

Project B3 Title: A Short History of Silent Film

Description

This project will provide students with an opportunity to not only take a peek into film history by examining technique from the silent film era, but also to trace a connection to a deliberate allusion to it in contemporary cinema. The idea is to foster a sense that the latest trend in movies owes a debt to its cinematic ancestors, and that no film merely arises out of a vacuum. Often, filmmakers pay tribute to this fact through an homage in their films. Students should be exposed to several of the possibilities of investigation either through a film on the early history of cinema or through a lecture or presentation. Once they have seen enough clips of early cinema, usually they will recognize some allusion that is present in a film they know to be from the silent era. Once they find it, they should get the details and see if they can dig up whether or not the contemporary filmmaker was, in fact, making a deliberate reference, allusion, or homage. If so, then they write up their discovery in the form of a one-page documentary script in correct two-column format. If not, they get to keep hunting.

Product

At the conclusion of this project the student(s) will create a one-page documentary script explaining the deliberate homage made by a contemporary filmmaker to a film from the silent era.

Objectives

This project is designed to allow students to:

- Become acquainted with documentary script format
- Recognize that all contemporary cinema owes a debt to the past
- Explore in the history of the silent era as one possibility for investigation for the big Independent Study assessment in B7 later on.
- Get used to the idea of relaying research in the form of a script

Support

Success on this project will depend on lessons in:

- Standard two-column documentary script format
- Early film history
- The concept of a homage

Links

This project connects to [A3](#) in the other Film assessments.

Resources

Essential resources include a DVD compilation of early silent films.

Variants

This project might be modified by requiring students to actually capture the clips from the two films and add their own voice-over narration, thus creating a mini documentary of their discovery. They might also make a link to a film from another culture instead of to a film from the silent era.