

Lights, Camera, MEDIA Literacy!

Lesson Plan # 18

Topics:

Journal Writing
The Edison Company
Three Stages of Film Production
Storyboards
Mary Pickford

Outcomes:

Students will follow organizational procedures.
Students will see, hear, and use applicable vocabulary.
Students will identify people and machines in a film about Thomas Edison.
Students will discuss the contributions of The Edison Company to early narrative filmmaking.
Students will discuss the three stages of film production.
Students will use storyboards in pre-production.
Students will identify Mary Pickford's contributions as a film pioneer in the early years of moviemaking.

Materials:

Writing journals
LCD projector
Chart paper
Post-its

HANDOUTS: *How Photography Got Its Start* (student completed)
Moving Image Machines (student completed)
How Movies Got Their Start (student completed)
Camera Shots
Storyboard shells
Creating a Three-Act Newsies Film (page one only)
Which Movie Star?

DVD: *EDISON: THE WIZARD OF LIGHT*

BOOK: *MARY PICKFORD REDISCOVERED* by Kevin Brownlow

New Vocabulary: monopoly, storyboard, sequence, shots, pre-production, in production, post-production, intertitles

Sequence of Events:

I. Journal Writing (15)

1. Prompt:

How did you feel about collaborating on a Melies-type film?

II. The Edison Company (95)

1. Tell students that they will be watching a movie made in 2002 about a fictional character that experiences Thomas Edison's involvement in early motion pictures.

2. Direct students to place all three completed handouts...

How Photography Got Its Start,

Moving Image Machines

How Movies Got Their Start

...in front of them and as they watch the movie, they should circle on their papers the names of people or moving image machines that are shown or mentioned.

DVD: EDISON: THE WIZARD OF LIGHT

3. Discuss what machines and people the students have circled as well as their reaction to viewing an interpretation of history.

Does the film help them understand what life might have been like in the early 20th century?

(Mention the tremendous amount of research done by the filmmakers to present a story based in an earlier time period.)

III. Three Stages of Film Production (10)

1. Tell students that they will be creating a very short film about the Newsies strike and that in order to do this, they need to know the three stages of film production:

PRE-PRODUCTION what you do prior to filming

IN PRODUCTION filming on the set

POST-PRODUCTION what you do after filming to assemble and complete the production.

2. Make sure students understand they are now entering pre-production for their films. The following activity will help them in pre-production...

IV. Camera Shots & Storyboards (30)

1. Hand out the packet of camera shots.

HANDOUT: Camera Shots

2. Explain that in pre-production, the **STORYBOARD** (*a sequence of pictures showing each separate SHOT*) is created, so that everyone associated with the film knows the exact plan for filming. They will be showing three scenes in their film, as explained on the directions sheet.

NOTE: STUDENTS RECEIVE ONLY THE 1ST PAGE OF THE DIRECTIONS!!!

HANDOUT: Creating a Three-Act Newsies Film: Page One

3. Direct students to create storyboards for their films:
After discussing different ideas as a group to come up with one master storyboard that uses simplistic drawings, even stick figures.

HANDOUTS: Storyboard shells

4. Groups turn in storyboards for approval.

V. Early Narrative Filmmaking (35)

1. Tell students that to this day filmmakers have enthusiastically joined in Edison's idea of telling stories and entertaining audiences through movies. They are going to see how much they know about 20 statements on a paper called "**Which Movie Star?**" by placing the name of a movie star from the given list in each of the blanks to complete the sentence accurately. They may use names more than once. Tell them they only get fifteen minutes to complete this individually or with a partner.

HANDOUT: Which Movie Star?

Even if all have not finished, stop after 15 minutes to review answers.

(Answer key: All answers are "**MARY PICKFORD.**") ☺

2. Call on individual students to read the sentences aloud with the correct answer inserted, so that they hear "Mary Pickford" all twenty times.

(Note: Although students could argue that # 10, 11, 15, 17 might possibly have more than her name and still be accurate, explain that it is Mary Pickford that will receive our focus in these lessons.)

3. Hold up the Brownlow Book **MARY PICKFORD REDISCOVERED**. Ask how many have heard of Mary Pickford before today?
4. Tell students that next session they will have the opportunity to view a Mary Pickford film.

VI. Reflection: (15)

1. Direct students to the hanging chart paper labeled:

What did you learn about Edison's role in early filmmaking?

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