



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
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Film as a Site for Education and Resistance

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by Andrew Maples

Introduction: Vocabulary and Approach

For this unit, I'll use the word cinema to refer to the larger project of the moving image. A film will be an individual work but with the connotation of a more reflective style of filmmaking. In contrast to films, movies carry the connotation of a pure entertainment with a cultural value that outweighs its artistic value.

As you read the programmed experiences of our unit, you'll recognize that just as there are different modes of writing, there are different modes of cinema. If you want to study "film as film" alongside studying film as a meaning-maker, you'll find here ways to navigate both concerns.

Comparing theater and film is a fine place to start because it is already common practice in English class. When watching a film adaptation of a play, for instance, we observe how films are action-oriented, change locations deftly, and show us exactly what the director wants us to see through the eye of the lens. Plays emphasize dialogue and character relationships in front of sets that require suspension of disbelief. Theater audience members have some autonomy in terms of where they look across a stage. This unit invites students to question how free they are as viewers. Images on-screen can invite or they can quash; they can inspire thought or spell out meaning. A truly democratic shot in a film gives us many sites to rest our gaze. This makes for a more taxing viewing experience but perhaps, also, a more rewarding one. When making viewing choices, are we at all times expected to submit to the spectacle of a consumer-focused cinema? Or can we consider films that are more thoughtful and that question their relationship with reality by way of distortion or disclosure, or play with how time and space are navigated? Then we can contribute to the meanings of films through interpretation, analysis, and through the introduction of theory (codes from culture that may or may not explain cinema). We do want films to take the lead in how we talk about them, so "What stands out to you?" is a great question to jump in with students.¹ Dudley Andrew, in his article "The Core and the Flow of Film Studies," helps us think broadly before we dial in: "How shall information become knowledge and inquiry be disciplined?"²

I converse with my students about films and shows they enjoy, and we can even value films that throw weight primarily due to relationship-building in the public sphere.³ Andrew is fond of quoting Serge Daney, a French film critic, who said that cinema was born on two legs, entertainment and art. These legs can walk together, but we want to expose students to films that they would be unlikely to encounter on their own and that

provide a counterpoint to other viewing habits. Important films are not easily forgotten, and they connect students to the origins of cinema.⁴ If we model returning to strong films and strong thinkers with our classes, students can gradually develop evaluation skills on the way to cultivating an informed taste, un-dominated by what marketers tell them is desirable every time they enter the internet.⁵ Students deserve to be given opportunities to encounter the otherness and personal shock of a piece of art.⁶ Alain Bergala's pedagogy of watching in his *The Cinema Hypothesis* includes being willing to see something in all its mystery before attaching meaning to it.⁷ In addition, using foreign films, as this unit will, not only builds empathy for other cultures, but also allows us to focus on general human problems, apart from how social issues manifest in the U.S. Characters in films become our buffer against the incomprehensible and difficult things of the world, and we glean possible responses.⁸ As art is, by its nature, seeking its own liberation, it is automatically counter-cultural, and as such it might take attention training and recalibration to get involved. But at the same time, a superpower of cinema is the intensity and focus it demands.⁹ Film: "the first in a series of technological media aiming for transparency, whereby the spectator would be co-present with what is displayed."¹⁰ Cinema is immersive, a complex enough medium to contribute to student understanding of whatever new media emerge.¹¹

Context and Rationale

If you are an English teacher like me, maybe you use film in the classroom as a vehicle for information or as a complement to a piece of literature. Maybe you make sure that the documentary and narrative films you include are of high quality (to your taste), very topical and well-made. You avoid using films as fillers or rewards. If so, then we are on the same page, or frame, as it were. I have stopped myself from showing films in class in fear of being perceived as a lazy teacher, and maybe, like mine, your school has a policy against showing movies. Let this unit be part of a systemic argument to include film study tactically and potentially in curriculum.

Studying film as film does deserve a place in an already-crowded English curriculum, and studying film is one way to love film. Analysis and interpretation are pleasurable! We want our students consciously participating in the game of meaning which filmmakers play.¹² The impulse to hollow a home for cinema in American schools hearkens back to the film appreciation movement of the 1930s or the notions of the Society of Cinematologists in 1959 who preached appreciation, analysis, and film history as part of literature courses.¹³ Currently, film falls under the heading of media literacy in schools. Media studies includes radio, TV, video games, social media interaction, etc, Each of these is an uninterrupted process of flow and remediation from earlier media while cinema has a more grounded cannon of standalone works (films).¹⁴ Media is wide and film deep; media is continuous thought while films transport us, connecting thoughts. Media literacy is part of cultural studies, something I teach by employing an inclusive definition of "text" and "reading" to promote awareness of literature and language as culturally situated.¹⁵ Writing we call the habits of composition. Of course, film studies and English studies cover similar terrain: narrative structure, close reading, and intertextuality. Further, art films provide a pathway to consider plot together with the poetic image; the world is shown as it is yet transcendent at the same time. The word *verismo* captures this idea of poetic reality nicely, and I've begun to realize that poetic films just age better than green-screen films where the magic happens mostly in the editing bay. Even CGI from a few years ago looks corny. Art film is often thought of as

passive, where the word “passive” is related to “passion” as opposed to “action.” This passivity is linked to the melodrama genre in which events happen and characters react. So the pace is slower, but viewers gain gestation-time.

The theme of the films mentioned within this unit is education. The reasons for this will be discussed in depth, but cinema holds many examples for how education works and counter-examples for how it doesn't. It's much easier to show things falling apart, but documentaries of real classrooms lean positive. In America, from 1935-1977, teachers were figured negatively, authoritarian and dismissive, but since then, teachers have become heroes.¹⁶ I don't recommend showing a movie (yes, I said movie) like *Lean on Me*, for example, because the teacher-hero disposes of students immediately and espouses middle class conformity, preaching personal responsibility without its necessary companion, systemic responsibility—changes in educational, economic, and social opportunities.¹⁷ *Lean on Me* doesn't accurately represent the school conditions where I teach, whose students, however, might easily get stereotyped in similar ways.¹⁸ Urban school films in America often look like a fantasy through which the students, and not the audience, are expected to change. Middle-class school films deal with conformity and popularity, and upper-class private school films picture the stress of academics and ambivalence about wealth.¹⁹ This unit will not dwell on Hollywood's representations of schooling, but the principles it contains could be applied to these films.

Freedom (think guidance systems, rules, conflict management) and discipline (think self-discipline) are the two essentials of education.²⁰ If these are present, why and how? If they aren't, why not and how? School, as a common childhood experience, is often represented in film, so school is an ideal guide for curation of films and clips, providing a fairly consistent iconography, subject matter, and problem structure to consider and discuss. Children in film are also naturally good at conveying justice issues to adults, and this especially holds for justice inside of educational institutions.

The experiences of education and schooling are not always rewarding for my students who struggle to place their schooling in the context of their lives and their education in relation to their futures. Michael Armstrong, a British scholar who studies childhood imagination, says, “Education is a ceaseless struggle to maintain creativity in the face of experience.”²¹ Students trying to complete themselves in a “harmonious and many-sided manner,” who are trying to creatively contribute to the world, are challenged by experiences that reconfigure them in ways that don't feel secure.²² The students in my English classes tend to register our subject matter inert, due to the system's refusals to utilize, test, or throw into fresh combinations what we examine.²³ My very capable students have not been challenged enough and struggle to rise to expectations due to trauma-mind, monotone listening, and an inability to self-advocate in the school setting. After their first years in college, former students communicate that they needed to think about speaking into their educational development sooner, that high school merely graduated them instead of insisting on a more “complete achievement of expressing one's potential in the face of one's actual environment.”²⁴ While I believe that my students are fully engaged with culture on their own account, this unit wants students to understand one of the systems, schooling, that shapes their lives. Then, perhaps, they could more readily merge their personalities with something beyond themselves, while serving a very personal vision.²⁵

I want my students struggling with questions like, “Do I agree with my own schooling?” and “Am I learning?” and “What is education to the limit?” and “What is adolescence in relationship to childhood?” and “How do we reform our public schools?”

This unit's standards orbit media literacy, visual literacy, technology skills to create a product, and author's

purpose and audience effects,. Also, because I teach older high school students, key skills of synthesis, remembering, and pattern-finding across and between texts, become an added focus. I have long looked to Alfred North Whitehead's "Rhythm of Education" to advise curriculum design; he teaches that true education moves from Romance to Precision to Generalization, but we could just as easily say from Freedom to Discipline to Freedom.²⁶ I hope that teaching fresh films (the vividness of novelty) covers Romance, that teacher and students pointing at and comparing films and clips covers Precision, and that the relevant techniques we gain lead to Generalization through imaginative and artistic exercises.²⁷ Education resists falling under one epistemology, but the following aims are an approximation for how I envision education serving society best:

- the larger liberal arts project to witness and prepare free citizens who have full and equal participation in social life...
- the even larger democratic political project for which young people need independent and critical thinking, personal and collective development, participatory involvement, consensual practices, and healthy, internalized limits of the necessity of stratification and hierarchies based on expertise or experience...²⁸
- the still larger human project of reconciling how we are different within an affirming community and how we are no different from anything else, unselfishly identifying with a wider spectrum of life, becoming "visible while carrying what is hidden as a gift to others"...²⁹

...and if we anticipate that citizens like these are the kind of people we want to live with, and we resist holding one image of the ideal citizen too clearly in our minds, freedom might move to become the guiding principle of the American public school system.³⁰

And I am thinking that big. Our goals must be worthy and radical, so even when compromising, we progress.³¹ Just as films are large-scale negotiations, so too is democracy. Film can package information in an emotional way and bring warmth to the problems and solutions of democracy.³² We need our emotional side to reason, and we continue to struggle for perfection fusing reason and imagination.³³

I am pleased with how well film unites the kinds of texts and thinking we flex as English scholars. As we interpret (observe, describe, respond, and connect) films, what the filmmaker intended is not an endpoint; the work itself extends its author's knowledge.³⁴ As critics and commentators, we "share in the promotion of the active process of what the filmmaker went through in producing the work," and the imagination this requires allows us to participate in culture, embody and advance knowledge, and develop skills.³⁵ We must help students make films themselves, even if only with their imaginations.³⁶ The whole point of being critical is self-consciousness; interpretation and analysis are not the end but a step toward a product, an initiation into action.³⁷ Interpretation, itself preparation for democracy, is the same as judgment when students exercise their imaginations.³⁸

Limitations and Roadmap

It is not within the scope of this unit to discuss film history or theory at large, but ways of thinking about film, which are historically situated, permeate our approaches. I have read as deeply as time allowed, and so the unit is an attempt, in the same way that an essay is an attempt, to deploy a fruitful sequence of study, juggling some of the most persistent lines of inquiry in film studies. For instance, we will not specifically address film adaptation but will consider how film transforms reality. We will not talk explicitly about a particular film's references, how it relates to past filmmaking, but we will debate how art communicates with reality through the ideological world. We will ask if film is a language but keep the number of film codes low. We won't delve deeply into the social determinants of the film industry (Marxism), but we will use immanent analysis to call out the contradictions in systems. Plot and characterization will remain in the background as assumed foci in English classrooms, while we foreground questions about timing, rhythm (effects of montage or cutting), texture (the finer details of a shot's composition...personality of location: lights, lines, color), and feeling structure (emotion + aesthetics).

It's within the map of this unit to use the constraints, resistance, and possibilities of filming space, which is an element of how the medium of film reiterates and crafts meaning and resonance, to push and pull against questioning and re-envisioning schooling and the educational dimensions of our lives. Interlocking groupings of students focused on education and film will help physically juxtapose the tension of our inquiry; one member of each education group (called little communities) will constitute another unique group focused on film (called ensembles) when they convene. If the education groups are labeled by direction on the compass rose, there would be one east, west, north, south, etc. in each film group, which would have their own naming convention, perhaps unique or obscure film terms picked from a hat?

More Relevant Research

How Films Teach and How Teach Films

It's not a stretch to say that education is a vocation of film, and education has long been a subject and a project of cinema.³⁹

Teaching is often about deriving something abstract from something concrete. It formulates, inscribes, circulates, and repeats sounds, images, texts, etc.—the artifacts of the practice.⁴⁰ Film, like teaching, is adept at embedding signs that result in the hunt for meaning. The way film teaches audiences is by transmission, using symbolic messages that can't be policed and that stick in our minds, assimilating deeply, integrating with one's own experience.⁴¹ Like the storyteller, filmmakers listen to the voice of nature and resist using so many words in favor of images.⁴² Filmmakers reference their cinematic lineage using transmission as well, and citation of lineage is also a storytelling habit.⁴³

There is much overlap between children in cinema and education in cinema. We can judge a country based on how it treats its children, and how we represent children in visual form is an indicator of our commitments to what children are.⁴⁴ Children, like film, show us the friction between fiction and the real world. Films cause us

to revert to childhood because we, reflecting the beginning stages of development, are confronted with something new.⁴⁵ Our perception becomes sharpened; we seek an earlier time. As we watch children on-screen, we get a sense of a more raw or basic form of humanity, an evolutionarily deep story that hits below the brain.⁴⁶ Spectators want to protect a child on screen who seemingly is doing everything for the first time.⁴⁷ In cinema, the child can symbolize the boundary between nature and culture.⁴⁸ Children seem so natural and believable in movies, but what does it mean that they are put on display?⁴⁹ What are the pleasures and anxieties that the image of a child solicits?⁵⁰ The still image came to life in film, and because movement is life, people can live past their deaths on film.⁵¹ Children are symbols of the right to be and the promise of unforeseeable futures.⁵² They can function as victims or adults, and in both cases they tend toward resilience...but they can also make the familiar strange.⁵³

We learned in our seminar that the Iranians are the best filmmakers of children, and Truffaut was the most intent on filming children. The activities below will reflect these histories. Educators are clued into the concerns of children, even though we must preserve the mystery of childhood and avoid pretending we can fully relate.⁵⁴ But the child is the proving ground for whether education is working or not. The free and uninhibited development of children is a concern inseparable from education and often touches film through the Bildungsroman form.

Education in Society

bell hooks says that “children make the best theorists because they do not grasp social practices as inevitable.”⁵⁵ We want our students theorizing about how films think, which will lead to how society thinks, especially about education.

What is the relationship and conversation between schools and society? Schools, like society, wrestle with the question: how can freedom and non-sovereignty co-exist?⁵⁶ Actors (not the dramatic kind) in society exercise freedom, which is more about responsibility than about feeling free.⁵⁷ We can't seek an escape from the world; freedom needs the company of a publicly organized space of appearances where words are heard, deeds can be seen, and events are discussed, remembered, and turned into stories.⁵⁸ Schools are part of this public domain in which we disrupt what happens automatically because for humans, freedom does not seem to be the norm.⁵⁹ Schools can protect against sovereignty and tyranny as students communicate with each other and think the thoughts of others. What never leaves humans is a capacity to begin.⁶⁰ The action of freedom is the same as a beginning, and actions will be required to sustain our beginnings, plateau our climaxes.⁶¹ We then ask: how do we learn what the new situation requires?⁶² As humanist teachers, we care because we remember how good it feels to be cared for with relational receptivity and engrossment.⁶³ How do we encourage evolution that moves forward from mere functioning to expressing to intensity?⁶⁴ How do we remove hierarchies from how students observe and act?⁶⁵ School is in session.

Film-as-Film Again

People, especially young people, like what they like, and if you are unable to flex your own power in learning, then TV and popcorn cinema, ever seductive, socially obligatory, and quickly obsolete because of overuse, will always win the moment.⁶⁶ One goal is to provide opportunities for students to take charge of their visual lives. A place to start to stimulate film awareness in students is: what films are essential for your relationship to cinema?⁶⁷ These formative films are an example of how timing is everything: “whatever is not seen in time

will never truly be seen.”⁶⁸ Our goal as educators would be to curate films for students that are one step ahead of their current cycle of development and relationship to life.⁶⁹ We can’t guarantee that students will be moved, but positive learning outcomes are likely using films about education, an immediately accessible and applicable topic that creates a text set.⁷⁰ Bergala postulates that cultural knowledge comes from connecting pieces of art to a network of others, and so inside the classroom we simulate accumulating cultural knowledge outside the schoolhouse walls.⁷¹ This network connects films to films, films to film history, and films to the entertainment world. As we connect films, the attention we consent (exertion plus goodwill–Bergala’s definition) to bestow is a risk, but we become more ourselves in the world in the process because we start to expect something to happen around us.⁷²

As alluded to previously, educators lead with their own taste because any other approach is intellectually disingenuous.⁷³ We choose films that are developmentally appropriate without worrying too much about offending student sensibilities.⁷⁴ Art should jangle our paradigms and rearrange homeostasis; art is the exception to the cultural rule.⁷⁵ For this reason, students might find films strange and difficult, leading to resistance.⁷⁶ Good. We honor resistance, and art’s strangeness is what challenges the status quo. Sometimes we first resist what eventually matters to us most.⁷⁷ We want students rebelling against what has gone before them, so we provide a larger viewing culture to rebel against.⁷⁸ Whitehead says teachers prevent waste, and Bergala says that pedagogy can save time on the natural rhythms of learning.⁷⁹ Yes, teaching is a simulation; in this case, teachers help the juxtaposition between films and film clips happen.⁸⁰ Teachers learn from their students by choosing a topic in cinema studies (for instance filmed space vs. real space) to explore through excerpts.⁸¹ Students can add clips from films they know to the learning sequence.⁸²

Hardcore Creative Analysis

Goethe, calling education self-culture in service to others, nods to action as a creative imperative: “In the beginning was the deed.”⁸³ This is how we culture ourselves, how we form our character in the world, and we are trying to produce creative spectators with the cultural capital of our classrooms. We read films *and* the creative act of filmmaking, becoming spectators who “experience the feeling of creation itself.”⁸⁴ This is a mindset that transforms the spectator into a participating, active member of any society. Films are experiments with a problem without knowing the ultimate solution, which positions them as situations presented for groups of people to dialogue about. We start with films because then we’ve shared a series of experiences, and our anecdotal responses are a great place to start. Watching films whole, like reading whole novels, teaches us how the medium works, but the film clip or fragment is useful for shot by shot comparisons and re-watching to notice, for example, how painterly a shot’s composition can be. We postpone ideology as long as possible in favor of reading what is in front of us.

Bergala importantly takes us to “the final moment where the possibilities were still available, to that instant still vibrating with uncertainty” where the filmmaking decision occurs.⁸⁵ This frame for reading a shot shifts my spectrum. The “unnatural” amount of imagination it takes to conceive of all that was possible before the final decision is indispensable for teachers and students of film to note.⁸⁶ The director’s job is to keep each day’s work serving the story as a whole, so these irreversible decisions add up to a cumulative effect that puts the director’s original vision for the entire film in the audience’s mind.⁸⁷ Director decisions rely on rationality, intention, intuition, instinct, and reflex, but as analysts and connoisseurs, we honor the “permanence by

chance” of cinema by relating fragments of films to whole films.⁸⁸

We want our students to hold aloft the tensions of where the original idea meets rugged reality in the domains of choice, placement, and approach, to appreciate the “glorious constraints” of filmmaking, “the listening conditions of reality.”⁸⁹ The best filmmakers end up with a product that is reasonable and new, not quite the plan, but an actualization that takes the resistance of reality into account. We are focused on space for this unit, but actors are the most resistant part of reality.⁹⁰ We can enter the reality of filmed reality as watchers, but also we find pleasure in understanding what Bergala calls breaking the toy.⁹¹

Artistic observation can achieve a sense of wonder, maybe because art doesn’t need a purpose, as nature-based cultures remind us. I do not want my students overwhelmed by the prospect of making even a short film because filmmaking is particularly difficult to estimate the time and energy needed, but I do want my students to have direct and personal experience with the process of filmmaking, a pursuit that requires solitude and risk-taking.⁹² They have engaged with something: their efforts hold together, and they have put some choices to a test.⁹³ Bergala insists that cinema can be present in a single shot, and by paying attention to the “small music” that is the life in a shot, we cannot fixate on control because then we are not paying attention.⁹⁴ The activities below are about helping students refine their perceptions, and as your classes balance the self-confidence of action with watching films and reactions to films attentively, community is built through trying similar filmmaking activities and dialogue in the commons.

Wisdom Always Sticks the Landing

Finally, film aesthetics belong alongside the theme of education as in the unit at hand. The more we specialize, beyond the amateur mastering of routines, the more we bring an intimate sense of power, beauty, and structure of ideas to a body of knowledge which is oriented to who we are as people.⁹⁵ The moves of critique produce virtue! We gain a sense of style by achieving what we expect to happen. With style, we can fashion power and hold power back, and we begin to calculate with some foresight the effects of our activity.⁹⁶

We’ve arrived at wisdom which is there to handle knowledge, selecting it and employing it to add value to immediate experiences.⁹⁷ Whitehead calls wisdom “the most intimate freedom available.”⁹⁸ We crave what has value, which is determined through wisdom, in order to experience Whitehead’s Romance afresh.

Classroom Activities: Ten Days

I imagine this unit taking place as a creative entry point to the school year. You will have just finished conveying and negotiating the routines and agreements of your classroom: that everyone is responsible for classroom dynamics, that the engaged voice is always changing in dialogue with a world beyond itself, that you control your grade by your labor in the classroom, that you know you’re working by documenting your progress, and that homework happens only in preparation for the next day’s class. Please keep in mind that the films I have chosen are not requirements, but the lines of inquiry and activities could be useful for whatever thematic unit you devise. Film itself is an educational site.⁹⁹

Essential Questions:

How do shots and space interact when making a film? OR How does space resist (limits + possibilities) when shooting a film?

Are the essentials of education, freedom and discipline, part of my school experience?

Day 1

Topic (Film): Pedagogy of viewing (get used to juxtaposing and comparing clips) and the shot, attention training

Topic (Education): Freedom and discipline into

Film Clips: touching the full genre spectrum, show the following set of clips:

- Linda Farrell Reading Rockets reading lesson (video)
- fashion class clip from Frederick Wiseman's *High School* (overtly political documentary)
- Herr Bachman's conversational, dirty-talking style in *Herr Bachman and His Class* (more observational documentary)
- gaining trust scene in *Stand and Deliver* (Hollywood)
- opening classroom scene in *Where is the Friend's House?* (art film).

Prepare for tomorrow: Read the "Go Ask the Mice" chapter in Tom Brown's *The Tracker*.

Day 1 will begin with a questionnaire that asks some simple questions about personal film history and appreciation to activate prior knowledge: What are the films in your childhood that had the biggest impact on you? What was a film you saw over the summer? How much did you love it? Does it interest you why you love it, yes or no? Answer why for either yes or no. Finally, What makes a film great?

Discuss these answers as a class, and define critique as the art of loving. Set students up to understand that this unit is designed to promote critical thinking about schooling and to give them some experience with filmmaking to become active viewers. It takes investment time to specialize in film, so our efforts are beginning experiments with shots and space.¹⁰⁰ We are training our attention, and when viewing films and clips, we are willing to be duped by the illusion of reality in order to have any chance of being a good critic.¹⁰¹ These are similar attention skills we bring to literature to help us remember and find patterns. Students will be given simple graphic organizers to structure their thinking, and let students know ahead of time the days that you will screen whole films in class. I plan to have zoom showings on the evenings of those same days because of how important it is that we have these films in common and how pivotal a re-watch can be. This should also reinforce early in the year that presence is expected for learning, more than attendance.

Give students a preview and an example (teacher version?) of the capstone learning experiences of this unit. First, deliver a sequence of three, one-minute shots that capture the general essence of a place with "an abundance of complex perceptions and sensations."¹⁰² The three shots require a chaser of two short writings: a making-of learning process essay and a paragraph detailing takeaways from the feedback the class provides on share day, Day 10. Students should know that their grade will not be based on the quality of their shots but how they write about their learning process. The second celebration of learning will be a critique of their schooling, written in the genre of film criticism, which should include autocritique (critiquing

one's own ideas about education from Day 2 of the unit). For extra credit, students can keep a dream journal over the next two weeks. Humans are image makers, so we want students to attend to the films they are already making.

Day 1's clips are chosen to demonstrate genre traits, even though we hold interpreting and analyzing more artistic films as our North Star. The root of respect is "to look at," so we provide students with a Truth Chart to respect the clips and record their observations of each clip under the labels: What truth is intended and why? What is twisted/shaped/reinvented? What is simplified?¹⁰³ Allow students free reign to record, but unpack this chart after each clip. Post-discussion, students can take some time to add to their boxes. This will be a slow methodical process, but the clips we choose should function as stand-alone pieces. Their "extraction is felt like suspense," so they are really teasers for films we will touch base with again throughout the unit.¹⁰⁴ This chart is already getting students to play with how film and types of film transform reality.

When you reach the last clip of the day, take the opportunity to define that a shot happens uninterrupted between cuts. Let students use the word wall for its intended purpose—students displaying words that they encounter throughout a unit. A word wall is student led, though we would certainly like to see "shot" up there to set the tone. As an exit ticket, students should write about which clip showed the least student freedom (choice) and discipline (the ability to act on choice).

Day 2

Topic (Film): Critical response and the resistance of the real

Topic (Education): Film as public pedagogy—how film enables conversations that connect politics, personal experiences, and public life

Film Clip: Opening school scene of *The 400 Blows*

Prepare for tomorrow: Read a critical review of *400 Blows* from imdb.com. Look for the New York Times, Austin or Philadelphia papers, or Slant Magazine.

After a reading check in which students name and describe the kind of education they discovered in *The Tracker*, Day 2 begins with getting students into their interlocking groupings for the first time. There will be only one activity that is done in a group context in this unit because filmmaking is a personal pursuit even though it takes many people to get a film to the projection booth. Our groups exist for sharing ideas, leading discussions, and impromptu presentations. In their little communities, on big sticky notes, students should brainstorm what they see as problems with public schooling in America, a context with which they are familiar. Groups will then rotate to the next group's sticky and write below what they think are the values in society that led to those problems or the values in society that need to be there to solve them. Groups will return to their original sticky, and after a few minutes of group reflection, they will present on whether or not they agree with the values statements attached to their work. This kind of spontaneous presentation is typical of college classrooms, so students need practice.

Students will then move into their film groups to try to solve the kind of problem that can arise for filmmakers on the set. I'm sure you can do better than this situation, which actually happened at a shoot at my house in support of our school's production of *Little Shop of Horrors* (the "Somewhere That's Green" sequence): The goal of today's shoot is to capture a very particular scene of 1950s American suburban bliss with the white picket fence, garden, fantasy family, the works. Your plan is to film a scene where the family is watching TV

and eating TV dinners, but the house you've secured for filming doesn't have a TV. How do you troubleshoot to arrive at a reasonable shot that includes the realities of the house at which you've assembled all your actors? Does your choice help you secure a shot that meets your goal? Why or why not?

As you're setting up the clip from *The 400 Blows* (the scene at the very beginning of the film), bat around the decisions the groups made. Drive home the point that there are so many possibilities for how the film can look until the filmmaker makes a decision, and then all those little filmed takes get combined to make something new: not exactly the plan, but an approximation, a conversation with life. When we say film represents reality with reality, we mean unpredictable, resistant life. Shots anchor us in this new reality. They are the fundamental unit of filmmaking.

Our next version of a critical response comes in the form of an Exchange of Experience chart. Students relate what they see in the clip to other works, a sense of tradition in the public domain, their own lives, and their imaginations. We can think of this as the next step beyond: "Have you seen *The 400 Blows*?" "Yes, I liked it!" And the next steps, further down the page, will be analysis (parts to whole, narrative structure + texture), interpretation (coming up with abstract meanings), and applying theory. These are all parts of criticism, but here, students are starting to build a network, and films spark connections, mirroring culture as they construct it, using the lure of entertainment to provoke thinking about charged issues.¹⁰⁵ When we get a chance to close read a scene, which goes beyond the gist (initial thinking for what it's about) to the main idea (what the filmmaker wants the audience to take away), we only get to main idea through sustained massaging of complex enough text. We create text-dependent questions, moving from general understanding to key details, then structure, author's purpose, then inferences and opinions, arguments, and intertextual connections. I fear that even the softest iteration of critical response throws kids in the deep-end of this close-reading framework that my district uses, but I want students to grasp early and often how film is connective tissue.

Maybe you watch the clip twice, the first time for general understanding and the second time for how the camera captures the space, where it lingers, how it moves. Then, as a class you can go back and postulate why. Is this a good space that supports learning? Make sure that students recognize that the public domain slot of their chart includes what Truffaut is trying to say about school, what our childhoods do for us, and what makes a good adult. The other tricky section of the chart has to do with imagination. Students can imagine ways that schooling could look different; after observing the rigid rows and the teacher's demeanor, they can judge what doesn't work and imagine what the opposite approach looks like in practice. Students should also start to imagine what it was like to film this scene. Why did a shot end where it did? Where would the camera need to be placed? How was the frame organized to account for the elements flowing across it? How are the actors accounted for in the frame? What limits did the filmmaker place on his power to manipulate the objects in the world caught on film?

I would collect this work, and publicly post student responses heading into Day 3, during which we will watch the whole film. So to avoid minimum effort and to celebrate engagement, teacher and student can reflect on the work and learning already happening. This moment of reflection is a data conference and a chance for students to self-assess.

Day 3

Topic (Film): Realism vs. Montage

Topic (Education): Bildungsroman

Film: *The 400 Blows*

Prepare for tomorrow: Update 2-page spread and leave some room for the ending tomorrow.

Day 3 is the first day that will be spent entirely watching a film, Francois Truffaut's first film, which is largely autobiographical. Historical data on *The 400 Blows* is widely available, but it is a defining film of the French New Wave. Bergala cautions us to show films without fuss because we want students leaving their comfort zone on their own terms.¹⁰⁶ Reflect on yesterday's responses for 10 minutes, and then press play. In an hour and a half block, the film will carry over into the next day.

This year, I learned about a practice called a two-page spread.¹⁰⁷ They are typically used for novel study, but I'd like to employ it for films, which after all, try to imitate the scope of novels. Students write on the back of one page and the front of the next, spanning the page break, to show that they are thinking about what they are watching. You could cue students with a loose framework to jumpstart them. Less prescriptive: think idea, image, narrative. More specifically:

- Is there anything that goes against the rules of the film? Where are the bumps? How can you justify why the bumps are there? The exception will tell you what the rule is.
- What challenges the viewer of the film?
- Where does the film put its effort?
- What is the film's attitude toward its subject?
- What is the stabilizing element of the film?
- What is diversion, and what is equipment for life?
- If this film is a Bildungroman, how does Antoine come of age?

These two-page spreads are an exercise in note-taking, one of the gathering skills of interpretation, a creative reaction to a piece of art, a piggyback on comprehension.¹⁰⁸ They should be as unique as the people making them. My two page spreads are typically full of quotes, sticky notes, and doodles. I also tell students that they can gossip about characters in their spreads, which should be completed after watching the whole film.

We do want to bring one classic film debate to bear as soon as possible in the unit, and that is realism vs. montage. Realist cinema relies on long takes, shooting on location, depth of field (the amount of the screen in focus), and total image offered. Montage just means editing, the more controversial side of which is expressive (the juxtaposition of images instead of the images themselves). Cuts are integral to filmmaking however, because they aid storytelling by structuring relationships, constructing meaning, and breaking down a space so it is recomposed to strong effect within the film. Cuts also help time pass. Because we are preparing students to compose shots, they need as many schemata (knowledge structures) as possible in order to act. Schemata influence the number of choices educational freedom can take advantage of and they dictate the amount of effort acting in the world takes. The instructions for viewing *The 400 Blows* could include enjoying the film but also looking for particularly strong images (called icasticos) or visually oppositional shots that go against the grain of the rest of the film. Look for the timing of cuts. What is surprising to you? Where does the filmmaker's curiosity take him? Where does the filmmaker linger? And look for clusters of images-what goes with what. What could these pseudo-repetitions, these events that rhyme, mean? Make note of these moments, so you can take the class back there tomorrow.

Antoine Doinel's interview close to the end of *The 400 Blows* stood out to me. He is dead center in the shot, and it serves to emphasize that the adults in his life have never really listened to him. The three prostitutes in

prison repeat with difference with the three little girls isolated from the boys at the Observation Center. For a 1959 film, I read this image cluster with a feminist lens: women are either shunted to the side or used by men, and both amount to a punishment.

I have very intentionally included an older and a newer French film in this unit to stay with one culture, not ours, even as we travel the globe.

Day 4

Topic (Film): Similarities/oppositions, texture

Topic (Education): Childhood experiences

Film: *The 400 Blows*

Prepare for tomorrow: Take a picture that represents where you are from. You will use it tomorrow.

On Day 4, finish *The 400 Blows* and give students time to finish their 2-page spreads. Before the final sequence that starts with a soccer match, ask students to write down on a digital bulletin board how they think the film should end. Truffaut also struggled with this choice. After “Fin” hits the screen, allow students’ thoughts to congeal before talking about what they noticed and viewing certain scenes again. This dialogue will not be completely student-led, but a discussion later in the unit will be. At this point, students need to hear the terms of film from the teacher as well as hear themselves say them. Films are puzzles, so we are puzzlers. Shots and objects have webs of meaning we are trying to touch and vibrate, to say something exact about a highly regarded film using precise language. Just as I ask students to provide a page number when citing a book during Harkness discussion, we must use the power of dragging the playhead on the video progress timeline to note where particularly key scenes begin or end. As their teacher, I need dazzling familiarity with the film, finding scenes quickly. Ideally, students have scenes they want to see again, but if not, guide them to what they might learn to love. I might kick it off by comparing the opening to the closing of the film. Why these choices? How did we get from one place to another? Or I might talk about how space, especially the family’s cramped apartment, is telling a story. Or I might use the stolen typewriter to speak on Antoine’s skills with language. We want students reading as imaginatively as they sometimes write.

Talk, an unrehearsed intellectual adventure, is the right speed for aesthetic consideration that helps students become more self-conscious of how to achieve imaginative goals.¹⁰⁹ This conversation could introduce new vocabulary as well, such as texture. While *mise en scene* happens at the level of shot, texture refers to impressions of the film as a whole, but the registers of texture look similar: acting and dialogue, setting, lighting, camera compositions and movement, sounds, music, special effects, and editing. When talking texture, we focus on technology (how was it accomplished), techniques (artistic possibilities), and individual style (overall feel + pointed use of strategies). *Mise en scene* (placement on stage), basically equates with what the audience sees in a shot, aligning with a filmmaker’s vision. *Mise en scene* is visual storytelling that includes decor, lighting, space, costume, and acting, all on a continuum between naturalistic and theatrical. Because we are focused on filmed space vs. real space for this unit’s creative analysis/output, asking the texture analysis questions above will be helpful.

Download this information at opportune moments in your leisurely, pattern and texture-based conversation, modeling “film as film” thinking. Students will end the class period revisiting the film review they read two nights ago, answering an exit ticket about the language they noticed the critic using, as well as if they agreed

with the critic or not. Sending students in search of a piece of criticism was deliberately done to show them that not just teachers curate learning experiences; they can too. That being said, it might not be a bad idea to have a few solid options on hand for students to borrow.

I don't want to lose sight of education on Day 4. Antoine Doinel is based on Truffaut's childhood self; so what is Truffaut's attitude (tone) toward that very personal subject matter? Values and knowledge are constructed in schools and in our homes of origin. Can students relate to any of Antoine's learning environments, the city included? The following questions could also work as secondary prompts for tomorrow's journal:

- What makes a good old person?
- How do children in film imagine the spaces around them?
- How do children put the world together?
- What worlds are overlapping
- Looking at the boundaries that distinguish what makes sense vs. what is considered disruptive, how does the conflict shift?
- Looking at difficult histories, where and how is the beauty?
- What images make you conscious of yourself?

Day 5

Topic (Film): Immanent analysis (using film to question inconsistency in society's rules and systems)

Topic (Education): Exposure to educational theorists

Film Clip: Opening 12 shots of *To Be and To Have*

Prepare for tomorrow: Take a photograph of the same subject as last night's photograph.

Students will start Day 5 with an Anti-harmony journal: What do you disagree with about young Antoine's early education in the home and inside and outside school? This journal has students thinking in writing before jumping back into their little community, education-oriented groups for curated research in stations. I suggest that you bring to bear education theorists who have influenced you or who have your attention presently. I also suggest that not all of the stations are reading-heavy; use some infographics and artifacts. Students should know ahead of time that these stations are designed to give them food for thought, fresh ideas about the potentials of education and how people theorize the field. Do the stations elicit any education negative examples from student schooling experience? If values define the goals that motivate action, are there any values articulated in the station work that would motivate active learning in students? When I teach the unit, I plan to supply stations with a version of the following:

- Comparison of the United States education system to Finland's, which is widely thought to be the best. A Google search will yield infographics. I plan to read some Pasi Sahlberg.
- Montessori's writing on punishment and rewards. Maria Montessori, whose first schools were in poor neighborhoods in Rome, is a major theorist, and students may have seen Montessori schools in the area. Hers is the only complete educational system designed by a woman.
- Examples of Fernand Deligny's wander maps and his concept of the network. Deligny, an anarchist educator, observed and worked with autistic children in the hills of France. His writing is a wild combination of animal analogies, art interpretation, and politics, but he was undeniably on the side of his students. The wander maps trace the pathways of his students and become part of their identity. It

was Deligny's idea for *The 400 Blows* to end with Antoine running to the beach. That's a great film-educator connection.

- John Dewey's writing on interest and discipline. We teachers poach from Dewey's constructivism all the time, but it pays to go to the source.
- The Reggio Emilia documentation process and the ethics of encounter. Reggio Emilia schools are named after a small town in Italy. The town has a theory of education! Could our towns do the same?
- Anecdotes from A.S. Neill's Summerhill School, a free school in Britain. He ran his school with radical ideas about freedom (no required classes) and the psychology of working with difficult students.
- A set of Friedrich Froebel's gifts. Froebel is the man behind Kindergarten. The gifts are sets of items to be used in creative play.

Teachers will need to pollinate groups during this activity, but students can be given a chart with questions applied to each station:

- What knowledge counts?
- What legitimates the social situation?
- How would agency be defined?
- What are the educator's thoughts about the future?
- How does the knowledge presented relate to your power of self-definition?¹¹⁰

Stations always take time, but leave time toward the end of class to watch the first 12 shots of the documentary *To Be and To Have*. It is thought that the style of a film is a template visible after the first 12 shots. This doesn't mean that the filmmaker's first 12 shots will wind up at the beginning of a film, but in a similar way, our earliest childhood experiences shape us. This is why the director's vision for the film and students' visions for their lives are so imperative. Count the shots out together as a class and have students pepper the excerpt with what they think the feeling structure is.

The exit ticket for the day is for each student to share the image of where they come from with another member of their ensemble (film group). For their partner's still image, the task would be to engage in pleonasm: use more words than necessary to describe the image they were privy to. We want students reaching for meaning and invention. Economy of language comes after finding something to say.

Day 6

Topic (Film): Floorplan, camera placement, framing, blocking

Topic (Education): Grading and competition

Film Clip: Throwing the papers out the window scene in *The Family Game*

Prepare for tomorrow: Read a critical review of *The Class* from imdb.com. Look for the New York Times, Austin or Philadelphia papers, or Slant Magazine.

Day 6 is when I get nervous. My professor in college told me I don't have the eye for being behind a camera, but I have to trust in my students' digital-native status and the process thinking that is the backbone of our approach. Today's activity will take the whole class.

A floorplan is more useful than a storyboard because it actualizes the technical concerns of invading reality and bringing it out. Student ensembles will be given the set-up of a scene from a film, and using four copies

of the floorplan of your classroom that you provide, they will plan four shots to tell the story, noting on the floorplan the camera position, any camera movement, blind spots, and where the actors will stand.¹¹¹ Here are some questions to guide the exercise:

- Where to begin and end the shot?
- Where to place the camera?
- How to organize or frame the elements that will be flowing across?
- What limits does one place on one's own power to manipulate the objects in the world caught on film?
- How should one incorporate the actor?

And here is what generally what happens in one scene of *The Family Game*, a satirical look at the wealthy middle class in Japan:

The teacher starts handing back papers to the class and starts with the lowest grades first. The class becomes animated and begins to clap in unison. The student with the lowest score walks to the front of the class with a paper bag on her head while students laugh. The teacher then starts balling up the next lowest scores and throwing them out the window onto the playground, where the students have to go to fetch them.

Students will use phone cameras (turned sideways) to capture the 4 shots they planned without actors present, dropping these images into a document. The final step of this activity is to get students to take the same shots again, but this time actors are included. Students should also drop these images into the same document, and write about what changed when actors were introduced and what choices, placements, and approaches would change as a result.¹¹² Students are playing with point of view when placement and approach change. The teaching experience of making a shot, that is engagement, coherence, and putting choices to a test, are tried in the group setting once before students are expected to create three one-minute shots of their own.¹¹³ Spatial concerns will vary from classroom to classroom; I, for one, will need to tape fake windows to the wall. And parts of the classroom could be contested between groups. Groups do, however, work at different speeds, and they can help each other when actors are needed.

Before students complete a paragraph comparing their two images of the same object, using yesterday's pleonasm as a jump-off and deciding which image is more fertile, we will watch the actual scene together to discover how the filmmaker's imagination manifested. Students should provide oral feedback about which shots stand out the most and postulate why. What do they wish they had thought of?

Day 7

Topic (Film): Rhythm, editing, equilibrium

Topic (Education): Teacher demeanor, student dignity, multicultural classrooms

Film: *The Class*

Prepare for tomorrow: Update 2-page spread and leave some room for the ending tomorrow.

Films can take us outside of the classroom, but are we squandering that trait of films because the unit's films are very classroom based? I hope not—hope, a necessary companion to critique. Before you press play on our second and final screening day, ask students to prime the pump with what they learned reading in preparation for today's class. *The Class* falls somewhere between a documentary and a narrative feature because the

teacher in the film was a teacher who wrote the memoir. The student actors in the film are actual students who improvisationally put the scenes together around loose criteria. This influences the rhythm, which is the essence of cinema, helping characters give the impression that they have escaped the screenplay.¹¹⁴ *The Class* was filmed with three cameras, a strategy which communicates the simultaneity and criss-crossing sightlines of a high school classroom. This film is also French, taking place in a contemporary, multicultural suburb of Paris, and there is one shot in particular, a latecomer to the class presenting his self-portrait, that to me, resonates with Antoine's interview at the end of *The 400 Blows*. Films talk to each other.

We want students thinking about the same film analysis questions that we have touched on before: around texture and similarities/oppositions. The characters in this film are complex, and students will hone in on the nuances of teacher and student interactions. What does and doesn't work in teacher/student relationships? Some questions geared specifically to this film can guide students in their two page spreads.

- How does film make the world visible to us?
- It has been said that there have been two major problems tackled with cinema: moving from the country to the city and the role of women in society. Does this film deal with either and how?
- A screaming man is not a dancing bear (Aime Cesaire), which is to say that life is not a spectacle. Does anything feel like a spectacle in this film as opposed to truth and relationship?
- Does the film keep its equilibrium from beginning to end and around its central idea? Can we account for asymmetry if it exists?
- Is this film primarily aesthetic or social? Does it capture life or produce meaning, or both?
- The classroom as a set is handled very differently in *The 400 Blows* and *The Class*. How might we characterize those differences?

Today's film is 2 hours long, so it will continue into Day 8. Students should know that they will lead the film discussion tomorrow. The ending of this film deserves some silence to land in the viewer's mind, so be mindful to leave that space free of teacher talk.¹¹⁵ Teachers can always improve at timing and silence.

Day 8

Topic (Film): Poetry of the shot, ambiguity

Topic (Education): Listening for what is behind what is said

Film Clip: Any scene in *Where is the Friend's House?*, or revisiting scenes in other films.

Prepare for tomorrow: Bring in a shot from a film you love that you find to be a poetic image.

Day 8 must begin by finishing a less poetic film, and students should again receive time to finish up 2-page spreads before students lead the film discussion. Though the teacher will operate the computer, navigating to shots, he or she should also be prepared to give the class feedback, less on the quality of comments than on how the conversation was conducted.

With half of class left, move to the poetic image, which I think is easier to understand than written poetry but harder to talk about. In written poetry, diction and syntax are arranged just so, line breaks produce tension and shape the poem, and shifts in tone provide clues to how and what a poem is arguing. There is high school curriculum language to unpack these poetic qualities. Poetic images also ask us to pay attention and re-see. Things slip into place. Poets, like Perseus, look indirectly at the world, and toting Medusa's head, carry reality

with them.¹¹⁶ In poetic images the composition is exact, but this precision asks the audience to accept a certain amount of ambiguity while following a director's gaze as it freely associates. Read slowly, poetry moves swiftly in terms of how ideas happen simultaneously, and poetic images also demand taking in a lot at once.¹¹⁷ Of course, imagery in images occurs without the barrier of language, but our physical senses are engaged. Just because the sensations that some films brandish are big and distinguishable does not mean their imagery is more effective. Some filmmaking can be heavy-handed, lacking subtlety and assuming little thinking ability on behalf of the audience. We can either try to eat the mystery (figure out what the poetry means) or embrace contradictions which can indicate radical acceptance, yet often be part of a struggle to change.

Again, we need to study shots, flexibly using the questions and terms of this unit. *Where is the Friend's House?* by Abbas Kiarostami is Iranian cinema, a very poetic cinema that draws from the poetic, rather than narrative, heritage of their literature. For each shot you choose, set up mini-debates about whether we should eat the mystery or embrace the contradictions of the image. Play devil's advocate to these changing positions that students are occupying. Pay particularly close attention to depth of field this day and how it structures viewer attention. We aim for interpretation by thinking about the role of the zig-zag path, the out-of-sync education conversation with Ahmad's grandfathers, and the film's obsession with doors and windows. Create one more simple chart to support your focus scenes. Observe, describe, respond, and connect are the column headings. Remember, interpretation wants abstraction, something introduced to the film from the outside that can be proven with evidence in the film. This is not a straightforward step, and it requires a range of life experience and training. But perhaps begin with the point of Ahmad's journey, which seems to be solidarity in the midst of much buying and selling. Tell students to let what interests them most about the film take the lead in terms of what to interpret.

If time allows, Day 8 ends with a choice of challenges. Either students can write about an experience they've had in order to speak freely about another topic, or they can go on a field trip around the school building trying to get a shot that constructs a place that is not realistic—an ambiguous shot of the school that doesn't translate to our image bank of schools.

Day 9

Topic (Film): Political statements

Topic (Education): Theory Production

Film Clip: *Wiseman's High School*

Prepare for tomorrow: Students knew this was coming, but their 3-shot sequence is due on Day 10.

Entering the classroom, students should post their poetic images on a digital bulletin board. Take a few minutes to connect to yesterday's lesson and connect with students over shared film experiences.

School is inherently moral, not commercial.¹¹⁸ School is not about winning at all costs, privatization, efficiency, flexibility (losing self), or accumulation of capital, though there is room for being competitive, fiscal training and taking time seriously.¹¹⁹ As citizens, we have to practice two things: syntony (participation with the world) and focalization (constructive concentration). We need freedom for both and self-discipline for both.¹²⁰

By consuming the films and texts that we have in this unit, there are many sides to education in the collective conscience. Show several more intentionally political segments from *High School*. Day 9 is about composing theory, symbolically acting on our observations and sense of justice. Back in little community groups, students will devise a system of ideas to explain what they want the values of their education to be. These principles could be used to name practices, guide actions, and transform society, the last of which is the whole point of schooling. bell hooks says that, “Theory must serve collective liberation” and “the production of theory as a social practice can be liberatory.”¹²¹ I want to demystify the word theory, and so I limit, for now, the exposure to too many theories that can be applied to reading a text (feminism, critical race theory, queer theory, etc...even though they aid knowledge production). If students are struggling to bring their experiences and films into Day 9, then assure them, “Use how you don’t want to be treated to think about how you do want to be treated. Use how you’ve felt underserved to think about what would serve your future. What does freedom look like in American public schools? What would help me cultivate my internal discipline?” Groups will return to the large group with ideas, and we will look for consistencies and ways to collapse categories. Teachers can ask about reframing some of the language during this discussion, but the principles should come from the students. They are becoming “pioneers in abolishing the drudgery of life” by shaping their own experiences.¹²²

There are many reasons why school reform is difficult. Seymour Sarason’s work on this topic is illuminating, but students, like principals, need to be trained for change and realistic expectations. Revisit the educational theory that students develop throughout the semester. The rest of Day 9 can be spent on the educational writing capstone mentioned above.

Day 10

Topic (Film): Viewer feedback

Topic (Education): Documentation

Film Clips: Student shots!

Prepare for tomorrow: Written components of 3 shots: coalescing feedback and making-of process essay

Already this unit includes more out-of-class work than normal, so like yesterday, the last day allows for writing time in class. But first, students will share the three one-minute shots they filmed and provide written feedback to their peers. Let the feedback charts mimic the interpretation chart from Day 8, and provide physical copies to the student on the hot seat to receive feedback immediately and more personally. This is a moment of celebration; cultural value has been created. Students have made something which is its own form of documentation, but students will also articulate their learning, bringing educational value to our interpretive work.¹²³ I’ll be bringing in popcorn, even though ours is no popcorn cinema.

Coda

The criticism we have read and performed in this unit turned into creativity on the film side and theory on the education side. I worry that I've included too much rationale in these pages, but rationale is a piece of beginning, not just a reason to begin. We have read horizontally across films, and I hope that 10 days is enough time to make an impression on students. I only arrived at that number 10 by breaking down a semester into nine units as the College Board does for AP curriculum. If we remember that we teachers are public intellectuals willing to connect pedagogy to the problems of public life, film can function as another way to define ourselves "authentically and spontaneously in relation to the world."¹²⁴

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

The teaching objectives of this unit are in line with the following Standards of Learning in Virginia:

- 11.2b: Use media, visual literacy, and technology skills to create products.
- 11.2d: Determine the author's purpose and intended effect on the audience for media messages.
- 11.4j: Analyze the use of literary elements and dramatic (and filmmaker...my addition) conventions.
- 11.4k/11.5h: Generate and respond logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, synthesizing, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading texts.
- 11.6a: Generate, gather, plan, and organize ideas for writing to address a specific audience and purpose.

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