

# Honors Film as Literature Syllabus

Fall 2025

Teacher: Mr. Coomes  
Room: 120

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## Class Description

In this class, we will begin to view film not only as entertainment, but as literature collaboratively created with a purpose. Essentially, instead of reading a novel or short story, we will be "reading" films. We will think, discuss, and write analytically about characters, narration, point of view, setting, themes, plot, symbolism, genres, actors, directors, soundtracks, and technical aspects of film. Assignments will include, but are not limited to, film reviews, analytical essays/papers, class discussions and debates, and presentations. Though they will not be a major focus of the course, film history and theory will also be discussed.

## Materials Needed

These should be obtained as soon as possible and brought to class daily:

- \* earbuds or headphones (if absent)
- \* school-issued or personal laptop
- \* pen (blue or black ink) or pencil
- \* loose leaf paper
- \* notebook, folder, or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " binder for handouts & notes
- \* an open mind to film and the ideas that will be discussed in the classroom throughout the semester

## Units of Study

### **1<sup>st</sup> Nine Weeks**

Unit 1: *Coming of Age (Now & Then, The Cure, The Way Way Back)*

Unit 2: *Appearance vs. Reality (Singin' in the Rain, Psycho, Hitchcock, The Truman Show)*

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Nine Weeks**

Unit 3: *The Documentary (Life Animated, Gasland, Street Fight)*

Unit 4: *War (U-571, Life is Beautiful, The Imitation Game, Joyeux Noël)*

Final Exam

## Grades

Major Grades (major unit assignments, tests): 50%

Daily Grades (homework, class assignments): 50%

This class will use the school's grading system listed in the Student Handbook.

A = 100-90    B = 89-80    C = 79-70    D = 69-60    F = 69-0

## Absences, Tardies, Late Work

Students will be expected to follow the tardy, absent, and late work policies outlined in the student handbook as set forth by Rutherford County Schools and Central Magnet School. If a student has prior knowledge that he/she will be tardy to class due to being detained by another teacher or administrator, that student must present a note from that CMS staff person before being admitted to class. A student will be considered tardy if he/she is not completely inside the classroom when the bell sounds.

- Students will receive a reasonable amount of time to makeup assignments due to absence. As a general rule, reasonable time is defined as 5 days after the student returns to the missed class. Field trips and sport-related absences work the same as a regular absence. See the RCS & CMS grading guidelines for a complete explanation of makeup work for absences.
- Assignments should be turned in on the day due. Any assignments can be turned in late for 90% of the grade up to 48 hours late, 70% of the grade if more than 48 hours up to seven days late, and 50% of the grade if more than seven days (one week) late.

**You are 100% responsible for your make-up work.** I have all handouts and assignments available upon request. I will not chase you down to give you your assignments.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

**Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this class.** If you plagiarize or cheat, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment and will face the consequences listed in the Student Handbook (a zero stays in the gradebook until the assignment is re-done or resubmitted—at that time a student can receive up to 80% of the grade). Plagiarism is a serious matter equivalent to criminal fraud or theft. Assignments will also be submitted to Turnitin.com, a plagiarism checker that also looks for work created by AI. There should be no use of AI on any assignment unless explicitly told it's ok to use that assignment. It is my expectation, and should be yours as well that as a high school student, you can do any assignment in this class without cheating. Please do all your own work; it is the only way you will improve your writing and critical thinking abilities.

### **Classroom Rules:**

1. Be Present
2. Allow Others to Learn
3. Respect and Be Polite to One Another
4. Raise Your Hand to Obtain Permission to Speak or Move from Your Desk
5. Respect School Property & Rules
6. You can have Food, Drinks, Candy, & Gum in class as long as they are not distracting (and you share with Mr. Coomes)

Failure to follow these rules will result in the following: First of all, for any behavior issues, students will first receive a verbal warning from Mr. Coomes to stop the unapproved behavior. Secondly, if the behavior persists, Mr. Coomes will have a one-on-one conference with the student. Thirdly, if the behavior persists, Mr. Coomes will contact the student's parent/guardian. Lastly, if the behavior still persists, Mr. Coomes will write a referral for the student and the appropriate principal will handle the problem. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, Mr. Coomes will go immediately to the fourth step and refer the student to the principal's office.

Students are expected to follow all district and school rules, and infractions of such rules will be handled according to the district or school policy. Violent or extreme disregard for the rules will be handled by the school administration and security.

### **Expectations**

- You should do your assignments for this class.

- If given class time to work on an assignment, you don't socialize until all class work is complete.
- If you have questions about an assignment or need extra help, ask the teacher.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **1. Leaving the Classroom**

The students will remain in their seats until the bell rings. Do NOT line up at the door. The students will then leave the classroom in a respectful, quiet manner.

### **2. Emergency Situations (Tornado, Fire Drill, Etc.)**

In the event of an emergency situation, the students will remain silent at all times. The students will stand up beside their desks and begin walking out the door in single-file rows starting with the row closest to the door.

### **3. Starting/Ending Class**

The students will remain quiet in order to listen to announcements. Class will begin each day with the Song of the Day and will end with a short review of the day's lesson and any homework assignment. Again, the students will remain seated until the bell rings.

### **4. Discussing a Problem or Concern with Teacher**

My door is ALWAYS open! I prefer that students come to me with problems or concerns about class or personal problems at the end of the class period or end of the school day. However, any emergency questions or situations can be addressed immediately if necessary.

### **5. Seating Chart**

We will have a seating chart, which may change periodically as it becomes necessary. You will be expected to stay in your assigned seat at all times. You may choose your seat on the third day of class (and remember it may be permanent).

### **6. Sleeping**

There will be no sleeping in this class. Period. This includes students who lay their heads down or even *seem* to be asleep.

### **7. Cell Phones**

No cell phones from 7:45am - 3:00pm at Central Magnet School. New rule and new Tennessee law.

### **8. No Spoilers!**

If you have seen any of the films that we will be watching this year, do not ruin the ending or ANY part of it for anyone else! Please do not take away a film-watching experience from students in this class or any of my other classes.

In this classroom, you have rights and obligations.

You have a right to...

- make a contribution to an attentive, responsive audience.
- ask questions that clarify and advance your understanding.
- be treated civilly.
- have your ideas discussed.

You are obligated to...

- speak so that everyone can hear.
- speak one at a time.
- listen for understanding.
- agree or disagree (and explain why) in response to other people's ideas.
- critique ideas, NOT people.

By signing this page, I hereby state that I have read the course syllabus, rules, and procedures, and I agree to abide by these for the period of the course. I have also looked at the film titles we will be watching this year and agree to those as well.

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Student's Signature

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Date

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Parent's or Guardian's Signature

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Date

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Teacher's Signature

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Date

Parent/Guardian Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Email Address(es) (Preferred):** \_\_\_\_\_

Any Parent Comments:

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**Note:** Getting syllabus filled out and signed is a grade. It's due next class period.