

The Fly

Lesson Plan- Society as Projected in Works of Media: *Is art a portrayal of our history, or does art portray our society and perhaps foreshadow the future?*

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Duration: 50 min

Grade Levels: 12th Grade

Subjects: Visual Arts, History

Standards:

California State Board of Education

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards- Theater Proficient

- 3.1 Identify and compare how film, theatre, television, and electronic media productions influence our values and behaviors.
- 3.3 Identify key figures, works, and trends in world theatrical history from various cultures and time periods.
- 4.2 Report on how a specific actor used drama to convey meaning in his or her performances.

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards Theater- Advanced

- 1.1 Use vocabulary of the theater, such as *genre, style, acting values, theme, and design*, to describe theatrical experiences.
- 1.3 Identify the use of metaphor, subtext, and symbolic elements in scripts and theatrical productions.
- 3.2 Analyze the impact of traditional and nontraditional theatre, film, television, and electronic media on society.
- 4.2 Draw conclusions about the effectiveness of informal and formal productions, films, videos, or electronic media on the basis of intent, structure, and quality of the work.

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards-Music

- 5.1 Explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts.
- 5.2 Analyze the role and function of music in radio, television, and advertising.

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards- Visual Arts Advanced

- 1.4 Research two periods of painting, sculpture, film, or other media and discuss their similarities and differences, using the language of the visual arts.
- 1.6 Describe the use of the elements of art to express mood in one or more of their works of art.
- 3.1 Identify contemporary styles and discuss the diverse social, economic, and political developments reflected in the works of art examined
- 3.2 Identify contemporary artists worldwide who have achieved regional, national, or international recognition and discuss ways in which their works reflects, plays a role in, and influences present-day culture.
- 5.2 Compare and contrast works of art, probing beyond the obvious and identifying psychological content found in the symbols and images.

Preparation:

1. Copies of Worksheet A and B.
2. Scenes from the two movies: *The Fly (1958)*, *The Fly (1986)*-the scenes used will vary upon each teacher/class. (for example, scene: Scientists talking about the transportation, or them talking about their invention and what it will do to society/culture)
3. Technology to show the clips to the class.

Assignment before class

Class will be divided into three groups. Students (independently) will research one of the periods as homework:

Group 1: Research the major events in history between 1950-1960.

Group 2: Research the major events in history between 1980-1990.

Group 3: Research the major events in history between 2000-2008.

Procedure:

1. As a class, brainstorm: “Is art a portrayal of our history, or does art portray our society and perhaps foreshadow the future?”
2. The teacher will have a class discussion of major historic events in history: 1950s, 1980s, and present. What was happening in the world in 1950s? 1980s? What is happening presently?
3. The students will fill out **Worksheet A** as a class.
4. The students will watch a scene from *The Fly (1958)*
5. The students will fill out **Worksheet B, section 1** while watching the segment.
6. The teacher will engage the class in conversation by asking the students to describe what they are seeing in the scene and describe why that element is important to the scene. (interesting points to discuss: the mood in the scene, the themes in the scene, the actions, dialogue, the emotional state of the actor, actors delivery, the emotional state of the viewer, the way the scene is shot, camera angles, props, furniture, costumes, special effects, projected/intended audience) **Questions for discussion: Does the movie reflect the society and culture of the times? Why or Why not? What are the key elements that could define this period?**
7. The teacher will write down the key points on the board.
8. The students will watch 1986 version of *The Fly*.
9. The class will fill out **Worksheet B, section 2** while watching the segment.
10. The teacher will engage the class in conversation by asking the students to analyze 1986 segment with previously discussed points.
11. The teacher will write down the key points on the board.
12. After talking about each segment individually, the class will view the two segments again, and then contrast the two segments.

NOTE to the teacher: Discuss the differences in the character with your class. What are the intentions of the character in different films? What is the mood in the scene? What do you see? What could the fly symbolize in this society? Do these ideas parallel our society?

Examples of themes, thoughts and topics: the smallest particle is the scariest, gene mutation, combination of different societies, technology and science running ahead of time. Do you see any reference to the historical events of the period? How might have some of the historical

events effected the context of the scene? Does the main character welcome the change, or resist it? How would you define the culture of this time period just by analyzing a scene from a shot in this time period? What was the intent of the director?

13. Based on the ideas and analysis of the class, the teacher will ask the class to brainstorm some of the themes and ideas they might expect to see in a new opera production of *The Fly*.
14. Students will fill out **Worksheet B, section 3**.
 - a. **Note to teachers:** This has many correct answers. Some of the possible answers: politics, virtual reality, gene mutation, abortion, gene splicing...
15. Students will write their thoughts in an essay format as homework.

Goals:

1. To introduce students to three different time periods.
2. To allow students to research topics on their own.
3. To engage the students to participate in the class discussion.
4. To allow students to compare ideas, thoughts and themes on three time periods.
5. To allow students to see segments of films from different time periods and to analyze the themes that may have influenced the works and themes in the media.
6. To engage the students to use the vocabulary of theater and media in discussing two film segments.
7. To allow the students to analyze how the actors in the scene convey meaning in their performances.
8. To introduce students to how the works of media may reflect the society, as well as director's thoughts.
9. To allow the students to analyze the impact of media on society and vise-versa.
10. To allow the students to identify key figures, works, and trends in several different time periods as projected in two film segments.
11. To allow the students to identify and compare how film, theatre, television and media can influence our values and behaviors.
12. To engage the students to discuss the similarities and differences of two time periods using language of the visual arts.
13. To allow students to identify contemporary styles, and themes- discussing diverse social, historical and political developments reflected in the works of film/media.

Assessment:

1. Students will be able to research the given topics.
2. Students will be able to discuss themes, topics, and ideas as related to three different periods using the vocabulary of the visual arts and theater.
3. The students will be able to describe elements that they see and analyze the patterns that develop between the given time period and the film segments.
4. The students will be able to fill out **Worksheet A** as a class.
5. The students will be able to discuss, and analyze the film segments.
6. The students will be able to fill out **Worksheet B**.
7. The students will be able to convey their thoughts, themes and ideas in an essay using the discussed topics presented in class.

8. In the essay, the students will be able to analyze the effect of film/media on society and the way the society is portrayed in film/media.
9. The students will be able to predict some of the possible themes in a work of film/media today and provide supporting argument from the class discussion.

Worksheet A

1950-1960 Major Events	1980-1990 Major Events	2000-2008 Present Important Events

Worksheet B

The same story inspired both movies, *The Fly* (1958) and *The Fly* (1986). Analyze and describe elements you see. Fill out section 1 and 2. You may use extra paper.

1958 “The Fly” Section 1	1986 “The Fly” Section 2	2008 Opera “The Fly” Section 3

Seeing the trends in the two movies which were made based on the same idea, discuss how each might have mirrored the society. This story has recently been made into an opera. Based on your analysis of events portrayed in the films of 1958 and 1986, predict some of the issues this opera might touch upon.

Homework Assignment: write an essay describing how, in your opinion, the media can reflect our society and culture. Use examples from class discussion. Discuss some of the themes that you predict to be important elements in the new production of *The Fly*.

Worksheet A – optional answers (answers will vary)

1950-1960 Major Events	1980-1990 Major Events	Present Important Events
<p>-Plutonium separated from pitchblende concentrates</p> <p>-Assassination attempt against Truman</p> <p>-Congress passes McCarran Act over presidential veto; it calls for severe restrictions against Communists, particularly in sensitive positions during emergencies</p> <p>-European Broadcasting Union formed</p> <p>-Electric power produced from atomic energy</p> <p>-Queen Elisabeth Crowned</p> <p>-Nobel Prizes for Medicine and Physiology goes to scientists working on studies including: living cells, molecular forces, chemical reactions in living cells(58)A & RNA(59)</p> <p>-U.S.S.R. and U.S. test hydrogen bombs</p> <p>-Cosmic ray observatory erected on Mount Wrangell, Alaska,</p> <p>-(55) USSR ends war with Germany</p> <p>-(57) USSR launches Sputnik I & II, first earth satellites...the III is launched in 58</p> <p>-US artificial earth satellite Explorer I is launched</p> <p>-US nuclear submarine "Nautilus" passes under icecap at North pole</p> <p>-(58)US launches first moon rocket.</p> <p>-Students protest segregation by nonviolent sit-ins</p> <p>- Vietnam War starts in '59</p> <p>- Cold War</p> <p>- African American Civil Rights Movement</p> <p>-(55) Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat</p>	<p>-Nobel Prize granted for study on: (80)body's acceptance and rejection of foreign cells and research into sub-atomic particles</p> <p>-Soviet cosmonauts return to Earth after a record of 185 days (80)</p> <p>-War in Lebanon</p> <p>-Cold War</p> <p>- Nobel Prizes: (82) Chemistry for analysis of the structure of viruses and DNA.</p> <p>-(82) Darwin dies</p> <p>- (83) The world's first artificially made chromosome is created at Harvard University</p> <p>- (83) Reagan names the USSR the "Evil Empire" and proposes a revolutionary new antimissile defense system to be known as the Strategic Defence Initiative (nick-named "Star Wars")</p> <p>- bomb planted by Muslims destroys US Embassy in Lebanon</p> <p>- (83) South Africa adopts a new constitution giving limited political rights to "colored" and "Asian," but not "Black," South Africans</p> <p>- Bruce McCandles and Robert Steward are the first to fly in space untied (us)</p> <p>- US and FR discover AIDS virus</p> <p>(84) DNA analysis shows that chimpanzees are more closely related to humans than all other apes: genetic difference is barely 1%</p> <p>- Nobel Peace Prize (84) International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War</p> <p>- (85)The transputer is invented by Inmos, U.K. to enable a computer to manage parallel information processing</p> <p>-Lasers are used to clean clogged arteries</p> <p>- (85) gene known to inhibit growth is discovered</p> <p>-(86) 25,000 AIDS cases are diagnosed in US</p> <p>-(86) Brit. Surgeons perform the first triple transplant (heart, lung, liver)</p> <p>- (87) Soviet government releases 140 political prisoners</p> <p>-Birth control</p>	

Notes: