



OUR MAN IN TEHRAN LESSON PLAN

TARGET GRADE LEVELS: Grades 9-12

SUBJECT RELEVANCE: English – Media Studies

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MAIN THEMES AND MESSAGES

Revolution, justice, equality, equity, overcoming adversity, independence, politics, military action, rivalry, relationships, acceptance, political upheaval, rights and freedoms.

LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This lesson guide is to supplement the high school academic English courses (grades 9 through 12). The lesson activities are presented to provide the teacher with ideas for implementation and assessment of the “Media Studies” strand of the course.

The film *Our Man in Tehran* provides a contemporary avenue for infusing relevance and interest into the content of the high school English courses. For each of the aforementioned strands, clear connections (and extensions) between the film and content will be provided:

- **“Premise”** - shows the connection between the curriculum material and the contents of the film.
- **“Guiding Questions”** - can be used to engage student thinking in class-discussions, or can serve as the core-questions in mini-assignments or projects
- **“Sample Activities”** – ideas for formative or summative assessment



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

MEDIA STUDIES

- 1.1 explain how media texts, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, are created to suit particular purposes and audiences
- 1.2 interpret media texts, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, identifying and explaining the overt and implied messages they convey
- 1.4 explain why the same media text might prompt different responses from different audiences
- 2.1 identify general and specific characteristics of a variety of media forms and explain how they shape content and create meaning
- 3.1 describe the topic, purpose, and audience for media texts they plan to create
- 3.2 select a media form to suit the topic, purpose, and audience for a media text they plan to create, and explain why it is a highly appropriate choice
- 3.4 produce media texts, including increasingly complex texts, for a variety of purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

Pre-Viewing Activity:	“Inferences from Imagery”
<i>Materials:</i>	computers for poster viewing
<i>Time Allocation:</i>	~20-30 minutes
<p>Students can practice their analytic, reasoning, and extrapolation abilities by examining the movie poster for <i>Our Man in Tehran</i> and developing a synopsis for the film.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will be organized into groups of two or three, and choose one of the following roles for themselves: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recorder (responsible for typing or writing) b. graphic analyst 2. Students will use the poster below and create a hypothesized synopsis of the movie 3. The plot mentioned in their synopsis write-up must reference the movie poster as evidence of their thinking <p>Students, working in small groups of 2-3, should take the following into consideration when analyzing the movie poster: <i>number of characters, tagline of the film, title of the film, actor(s) featured, facial expression and body posture, colours used, objects, icons, symbols, colour, and mood created.</i></p> <p>http://www.vernonfilmsociety.bc.ca/fallfest2013/our-man-in-tehran-poster.jpg [printable copy of poster on page 4]</p>	
<i>Modifications and Notes:</i>	<p>After students have completed their synopses, the trailer can then be shown to the students. The plot shown in the trailer can be compared to the ones that the students drafted → students can make revisions as necessary</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LyR2N67Sq0</p>



POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Premise:

The production and release of a movie implies the involvement of a wide array of media texts. Prior to the release, movie posters, radio advertisements, print advertisements, radio jingles, clothing, news articles, could all be produced to promote the film. In this section, students will have the opportunity to examine the different kinds of media texts, the purposes and effectiveness of each, as well as the opportunity to produce their own in context with the film.

Guiding Questions:

1. The movie poster for the film possesses certain elements that hint at the content of the film, what are they?
2. Do you think that the reception of this film would be different for an international audience, as opposed to a Canadian one?
3. Why is it important to tell Canadian stories? What would happen if we didn't?

Sample Activity:	“Motivation is Key”
<i>Materials:</i>	Access to a computer and a printer, student handout labelled same (PAGE 5)
<i>Time Allocation:</i>	~60 minutes
<p>Motivational posters are commonly found and used in a variety of settings to provide inspiration to the viewer. Typically, they feature a picture that is expanded upon by a large block of text (the subject of the poster) followed by a smaller line of descriptive text (putting the subject of the poster into context). Many of the posters that adopt this format are often used ironically or satirically.</p> <p>As an example, students can be shown the following motivational poster:</p> <p>http://www.brandonberndt.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/unemployment.jpg</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students, working individually, should first find a picture from the movie (by using the Google image search engine, with the key words “Our Man in Tehran movie”) they want to use for their poster 2. Students can then use the following website to create their poster: http://bighugelabs.com/motivator.php 3. To supplement their poster creation, students must write a descriptive paragraph that discusses why they chose their particular image, what their message is, who it is intended for, and why. 	





Sample Activity:	"Kijiji Ad Response"
<i>Materials:</i>	Student handout labelled same (PAGE 6)
<i>Time Allocation:</i>	~45 minutes
<p>This activity will assess students' ability to formulate an argument and provide evidence and rationale to supports their statements. Students will be writing a response to a user on a popular buy-and-sell website (similar to the American craigslist parallel) that has requested that another user offer a film that is representative of Canadian films and culture.</p> <p>Students' response should incorporate a discussion of the setting, the soundtrack, and the cast of the film. This will require some research and access to computers. Their response should not only discuss the individual Canadian components of the film, but also the combined effect of those parts to create a distinctly "Canadian" movie. Students are encouraged to cite scenes or events from the film to support their discussion.</p>	



MOTIVATION IS KEY!

Feeling apathetic? Perhaps it is boredom you are suffering from? Well, shake yourself out of that funk! What you need is a motivational poster to get yourself in gear so that you can have the energy to be all that you can be!

Your responsibility is as follows: create a motivational poster using an image from *Our Man in Tehran* so that you can refuel yourself with inspiration whenever you're feeling out of it! Who knows, maybe other people could benefit from your poster too!

Your poster can talk about a social issue, an emotion or state of being, or whatever strikes your fancy!

For example:



Your procedure is as follows:

1. Use the Google search engine, with the keywords "Our Man in Tehran movie", and find an appropriate image you would like to use
2. Go to "<http://bighugelabs.com/motivator.php>" and follow their instructions on making a motivational poster
3. Create a short write up for your poster that discusses the following: **why you chose that specific image, what your message is, who your poster is intended for, and what kind of reaction you hope to gain from their viewing it**



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Wanted to Buy: Canadian Film



Date Listed	01-Jun-12
Last Edited	14-Jun-12
Price	Please contact
Address	Toronto, ON M4J, Canada View map

Greetings, I am a self-proclaimed film connoisseur and I have begun the work of what I can only describe as amassing the greatest collection of films in the history of cinematography. For every year since physical copies of films have been available, I have been collecting a film from every country, storing said films inside my guarded cine-vault. I believe films are an expression of humanity's soul, and every country has a different way of showcasing their interpretation.

Reviewing my collection so far, I have noticed that I am missing a film of the following criteria: released in 2006 and classified as being "Canadian". Although it's classification as being "Canadian" is required, the content of the film must also be representative of Canadian culture and ideas.

I implore you, Canadian users who may be reading this, to lend me the wealth of your knowledge and experience and suggest a film to fill this vacancy. However, due to my meticulous nature, I must ask that any suggestion you make must be supported by evidence from the film that explains what about the film is distinctly "Canadian". Perhaps take into consideration the casting, setting, soundtrack, plot, and their combined effect to create a distinctly "Canadian" vibe.

I am willing to travel to pick up the film. Thank you in advance, kind stranger.



OUR MAN IN TEHRAN: POST-VIEWING QUIZ /10

1. What aspects of the Shah makes him a very formidable opponent for Ayatollah Khomeini?

2. Which famous historical figure was Ayatollah Khomeini compared to and why?

3. What were some of the slogans used during the dissident movement demonstrations against the Shah?

4. When President Carter stopped by in Tehran for New Year's Eve, what advice did his senior administration give him for his speech?

5. What was the codename of the commando rescue operation?

6. Why was it that the Shah possessed more leverage over the United States than the converse?

7. How did the Shah gain his position on the throne?

8. What did the United States sell to Iran that they've sold to no other country in the world before?

9. What tragedy happened while the commandos were conducting the rescue operation

10. What triggered the hostage crisis?



OUR MAN IN TEHRAN: POST-VIEWING QUIZ (ANSWERS)

1. What aspects of the Shah makes him a very formidable opponent for Ayatollah Khomeini?
The Shah has been on the throne for 37 years, has a large military force, a fearsome secret service, and lots of money.
2. Which famous historical figure was Ayatollah Khomeini compared to and why?
Ayatollah Khomeini was compared to Ghandi for being a democratic revolutionary.
3. What were some of the slogans used during the dissident movement demonstrations against the Shah
“down with the shah”, “guerilla war is the only way to freedom”, “people, pick up your arms”, “yonkee go home”, “death to the shah”
4. When President Carter stopped by in Tehran for New Year’s Eve, what advice did his senior administration give him for his speech?
They told President Carter to talk about the positive qualities of the Iranian people, and to avoid lauding the Shah.
5. What was the codename of the commando rescue operation?
Operation EAGLE CLAW.
6. Why was it that the Shah possessed more leverage over the United States than the converse?
It is because Iran had oil and was responsible for defending American interests in the Middle East.
7. How did the Shah gain his position on the throne?
His father was an Iranian military officer than launched a coup and declared himself Shah.
8. What did the United States sell to Iran that they’ve sold to no other country in the world before?
The United States sold Iran 72 F-14 Tomcat fighter jets.
9. What tragedy happened while the commandos were conducting the rescue operation?
One of the helicopters clipped an airplane on the ground and crashed.
10. What triggered the hostage crisis?
When the Shah was allowed into the United States for cancer treatment, the Iranians thought it was a CIA plot to retake Iran.