

Fresno Pacific University  
Center for Professional Development

Course Syllabus

**LNG 905 Reel Reading: Film and Literacy (7-12)**

Instructor: Elaine Reimer Paré

Contact Information

Phone: 514-696-1631

Email: [empare@videotron.ca](mailto:empare@videotron.ca)

### **Course Description**

English teachers are always looking for new ways to engage students in literature. The average student may have a difficult time naming five favorite novels, but he/she could probably recommend at least ten “must sees” for your weekend movie party. Young adults (like most people) love to watch movies; however, few realize how closely film is linked to literature. In fact, incorporating film into the English classroom can help students strengthen the analytical skills essential in the study of literary texts.

Using a medium that students already love makes learning how to identify plot structures, point of view, character development, setting, etc., an exciting and enjoyable process. Whether teachers use film clips or entire films, they will help students build critical thinking skills that they may then apply to literary texts. English students will gain confidence in their ability to analyze written texts because they have been able to “see” the structures in a visual text that is part of their everyday lives.

This course will help students learn how they can use film to enhance their teaching of literature. Students will read John Golden’s *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom*, develop lessons based on the models in the reading, teach several films or clips (making specific links between the film and literature analysis), and reflect on their learning/teaching experiences.

The standards established by the National Council of Teachers of English are reinforced throughout this course. Assignments have been designed to help teachers implement the objectives of the standards, such as leading students to “apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.” The text for the course, *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom*, is an NCTE publication and strongly promotes concepts highlighted in the standards.

*Reel Reading: Film and Literacy* has been developed as an online course. Students enrolled in the course will receive access to the course’s website where the welcome letter, syllabus, assignment listing, and teacher forum are available. The course’s text will be sent by regular mail. Instructor/student discussion and interaction will be encouraged throughout the course’s duration. Extra resources are available on the website, as well as grade reports, message boards, and assignment submission links.

### **Learning Objectives / Outcomes**

It is hoped that students of this course will learn many strategies for using film in the English classroom. This list highlights the main goals established by the course. Please note the national standards addressed through each objective (the number refers to the standard as described in the following section).

Students of this course will be able to:

- Define basic film and cinematic terminology (1, 6)

- Explain and illustrate film terminology to their students (1, 3, 6)
- Identify film scenes that demonstrate the elements of fiction, such as point of view, symbolism, setting, character, etc. (1, 3, 6)
- Provide critical analyses of film “texts” (1, 3, 6)
- Make links between film and literary text analysis in the classroom (1, 2, 3, 6)
- Create lesson plans that engage students with film and print texts (1, 2, 3, 6, 12)
- Design lesson plans to teach film so that it contributes to their students’ literary education (rather than as a “rainy day” activity) and builds stronger critical thinking, reading, and writing skills (1, 2, 3, 6)
- Identify ways to open the eyes of their students to world cultures, current issues, societal trends, etc., through both film and literary texts (1, 2, 3, 12)
- Create classroom discussion questions inspired by the film clips shown in order to encourage students’ skills in critical thinking, comparison, and analysis (1, 3, 6, 12)
- Identify the ways that using film in the classroom helps them to meet the national standards for the teaching of English
- Choose appropriate film texts that meet the standards of their state, school district and school
- Use film in the English classroom with confidence and enthusiasm
- Analyze and critique current film resources and teaching strategies

### **National Standards**

This course specifically addresses the following standards established by the National Council of Teachers of English:

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

### **Course Materials**

- Golden, John. *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 2001.
- Students of this course will receive information about Fresno Pacific University and the Center for Professional Development, as well as information on course policies and procedures.

## Course Requirements

Students of this course will be expected to write reflective responses to their reading assignments and teaching experiences. They will develop and teach lesson plans that integrate the film, literary and pedagogical concepts modeled in the text. Students will be expected to connect their academic work with state standards and to research film-related issues such as viewing policies, film availability/resources, teaching strategies, etc. Three contacts via e-mail between instructor and student are required (see Assignment #1, #6, and #8).

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Complete the following assignments. The questions require that you demonstrate evidence of your reading as you incorporate the concepts and strategies into your lesson designs and responses.

Please note:

- Word count guidelines for written responses are approximate; they are provided to give you a general sense of the length expectation for each assignment.
- Many of the course's assignments ask you to develop lesson plans and teach them to your students. The lessons should be modeled on examples and ideas proposed by the text. Your plans should respond to the particulars of each question, as well as state your lesson's objective, the process you will follow, and, after you have taught the lesson, your assessment of the lesson's strengths and weaknesses. Your lesson plan does not need to be longer than one or two pages. Use a format and structure that is comfortable and practical for you, whether that means point form, outline, short paragraphs, etc.
- The instructor is available via e-mail at any point during the course to answer questions, provide feedback, or clarify assignments.

## Assignments

### 1. Personal Experience with Film in the Classroom:

Describe your experience using film in the classroom. What role has film played in your teaching? Has it been a positive learning tool? Have you faced challenges? What are you hoping to learn through this course? (300 words) Please send this short introduction to the instructor via the course website as soon as you have written your response. This is the first of three required contacts between student and instructor.

### 2. Text Reading:

Read the course's text *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom* by John Golden.

### 3. Film Terminology (Chapter 1):

Develop and teach one lesson in which you introduce basic film terminology and cinematic effects to your students. Use Chapter 1 and Appendix A for guidance and inspiration. Find two film clips (not used by Golden) that demonstrate several of the terms you will introduce. Describe the significance of the clip and develop two or three "Questions to Consider" for each clip (see "Putting It All Together" section of Chapter 1). These film clips should be incorporated into your lesson.

### 4. Film and Reading Strategies (Chapter 2):

Chapter 2 discusses film and reading strategies. Golden uses predicting, responding to the text, questioning the text (at different levels), storyboarding, and soundtrack to engage students with text. Plan and teach a lesson that helps students to use one of these strategies. Your lesson, as Golden demonstrates, should include both a film and a print text (choose one not used by Golden). Feel free to model your lesson (and handouts, if desired) on Golden's examples.

#### 5. Film and Literary Analysis (Chapter 3):

In Chapter 3, Golden explains how he uses film to move students toward literary analysis. Select one of the elements of fiction (character, setting, symbol, point of view, etc.) and create a brief lesson that uses a film clip and short text to demonstrate the element's role. Teach and assess the lesson.

#### 6. Teaching Insight:

Choose an idea, observation, strategy, or teaching insight that you have had so far and share it in the course's forum for feedback and interaction. This is considered the second contact between student and instructor.

#### 7. Full-Length Film (Chapter 4):

Choose a film that would be appropriate to show to your students in its entirety. Follow the process Golden outlines in Chapter 4 by noting the title of the film, your rationale for showing it, and your previewing exercises. Divide the film into viewing days according to your class schedule and prepare your lesson, as Golden models, with "Things to Notice," "Key Sequence," "Discussion Questions" for each day, and, finally, "Closing Questions/Activities." You are not required to teach the film for this course; submit your lesson plan without an assessment.

#### 8. Text Response:

Write a critical response to Golden's strategies and examples. What insights did you gain from your reading? Were there particular examples or ideas that caught your attention? Did your reading raise additional questions? Did you think of other ways that film could be used in your classroom? (300 words) Please submit this response to the instructor when it is completed. This is considered the third formal contact between student and instructor.

#### 9. Film Viewing Policies:

Each school, school district, or state may have different policies concerning film use in the classroom. Research the copyright laws and district guidelines that apply to your situation and relate your findings in a brief summary. (300 words)

#### 10. State Standards and Film:

Consult your state's standards for the teaching of English. How does using film in the classroom meet specific objectives established by these standards? (300 words)

#### 11. Film Resources:

What resources are available for teaching film in the English classroom? Consult your school or district library and compile a list of potential film resources for your classroom. Research literary or film journals, relevant websites, textbooks, etc., for additional ideas about the role film can play in the English classroom. If you know teachers who have used film successfully, discuss with them the strategies they have found most effective. Write a response that details your findings. (300 words)

Note: If you are not teaching when taking this course, you may substitute the teaching and assessment aspects of the assignments above with ONE of the following two options:

Option A: Read approximately 25-30 pages of a credible, educational source(s) that discusses the use of film in the classroom. You may consult the bibliography included at the end of Golden's text for possible resources, as well as the references section of this syllabus. Write a thoughtful, critical response to your reading. (500 words)

Option B: Develop two additional lesson plans inspired by ideas in Golden's text.

### **Submitting Completed Work:**

Students should return completed work within one year of the date of registration, but not less than three weeks after registering.

Completed work should be sent to the instructor via the course website. Each assignment will receive a grade; this grade is confirmation that the work was received.

Please keep a copy of all coursework; submitted work will not be returned. If you are unable to submit your work through the Moodle website, please contact the instructor for alternatives.

### **Evidence of Learning**

- Student provided evidence of his/her understanding of the course's objectives and the text's principles through his/her reflective writing. (Assignment #1, #7)
- Student demonstrated an ability to think critically, conduct independent research, and integrate findings into his/her teaching. (Assignment #8 and #10)
- Student read a teaching text and responded to its ideas critically. (Assignment #2 and #7)
- Student identified ways in which his/her use of film in the classroom reinforced objectives established by his/her state's teaching standards. (Assignment #9)
- Student developed lesson plans that demonstrated an understanding of the assignment and its purpose. Each lesson plan included an objective that was clear and attainable, an explanation of the process through which this objective would be met, and an assessment (when appropriate) of the lesson's strengths and areas for improvement. (Assignment #3, #4, #5, #6)
- Student demonstrated an understanding of how film could be used effectively to teach literary concepts and to build reading skills. This understanding was shown through the strategies used in his/her lesson designs, the film and print texts chosen for use in the classroom, and the literary connections reinforced between texts.

### **Grading Policies and Rubrics**

Evaluation:

- Written Responses (5): 40%
- Lesson Plans (4): 60%

Students who take the course for credit/no credit must earn a 75% or above to earn credit. Students who enroll in the course for a letter grade must achieve a grade of "A" or "B." Coursework that earns below a "B" mark will not receive credit; this applies to both the credit/no credit and the letter grade option.

#### **• 100%-90% = A**

A student who earns an "A" demonstrates a clear understanding of how film can be used in the classroom to help students strengthen their reading skills. The student completes all assignments according to directions; in addition, the student shows evidence of creativity, interaction with the text, and appropriate film and print text choices. The student's written responses and lesson plans show an investment of time, energy, and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student is original and thorough.

#### **• 89%-75% = B**

A student who earns a "B" differs from an "A" student in that he/she submits work that is complete but that lacks a certain thoroughness and originality. The student demonstrates an understanding of the ways film can be used in the classroom, even though the student's work may not be as polished as it could be. For example, perhaps the student has chosen several weak film clip examples, has written vague objectives for lesson plans, or has not made smooth connections between the analysis of film and print texts, etc. The student responds to the questions, but he/she does not address all issues or examine the topic with detailed analysis or reflection. There

may be minor elements missing from the work expectations.

• **74% or below = no credit/no grade**

A student who does not receive credit or a grade for this course has not completed the work required. Essential elements of the assignments are missing; the work that has been submitted does not show adequate thought or effort. A student, for example, who uses clips from the same film for all of his/her lesson plans has not demonstrated an investment of the time and effort expected for this course.

Please note: The online grade book is available for you to monitor assignments submitted. Numerical scores will be given for each assignment, whether you are taking the course credit/no credit or for a letter grade. Please note that your “current percentage” will not be accurate until all assignments have been submitted; the online grading system considers all assignments in its grade configuration, even those that have not been completed.

### **References**

Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Buckland, Warren. *Teach Yourself Film Studies*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Costanzo, William V. *Reading the Movies: Twelve Great Films on Video and How to Teach Them*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1992.

Dick, Bernard F. *Anatomy of Film*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

Ebert, Roger. *Roger Ebert's Book of Film*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996.

Golden, John. *Reading in the Reel World: Teaching Documentaries and Other Non-fiction Texts*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2006.

Kawin, Bruce. *How Movies Work*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.

Krueger, Ellen, and Mary T. Christel. *Seeing and Believing: How to Teach Media Literacy in the English Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2001.

Monaco, James. *How to Read A Film: The World of Movies, Media, and Multimedia*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Schillaci, Anthony, and John M. Culkin, eds. *Films Deliver: Teaching Creatively with Film*. New York: Citation Press, 1970.

Teasley, Alan B., and Ann Wilder. *Reel Conversations: Reading Film with Young Adults*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1997.

### **Internet Resources**

[www.amlainfo.org](http://www.amlainfo.org) (Alliance for a Media Literate America)

[www.wm.edu/education/599/04projects/Muller.pdf](http://www.wm.edu/education/599/04projects/Muller.pdf)

[www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org) (Center for Media Literacy)

[www.mrqe.com](http://www.mrqe.com) (Movie Review Query Engine)

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/learningresources/fic.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/learningresources/fic.html)  
<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/>

### **National and State Standards**

<http://www.nbpts.org/>  
[www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks](http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks)  
[www.education-world.com/standards](http://www.education-world.com/standards)  
[www.sps3000.net/etpdp/background/standards.htm](http://www.sps3000.net/etpdp/background/standards.htm)  
<http://www.academicbenchmarks.com/search/>  
<http://www.didaxinc.com/standards.html>

### **Policy on Plagiarism**

"All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue."

### **University Information**

Graduate level course work reflects Fresno Pacific University's Desired Student Learning Outcomes as it applies to professional development to demonstrate the following:

- Oral and written communication in individual and group settings
- Content knowledge, and application of such knowledge in the student's area of interest to affect change
- Reflection for personal and professional growth
- Critical thinking
- Cultural and global perspectives to understand complex systems
- Computational/methodological skills to understand and expand disciplines, including an understanding of technological systems