

Lights, Camera, Literacy!
High School Edition
Lesson Plan #12

Topics:

Journal Writing
Edward Scissorhands
Flashback Techniques
Short Film Project
"Free Your Mind" Writing Prompts

Outcomes:

Students will follow organizational procedures.
Students will see, hear, and use applicable vocabulary.
Students will analyze Edward Scissorhands using the LCL! 3x3 Story Path.
Students will identify and discuss cinematic flashback techniques.
Students will participate in a focused brainstorming session to develop story ideas for a short film project.

Materials:

Journals
LCD projector or Promethean Board
Chart paper and Post-Its or Promethean Board
Edward Scissorhands DVD
Edward Scissorhands Hollywood Backstories
Creativity prompts

HANDOUTS:

LCL! 3x3 Story Path Blank Template (from Lesson #8)
Completed LCL! 3x3 Story Path for Edward Scissorhands
Flashback Techniques Capture Sheet
Magical Realism Short Film Project

New Vocabulary: Non-Linear, Flashback, Match-Cut, Sound Bridge, Dissolve, Magical Realism, Creativity, Word Association, Free Write

Sequence of Events:

I. Journal Writing (15)

Prompt: What did you think of the film Edward Scissorhands?

II. Edward Scissorhands - Hollywood Backstories (30)

1. Watch all three parts of Edward Scissorhands - Hollywood Backstories.

[Edward Scissorhands - Hollywood Backstories](#)

Allow time for student reaction.

III. The LCL! 3x3 Story Path for Edward Scissorhands (30)

1. Pass out copies of the LCL! 3x3 Story Path Templates. As a group, students complete the 3x3 Story Path using events from Edward Scissorhands.
2. Groups share their answers.
3. Display the completed LCL! 3x3 Story Path for Edward Scissorhands on the overhead and review with students:

Completed 3x3 Story Path for Edward Scissorhands

4. Explain that it's okay if not everyone agrees on where the events fit exactly into the LCL! 3x3 Story Path. However, it is important that students understand that the film does indeed follow this basic structure. Point out that the audience expects to go on a journey when they watch a movie and having a strong, well-structured plot helps to keep the audience engaged.
5. Explain to students that in Edward Scissorhands the LCL! 3x3 Story Path is **NON-LINEAR**, out of order, and uses multiple

FLASHBACKS. The audience learns Edward's backstory through these flashbacks. (Edward's ordinary world: Edward, created by a kind inventor, lives in a Gothic mansion on a hill. The inventor dies before he can replace Edward's scissor hands with human-shaped hands. Edward stayed alone in the mansion.)

IV. Analyze Flashback Techniques (50)

1. Tell students that flashbacks allow the filmmaker to change the chronological story order to show events that have taken place earlier. Flashbacks can serve multiple purposes in film. Often, flashbacks are used to help explain a character's backstory. This is the case with the flashbacks in Edward Scissorhands.

The whole film actually starts and ends with a flashback as Kim, now an elderly woman, tells the story of her past relationship with Edward to her granddaughter.

2. Tell students there are multiple cinematic techniques for using flashbacks in film and that they are going to watch and analyze the flashback scenes in Edward Scissorhands.
3. Pass out copies of the Flashback Techniques Capture Sheet. Play the Edward Scissorhands flashback scenes listed below. Students will write observations about each flashback scene on their Flashback Techniques Capture Sheets.

You may want to play each scene twice for students. Prompt students to share their observations after watching each scene and use the teacher notes to point out further details as needed.

4. Edward Scissorhands Teacher Notes:

Scene 2. A Story About Snow from the DVD Menu Scene Selection Options.

Music abruptly stops, lighting is very different, clearly moving into a new world or time- the grandmother's story is over.

Scene 7. *The Neighbors* from the DVD Menu Scene Selection Options. (Flashback starts at 33:00 minutes)

MATCH-CUT editing technique. Camera zooms into Edward's face as he stares at the rotating can- then the scene switches onto a can rotating in the flashback scene. Music begins as the viewer is taken into the flashback scene. Lighting and colors change.

Scene 10. *Remembering* from the DVD Menu Scene Selection Options.

This flashback is an example of a **SOUND BRIDGE**. Viewer hears audio (dialogue & music) from the flashback scene before it actually starts. Camera hangs on Edward (medium shot) before cutting to flashback scene.

Scene 20. *Edward Gets Mad* from the DVD Menu Scene Selection Options. Scene begins at 1:24.

Camera slowly zooms into Edward's face as he hugs Kim. The warmth and love he feels toward Kim reminds him of his love for his father figure as the scene **DISSOLVES** into the flashback and we learn why Edward never received his hands. Same piece of music continues as the scene dissolves into the flashback scene. Unlike other flashbacks, this one transitions back to the same scene where it began with Kim and Edward embracing.

V. Magical Realism Short Film Project (25)

1. Explain to students that their final project for the semester involves creating an original short film in the genre of **MAGICAL REALISM**. *Edward Scissorhands* and *I'm Here* are both examples of magical realism.
2. Magical Realism is a genre of film (or fiction) in which magical elements are blended into a realistic atmosphere. Magical Realism involves accepting the unbelievable as reality.

The viewer (and the characters in the film) accept the fantastical as reality from the very start.

Ex.: The community accepts Edward when Peg brings him to live with her and her family. The characters in *I'm Here* accept that robots live among them.

Ask students if they can recall other fantastical elements from *Edward Scissorhands* and *I'm Here*.

3. Pass out copies of The Magical Realism Short Film Project Handout and project on the screen. Review the guidelines.

VI. "Free Your Mind" Writing Prompts (45)

1. **CREATIVITY** is the use of the imagination to come up with original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work.

One of the most challenging aspects in creating an original film is coming up with creative ideas.

Tell students that before they begin thinking about possible ideas for their short film project they will first respond to some writing prompts to help stimulate their creativity. This activity will help students unlock their creative potential by allowing their minds to wander freely and uninterrupted.

2. Tell students they will be responding in their class journals as you project different prompts onto the screen one at a time.
3. Review the guidelines before starting the prompts:
 - Students **must not stop writing** during the required time frame. If they get stuck, they should write the same thought over and over again until something new comes, but they **DO NOT** take their pencil from the paper.

- Tell them not to overthink it. It's important that they simply write what pops into their minds at that moment. They should allow their minds to wander freely and uninterrupted. There are no right or wrong answers - only ideas.
 - Responses will not be shared, so they can let their imaginations run wild!
4. **PROMPTS 1 & 2: WORD ASSOCIATION.** Students **FREE WRITE** for **30 seconds** listing whatever words or phrases pop into their minds. Freewriting is when students allow their minds to wander and write down **WHATEVER** pops into their mind. The ideas can be completely random. **The only rule is they DO NOT STOP WRITING for the allotted time.**

Students write down one word and then another word that the first word brings to mind creating a chain of single words or phrases.

Prompt #1: ALARM

Prompt #2: SLEEPY

5. **PROMPT 3: IMAGE.** Students free write a scenario about an image for 60 seconds.

Prompt #3: [Dark Doorway](#)

6. **PROMPTS 4 & 5: SOUNDS.** Students free write a scenario inspired by a sound for 90 seconds.

Prompt #4: [Carousel](#) sound. Ask students to imagine themselves as a character in a story where the carousel is and to write from that point of view.

Prompt #5: [Big Space Drone](#).

After all the prompts are completed, lead an informal discussion. Was anyone surprised by the process? Did anyone have more success with certain prompts than others? Would anyone like to voluntarily share an idea they came up with or read an excerpt from their writing?

VII. Reflection (15)

1. Direct students to the hanging chart paper labeled:

How can the “freeing your mind” activities increase creativity?

2. Hand out Post-Its on which students write an item to post on the chart.
3. Review the comments on the Post-its with the class, so students have a sense of what was learned that day. Make sure to clear up any misconceptions.