

# **“Ogres are like onions: Peeling back the layers of film as text”**

## Presented by:

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A Link to Our Presentation: <http://www.slideshare.net/mistersloan/ogres-are-like-onions-peeling-back-the-layers-of-film-as-text-16256609>

## Function and power of films in the classroom:

“Great films are the modern vernacular equivalent of ancient classics, embodiments of the human capacity to imagine and create in a commonly understood language. Great art represents the highest use of the creative spirit and provides a uniquely aesthetic experience. What others have attained in poetry, prose fiction, music, theater, ballet, and opera, filmmakers now attain with the tools and techniques of cinema” (Nichols)

“Movies deliver a powerful emotional impact distinct from the impact of other media. This, too, relates to the ability of moving images to bring situations and events back to life on a screen as well as to aesthetics” (Nichols)

## A broadened consideration of “text”:

1. A stretch of language, either in speech or in writing, that is semantically and pragmatically coherent in its real-world context. A text can range from a single word to a sequence of utterances and sentences in a speech, a letter, a novel, etc. (Carter and McCarthy)
  - a. *In short, “a coherent stretch of language that may be regarded as an object of critical analysis”*
2. “A text may be defined as a relatively independent and hierarchically structured linguistic unit which reflects a complex state of affairs and has a specific communicative intention” (Glaser)

## Film as a distinct form and structure:

“Every encounter with a cinematic world is more like a guided tour, and every tour guide, or filmmaker, has her own perspective on the film world she displays for us. Viewers need not accept the filmmaker’s perspective, but they cannot escape it either” (Nichols)

“The look of a painting, the flow of a novel, and the shape of a film all accomplish the same thing: they produce the viewer’s immediate experience of a distinct world. Pondering its significance follows from active engagement with form” (Nichols)

**Suggestions for further use of film in the classroom:**

**In the ELA classroom:**

1. Literary Elements introduction or review: **Shrek, The Lion King**
2. Friendship, Loneliness, Mental Disability (to complement a book such as Of Mice and Men): **Radio, The Mighty**
3. Finding Yourself, Overcoming Adversity, Who am I? Units (to complement a book such as Bronx Masquerade): **The Express: The Ernie Davis Story, Freedom Writers**
4. "Antigone", Female Heroines, Tragic Hero: **Joan of Arc, The Whale Rider**
5. To Kill a Mockingbird, Racism, Moral Integrity: **A Time to Kill**
6. Holocaust: **Boy in the Striped Pajamas, Life is Beautiful**

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**In the Film classroom (or as full-film text studies in the ELA classroom):**

Suggestions (by title) include the following films. Detailed exploration of the use of these films and others is included on a separate handout:

**Avatar, Apollo 13, Casablanca, The Hunger Games, Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring, The Princess Bride, The Sixth Sense, The Truman Show**, among many others

Personal Connections:

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Bruder, P. (2008). *Using film in your literature classroom: lights, camera...read!*. New Jersey Education Association. Retrieved from <http://www.njea.org/teaching-and-learning/classroom-tools/toolbox/using-film-in-your-literature-classroom>

Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge Grammar of English*. Cambridge University Press.

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Hitchcock, A. (Producer and director). (1959). *North by Northwest* [Motion picture]. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Katzenberg, J., Warner, A., & Williams, H (Producers) and Adamson, A. & Jensen, V. (Directors). (2001). *Shrek* [Motion picture]. United States: PDI/Dreamworks.

Nichols, B. (2010). *Engaging Cinema: An Introduction to Film Studies*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Public Broadcasting Service. *Why study film in the classroom?* Retrieved from [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/learningresources/fic\\_intro.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/learningresources/fic_intro.html) (extensive list of additional resources available from this site)

**Common Core Standards: Which standards are relevant to me?**

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**Activities:**

**Introductory Montage:**

**Initial Reactions:**