and say, "I just do it."

On advantage of Web-based learning is that students can participate in complex simulations such as *Sim City 3000*, *Populous*, or *Alpha Centauri* to define problems or issues associated with housing, transportation, shopping, business, schooling, waste disposal, day care, etc., in developing communication. For example, in *Sim City 3000*, if players do not zone for incinerators or landfills, the city piles up with trash.

It is also important that these situations contain complex, “ill-structured” problems that do not lend themselves to easy solutions. In his book, *Designing World Class E-Learning*, Roger Shank argues that learning is most likely to occur when people have to face and deal with problems or issues. It is through learning how to address and cope with problems that people develop new ways of thinking or behaving. He therefore argues that Web-based learning courses based on cases need to include complex problems, conflicts, or dilemmas.

Schank, R. (1998). *Inside multi-media case based instruction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=24435189>

This suggests the value of focusing in on complex issues or dilemmas portrayed in literature or media texts, as well as issues or dilemmas associated with use of any media texts, for issue, the issue of whether violent or sexist computer games should be censored.

One useful online Webquest-type tool for creating inquiry-based activities and lessons is the WISE instructional development site

<http://wise.berkeley.edu>

This site, developed by the National Science Foundation initially for use in science education, builds in specific question-asking, reflection, and journal-writing prompts and activities. For example, certain screens pop up that ask students to write in their journals about the questions or issues they are studying. Teachers can use this tool to construct highly interactive activities that actively engage students in their learning.

Sites on problem-based learning;

Problem-based learning: Maastricht University

<http://www.unimaas.nl/pbl/>

The Learning Tree: Problem-based learning

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/clrit/learningtree/Ltree.html>

Center for Educational Technologies

<http://www.cotf.edu/ete/teacher/teacherout.html>

## *Genres*. You may also organize your unit around studying a particular genre—short story, novel, ballad, rap, drama, memoir, biography, poetry, film noir, or hybrid combinations or mixtures of genres evident in a multi-genre approach to writing instruction (Romano, 2000). As was noted in Module 7 on film and television genres, one advantage of a genre approach is that students learn a larger literacy practice of making generalizations about similarities between different texts based on certain genre features. For example, have read a number of different autobiographical essays, students may then identify similar features common to those essays. One disadvantage of a genre approach is that is leads readily into pigeonholing or categorizing texts as representing certain genre features without critically analyzing those texts. Moreover, such reductionist genre approaches can also reify a formalist approach to English instruction—overemphasizing the study of formal structures without examining other aspects of texts. For example, it may be assumed that all short stories have “rising action,” “conflict,” and “resolution,” when in fact there are many stories that do not follow that formal structure.

In organizing genre units, you need to work deductively to provide certain frameworks or concepts about genre features, while, at the same time, allowing students to make their own inductive connections between texts. You may also organize a unit around producing or writing certain genres, integrating reading and writing instruction. Students need to have opportunities to create their own genre texts based on their study of genre. For example, after studying the genre of rap, they create their own raps. In studying texts, students may then focus on techniques being employed with an eye towards producing such texts. In writing texts, they then draw on their genre knowledge in providing feedback to each other’s texts.

Google: literary genre sites

<http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Literature/Genres/>

Fantasy/science fiction literature

<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/english/clf/index.html>

<http://www.sfwa.org>

<http://www.sff.net/people/Amy.Sheldon/listcont.htm>

<http://www.hycyber.com/HFindex.html>

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

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v28n2/bucher.html>

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~felluga/sf/pop/sf.html>

Historical fiction

<http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~soon/histfiction/>

<http://home.midsouth.rr.com/ochsner/>

Romance

<http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Literature/Genres/Romance/Authors/>

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

<http://www.rna-uk.org/site.html>

Mystery

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

<http://www.sldirectory.com/mystery.html>

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

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

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

<http://themysteryreader.com/>

<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/Monstrosity/index.html>

Autobiography

<http://www.educationplanet.com/search/Teacher_Resources/Thematic_Units/Literature/Autobiography>

Poetry resources/online poems

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

<http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/>

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/a/amverse/>

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

<http://www.lit.kobe-u.ac.jp/~hishika/20c_poet.htm>

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/2001/3/>

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

<http://teenwriting.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://teacher2b.com/creative/poetry.htm>

<http://www.onlinepoetryclassroom.org/how/LessonPlans.cfm?prmPageID=8>

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

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

Drama resources

<http://www.unexpectedproductions.org/new/playbook/playbook.html>

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

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/drama.html>

<http://www.thevirtualdramastudio.co.uk/vds2.htm>

<http://www3.sk.sympatico.ca/erachi/>

<http://members.iinet.net.au/~kimbo2/lessons/index.htm>

<http://newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/theatre.html>

*Historical periods or cultural movements*. You may also create units based on certain historical periods or cultural movements, for example, the portrayal of World War II in films, the rise of Hip-Hop culture in music, or the Harlem Renaissance in American literature, music, and art. In studying these periods, you can incorporate background historical events or cultural attitudes shaping texts, as well as similarities between literature, art, music, and popular media. One disadvantage is that it may simply become matter of covering a lot of historical information or facts about features of the period without fostering critical response to the literature itself.

Jack Lynch: lots of resources for teaching American literature

<http://newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/american.html>

Voices of the Shuttle: American Literature (resources for specific authors)

<http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2739>

University of Colorado: lot of links to American/British/World literature

<http://www.colorado.edu/English/mispag/Web_Pages/specific.html#anchor48360>

Literary Movements in American literature

<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/enl311/litfram.html>

Google: British literature sites

<http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Literature/World_Literature/British/>

Georgia Department of Education: American literature: sequenced lesson plans

<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/seqlps/sudisplay.asp?SUID=200>

History of American literature: organized by periods

<http://www.bibliomania.com/2/3/270/frameset.html>

<http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/table.html>

Annenberg video series: American Passages

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series164.html>

University of Michigan: The Making of America

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp/>

Georgetown University: Electronic Archives for teaching American literature

<http://www.georgetown.edu/tamlit/tamlit-home.html>

A Hypertext of American History

<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/>

Webquest: American history and literature

<http://www-cchs.ccsd.k12.wy.us/cchs_web/jiliff/home/main.html>

Webquests: Elizabethan England

<http://www.loudoun.k12.va.us/schools/lchs/english/lewis/elizabethan/>

<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/wjhs/mediactr/englishpathfinder/romeo/>

<http://www.it.css.sd63.bc.ca/lrc/BElizabethanEngland1.htm>

<http://www.fairfield.k12.ct.us/fairfieldhs/cfairfieldhs31/>

<http://www.ksd140.org/grissom/elizabethan.html>

<http://www.cchs.ccsd.k12.co.us/cchs_resources/class_projects/Webquest%20for%209th/Elizabethanindex.html>

<http://www.standrews.austin.tx.us/library/Shakespeare10th.htm>

Life in Elizabethan England

<http://renaissance.dm.net/compendium/home.html>

Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet (award-winning site)

<http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/>

The Romantics

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/>

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/rchs/index.html>

Webquests: The Puritan period (background for *The Crucible,* Hawthorne’s stories, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond,* etc.)

<http://www.esc20.k12.tx.us/etprojects/formats/webquests/spring2001/jay/amlitwq/default.html>

<http://www.katy.isd.tenet.edu/pathways/resources/la/witch8/whatme.htm>

<http://www.bestschools.org/hs/webquest/crucible.htm>

<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/plegal/tips/t2prod/asconawq.html>

<http://www.elmoreco.com/technology/Coordinators/webquests/americanexperience/webquest%20-%20american%20experience.htm>

<http://www.lakelandschools.org/wphs/Denella/TheCrucible.htm>

<http://www.teachnet-lab.org/MBHS/Scragg/Crucible/lessons.html>

<http://tiger.towson.edu/users/pgalla3/WitchWebquest.html>

<http://www.cesa8.k12.wi.us/teares/it/webquests/crucible/index.html>

Resources for teaching *The Crucible*

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/miller.html>

Threads of Change in 19th Century America

<http://seed210.tripod.com/task.htm>

Webquest: 19th Century American Women Writers

<http://www.student.uncwil.edu:8000/~shb9988/webquest/webquest.html>

Resources: 20th Century British literature

<http://newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/20th.html>

Webquests: The Roaring ‘20s (background for books by Fitzgerald, Hemingway, etc.)

<http://webquests.esu7.org/wq03/>

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/webtheroarch.html>

<http://www.natick.k12.ma.us/schools/nhs/departments/english/hagemeister/fitz_webquest/Fitzgerald.html>

<http://www.esc20.k12.tx.us/etprojects/formats/webquests/friends/barbara/1920/default.html>

<http://www.ccsdschools.com/instructionaltechnology/webpages/WebQuests/jims/hvalentine/index.html>

<http://www.ccsdschools.com/instructionaltechnology/webpages/WebQuests/jbe03/jfleming/index.html>

Webquests: The Harlem Renaissance

<http://www.kn.sbc.com/wired/fil/pages/webaraisinka.html>

<http://www.plainfield.k12.in.us/hschool/webq/webq71/>

<http://www.manteno.k12.il.us/webquest/high/LanguageArts/HarlemRenaissance/Harlem%20Renaissance.htm>

<http://www.web-and-flow.com/members/rachey/harlemwriters/webquest.htm>

<http://staff.gpschools.org/arok/frauweb/WebQuesthtml.htm>

<http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/schools/gunston/people/teams/core/navigate/harlem/>

<http://eprentice.sdsu.edu/J03CR/amunski/webquest/harlem.html>

Resources on The Harlem Renaissance

<http://www.42explore2.com/harlem.htm>

Webquest: To Kill a Mockingbird: Growing up in the 1930s

<http://www.slc.k12.ut.us/webweavers/jillc/mbird.html>

Post World War II American literature

<http://english.berkeley.edu/Postwar/default.html>

Webquests: The Beat Genreation

<http://www.fb10.uni-bremen.de/anglistik/kerkhoff/beatgeneration/BG-TheCourse.htm>

<http://coe.nevada.edu/sconti/1stpage.html>

Resources: The Beats

<http://www.charm.net/~brooklyn/LitKicks.html>

<http://www.levity.com/corduroy/index.htm>

The Sixties Project

<http://lists.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

Women’s literature

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

<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/newsite/index.htm>

Resources: African-American literature

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/as/Literature/amlit.black.html>

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/afroonline.htm>

<http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers_aa19/>

<http://www.georgetown.edu/tamlit/teaching/af-am_syl.html>

Resources: Native-American literature

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

<http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/educators/lesson1.html>

<http://www.georgetown.edu/tamlit/essays/native_am.html>

Teaching Asian-American literature

<http://www.georgetown.edu/tamlit/essays/asian_am.html>

Teaching Chicano literature

<http://www.georgetown.edu/tamlit/essays/chicano.html>

World literature in English

<http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/anglophone/index.html>

Postcolonial literature

<http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg/landow/post/index.html>

<http://www.wmich.edu/dialogues/sitepages/home.html>

# Techniques for Developing Units

## 

## *Initial interest rousers*. In designing units, you need to begin with an interest rouser activity that hooks students into the topic, issue, theme, genre, etc. By initially engaging them with texts, material, or phenomena you will be studying, you are providing them with an experience that may enhance their interest and lead them to perceive the value or worth of the unit. For example, in doing a poetry unit, rather than beginning with a discussion of “what is poetry,” students may begin by bringing in and sharing favorite poems.

*Connecting to students’ cultural background*. In planning a unit, you also need to consider your students’ cultural background experiences and perspectives. In doing so, you are providing students will what Carol Lee (2001) describes as “cultural modeling” of connections between the students’ cultural background and what they are learning. In working with African American students, Lee builds on their background knowledge of the use of symbolic language in hip-hop culture to help them interpret symbolic language in literary texts. This suggests that you not only need to be aware of your students’ cultural background, but you also need to devise methods of making links between that background and the material in a unit.

Applying critical approaches. You may also want to have students learn to apply the difference critical approaches discussed in Module 4: discourse analysis; semiotic; archetypal; rhetorical; gender, class, race analysis; poststructuralist/postcolonial approaches. In applying these approaches, it is important that you model their application with specific texts, as well as provide students with ample opportunity to practice applying them to texts.

*Providing variety*. In planning your unit, you also want to include a variety of different types of experiences in order to avoid redundancy and repetition. You can create variety by incorporating a range of different modes discussed in the next chapter: drama, videos/DVD’s, different forms of discussion, art work, creative writing, etc. You may also build in choices between these different modes; again, students are more likely to be motivated to participate when they are given options.

*Sequencing activities*. It is important to sequence activities so that each builds on the next in some logical manner. In deciding on how to sequence events, you’re thinking about the need for “first things first”—what do students need to do to prepare them for an event. For example, you could start a classroom with a large-group discussion of a story. However, you may find that many students do not contribute to the discussion or have little to say about the poem. Adopting an alternative “first-things-first” approach, you back up and consider those events that would better prepare students for a large-group discussion. That might include an initial freewrite about their responses to the story followed by sharing their freewrites with each other in small groups. Through this writing and discussion, students are articulating and extending their responses. Then, when they are in the large-group discussion, they can draw on their writing or discussion, resulting in the greater likelihood that they may contribute to the discussion.

*Integrating writing*. In your activities, it if important to integrate writing different types of informal writing activities—freewriting, listing, jotting, journal-entries, mapping, etc., to help students formulate their responses to media texts and ideas in a spontaneous, informal manner. Jim Burke’s “school tools”

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/Tools/notemaking.html>

includes various informal writing tools for fostering student thinking about texts. And, having students share their writing on-line, as noted in Module 1, gives them a sense of audience and purpose for formulating their ideas. This informal writing can then serve as the basis for creating more formal final essay reports at the end of a unit as well as material for inclusion in a portfolio (see discussion of portfolios below).

*Producing texts*. As was discussed in Module 3, it is also important that students be continually their own video, multi-media, or hypermedia texts as a means of helping them understand media texts. Students are also more likely to be engaged in a unit when they can display their creative productions to others. For example, in a unit on the influence of the media on sports, students could create their own multi-media production that includes clips of television and radio broadcasts, sports talk shows, sports promotions, and news coverage of sports, clips that serve to portray underlying connections between these media related to economic and cultural forces shaping sports.

In selecting media texts that are copyrighted, you and your students need to follow the guidelines associated with “fair use” of media texts for educational, non-commercial, classroom use:

For information from PBS about Fair Use Guidelines for Off-Air Recording of Broadcast Programming for Educational Purposes

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/copyright/copyright_fairuse.shtm>

For information about Extended Taping Rights of PBS programs

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/copyright/copyright_trights.shtm>

For information about teachers’ or students’ multimedia projects employing copyrighted material

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/copyright/copyright_ed_multi.shtm>

*Final projects*. You should also include a culminating final project that serves to draw together the different, disparate elements of the unit. This final project should provide students with an opportunity to extend approaches and ideas from the unit to create their own interpretations of texts. For example, in a unit on gender and power, students could analyze the portrayal or representations of gender roles in texts not read in the unit. Again, providing choices for different projects enhances motivation to complete their chosen project. And, having students produce a presentational product to share with others adds some incentive to doing projects.

Further resources for unit development:

North Central Regional Education Lab: On-line lesson-plan development

<http://www.ncrtec.org/tl/lp/>

Teacher Universe lesson-plan developer

<http://www.teacheruniverse.com/tools/lessonplanner.html>

Literature units organized by texts

<http://english.unitecnology.ac.nz/resources/secondary_texts/home.php>

<http://www.richmond.k12.va.us/readamillion/LITERATURE/lindas_links_to_literature.htm>

General collections of literature units/activities/courses

<http://www.teachtheteachers.org/projects/AMoore/GatsbyQuest/wqmain.html>

<http://www.colorado.edu/English/amlit/>

<http://www.colorado.edu/English/mispag/Web_Pages/specific.html#anchor48360>

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

<http://vms.cc.wmich.edu/~careywebb/>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/cyberguide.html>

<http://www.educ.ucalgary.ca/litindex/>

<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/syllabi.html>

<http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/cy912.html>

<http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-3363.html>

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/subject_categories_all.asp>

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson_index.asp>

**Evaluation and Assessment of Learning**

In evaluating student work in units, it is important that you consider the use of performance or “authentic” assessment as a means of evaluating students’ written responses, project work, or productions.

Glenn Brown and Michelle Craig, Assessment of authentic learning

<http://www.coe.missouri.edu/~vlib/glenn.michelle's.stuff/GLEN3MIC.HTM>

George Lucas Foundation: Assessment

<http://www.glef.org/Assessment/index.html>

George Lucas Foundation: click on video for Assessing Project-Based Work

<http://www.glef.org/Assessment/resources.html>

The ERIC website for assessment and evaluation

<http://ericae.net/>

Coalition for Essential Schools: material on authentic assessment

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

*Formulating criteria and rubrics*. To evaluate student performance, you need to formulate specific criteria and rubrics consistent with your goals (see Module 2). For example, if you wanted to evaluate students’ analysis of a literary adaptation, you may want to develop criteria associated with their ability to critically examine the film adaptation relative to the original text. Chris Worsnop (2000) developed a set of criteria for evaluating students’ depth of perception or critical insight involved in responding to feature films:

Levels of Insight

\* Individuals reveal their level of insight into media by their reactions.

\* Identification with the plot/story (fabula)

\* Identification with the character/star (persona)

\* Identification with the author (creator)

\* Adopting a critical stance (adjudicator)

Plot (Fabula)

\* Understanding of the story, its development and syntax

\* Ability to recognize universal “mythical” elements

Character (Persona)

\* Understanding of characterization

\* Understanding complexity of performance and psychology

\* Understanding interplay between character and other elements in the film

\* Ability to connect characters to universals, stereotypes, other characters in other works

Author (Creator)

\* Detection of concrete and conceptual work of the author (editing, script, composition, sound, camera placement, camera movement, ideology, etc.)

\* Detection of interaction of various elements of author's skill

\* Ability to connect to other work of same author

Synthesis (Adjudicator)

\* Seeing the work as an integrated whole

\* Identifying excellence, gaps, excesses, deficiencies

\* Use of primary and secondary sources as evidence

\* Ability to predict based on multiple insights of the oeuvre

Criteria such as these could then be transformed into specific rubrics related to specifying different levels in a students’ perception and insight, levels reflecting, for example, “exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” and “needs work.” On-line rubric templates such as Rubistar

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/> can be used to devise these rubrics.

University of Northern Iowa Professional Development: Lots of rubrics for different types of work

<http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/profdev/rubrics.shtml>

Jim Burke’s rubrics for journals, projects, portfolios, from his *EnglishCompanion*.com site

<http://www.englishcompanion.com/assignments/assessment/rubrics.html>

Journal rubric

<http://home.cfl.rr.com/eghsap/AP%20Literature.html#essay%20scoring%20rubric>

Rubric for video production

<http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/profdev/videorubric.html>

Mertler, Craig A. (2001). Designing scoring rubrics for your classroom. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7(25)

<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=25>

Moskal, Barbara M. (2000). Scoring rubrics: what, when and how?. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7(3)

<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=3>

Chicago Public Schools: Creating a Rubric from Scratch:

<http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_and_Rubrics/Create_Rubric/create_rubric.html>

*Creating portfolios*. One way of integrating the assessment of student work in a unit or course is by having students create a portfolio, or collection of work, which showcases their growth, knowledge, and understanding of their work in the unit or course. One is a working or process portfolio which is intended to help students keep track of materials and assignments as they move through literary experiences. The product or show portfolio is a more formal collection of work chosen by the student with an introduction written by the student explaining his or her growth.

Central to portfolios is student reflection on their work. Students could reflect on what they want to learn in a unit and course based on the goals you provide them. They could then reflect on what they are learning and whether they are achieving their goals. They could also reflect on difficulties and challenges in their learning. It is also important that you encourage them to reflect honestly and candidly. One problem with a lot of portfolio reflection is that students engage in reflection that “sounds good,” but doesn’t entail critical self-assessment.

*E-portfolios*. Students could also create e-portfolios based on digital versions of their texts, images, and/or video clips, something that would work well in a media studies course. Given the hypertext nature of digital texts, students could construct links between their different texts that display their reflections on connections between their work.

Because students may be participating in on-line chats as a part of a media studies course, they could also include examples of their own or others’ chat participation and reflections on what they learned through their chat exchanges as well as changes in the nature and quality of their participation over time. Alice Trupe (2003) provides the following suggestions for students to include in a course organized around on-line, chat, or MOO interactions:

\* One text might be comprised of a selection of important chunks of text from a single computer conference or MOO session, with an accompanying short analytical text explaining the value these excerpts had for the writer. For example, the student might choose a thread that showed how her thinking on a topic evolved through discussion with one or more of her peers.

\* A similar text might be comprised of a selection of conference or listserv posts that showed the evolution of a student's thinking over several weeks. Or the student might choose to show several short texts that demonstrated her evolving skills as a writer.

\* Another text I would like to see in a portfolio is a weaving together of several students' conference or email texts to make a particular point, a document that might also include quotation from print texts or Web documents. This text might be produced by a single writer or by a collaborative writing group.

\* At least one text in the portfolio would include the use of desktop publishing techniques to convey meaning. This might be a word-processed report or newsletter.

\* I would, further, like to see a good one-page evaluation of information found on a Web page, authored singly or collaboratively, that would demonstrate students' ability to practice research skills in electronic environments.

\* Paired texts would include a traditional essay or research paper plus a Web page on the same topic, ideally with a short reflective paper that analyzes how writing for the Web changes the writing requirements of presenting the argument or information.

\* I would like to see an outline of the same paper prepared with presentation software for oral delivery.

\* Another text I would like to see is record of one or more MOO sessions that could illustrate MOO literacy, involving commands for successfully navigating the environment or building in it, interacting with others, and manipulating virtual objects (incorporating students’ rooms, fictional identities, bots, ASCII art, etc.).

In evaluating e-portfolios that are created in a different digital mode that traditional essay writing and that are based on hypertext links, you need to consider employing criteria that are consistent with creating digital texts. As noted in the discussion of judging web sites, effective writing in a digital mode requires the writer to go beyond simply presenting information to engage an audience in a highly interactive manner, including the use of visual images and hypertext links. At the same time, writers also need to be able to provide audiences with a clear sense of direction or road map as to how to navigate through their e-portfolio, as well as the rhetorical effectiveness in their use of visual illustrations of text material (Herrmann, 1991; Wilferth, 2003).

For more information on e-portfolios:

Helen Barrett, The Electronic Portfolio Development Process

<http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios.html>

American Association of Higher Educatoin: Electronic Portflioes

<http://webcenter1.aahe.org/electronicportfolios/index.html>

Use of e-portolios in teacher education

<http://www.pt3.org/stories/eportfolio.html>

NCATE: 400 students’ eportfolios

<http://www.education.eku.edu/coe_ncate/eportfolios.htm>

For further reading on evaluation:

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composition.*Kairos 7*(3)

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Ideas for integrating media into English/literature instruction developed by students in CI5472, Spring, 2004

Amanda Furth

Create an iMovie which visually interprets a poem.

Your two-minute movie should have a minimum of

a) eight different images

b) one image with an effect

c) one transition

d) one audio effect

e) all the text of a ten-line poem

f) works cited

g) quality & depth of thought in visual interpretation.

Amy Gustafson and Kathy Connors

We feel that in teaching literature there are many movies that you can choose that will enhance the students learning of literature while also providing a look into an alternate text. After reading *To Kill A Mockingbird*, for example, you do not need to watch the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird* to enhance students' understanding of the book. You could instead watch a movie that parallels the story and have the students pick out these parallels and also depict what themes, ideas, etc. were contrasting between the book and the movie.

To make things more concrete, here is an example. While doing a unit on Ayn Rand's *Anthem*, you could supplement the text with the movie *Antz*. Then the students quickly see the connections between texts and the differences.

Tammy McCartney and Kimberly Sy

Current educational theory emphasizes cross-curricular connections as beneficial to student learning. A language arts teacher could pair with say, a social studies teacher and integrate their units. For example, if the class were studying World War II, the students could learn the factual basis of the time period in history class. In the English classroom, the students could look at films that depict different perspectives on the time period such as *Come See the Paradise* (Japanese Internment Camp), *Europa, Europa* (Jewish/German experience) and even the blockbuster *Pearl Harbor* (mythic American experience). Students could then discuss and be involved in activities that analyze the many ways the war was perceived from the different film perspectives.

Reid Westrem

In thinking about the film/literature activity, I was reminded of a parallel topic: the relationship between film and history. There are several interesting books that deal with this subject:

*The Columbia Companion to American History on Film*

*Revisioning History*

*Reel History*

*Visions of the Past*

*History Goes to the Movies*

*Reel v. Real*

*History by Hollywood*

*Past Imperfect*

Some books that might be taught in an English class, such as T*he Grapes of Wrath*, are probably discussed in the titles above.

Anyway, on the teaching activity: Jane Austen meets Hollywood

The idea of comparing *Emma* and *Clueless* is, of course, not at all original, and the writing activity I’m listing would follow a fairly standard set of lessons establishing comprehension of the two works.

Materials:

*Emma* (1816) novel by Jane Austen: make copies of opening pages

*Emma* (1996), film by Douglas McGrath starring Gwyneth Paltrow

*Clueless* (1995), film by Amy Heckerling starring Alicia Silverstone

Activity:

1. Read the opening paragraphs from Jane Austen’s *Emma*. Underline words you don’t know.

2. In the margins, briefly paraphrase the type of information the author gives us. Setting? Character development? For whom? Bracket each separate topic.

3. Now make a general statement about the author’s tone (attitude, mood, feeling) toward the characters involved.

4. On a separate sheet of paper, imitate Jane Austen and write the opening page of *Clueless*, the novel (approx. 300 words). Provide the same type of information, tone and diction (choice of words); you may, however, paraphrase information.

5. In follow-up discussion, examine the choices writers made and the rationales they give for their choices.

Dixie Boschee and Anne Holgrem

While reading Shakespeare’s play, *Romeo and Juliet*, I would show the same scene in two different film clips. For example, I would show 1.5 where Romeo first spies Juliet in Franco Zeffirelli’s 1968 film and Baz Luhrmann’s 1996 version.

1. Before playing the first film’s scene, I would prompt the students with the following questions also written on the board/overhead):

--What types of emotions are evoked in this clip?

--Why do you think you feel this way? (e.g., if you are sad, was it the acting or have you had an experience that connected in some way to what you saw?)

2. Students will take 5 minutes to write their thoughts. I will play the second film clip of the same scene and ask students to respond to the same set of questions.

3. Once they have finished their thoughts, I will play both clips again and ask them to note if their responses changed in either clip. If so why did they think that happened?

4. Students will compare their experiences and write which film clip best captured the play’s scene as read in class. They will then pair with another student and share their findings for a minute. .

5. We will come back together as a class and discuss which was more effective and why they felt that way.

We will continue reading or move on to another film clip.

Daniel Gough and Adam Banse

Adam and I discussed using film to compliment a reading of *A Separate Peace*. There is no worthwhile version of this novel in film, so it is a chance for students to learn about cinematography and actually film some meaningful scenes from the novel themselves. Lessons would involve analyzing the front cover of the novel to understand how meaning is conveyed visually, sketching scenes in order to communicate the mood, power, theme, etc. of that scene, analyzing film clips to understand cinematic techniques, bringing in their own clips, storyboarding scenes for their own productions and finally filming and making an iMovie. A possible movie that could be used to accompany that unit would be *Dead Poet's Society* which parallels the themes of coming of age in a private school environment.

Lindsay Kroog

During my Holocaust unit I hope to integrate film. To do this, one of my ideas is to integrate it through a web quest. This will be my final project for this class, but I think that if I can send students on a search that leads them to view some clips of survivors and other such media it will help with their learning. I do not think that showing a whole movie to my 7th graders would be advantageous. Depending on the movie, it will be overwhelming and not age-appropriate. Showing clips in short amounts through the internet would be more beneficial I think.

Louise Covert and Rebecca Robertson

When we study advertising, we look for fallacies in TV ads. With 8th and 9th graders, they learn all the different fallacies, and then we watched commercials, and an episode of 60 Minutes, and the kids identify the fallacies that they found within the commercials or show. To extend this assignment into film study, we could select a film that reflects popular culture, and have the students look for fallacies that they see in the fictional story.

Talk about what aspects of certain cultures or social perspectives these fallacies reinforce or discount. Students could talk or write about these fallacies in relation to their own perspectives on society and the world of media and film.

Scott Devens

I am thinking about designing a unit centering around the concept of what it means to be an expert in something (anything!) and using film study as a basis for teaching the concept. In thinking of an "initial interest rouser", about all I can think of is simply posing the question: what is an expert and then having students do a free-writing followed by share. Then, I could share my own experiences with becoming an "expert" at something; then, ask students who are willing to share, what are they expert at, if anything? Challenge is for everyone to experience the feeling of being an expert at least once in their young life.

Thinking of designing this inquiry-based unit around film study and history of film. Would start by kind of modeling the process of becoming an expert by investigating the film(s), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, which was made in 1956, 1978 and again in 1993. Having students use web resources such as filmsites, would encourage them to keep digging (nowadays: linking) until they could answer just about anything about the film. Students would keep a portfolio of research. Perhaps each student’s research could culminate in a session where other students interview them to decide if they really are an expert. The *Body Snatchers* flicks are a good place to start because they have some historical meaning (some thought allegory to Communism) and the students would find the genre interesting. Then the real, independent inquiry begins as students work with partners or on own to research ANY film they are interested in to become an expert about it. Their final project could be a paper or review. They could even post some of their comments on the Imdb website.

Jennifer Larson

View the BBC version of *The Tempest, Forbidden Plane*t, and the Molly Ringwald version of *The Tempest* (or only a particular scene). Have students discuss the way each was presented and its merits and detriments. Next, students will in pairs write a proposal (treatment, I think it is) of how they envision the Tempest being presented, and what mood or theme their presentation will highlight. Perhaps they could storyboard a scene as part of their treatment. They will present this to the class and sell their idea.

Jessie Dockter and Rachel Godlewski

We like the idea of showing films or clips of films with themes related to the literature being read in class. One idea is to take a book like *The House on Mango Street*, and to discuss gender roles and expectations in the story. Then have students choose any film on their own to watch and analyze for the same issues. Students could determine what messages the movie gave concerning the roles of women or men in society. You could have them choose to focus on either men or women, but probably not both. Then, students could think and write critically about films that they normally just enjoyed for entertainment value.

There are other possible film and book connections to consider as well: *Cry Freedom* could be paired with *Waiting for the Rain* which is about apartheid in South Africa and about the relationship between two young boys, one white and one black. You could discuss the power dynamics and friendships in both stories. Also, *Life is Beautiful* could be used in connection with reading the memoir Night.

Beth O'Hara

At Hastings High School in the fall, I will be teaching two sections of English 10, and one of books we will be reading is *Night* by Elie Wiesel, the story of teenaged Elie's experiences in Auschwitz and Birkenau. In tandem with this novel, we will look at the film *Life is Beautiful*, starring Roberto Benigni. I think it will be interesting to see these different perspectives on that concentration camp experience -- one from a father's perspective as he tries to protect his young son, the other from the perspective of a son as he struggles to save himself and his faith, in his father and in his God. Pairing these two texts also will shed some light on the seeming discordance between humor and life in a concentration camp.

Katrina Thomson and Jennie Viland

*Fahrenheit 451* is a great book to talk about film/media because the central idea of the book itself is the role of media in modern life and how the oversimplification of information and the "dumbing down" of society results in a society that ends up giving up on reading altogether. With my students at Hopkins we have been making connections between our society and the authoritarian one depicted in *Fahrenheit*, and how elements of our society are frighteningly similar to the Bradbury's futuristic one, from the prevalence of constant CD player/headphones syndrome to reality TV shows. The students have been looking at media ownership (we even used the same circle/diagram handout Rick passed out tonight) and TV addiction and how this kind of behavior could be the precursors to Bradbury-like self-censorship in the not-too-distant future.

The film of *Fahrenheit 451* is an absolute horror - very dated and really a "B movie", but, nonetheless, it can be used effectively in the classroom. Our idea would be to view parts of the film, if not the whole thing, and have kids chart the differences between the novel and movie. There are numerous glaring differences between the two, from the way that the firemen and Mildred are depicted to the casting of key roles like Mildred, Montag and Clarisse. After viewing the film, students would then take over as directors of a more modern interpretation, including casting the roles using modern actors and identifying ways that they would change how the society is depicted.

As a major writing piece in this unit, my students also created the front page of a newspaper for Fahrenheit - they had to write three stories relating to the novel - one a straight news piece, one a "feature" article on a main character, and one an editorial about an issue or theme from the plot. Students really got engaged with this project and produced some pretty impressive products.

Jeffrey Wendelberger

One film adaptation I frequently use is the movie version of the book, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. I love this book and most students I read it with also love it. But the last few years I have worked with struggling readers and I find that they have difficulty really connecting to the book. There are a lot of subtle scenes in the book and some readers can get lost during these parts. Especially with struggling readers I think they have trouble making visualizations of the setting of this story. It takes place in the rural south during the 1930’s and I think struggling readers get lost when they cannot connect to this time and place. The movie version of this book does an excellent job of portraying the poverty and rural setting of this time. Using Rachel Malchow’s taxonomy, this version of the book would be classified as a faithful analogy. For the past few years when I have taught this book, I have always shown the first third of the film, then read the first half of the book, then shown the second third of the film, then finished the book and finally finished the movie. I normally do it like this because I think the book and the movie do parts of the story well and other parts not so well.

Erin Warren and Erin Grahmann

The activity involves switching-up on the status quo. Show the movie version of a book FIRST. This plan worked well for me when I had a classroom full of struggling readers once a few years ago. We watched the Disney version of *Never Cry Wolf* before reading Farley Mowat's book aloud in class. For those readers who have difficulty forming visuals while reading, problem alleviated (to some degree). I realize this isn't a revolutionary concept, but I was actually able to finish an entire book with students who had a hard time finishing anything. I attribute some of that success to hooking them with the movie first.