

TITLE OF LESSON

English 1 Unit 2 Lesson 15 – Autobiography, Telling Your Story through Film, Target Audience, Medium, Point of View

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

Up to three class periods

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 9-10: R1.0-3, W1.0, L/S1.0-9, 1.11-14

MATERIALS

El Norte – Film

Story Tools sheet (students create)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the concepts of target audience, medium and point of view
 - To show how authors might choose to tell their story through film
 - To reinforce the concepts of literary elements/tools as demonstrated in film as well as literature
 - To reinforce positive discussion and forming opinions with supporting evidence
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EXPLANATION OF LESSON

For this particular lesson, students will be watching the movie *El Norte* to study the idea of being able to tell a story through film. The movie addresses the issues inherent in immigration, in particular recent Mexican immigration. Although there are many who believe all cultures have at one time or another been immigrants, there are some who may be offended at the idea of illegal immigration. You know your student and parent demographics best. Please view the movie prior to presenting it to your class to determine appropriateness for your student population. If you feel it is inappropriate, choose a different film that tells the story of an individual or individuals undertaking a journey. Students will be taking notes to determine the target audience of this particular film, the message, point of view, character appearance/description, action/events, reflection, evaluation and dialogue. It will be important for you to help students to wade through what is important to take notes on and what is not important. The film is fairly lengthy. Should you choose to show the entire film (depending upon your class schedule), you may want to set aside three class periods. Or you could opt to show clips of the important parts. If you do not live in an immigrant community, be prepared to field questions in as unbiased a manner as possible. The film is told from the point of view of the immigrant. Allow for questions and some discussion at the end of the movie.

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded work and have students place it in the appropriate section of their folders.
- 2) **Agenda/Daily Log** – Have students copy the agenda you have written on the front board.
- 3) **Vocabulary** – Prior to class, write the list of vocabulary words below across your front board or on an overhead projector. When students arrive, ask them to take out a piece of paper and write the following words across the top:

target audience message point of view character/description action/events reflection evaluation
dialogue medium

- 4) **Story Tools** – Have them draw a vertical line between each word, creating their own story tools sheet. Students should recognize most of the words. Underneath each word, have them write the definition. When

- they have finished, ask for volunteers to read their answers out loud. Write their answers on your board or overhead. You are reviewing story tools with them as they will be identifying the story tools in this film.
- 5) **Identify New Vocabulary** – Students may notice there are a few new words. Ask if anyone knows what they mean. Allow students to struggle with the definitions, before you give the answers or allow the use of a dictionary. It is in the struggle or wrestling with words that learning takes place. Start with *target audience*. Tell students that a target audience is the reader that the author would like to aim his/her piece of writing at. In film, the target audience is the viewer that filmmakers want to watch their film. Ask students if they can think of any films that have been targeted specifically at teenagers (e.g., *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, *Boyz in the Hood*, *Bring It On*, *American Pie*, *Scream*, etc.). Ask them why filmmakers might want to target a specific audience. Hopefully students will come up with answers like “so more people will go see the film” or “so they can make more money.” Ask students to think about what kinds of teen target audiences there are, if there is more than one (e.g., African American teens, Latino teens, female teens, male teens, athletic teens, hip hop teens, etc.). The idea is to help students to understand that often it is more effective from a sales and marketing point of view to target particular sub-cultures because we have such a large population in our society. This is a hard concept for many ninth graders to understand. So be prepared to spend some time answering questions.
 - 6) **Medium and Point of View** – Next, tell students that a *medium* is a vehicle, forum, method, tool used to convey a message. One medium is film. Ask if they can think of other mediums (i.e. books, magazines, radio, billboards, songs, poems, newspaper, Internet, etc). Finally, tell students that *point of view* is the eyes through which a story is told, complete with that person's thoughts feelings and recollections. Ask students to think about the pieces of writing they have been working on in your class. What kind of writing is it? By this time they should be able to tell you it's autobiography without hesitation. Ask them what point of view their piece is written from. Hopefully, they will be able to say the author's point of view or their own. Ask if there could be other points of view in their stories. Move them towards understanding that a story could be told from the point of view of the author or from the point of view of another character or from a third party's point of view, usually the narrator.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Directions** – Tell them that today they will be watching a film and taking notes. It will be their job to be very observant and write down the important parts *only* of today's film. They should be looking for the tools on their chart. Underneath each tool, they will write in the examples they see of it in the film. There may be more than one example of each tool. So be careful and pay attention. Tell them that target audience, medium, point of view and message are all linked together. To figure out one they must be able to figure out all of the others.
2. **Film** – Watch *El Norte*.
3. **Debrief** – If you have time at the end of each class period that you show the film, ask students what examples they found for each of the tools. In particular, focus on message, target audience, medium, and point of view. Make sure that as they give you answers, they are also backing up their ideas with specific examples from the film. This is a perfect opportunity to reinforce the concept that a good idea is supported with evidence that backs it up. You may want to ask how point of view and message are linked. Ask them how the message and target audience may be linked. Can this filmmaker have more than one target audience? Why do they think this filmmaker made this film? Do they think the filmmaker had a different point of view than the main character and if so, was it apparent in the film and how? Give ample opportunity for dissenting points of view, as long as they can back up their opinions with concrete examples. As you bring the discussion to a close and are picking up their notes to grade them, tell students they should begin to think about and keep in mind the messages they would like to send in their writing and who they would like to send them to. You may want to bring up the idea of journey by asking students what kind of journey this filmmaker is attempting to convey to his audience. Is there more than one? Is it physical or mental, emotional, psychological or intellectual or all of the above? And how are his concepts of journey linked to each other?

4. Homework Review – Review homework. Then collect folders to be graded according to organization and thoroughness. Yes, now is the time to make sure all those missed assignments magically appear, as they can receive partial credit for them through their folder grade!
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HOMEWORK

OPTIONAL: you could ask them to watch television and choose one show they normally watch and fill in a story tools sheet for that film to include target audience, medium, point of view and message. Make sure that if you assign this, you also make time to discuss their findings as a class.

GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

Final Exam Unit 1
Hero Myth
Trickster Myth
Monster Myth
Creation Myth

Unit 2

Autobiographical Incident 1
Autobiographical Incident 2