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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2015 Volume IV: Using Film in the Classroom/How to Read a Film

Deepening One's Understanding of Psychological Disorders Through Film: From One Extreme to Another - Depression and Schizophrenia

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In this unit film interpretation will be used to better understand the psychological disorders of depression and schizophrenia. Following the Common Core Standards, students will read for meaning and interpret multiple sources (written text and film) regarding depression and schizophrenia. High school students will focus on the guiding questions: How is psychologically abnormal behavior defined? What are the symptoms and causes of depression? Describe the symptoms and causes of schizophrenia? What are the challenges associated with these diagnoses? What cinematic elements help with the portrayal of psychopathology in movies? How do the cinematic elements of the film accentuate or contribute to your understanding? Students will participate in Socratic Seminars to critically read, view, and prepare to actively participate in conversations to help them make meaning of this complex content. Additionally, they will write individual patient reports to represent their understanding. Then, they will create collaborative public service announcements about the disorders.

(Developed for College Preparatory [CP] Psychology and Advanced Placement [AP] Psychology, grades 11-12; recommended for Psychology courses, grades 10-12)

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