



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

Immigration and the Narrative Voice: Analysis of Image and Sound in Film and Its Connection to the Immigrants' Stories

Guide for Curriculum Unit 15.04.07, published September 2015
by Kathleen Therese Radebaugh

We are a nation of immigrants who bring different beliefs and values to the United States of America. In this curriculum unit for a middle school ELA or a history classroom, students will interpret and analyze how two different ethnic groups of the 1850s and the 1960s were portrayed in two different films. *Hester Street* is a film about how a Jewish family from Russia adjusts to their new community in Manhattan's Lower East Side in 1850. *West Side Story* is a filmed theatrical performance about two star-crossed lovers from different neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Each film has a very different style of portraying the stories of Jewish and Puerto Rican immigrants, yet students will see the parallels in themes and characters. The culminating assessment for the students is to analyze and evaluate the immigration process currently in the United States and to ask why immigration is a reform topic in the mayoral and presidential elections of 2016.

(Developed for English, grade 7; recommended for Social Studies, grade 7)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use