**Subject:** History-Media studies

**Title:** Nationality of films

**Grade:**16-17 year olds

**Time:** 1.30 (after having watching the film)

**Teacher:** Katsikogianni Vaso

**Material:**

Dvd with the film ‘Brides’/Nyfes

Internet access

**Methodology:**

Discussion

Group work

Research

**Overview**

Films can be much more than entertainment; they can also help students better understand themselves, their culture, and other forms of media.

Films reflect the cultures and nations in which they were produced. Hollywood films, one might argue, reflect certain things about the American nation's culture: love of distraction, attraction to adrenaline and testosterone, good’s triumph over evil, and belief that things work out in the end.

Other cultures and nations have different values and so produce different sorts of films. Sometimes these films baffle us. We might watch a French film, for example, and wonder why it's funny. Or we might watch a Russian film and wonder why the director never calls for a close up. These observations are in fact excellent starting places. Consider differences. Find out if these differences reflect something about the national character, or if they reflect trends in the national cinema.

**Objectives**

To help students

1. see the media as one of the paths to create a universal sense of citizenship and culture
2. understand national cinema as a medium of promoting local culture, cultural diversity and national specificity, reflecting on the nation itself, its cultural heritage, its indigenous traditions, its sense of common identity and continuity
3. understand that national films display the nation’s culture to the world when screened abroad
4. understand that films educate about the practices and social codes of a society at any given moment
5. see’ beyond the frame’ /analyze the movie with the help of the teacher-provided “Questions to Think About”
6. examine a cultural phenomenon (immigration)
7. understand that films are a collaborative medium, not one person can control the product. A lot of people sometimes from different nationalities have a hand in determining the final product of film (co-productions)
8. write a synopsis

**Procedure**

**Activities:**

 “Questions to Think About”

Ask students the following questions:

1. Do films have nationality?
2. Have you ever watched a Spanish/Italian/Chinese film? Can you tell one from the other?
3. Which factors define the nationality of a film? Choose from the following:

Language

Cast

Crew

Filming location(s)

Music/soundtrack

Costumes

Story line/ Topic

Script

Audience

Genre

Values/outlook of life

Financing

Country of production

Other

1. Look at the ‘Brides’ homepage (follow the link below) and find information about the nationality of the above.

<http://thecia.com.au/reviews/b/images/brides-nyfes-production-notes.pdf>

1. After completing the information above, think:
2. which elements constitute the Greek-ness of the ‘Brides’
3. whether it is intended for a domestic or an international audience. Explain.
4. Read the reviews about Brides (see Worksheet) written by various viewers in The Internet Movie Database (IMDb). Find out in which category the viewers belong:
* Greek
* Greek of the diaspora
* Not Greek
1. Does the film reflect any cultural phenomenon? Is it national or transnational?
2. What other universal themes are there in the film?
3. Read the reviews again and underline which of the following themes are mentioned by the international audience.

unrequited love gender class family values destiny

1. Suggest some topics that the national cinema of the following countries would deal with:

Romania Italy Serbia England

India Ireland Spain France

1. Did the film help you understand a part of Greek history better?
2. What about the reviewers above who are not Greek? Were they able to understand the part of Greek history depicted in the film?
3. Has the director of the Brides made the film appealing to an international audience? How is this apparent? Tick the following:
* universal themes
* Hollywood aesthetic
* foreign elements within the narrative
	+ use of national stereotypes or icons
* cast/production helped in the marketing of the film to an international audience
1. Generally, how is your country and nationality portrayed to the world through this film?

**Homework**

Write a movie Synopsis for someone who hasn’t seen the movie yet and wants to figure out what the movie is about.

A synopsis is a brief summary of the film. The formula is always the same: a bird's eye view of the story; letting the reader know what to expect; withholding enough detail to save the suspense. Overall, when writing your SYNOPSIS, use visual images to convey the story as much as possible. If the reader can see the story in their head, then they will want to watch the film.a sense of what to expect, without reading a lot of detail. That's all you need.

1. Identify

the target market

the genre or sub-genre (i.e., Drama, Romantic Comedy)

1. Present a brief, interesting capsule of the body (about 25 words) including setting, period, and sense of tone
2. Write about character development, situation, motivation, conflict, and resolution
3. Talk about only the key scenes and turning points that influence the lead characters’ actions
4. Mention any notable contest awards or additional important information
5. Use formal language, one paragraph, third person, present tense, linking words ( As a result; In addition; In conclusion etc.)

**Evaluation**

#### Rubric for Participation in Class Discussion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Participation:**  | **Comments on Student’s Participation:** | **1→5:** |
| Participated often in discussion. |  |  |
| Listened well to others. |  |  |
| Comments demonstrate reflection and understanding about how films reveal national identities. |  |  |
| Comments reflect that student has new appreciation of films and their meanings. |  |  |

**References**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0368619/>

<http://thecia.com.au/reviews/b/images/brides-nyfes-production-notes.pdf>

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/film.shtml>

<http://www.offscreen.com/index.php/phile/essays/local_global_identity/>