

FILM AS LITERATURE I/II LITERATURE SYLLABUS

Ms. Cherylyn Mazzaferro
Email: cmazzafe@egusd.net

SHS VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

Sheldon High School envisions a future where every student is empowered with equitable opportunities to become goal-oriented, curious, critical thinkers, and compassionate global citizens. We aspire to develop the skills necessary to cultivate empathy and instill the values and abilities required for our students to become not just employable individuals, but true global citizens in an interconnected world. Embracing the arts, innovative Academies, and Career and Technical Education (CTE), we foster a foundation of self-sufficiency, resilience, self-advocacy, and mindfulness. By forging strong partnerships with our students, families, community, and staff, we aim to create a community of learners who embody these qualities and thrive in the pursuit of knowledge, excellence, and creativity.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This elective course will explore one of the most popular media forms of the last century, and will embody four teaching methods: lecture, discussion, film viewing, and lab work/production. By learning how to watch and listen to films, students will be challenged to think historically, theoretically, and analytically about a wide range of topics related to film specifically, and other forms of cultural expression in general.

We will analyze the elements of cinema including: cinematography, editing, sound, performance, and ideology. We will also examine film as historical artifacts, studying the ways film oftentimes acts as a reflection of society. Specifically, we will study the historical, cultural, scientific, and technological advancements, as well as advancements in the film industry, to analyze the way in which those developments are reflected in film. Additionally, in order to understand film as a collaborative endeavor, students will participate in collaborative learning projects in class. Students will examine the ways cinema must synthesize all of its elements to function as a single work of art.

Finally, students will participate in treatment writing and the planning process of filmmaking in order to demonstrate their understanding of the topics covered in the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to be organized and prepared to learn each class period. Students will complete a variety of reading, writing, listening, and speaking assignments for this course, and will be expected to participate in classroom discussions.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are expected to contribute to a positive learning environment where all students can achieve their greatest potential. To ensure a positive learning environment the following rules must be followed at all times:

| | |
|---|--|
| RESPECT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respectful and mature behavior is expected at all times, including when discussing ideas that are different from your own.• | INTEGRITY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approach yourself, your work, your peers, and your teacher with honesty. |
| TEAMWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a supportive environment for sharing, exploring, and discussing new ideas | EFFORT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete your work to the best of your ability; work to be better every day. |

D.E.I. STATEMENT

The Sheldon High School English Department is committed to creating and maintaining an equitable and inclusive classroom environment where all students feel safe, welcomed, supported and valued. We strive to create classroom environments that are structured to ensure students are able to engage, explore, and learn through critical analysis, reflection, and class discussion. In addition, English classrooms are a place where students will feel challenged by new ideas, analyze the history and contributions of authors over time, and question, discuss and explore complex texts.

At each grade level, we ask students to read, examine, study, dissect and question a variety of texts. The texts, assignments, and discussions that will occur in the classrooms are all designed to guide students toward mastery of the Common Core State Standards and English Language Arts skills. These texts represent a range of historical eras and viewpoints, geographic

locations, ethnicities and cultures. Many of the texts we read will highlight questions about race, human behaviors, culture, social justice, civic responsibility, and community engagement, and will encourage students to consider who they are as individuals and community members. The examination of these texts will also allow students to consider perspectives they bring to the classroom as they interact with the content. This process is what affords students the opportunity to examine and unpack unfamiliar viewpoints and diverse experiences, and allows them to acquire the tools necessary to be critical thinkers and members of a diverse community.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty or cheating of any kind is not tolerated at Sheldon High School. This includes, but is not limited to: Sharing work, copying work, plagiarism from the internet or other students, uncited sources, unapproved collaboration, submitting someone's work on your behalf, messaging during assessments, etc. Cheating of any kind may result in a zero on the assignment(s), and Seniors being placed on the no activities list, missing out on Senior events (including the Graduation ceremony), removal from sports/academies/clubs/on-campus activities, refusal by staff for Collegiate letters of recommendation, and disciplinary consequences from administration. Any use of Artificial Intelligence tools or essay writing services (such as: Grammarly, ChatGPT, Quillbot, etc.) to create work submitted as your own writing will be considered an academic dishonesty violation and may result in scores of 0 on assignments.

Please see the [Academic Integrity Slideshow](#) for further clarification on Academic Honesty,

5-STAR

5-Star will be used for various purposes in class, including bathroom and hall passes.

PHONES/HEADPHONES

Phones and headphones are not allowed to be used in class. Before class each day, students will place their phones in the phone caddy at the back of the room. They will remain there until the end of class, at which time they will be dismissed to collect them. If a student has a health issue or other personal issue related to their phone, they can address this with me individually. In the event of an evacuation or emergency, students will retrieve their phones as we leave the room or go into lockdown. Headphones are to remain in backpacks, unless there is an assignment where students are explicitly instructed to use them.

GRADES AND ABSENCES

Students are responsible for checking their Synergy accounts regularly to monitor their grades and assignments. Only students with excused absences will be able to make up missed work.

In the event of absences, students are required to check the class calendar, gather any missing notes from a classmate, and meet with the teacher during posted tutoring times. Additionally, regular attendance in this class is crucial.

| GRADING SCALE | CATEGORIES |
|--|--|
| 90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 60-69 = D 59% or less = F | Daily Assignments/ Projects/ Presentations* : 60% Midterm/Final Project (including process)* : 40% * Failure to present projects will result in a grade of 0 for the project and presentation. |

GRADES ARE NOT ROUNDED IN THIS CLASS.

SYNERGY

Synergy is a communication tool that allows parents/guardians/students to access student grades, email teachers, etc. Go to <http://shs.egusd.net/> for the school link. Choose ParentVue from the Synergy drop- down menu.

CHROMEBOOKS

Charged chromebooks are required daily materials. Students will not be excused from class to check out a loaner, or to charge their chromebook in class. They will have to do the assignment on paper and then transfer it to their computer at another time.

FILM LIST

Please see the next page for a detailed overview of the films we view and discuss in the course.

FILM AS LITERATURE SYLLABUS AND POSITIVE PERMISSION LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Throughout the Film as Literature Class, we will study a variety of films that have had a significant impact on film history. All films have been selected because they support the goals and objectives of the course as listed in the syllabus.

The [Film as Literature Film/Clip List](#) gives an overview of the films we will view (either in clips or in their entirety) in the class. All titles can be referenced via the website IMDB.com (Internet Movie Database) which has a viewer-edited parental content advisory page that outlines any objectionable material for all films in its database. These pages should be helpful to you if you are at all concerned about any of the films' content. Additionally, you can read about the specifics for each rating on the MPAA website (www.MPAA.org). Films made prior to 1968 received ratings under the old Production Code, known as The Hays Code. In general, films that received an endorsement by the Production Code were deemed suitable for all audiences. The code was so strict that any films meeting the criteria do not contain any objectionable content by today's standards in terms of profanity, violence, or sexual situations.

Careful consideration was given to all of the films listed on the syllabus, with particular attention paid to any rated PG-13 or R. Each of the R rated films have been chosen based on numerous honors by various film societies, in addition to historical and artistic significance. In general, the R-rated films chosen received that rating due to intense themes and/or violence. In class, the issue of violence in media will be addressed to allow students to look critically at such issues with the opportunity to discuss those issues in a safe and positive environment under the leadership of a responsible adult.

Please review the list below of films that will be viewed in their entirety. If there are any films/clips you do not want your student to view, please list them at the bottom of the document where you sign and return.

| FILM | REASON FOR SELECTION | CURRICULAR FOCUS |
|---|---|---|
| <i>The Sandlot</i> (1993) PG | Winner of Young Artist Award for Outstanding Youth Ensemble in a Motion Picture | Basic elements of film and narrative structure; framework for introduction of film literacy devices and basic cinematography |
| <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> (1952) G | Considered one of all time top 10 American films; 1989 Winner of National Film Preservation Board Award | Elements of musicals; historical connections to talkies (satire); elements of art; principles of design; shot types |
| <i>Psycho</i> (1960) R | Reflects Alfred Hitchcock's unique style; considered the mother of all modern horror/suspense films; one of the most recognizable films in cinema history | Elements of horror/suspense; impact of black and white film; themes/motifs; shot types |
| <i>The Godfather</i> (1972) R | Ranked as 2nd-greatest film in American cinema by American Film Institute; Academy Award Winner for Best Picture | Elements of drama; themes/motifs; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); cinematography (shadows, contrast, sepia) |
| <i>The Godfather II</i> (1974) R | Winner of 6 Academy Awards, including: best picture, supporting actor, director, writing (screenplay adapted), art direction, and music | Elements of drama; lighting (quality: hard, soft, diffused; direction: front, beauty, top, under, 45°, side, edge, back) |
| <i>Star Wars IV: A New Hope</i> (1977) PG | Winner of 7 Academy Awards, including: film editing, music score, production design, costume design, sound mixing, sound editing, visual effects | Elements of science-fiction; connections to past science-fiction films; archetypes; visual effects (practical vs. special); 3-D animation; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects) |
| <i>Aliens</i> (1986) R | Produced one of the most iconic heroines of the action genre; Academy Award Winner for best visual effects and music/original score | Elements of action and science-fiction; visual effects (practical vs. special); lighting; cinematography; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects) |
| <i>Do The Right Thing</i> (1989) R | In 1999, the film was deemed "culturally, historically, and aesthetically significant" by the Library of Congress and preserved in the | Elements of drama; political and social commentary; historical impact; motifs/themes; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | National Film Registry | cinematography (dolly shots, canted angles, close ups) |
| FILM | REASON FOR SELECTION | CURRICULAR FOCUS |
| <i>Jurassic Park</i> (1993) PG-13 | Used pioneering computer-generated imagery (CGI); Academy Award winner for Best Sound, Best Effects/ Sound Effects Editing, Best Special Effects | Elements of science fiction; visual effects (practical vs. special, with an emphasis on CGI); sound (dialogue, music, sound effects) |
| <i>The Matrix</i> (1999) R | Best known for revolutionary visual effects; Academy Award winner for Best Film Editing, Best Visual Effects, Best Sound, Best Sound Editing | Elements of action and science-fiction; archetypes; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); visual effects (practical vs. special/ bullet-time and flo-mo); storyboards and scripts |
| <i>Big Fish</i> (2003) PG-13 | Reflects Tim Burton's 'Burtonesque' Gothic cinematic style; unique blending of several genres of film into one cohesive narrative | Narrative structure (non-linear, flashbacks, frame story, genre shifts, montages); themes/motifs; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); visual effects (forced perspective, desaturation/oversaturation, 'Burtonesque' style); editing and transitions |
| <i>Lady Bird</i> (2017) R | Considered one of the best films of 2017; focuses on a coming-of-age story of a teenage girl; directed by a female director, Greta Gerwig; set and filmed in Sacramento | Elements of drama; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); cinematography (shot types and impact); editing (types of edits and transitions); impact of female director's perspective |
| <i>Get Out</i> (2017) R | Academy Award winner for Best Original Screenplay (Jordan Peele becomes first African American to win this award); uses cinematic tropes to explore modern-day racism | Elements of horror/ suspense/ thriller/ mystery/ satire; students will have list of all film elements studied and will select 4 to analyze; role of race, gender, and representation in the film industry |
| <i>The Princess Bride</i> (1987) PG | Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films Award winner for Best Fantasy Film; 2016 Award Winner of National Film Preservation/ National Film Registry | Elements of fantasy and satire; sound (dialogue, music, sound effects); cinematography (shot types and impact); editing (types of edits and transitions), narrative structure (frame story) |

-----Sign and Return-----

After carefully reviewing the Syllabus and [Film as Literature Film/Clip List](#) for the Film as Literature I/II course, please sign and return this page to your teacher.

Parents/Guardians:

Please list any films/clips you would prefer that your student not view. *However, please note that if you are uncomfortable with 2 or more of the films on the syllabus, it will be in the best interest of your student to switch to an alternative course.*

| |
|--|
| |
| |

I have reviewed the Syllabus and Film List for the Film as Literature I/II course and understand the course objectives and expectations. I give permission to my student to watch the films listed on the [Film as Literature Film/Clip List](#).

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|------|
| Parent/Guardian Name | Parent/Guardian Signature | Date |
|----------------------|---------------------------|------|

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------|
| Student Name | Student Signature | Date |
|--------------|-------------------|------|