



MOVIE POSTER

DESCRIPTION

Movie Poster is an activity where students create a poster about a text that includes a main graphic image, a tagline, and a quote from a critical review. Each element of the movie poster should be selected carefully and deliberately to accurately represent the text. This activity is used to gauge a reader's ability to make sense of the material. In this activity readers will create a movie poster for either a fictional movie based on a literary text or a documentary movie based on a non-fiction text. In addition to the movie poster itself, students will explain their design concept in written format.

LEARNING STRATEGIES Visualizing, Synthesizing

LESSON PLAN STAGE Synthesis

SKILLS Connecting Literary Elements, Making Meaning, Experience a Text, Main Ideas vs Details

PREPARATION

- Select a fiction or non-fiction text.
- Depending on available technology, decide whether the poster will be created electronically or on paper.
- If electronic, select a tool (Word, Publisher, other Web 2.0 tools).
- If paper-based, gather materials (magazines for image searches, drawing paper, pencils, markers, rulers, and glue).
- Create an assignment sheet and corresponding rubric.
- Collect sample movie posters that include taglines and critical reviews

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHING TIPS

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| 1 | Introduce movie poster and the design concept. | Introduce the purpose of the movie poster as a tool for attracting new people to the text. Review the assignment sheet that includes the expectations for the poster (graphic image, tagline, critical review). It is important to emphasize to students that the design concept (the decisions they make as they are designing the poster) is a crucial component. |
| 2 | Review sample movie posters | Provide sample movie posters for students to analyze for the key elements. Discuss the purpose of movie posters and the role of the image and text on the poster. It is important to select posters of movies that students have seen so they can provide deeper analysis. Have students label and critique the central image, the byline, and a critical review. If they have trouble critiquing you can ask them guiding questions like "How does this part of the poster affect you as a viewer?" or "Does this part of the poster make you want to go see this movie/read the text?" |



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3	Brainstorm themes of the text	Students can work individually or in pairs to brainstorm the key themes of the text.
4	Rank themes and justify the ranking with evidence from the text	Students can rank the brainstorm list in order to narrow down to the essential theme that should be included on the poster. The thought process behind the ranking is the key element in this step. Students should defend their top three rankings with evidence from the text.
5	Select and defend the theme	Students will select their theme from the top three. They should justify that selection. This is a good opportunity for students to practice the design concept explanation. "Why did you select this as your theme? Defend your selection." This could be done in written form, verbally with a peer, or during a student-teacher conference.
6	Brainstorm a list of images that reflect the theme	This step will help students start to focus their image search. This should be a very quick, independent activity. Use a timer and ask students to write down in one minute everything they picture in their heads when they think of the theme they selected.
7	Gather visual images	If creating a paper-based movie poster, students should flip through magazines to find images that reflect their theme. They can scroll through Google images if using a computer-based design. This initial image gathering is a time for students to be creative. It should be a fluid process between looking at images and generating ideas. As they look through images, they add ideas to the brainstormed list they created earlier. Logistically, it is helpful for students to have an envelope for magazine clippings to help keep track of the images. If working electronically, students should copy and paste images into a Word document or a compile a list of the image links.
8	Rank images and justify the ranking with evidence from the text	Students rank the brainstorm list to narrow down the image that should be included on the poster. Students should defend their top three rankings with evidence from the text. A sample sentence-starter could be: "This image reflects the theme because throughout the text ..."
9	Select and defend the most compelling images	After students have narrowed down to three images, they will select one image to include on the poster. They will defend that selection. This could be an independent step or students could take their three images and theme and ask for feedback from their peers before making the final decision.
10	Conduct a mini-lesson on writing taglines	You can use a simple four-step process to write a tagline. (1) Write a list of every word you can think of that is related to the text (2) Write a list of emotions the reader will feel when they read the text (3) Write a list of what distinguishes your text from other texts. Why is this book/movie better? (4) Use your lists to generate ideas and write engaging tag lines. Why should someone come see this movie?

11	Review sample taglines	Sample taglines can be found with a quick internet search. Depending on the time available, samples could be shared and analyzed through whole-class discussion. Taglines could be distributed to students and analyzed in small groups or pairs. “Is this a great tagline? Why or why not? What makes this a great tagline?” You could also revisit the sample movie posters you shared earlier and use their taglines as examples.
12	Write taglines	Students complete the four-step process reviewed in the mini-lesson above and write three to five taglines that relate to their theme and image. A simple two-column chart could be used. Column 1 could be the tagline and column 2 could be the justification. “This tagline relates to the theme and image because...”
13	Select and defend the most engaging tagline	Students select their best tagline and defend its selection. “Why did you choose this one? What makes it a great tagline? How does it reflect the theme of the text and complement the image you selected?”
14	Conduct mini-lesson on writing critical reviews	There are many ways to encourage students to think like a movie critic. You could read sample reviews that can be found online with a simple Internet search or in most daily newspapers. You could ask students to write a 2-3-sentence review of any movie they have seen recently and share it with a partner or a small group. You could select a few sample one- or two-line reviews from recent movies that your students have seen and discuss as a whole class what makes it a good review.
15	Write critical review	Remind students that as much fun as it would be to write a scathing review, the movie poster is a piece of advertising trying to attract viewers. If your students seem interested in writing a bad review, a fun homework assignment could be to write a negative review for the text/movie that the posters are based on.
16	Compile movie poster elements into one document (graphic image, tagline, critical review, title, author)	Once again, having the sample movie posters available will help students visualize their own posters. They will need to decide the placement of images and words, text size, and style, whether it is paper- or computer-based.
17	Conduct mini-lesson on the design summary and share a sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fun way to have students think about the design summary is to imagine they have been hired to create this movie poster and they have to pitch their creation to the movie executives. This is a compilation and justification of all of the decisions they have made during this process. You could create a simple worksheet for them to fill out or it could be a more extensive written assignment of a 1-page summary of their design concept. Whichever you chose, be sure to have a sample or a template to share with students.
18	Write the design summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be an independent step for students to think about their thinking during each step of the process.

19 Present poster and design concept

- Depending on time availability, the presentations could be to the whole class or the class could be divided into small groups where students present to each other. When students are listening to presentations it is good to establish a routine where students are asked to give feedback. This could be simply giving one piece of warm and one piece of cool feedback, or having the students use a more elaborate rubric.

20 Reflection

- The reflection is an opportunity to ask students how the process of creating the movie poster helped them understand the text and about the process itself. Sample questions could be: “How did creating this poster improve your comprehension of the text? Which design element (theme, tagline, review) was the most difficult? Why? What thinking skills did you use in this activity (analysis, evaluation, or synthesis)? “