

Film Literature I
2021

Teacher: Miss Whidden

Classroom: Rm. 415

Office: 414

Cell: 509-386-2011 (No calls or texts past 9 pm please)

This Class: This class is designed to help you become a more critical movie watcher. During the semester ahead we will be looking at films and treating them as we would any other type of literature. In this class you will:

- learn how to apply the principles of literary criticism to film.
- watch and analyze films from a variety of genres and time periods.
- write essays in response to the films and questions concerning theme and other aspects of each film.
- develop creative and research projects for presentation to the class.
- read material related to the films we study.

Attendance and Participation:

Have you ever talked to your friends about a movie after you watched it together? Well, we're going to do a lot of that. I imagine it will be difficult to be part of that conversation if you're not here to see the film, or talk afterwards, and it will be impossible to make up that aspect of this class. We simply will not succeed, as a class or as individuals, if students choose to not take attendance and class participation seriously. The treatment of film as literature requires us to talk, evaluate, criticize, agree, disagree, etc.. If you are not in class, or if you arrive late, you will miss vital opportunities to share your opinion and hear others. Bottom line:

Your presence is necessary!

Here's what happens if you fail to make attendance and punctuality a priority: you lose the two points you may earn each day just for showing up. If you are late, you lose one of those points. Excused tardies and absences are, of course, the exception to this rule. In addition to lost points, there is the added headache of finding out what you missed – information for which **you will be held responsible** – and making up the work.

Please be aware that you are expected to be seated quietly, in uniform, with your phone stowed at the time of the bell to start class. Failure to comply with this request will result in a tardy. Note: a tardy becomes an absence after 15 minutes.

The Films:

The plan is to study films primarily from the following list, but our study will not be limited to these films:

The Greatest Game Ever Played
A League of Their Own
Glory
Miss Potter
Finding Neverland
Million Dollar Baby
A Few Good Men
To Kill a Mockingbird
Signs
Dead Poets Society
Get Smart
Patch Adams
The Breakfast Club
Good Will Hunting
Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
I Am Legend
Love Actually
Finding Forrester
Charlie Wilson's War
Brokedown Palace
Ghost and the Darkness
Braveheart
Iron Man
The Dark Knight
Vantage Point
Memento
Little Miss Sunshine
Benny and Joon
I Am Sam
Crash
Amelie
Billy Elliot
The Bucket List
The Illusionist
The Prestige
The Natural
Seabiscuit
Phenomenon
McFarland, USA
The Hundred Foot Journey
Zootopia
Salmon Fishing in the Yemen
Interstellar

Note: lest you or your parents (or me) worry about the language, sexual references, gore and other questionable content of these films, allow me to ease your minds by reporting that I have very well edited versions of these films. **Original ratings DO NOT apply to the films we will see in class.**

Film Reviews:

In addition to the writing you'll be doing for each film, you will be turning in a film review approximately every 2 weeks for a film you watch outside of class. **See handout for format, example, and due dates.**

The Project: Expanded research project (paper and presentation).

Details will be handed out in a few weeks.

Grades:

90 – 100% - A
80 – 89% - B
70 – 79% - C
60 – 69% - D
Below 60% - F

Note: Look for grade updates on RenWeb.

In-Class Expectations: There are some things that you should know about how class works. First, in terms of classroom behavior there is but one word you need to keep in mind: **RESPECT**. If we can agree on a working definition of respect, what it means in our class, there should be no need for me to correct you. If you need to be reminded, I'm happy to do that. I have a few ideas about respect, regarding hats, jewelry, hand-raising, and a few other, deeper issues. We will talk as a class and add to these if we need to. **Cell Phones: Part of being respectful is doing your part to minimize distractions. Cell phones are not to be seen or heard in class.**

A Word About iPads: iPads will be used in class occasionally. You should have them every day, charged and ready to go. Normally, however, it will be necessary for them to be put away - not on the top of your desk, or in your lap, but put away.

The Final Word: My goal for this class is to help you become more educated film watchers. It's just possible that even in the silliest films you watch on your own time, there is something to be learned, about life, the human experience, etc. My hope is that you learn to find that meaning through the methods we'll study in this class. Please take it seriously and consider making your goal the same as mine. Since I learned to apply these principles to film watching, my experience has been richly enhanced. I wish the same for you.