

Brunswick School Department
Social Studies
Grades 11-12 History Through Film

Adopted: _____

Course Overview

This course will offer students a unique way to view history through the Hollywood lens. Students will analyze and evaluate the historical accuracies and inaccuracies portrayed in film to create a more balanced and truthful interpretation of the history presented. Students view movies on various topics and participate in discussions and write essays comparing that film evidence to information in more traditional sources, such as primary and secondary history sources, articles, film reviews, and critical commentaries. Participating in this course will afford students a unique opportunity to use critical thinking skills to enrich their study of history

Essential Understandings

- The historical accuracy of films should be scrutinized and dissected.
- Many periods in history have been romanticized or demonized in film.
- Film influences the way the government and its policies are perceived.

Priority Standards and Performance Indicators (as based on Maine Learning Results)

PS SS1 Conduct and present original research that utilizes primary and secondary sources in order to analyze, interpret and explain historical (and/or) contemporary social studies topics.

- a. Make judgments about conflicting findings (statements, testimonies) from different sources; incorporating those from sources that are valid and refuting others.]

PS SS2 Draw on concepts from civics and government to understand political systems, power, authority, governance, civic ideals and practices, and the role of citizens.

- f. Analyze the political structures, power, and perspectives of diverse cultures within the United States and the world.

PS SS3 Draw on concepts and processes from economics to understand issues of personal finance and issues of production, distribution, and consumption in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

- e. Analyze the role of regional, international, and global organizations that are engaged in economic development.

PS SS4 Utilize concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the United States and the world.

- c. Analyze geographic data on physical, environmental, and cultural processes to determine how these processes shape and change places and regions.

PS SS5 Draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

- e. Identify and analyze major turning points and events in the history of Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in the United States, and other cultures in the world.

Examples of Formative / Summative Assessments

- Responses to in-class activities and entrance and exit slip questions
- Analysis of primary and secondary source readings
- Daily discussions
- Written film criticism
- Multimedia presentations
- Journal entries

Sample Texts and Materials/Resources

Sample Texts

- *Hollywood's America: United States History Through Its Films* ed. Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts
- *Movie Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* Robert Sklar
- *Celluloid Mirrors: Hollywood and American Society Since 1945* Ronald L. Davis
- *Great Films and How to Teach Them* William V. Costanzo
- *American Film Institute Desk Reference* ed. Melinda Corey and George Ochoa

Sample Films

- *Gladiator*
- *Braveheart*
- *Saving Private Ryan*
- *Mississippi Burning*