

Film and Society Essay

In what ways does the film industry give us insight into the culture of the time?

Choose 2 of the 3 time periods & answer the bolded question with specific, detailed examples from that part of the unit supported by your own analysis. Examples should be drawn from the aspects of film covered in class.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- You are going to write a 3 paragraph essay (an intro paragraph & 2 argumentative body paragraphs.)
 - Your 2 body paragraphs should open with an argumentative topic sentence, which addresses the bolded question above, and be followed by 2-3 specific pieces of evidence.
 - You should try wherever possible to use PRIMARY SOURCES as your evidence. You must have at least 1 primary source quote in each of your body paragraphs.
- Evidence could be drawn from quotes or detailed descriptions of scenes from a film, quotes from historians, etc.. (You will find these things in the slideshows & class work. No additional research is required.)
- You do NOT need a bibliography for this assignment as you should be using material from class (NO OUTSIDE RESEARCH.)

Resources ([LINK TO UNIT SLIDESHOW](#))

- Film slideshow & notes (Golden Age of Film, *A Celebration of American Silent Film* movie notes, Early Animation, 1920s & 1930s in Film, Movies and Censorship)
- “How American Cinema Rose to Power” reading
- ADDITIONAL SOURCES are in the slideshow itself (lots of primary source clips)

Essay planning

Step 1: Brainstorm to remind yourself of what you know.

- A. Choose your decades. Consider which 2 decades of the 3 you feel most familiar with, know the most about, relate the most to, or found the most interesting. Then think about what was happening in those decades. What were some of the political, social and/or economic trends or themes of the time? What was going on in each decade? (HISTORICAL INFO GOES ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CHART BELOW)
- B. Now shift your focus back to film. What are some of the topics we learned about in films at this time? Consider the topics of movies themselves, the business side of how film/Hollywood worked, the technology that went into making films, etc.. (FILL THIS INFO IN ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CHART BELOW)

Film Essay – BRAINSTORMING SHEET

<u>HISTORICAL CONTEXT:</u> Decade & historical trends	<u>POP CULTURE EVIDENCE:</u> Films in that decade (detail on movies, tech, stars, film business, etc.)
Early 1900s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Industrialization, rise of business & technology, development of cars ● WWI 	
1920s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prohibition -> rise of gangs ● Flappers ● Roaring '20s ● Jazz music ● Economic boom 	
1930s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Great Depression ● Poverty ● Crime ● Dust Bowl 	People used films as a form of escape from the Great Depression - ex Shirley Temple films (Bright Eyes)

Step 2: Make connections between the left and right side of your brainstorming ↑↑ chart. Where are there overlapping themes that you could use to guide your paragraph? Choose 2-3 themes/trends that you understand and feel comfortable explaining in depth.

Step 3: Write a thesis statement that answers the question & integrates the 2 themes/trends you plan to explore.

Step 4: Gather evidence from your notes to support those themes. Find SPECIFIC, DETAILED evidence. Your paragraph should have a minimum of 2-3 detailed examples to illustrate the theme.

Step 5: Plan out your body paragraphs

- Open with your topic sentence (Be sure it's analytical and makes a clear argument that answers the bolded question at the top of this assignment)
- Start off your paragraph with some brief historical background on the decade.
- Add in the 2-3 detailed examples from the unit along with the evidence you plan to use. Pull those detailed examples from class notes/slideshow, primary sources, etc.. Remember, you need to use a minimum of 1 primary source quote in each body paragraph.
- Remember to pause after each example and analyze the evidence. You're trying to connect it back to the idea that film tells us something about the time.
- For those who sometimes struggle with analysis, I would encourage you to write a sentence analyzing each of your examples underneath the evidence. This will give you a chance to practice and me a chance to look it over to make sure that what you think is analysis, actually is.