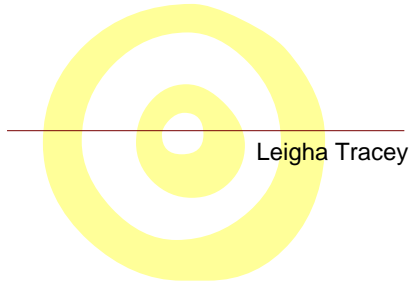


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Two Thumps Up

April 2002



Two Thumbs Up

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Movie Reviews

Objectives

Students will

1. Recognize different elements of a movie, focusing on both the final product and the process of making that product.
2. Analyze brief movie reviews provided.
3. Outline a movie review in a group discussion.
4. Develop a movie review in groups

Activities/Procedures

1. Put a short movie review on the overhead and read to the group as they follow along.
2. Do a concept map on the board about movies.
3. Discussion on what elements make up a movie. Write student responses on the board.
4. As a class, read a brief movie review. Put on the overhead, then focus on the following questions:

What is the plot of this film, and what are the reviewer's views of the plot?

How did the reviewer feel about the actors' and actresses' performances?

In what genre of film might this film be classified? (drama, comedy, horror, science fiction, documentary, etc.)

What specific descriptive words are used in the review to illustrate the writer's opinions of the plot, acting, or other elements of the film?

Had you heard of this movie prior to reading this review? If so, did this review change your opinions of the movie, and why?



5. Put students into groups. Each group selects a movie, either currently in the theater or an old favorite, for the focus of a movie. Make sure that students should select different movies. Give groups about ten minutes to write their review. Select a few groups to read their reviews.

Ask class to give a thumbs up or thumbs down based on the review if they would see the movie or not. All reviews should include the following:

-Names of stars of the movie

-Name of the director

-Rating

-Length of movie

-Evaluation of the plot of the movie

-Evaluation of actors' performances

-Any other elements of the movie that make this film unique (soundtrack, famous cinematographer or producer, etc.)

-Clear opinion of the film illustrated throughout the review, apparent in the analysis of the plot, characters, and other elements of the film

-Use of descriptive language throughout the review (use a thesaurus!)

-No more than 100 words (excluding names of stars, director, rating, and length)

Further Questions for Discussion

1. What are the different elements that make up a movie?

2. What different genres of film can you identify?

3. How are films rated, and are these rating systems effective?

4. What different people are involved in the creation of a movie, and what do they do?

5. How do descriptive words illustrate a writer's opinions of the plot, acting, or other elements of a movie in a movie review?
6. How do movie reviews influence people to see or not see a movie?
7. How do movie reviews differ from other types of newspaper articles?
8. How do films reflect the society in which they are created?
9. What makes certain movies popular, and why?
10. What makes a movie "good," in your opinion?

Evaluation and Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on participation in classroom discussion, and group movie review.

Other Information on the Web

The Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com>) provides everything you ever wanted to know about every movie ever made, including current releases.

Book Reviews

1. What do you think a movie and book review has in common?
Both will deal with:
 - Plot
 - Setting
 - Tone
 - Characters
 - Theme
2. Ask class what is important to include when convincing someone to read a book (such as specific elements of the plot, a good surprise ending, an interesting or endearing character, etc.). Add to the list on the board.

3. Place a brief book review on the overhead and answer the following questions as a group.

- a) What does the reviewer say the book is about?
- b) Is there a particular scene on which the reviewer focuses? Why do you think he or she chose this scene?
- c) How does the reviewer describe a main character?
- d) Does the reviewer offer a description of the setting of the novel (where and when it takes place)? If so, why is this setting significant to the book as a whole?
- e) What does the reviewer say is the main theme (universal message) of the book?
- f) Overall, does the reviewer have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the book? Include the reviewer's actual words in discussing his or her opinion.
- g) If you have read this book, do you agree with the reviewer's opinions? Why or why not?
- h) If you have not read this book, does the book review make you want to read it? Why or why not? What techniques does the critic use to persuade or dissuade you from reading the book?

4. Ask the class to give the book a thumbs up or thumbs down based on the review.

Tell the group that there are several places they can submit their own reviews and refer to the list on their handout packets. Encourage them to give it a try. Also discuss implementing a review section in their newspaper or yearbook, if they don't already have one. Reviews are important to understanding and developing the concept of culture. Reviews are a way to put your own "stamp" on something and to use your creativity to provide entertainment and information to your readers.

In addition, the review format can be used as a fun way to write about school events and personalities. You never know, one of you could become the next Ebert or Roper!