CRITICAL LITERACY AND MEDIA VIOLENCE PROJECT

PRIMARY UNIT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Grade 2/3 Unit is to develop the critical literacy skills needed by young students to recognize and evaluate violence in the media. Media violence material often is contained in moving-image texts (i.e. material that is viewed on screens). The Primary Units provide solid foundation skills in decoding and creating still-image and moving-image texts. Students who have a good understanding of the codes and conventions of visual imagery are capable of bringing sophisticated analysis skills to any kind of visual text they may encounter. Since moving-image texts exist primarily beyond the classroom, it is important that all students can take these analytical skills with them for every engagement with visual media.

This complex task has several compelling challenges. There is normative data about the development of infant vision, and the stage at which young children learn to relate real objects to pictures. There are, however, no well-researched developmental norms to map the way young children relate to moving visual images, (TV, movies, DVDs, computer games). Moving images are an abstract construct, appearing to be completely real to a young child. Children's anecdotal comments hint at a variety of developmental stages of understanding, but the kind of developmental cognitive sequencing that is the foundation of the other language strands has not yet been developed for Media Literacy.

Secondly, the Media Literacy strand of the Ontario Elementary Language Curriculum has become significantly more important, now that digital visual media are the prime source of so many popular narratives for children. Characters such as Shrek and Nemo are universally recognized in our culture. In the lessons that follow, most of the texts will contain still and moving images, to

help children begin to recognize the subtle coding used in visual imagery. Professional development in Media Literacy is beginning to help teachers embed this strand in literacy programs; however, there is still a reluctance to embrace visual media literacy in the early years because it is seen as a competitor to print literacy. In England, however, "research and practice demonstrate that using media texts can motivate children and create the necessary conditions for engagement with literacy learning" (*Look Again! A Teaching Guide to Using Film and Television with Three to Eleven Year Olds*, British Film Institute). Very young children now represent a huge target market in the entertainment industry. Since the powerful influence of visual media begins long before children come to school, it is crucially important that students learn to "read" visual media from an early age.

Thirdly, critical literacy is a very new concept in early-year's literacy instruction. McLaughlin and DeVood define critical literacy as "a dynamic process that examines power relationships, acknowledges that all texts are biased and encourages readers (viewers) to explore alternative perspectives and take action"(*Critical Literacy: Enhancing Students' Comprehension of Text*, Maureen McLaughlin & Glenn DeVooqd). This important aspect of literacy instruction is working its way down from more senior grades; however, what it looks like and sounds like in primary classrooms is still work in progress.

Finally, the topic to be addressed is media violence, but the choice of texts must relate to the topic in a developmentally appropriate way. Fairy tales and myths have been important stories which help young children deal with fear of abandonment and loss, terrifying possibilities for the smallest, most vulnerable members of society. Stories of giants, wicked stepmothers, dragons, trolls and other monsters have been created to help children confront their fears in a symbolic way. Goodness triumphs over evil. Gretel pushes the witch into the oven and Hansel is saved for the happy reunion with Father. Stories from *Cinderella* to *The Lion King* all feature young heroes who survive the loss of a

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parent, and overcome all foes on the road to a happy ending. Conflict, death and violence are enduring, elemental themes of childhood literature because they resonate with the most serious concerns of children. Variations on these themes occur in the literature for each generation, because ultimately, they are optimistic. Even a child can overcome adversity, and create a better world. Concerns with violent images arise from the nature of the images used to tell these stories of conflict and loss. Picture books usually have illustrations which are thoughtfully created for specific age ranges. The wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* is an illustrated, sly, talking, fictional creature, not a real photo of a snarling wolf. Illustrations in books designed for older children contain darker, scarier images.

Moving images, (i.e. television, movies, etc) are much more confusing for young children. They seem to represent an open window on a part of the world outside the home. This makes it difficult, in the early years, to recognize reality in movies and TV. In this golden age of computer generated special effects, the line between fiction and reality is blurred intentionally and cleverly, adding another dimension to the interpretation of moving images. It is in this realm that good media literacy instruction can begin to help children successfully "read" the visually imagery used by modern storytellers. Very young children are only beginning to have the cognitive development and life experience to begin to consider the reality question. For the most part, we may assume that in kindergarten and grade 1, everything on a screen is considered to be real in one way or another. When heading out to see the second *Stuart Little* movie, a four year old remarked "Stuart Little will be very happy to see me." With these ideas in mind, where is the best place to start?   The lessons have been designed to lay the groundwork for the development of media literacy skills which will lead to healthy emotional and critical literacy responses to all media in general, and media violence in particular.

In the Grade 2/3 section, the focus is on specific analysis of moving image conventions, and an application of conventions to moving image production tasks.

Showing Films in the Classroom

Q. I read through the lessons and I notice that I am being asked to show a number of film clips. My school does not have a site license. Isn't it illegal to show films without a license?

A. Currently (2007), Canada's Fair Dealing law allows teachers to show films and film clips without a site license, provided that the purpose of the viewing is instructional, and that there is an assessment component included in the lesson.

CRITICAL LITERACY / MEDIA VIOLENCE PROJECT

ANIMATION UNIT

GRADES 2 – 3

Grade Two   STORYBOARDS FOR FOLK AND FAIRY TALES

Grade Three   FILM FESTIVAL: CANADIAN ANIMATION

Lesson 1

What's A Shot?

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
  ▪ *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
  ▪ *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

Lesson Focus:
Students will estimate and then count the number of shots used in a scene.
Students then will reflect on how the shots helped communicate a message.

Big Idea (*All media are constructions)***:**
Creators of moving image texts use many carefully chosen shots in order to convey meaning in a scene.

Materials and Resources You Will Need

  ▪ DVD and/or video player and screen
  ▪ DVD/video clip of moving image sequence (about 60 seconds in length)
  ▪ Controller to pause, rewind and replay the segment
  ▪ Sticky notes
  ▪ Chart paper and markers

Introduction/Overview

This introductory lesson is designed to help students think more critically about the moving images they view, and will set up students for success in future lessons as they begin to analyse the techniques used by the producers of moving images to create meaning. The purpose is to make the conventions and techniques of moving image production explicit, and to help students understand how media messages are created and shaped by such techniques.

When viewing moving images on a screen (e.g. commercial, television program, movie), viewers are positioned by the producers to think, feel, or react in

particular ways about a character or an event. One technique for doing this is the careful planning and selection of **camera shots**. A <u>shot</u> is one continuous piece of recorded footage. It can be short or long, and each new shot should provide new information or impressions. It is the basic unit of moving image production.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Ask students whether they enjoy films or television programs. Invite them to share with a partner, what it is they enjoy about moving image texts. You may want to record students' responses on a chart titled, *Why We Like Movies!*

2. Explain to students that over the coming weeks, you will be looking at the many ways that film and television producers get their audiences to think or feel certain ways. Introduce students to the class **media glossary** (on chart paper). Explain that while they are investigating media techniques, they likely will come across new words. A media glossary will be one way for the class to track this new vocabulary and to monitor their understanding of different film techniques.

3. Introduce students to the first entry in the media glossary:

    Shot: A <u>shot</u> is one uninterrupted piece of recorded film.

4. Tell students that they are about to view a brief clip from a moving image text. **Note:** You may want to show the scene just after the opening musical number in *Shrek* (this scene begins with a shot of Shrek's sign warning others to keep out, and ends with the Shrek finding the "wanted" poster).

5. Before showing the scene in its entirety, pause the film after one shot. Explain to students that because the film has been interrupted and we are looking at something new, or from a new angle (or point of view), the shot has changed. The first viewing is for pleasure and to allow students to grasp the concept of a complete scene.

    Before viewing the scene a second time, ask students to estimate how many **shots** were used to make up the scene (or clip) that they just viewed. Students can record their estimates on sticky notes. Then, create a number line on the chalkboard by ordering the estimates from least to most.

6. Watch the clip for a second time. On the second viewing, count the number of shots out loud. Encourage students to join you in counting when they feel ready.

7. Refer back to the number line on the blackboard. Circle the sticky note with the number closest to the actual number of shots in the sequence. Ask students to turn to an elbow partner to discuss the following questions:

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- *Were there more or fewer shots than you had predicted?*
- *Did the number of shots it took to make the scene surprise you? Why or why not?*
- *What did you notice about the different shots?*
- *How might the scene have been different had there been more/fewer shots used?*

8. In groups, have students re-enact the scene. Then, have students talk about how the role-played scenes were the same or different from the movie scene. You may want students to record their ideas in a personal media journal, or you can record their ideas in a class media journal.

Activism

Invite students to generate questions they would like to ask a television or movie producer about the techniques they use to position their audiences (that is, get their audiences to think, feel, or act a certain way). Using a shared or interactive writing strategy, the class could create a letter to send to a local high school film program or college film school.

Assessment Opportunities

Focused partner/group conversations
Journal responses
Contributions to class discussions

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

For homework, students could count and analyze shots for one minute of a segment from a favourite television show or commercial, or music video or DVD. Students would keep a tally record of the number of shots, and note any change in scene or location, and the rhythm of the shots (i.e. fast or slow). In a journal, students could respond to questions such as:

- *How does the rhythm contribute to meaning (e.g. fast, aggressive, exciting changes; slow, gentle or sad changes)?*
- *How do the changes in shots affect how you think or feel about a character or event?*
- *How might you use the information you learned from this activity when creating your own media?*

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral language
Health
Mathematics – Number Sense and Numeration

Important Technology/Background for Teachers

Shot: A <u>shot</u> is one continuous piece of recorded footage. It can be short or long, and each new shot should provide new information or impressions. The camera can zoom in and out on a single shot, or it can pan across a scene. It is the basic unit of moving image production. The transition from shot to shot can take a variety of forms (e.g. cuts, mixes, wipes or fades). Transition techniques are not usually noticeable to viewers, but they certainly shape the meaning of the text.

Media Literacy: *Grade 2-3*

Lesson 2

Spot the Shot

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
Making Inferences/Interpreting Messages
Grades 2 and 3 – 1.2
- *Use overt and implied messages to draw inference and make meaning in simple media texts.*

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
- *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
- *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

Lesson focus:
Students will analyse how close-up and angle shots convey particular meanings.

Big Idea (*Each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics)*:
Camera shots are chosen carefully to convey meaning.

Introduction/Overview

The decision as to where the camera is to be situated when recording a shot is very important in communicating the overall mood or message of a moving image text (e.g. television program, commercial, movie). The placement of the camera can influence the overt (literal) message, as well as the implied (figurative) message (i.e. the producer's intended message). Students need opportunities to analyze moving image texts in order, first, to understand how this technique influences meaning, and, later, to consider how they may apply this technique in their own media productions.

In this lesson, students will have opportunities to view shots that make up shot sequences (brief clips) from a variety of moving image texts. They then will consider how different camera angles used in the shots help to construct reality and influence both the overt (literal) and implied (figurative) messages.

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> **Key questions to consider:**
> - *How is this like real life?*
> - *How is this not like real life?*
> - *How might the meaning be different if we were viewing it from a different point of view?*
> - *Which character might tell this story differently?*

Materials and Resources You Will Need

- DVD and/or video player, Screen, Controller to pause, rewind and replay the segment
- Chart paper

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Set the purpose for the lesson. For example:

   Last time, we discovered that many "shots" are used to make up a scene in a movie. I got to thinking: viewing moving images is a lot like reading. Just like authors use words to get us to think or feel certain ways, producers use moving images to do the same thing. With moving images, shots help to create the story. With books, sentences help to create the story. An author makes decisions about the words he or she will use to tell his or her story. Similarly, a producer makes decisions about what we see in a shot, to help tell his or her story too. We could say that shots are the sentences of moving images. Let's view some shots in order to understand how producers express their messages. But first, let's have a little fun!

2. Have students work with a partner; invite students to turn and face each other, and to slowly move their faces closer and closer together, until they are almost nose to nose; ask students to discuss how they felt as they got closer to their partner (record ideas on a chart titled *Close-Up*)

3. Invite the tallest and shortest members of the class to stand face-to-face. Ask the shorter student to talk about how it feels to be looked down upon by the taller student; then, ask the taller student to talk about how it feels to be looked up at by the shorter student. Record ideas on a T-chart titled *Looking Down: High Angle* and *Looking Up: Low Angle*

4. Next, reverse the roles by asking the taller student to kneel, and the shorter student to remain standing (perhaps on a box or step); ask each student to talk about how it feels now. Record any additional ideas.

5. Review the *Close Up* and *High and Low Angle* charts. Explain to students that film and television producers use camera angles to create the same feelings

that they just experienced. Enter the shot types into the class's **media glossary**.

Close-up: A close-up shot gets very close to an object, usually a face; close-ups usually make viewers feel sorry for the character, or uncomfortable.

Low Angle: In a low angle shot, the camera looks up at an object; this usually makes the viewer feel smaller or less important than the object.

High Angle: In a high angle shot, the camera looks down on an object; this usually makes the viewer feel bigger or more important than the object.

6. Select a moving image scene that clearly positions a viewer to feel a certain way about a character or event (e.g. camera angles used to show power relationships, close-ups used to create a feeling of discomfort or fear; e.g. replaying the scene from *Shrek* that was described in Lesson 1). As students watch the scene, encourage them to call out the different shots they notice.

7. To consolidate learning, you may want students to write a response in their media journals (or class media journal). Students could select a shot from the scene to describe or reflect on. Their response could be shaped by the following prompts:
   - *What type of shot was it?*
   - *How did the shot make you feel?*
   - *How do you think the producer wanted you to feel?*
   - *How do you think you would have felt if the shot was different (e.g. instead of a close-up, the shot was a long shot; instead of a low angle, the shot was a high angle)?*

Activism

Students could think about their favourite television shows and consider a character who is bullied or made fun of. They then could write in role, as if they were that character, retelling an event or episode from that character's point of view. Students could talk about how they might film the event and how they might use different shots to help their viewers think or feel a certain way.

Assessment Opportunities

Class discussions
Journal response

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students could watch a commercial and track transition effects used during the segment. They then could analyze the transition effects, using the chart used during the lesson.

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Health

Important Terminology/Background for Teachers

Abb.	Meaning	Description	Effect
ECU	Extreme close up	Eye/face	Aggression/discomfort
CU	Close up	Head/head & shoulders	Reaction; intimacy
MS	Medium shot	To waist	Neutral; shows relationship
MLS	Medium long shot	Full body	Neutral
LS	Long shot	Room	Specifies setting
ELS	Extreme long shot	House Lone figure in yard	Establishes setting; piques curiosity; arouses sympathy
ES	Establishing shot	City skyline	Establishes locale

Adapted from *Think Literacy! Media Studies 7-10*

Lesson 3

Creating a Dictionary of Camera Shots

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

CREATING MEDIA TEXTS
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 3.2
- *Identify an appropriate form to suit the specific purpose and audience for a media text they plan to create.*

Producing Media Texts
Grades 2 and 3 – 3.4
- *Produce media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques.*

REFLECTING ON MEDIA
Metacognition
Grades 2 and 3 – 4.1
- *Identify, initially with support and direction, what strategies they found most helpful in making sense of and creating media texts.*

Lesson focus:
To consolidate learning from previous lessons, students will create their own dictionary of shot types.

Big Idea (*Each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics*)**:**
Camera shots are carefully selected to convey meaning.

Materials and Resources You Will Need

- Digital cameras
- Computers
- Shot Dictionary booklets (either a cover and 5 pages of 81/2x11 in paper, or see Shot Type – Student Handout 3.1)
- **OR - Selection of magazines/newspapers**

Introduction/Overview

Students view a wide variety of moving image texts, and are exposed to a various shot types that aid in the creation of meaning. By linking the terminology

to concrete examples, students can consolidate their learning. As students continue to build their repertoire of media terminology, forms, conventions, and techniques, it will be important that they have opportunities to organize that information. In this lesson, students will review the types of shots that they have been analyzing in previous lessons. Then, they will apply their knowledge by taking digital photographs. The photographs will be compiled into a "dictionary of camera shots" to which students can refer for future filming activities.

Key questions for students to consider:
1. *What is the name of this shot?*
2. *When might I use it?*
3. *Why might I use it?*

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Provide opportunity for students to reflect on the different types of shots that have been introduced over the previous lessons. Using a think-pair-share strategy, ask students first to jot down the names of as many shot types as they can think of. Next, have students share their lists with a partner. Finally, allow students a few minutes to talk with their partners about what they know about the different shots.

   OR

   Play a game called *Spot the Shots* with students. Write the following prompts on the board:

   - Name the type of shot.
   - Tell why it might be used.

   Split the class into two teams. Invite one representative from each team to play in each round. For each round, show a moving image clip. The first student to raise his or her hand gets the first opportunity to respond. If the player can respond appropriately to the prompts, award the team a point. Repeat for a number of rounds. Be sure to emphasize that the point of the game is for review.

2. Consolidate learning by asking students to share the different types of shots they were discussing with their partners (or that arose from the game). Generate a list of the shots that will be included in the dictionaries of camera shots. As students share their responses (naming and explaining the shot), record the name of the shot type on the board. If students can describe a shot type, but do not use the correct name, provide them with the name. Ultimately, your list should include:

   - Close-Up
   - Medium Shot

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- Long Shot
- High Angle Shot (camera looking down)
- Low Angle Shot (camera looking up)
- Neutral Shot (camera straight on)

Note: If students mention "extreme close-up" or "medium long shot," put them in brackets beside the appropriate shot type on the list (e.g. close-up and long shot respectively). For the ease of the lesson, it is best to keep the shot types to six.

3. Arrange the class in partners.

4. With the help of experienced volunteers, help the partners take a shot of each of the six types on the list. For each student to have a personal dictionary, it will be necessary to take 12 pictures, using each student in the pair for six different types of shots.

5. Print all photos and return each set to the subject in the picture. Students can glue each photo onto a page (see Shot Type – Student Handout 3.1). They may copy the terms from the list on the board. Be sure to discuss the purpose of each shot type so that students may include the purpose in their books. Pages should be bound together to form a book.

6. As a **school-wide activity**, students could visit other classrooms, presenting their dictionaries and explaining their contents.

Alternatively (if digital photography is not an option)

1. Arrange the class in groups of 4.

2. Distribute magazines/newspapers to each group.

3. Have students find examples of the 6 types of shots.

4. Cut and paste each example in the Shot Dictionary.

5. Label each page with type of shot and function of each shot.

6. Exhibit booklets.

Activism

Students could examine newspaper photographs to analyze them for the types of shots used, and how that might influence the message. Students could create a bulletin board of photographs from magazines, newspapers, and other sources,

naming and explaining the camera shots. Included in the bulletin boards should be student writing in which they react to how this technique is used to position viewers.

Assessment Opportunities

Group work
Student Dictionary of Camera Shots
Presentation

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students could be encouraged to practise a variety of photography shots at home. A space could be created in the classroom to display students' work. Students also could be encouraged to discuss elements of composition in photography books, newspaper photographs, or current events photos. A visit to local photography galleries also may help to consolidate learning.
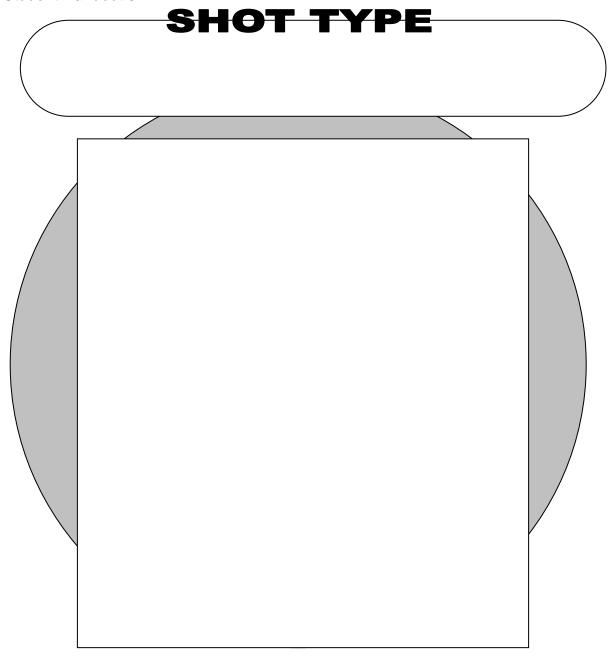
Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Visual Arts
Drama and Movement

Important Technology/background for Teachers:

Digital cameras are very simple to use, but need to be treated with care. Train the students ALWAYS to wear the wrist strap when holding the camera, so it never drops. If you see a student with the camera without the wrist strap on, take the camera from the child until the next time you use the cameras. This is a highly motivating activity, so children quickly learn to take care of the camera.

SHOT TYPE

What is the purpose of this type of shot? Why might you use it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Media Literacy: _Grade 2-3_

Lesson 4

The Visual Language of Moving Images

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
- ▪ *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
- ▪ *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

Lesson focus:
Students will apply their understanding of the language of visual images (e.g. camera angles) by role-playing power relationships.

Big Idea *(All media are constructions; each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics)*:
Both **what** is shown in moving image texts and **how** it is shown are the results of choices made to convey a particular meaning.

Introduction/Overview

Visual images can be" read "like other texts.   The position of elements within the image, the colours used, and the lighting all can affect interpretation. Camera distance (close-up, long shot, etc.), camera angle, and camera movement all affect meaning. The number and order of shots also affect meaning (*Look Again!*).

In this lesson, students will learn the "language of visual images" by brainstorming and role-playing power relationships (e.g. parent-child, teacher-student) and considering how they might express their messages if their role-plays were to be filmed.

Key questions for students to consider:
What does the producer want me to think, feel, or do as a result of watching this?
How does the producer create his or her message?
What techniques are used to create this message?

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Material and Resources You Will Need:

1. Strips of chart paper
2. Markers
3. [If desired] pretend movie camera (e.g. tissue box with a paper towel roll attached to it)

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Engage students in a role-playing activity whereby they role-play various power relationships. Prior to the lesson, have students brainstorm various power relationships with which they are familiar (e.g. parent-child, teacher-student, coach-player, bully-victim, domineering friend-group of friends). Each power relationship can be written onto a strip of paper. For the role-play activity, students can work in pairs or groups. Have pairs (or groups) select a strip of paper, and then role-play a situation related to that power relationship. At the end of each role-play, ask the class, *How did we know who had the power and who did not?*

2. Reflect on the role-plays by asking the class to consider the following questions:

   ▪ *If we were able to film your role-play, how might you make the power relationships clear to your viewers?*

   ▪ *What do you know about camera angles and close-ups? How might you use these techniques?*

3. Invite groups to re-enact their role-plays. This time, have one student play the role of "director." This person can pretend to use a camera, and show how he or she might use camera angles and close-ups to emphasize the power relationship. You may want to model this activity at first, with you as the director. This activity provides an opportunity to assess students' understanding of how camera techniques influence meaning, by listening as they explain their directions.

Assessment Opportunities

Group discussions
Role-plays
Student explanations of film techniques they might use

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students could role-play scenes from some of their favourite picture books. They could pretend that they are turning their scenes into films and talk about the

techniques they might use to film the scene. Students may consider questions such as:

- *Who is the audience supposed to like (the "good guy")?*
- *Who is the audience not supposed to like (the "bad guy")?*
- *How might I get my audience to like/not like characters?*
- *What can you learn about the character from this scene?*
- *What techniques might I use to get the audience to think or feel a certain way?*

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Dramatic Arts
Writing

Media Literacy: *Grade 2-3*

Lesson 5

The Visual Language of Moving Images II: Freeze Frame

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
- *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
- *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

Lesson focus:
Students will continue to apply their understanding of the language of visual images by analyzing moving image clips.

Big Idea *(All media are constructions; each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics)***:**
Both **what** is shown in moving image texts and **how** it is shown are the results of choices made to convey a particular meaning.

Materials and Resources You Will Need

- Short moving image texts
- Video/DVD player
- TV or other screen
- Controller to pause clip
- Media Cube (see Student Handout 5.1)
- 11 x 17 paper (or 8.5 x 11)

Introduction/Overview

Every element of a visual image can carry meaning. Producers draw upon visual codes and conventions to show status and relationships, masculinity and femininity, goodness and evil. Because most children have spent hundreds of hours viewing visual media, many students intuitively understand some of the codes; however, all children can make more sense of visual codes and conventions when we make them explicit.

In this lesson, students will learn the "language of visual images" by analyzing a moving image clip and responding to a variety of focus questions.

Key questions for students to consider:
What does the producer want me to think, feel, or do as a result of watching this?
How does the producer create his or her message?
What techniques are used to create this message?

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Assign students to work in groups of four. Provide each group with a **media cube** (see Student Handout 5.1).

2. Select a very brief section of film to show to students. You will want to select a clip that uses the techniques of high and low angles and close-ups to communicate meaning (e.g. the public service announcements produced by the Concerned Children's Advertisers are very brief and tailored for elementary audiences: www.cca-kids.ca).

3. View the section of film, shot by shot, using the pause button to freeze each shot on the screen. While observing the shot frozen on the screen, invite students to take turns, in their groups, rolling the game cube and responding to the question that turns up.

4. On sheets of 8.5 X 11 paper, the teacher quickly will sketch what is seen in each shot where you have frozen the frame. You may want to invite groups of students to create a tableau of what they see on the screen. Then, the teacher can play the role of "artist," sketching the students' tableau.

5. Line up each sketch on the blackboard in chronological order. This will be just a visual for this lesson, but will be the focus on the next two lessons, when students begin to examine how to create **storyboards**. Before moving on to the next shot, invite students to reflect and comment on what they see on the screen and in the tableau (e.g. *What techniques are being used? How is the producer getting me to think or feel a certain way about the characters or plot?).*

6. After having watched the entire clip, consolidate learning by recording students' thinking. On a piece of chart paper, write the title, "Ways to Create A Media Message." Draw students' attention to the sketches that you have placed on the blackboard. Explain that if they want to review the entire clip, they can take a look at the images:

   Before we begin charting our thoughts about how media messages are created, take a moment to look at the storyboard I have laid out on the blackboard. A storyboard, quite simply, is what we saw on film, drawn out on

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paper. It is like the plan a director makes before he or she begins filming. But we'll talk more about storyboards later. For now, let's just review the clip, and begin thinking about how the message was created – that is, how the director got us to think or feel a certain way while watching this clip.

Activism

Students could tape their favourite television shows and freeze a frame to analyze, using the media cube. Students could reflect on the messages of the show, considering how well the messages align with their own values or points of view. Students then could write a letter to the producers of their favourite shows, explaining their reactions to the messages of the show. Letters could be posted on a bulletin board (with responses, if possible and appropriate).

Assessment Opportunities

Group discussions
Student contributions

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students could set up a media log, which will be used like a journal, to record ideas and opinions about a variety of media, which they use both for entertainment and for information. Students will record a variety of personal responses to their experiences with a variety of media, from webkinz to the latest big screen blockbuster. Students also may complete specific assignments such as:
- Freeze frame a shot from a favourite video in your home video/DVD collection.
- Name the video/DVD.
- Describe the shot. (Subject, background, camera angles costume lighting.)
- Explain what you can learn about the character from this scene.

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Role playing
Writing

Important Technology/background for Teachers:

Media Logs are important tools to help students reflect on understand their media choices.

Media Cube

What can you tell about the time, place, mood, and setting?

What and who do you see in the shot? Is this a good shot? Why or why not?

What can you tell about the characters from the way they are dressed?

How might the scene be different if the shots were in a different order?

Where do you think the camera is? Why might it be there? How do you know?

What is the producer's message? How is the message created?

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Lesson 6

Creating Storyboards: Part 1

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
   ▪ *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
   ▪ *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

CREATING MEDIA TEXTS
Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 3.3
   ▪ *Identify conventions and techniques appropriate to the form chosen for a media text they plan to create.*

Lesson focus:
Students will understand that storyboards play an important role in the planning process for the creation of moving image texts.

Big Ideas (*All media are constructions; each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics)*:
Moving image texts are carefully constructed and planned out, applying techniques in order to convey meaning.

Introduction/Overview

British researcher Sonia Livingstone states, "The skills required to produce content are more crucial than ever. Indeed not to do so would be positively disempowering for citizens given the present rush to duplicate or even replace our present social and political institutions online" (*Young Children and New Media,* London: Sage, 2002). Students view a myriad of media products every day, but may not know the process behind their creation. All media products begin as ideas, move through a creation process, and lead up to a final product. Students experience this process with their writing, and can draw upon those experiences and apply them to the creation of media texts. Learning to create storyboards is an essential media production skill.

A storyboard is a type of graphic organizer, used to record information about the nature and sequence of shots in a moving image production. It consists of a page of boxes, like comic book squares, with a few lines beneath each box. These lines are for specific information for each shot, which is pictured by stick drawing in the box. It is a graphic representation of the shots in a scene. Creating a storyboard is a useful organizing process for a scriptwriter, and an essential document for the director and cinematographer.

In this lesson, students first will create a storyboard by working backwards from a moving image. Then, building on their learning, students will create a storyboard from a selection of literature.

Key questions to consider:
- *What kinds of plans do producers make before filming a movie or TV program?*
- *How might I plan to create a movie or TV program?*
- *How does a storyboard help me?*

Materials and Resources You Will Need

- Storyboard sheets (see Student Handout 6.1)
- Short DVD/video clip

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Establish the purpose for this lesson:

   Lately, we have been looking at shot sequences and thinking about how they help create a message for a moving image text. We have watched a number of shot sequences over the last little while, but before those sequences are filmed, they begin as ideas in someone's head. From ideas in the head, those ideas are put onto paper, in the form of a storyboard. Now, I have used that word before. What do you remember, or what do you think about, when you hear the term "storyboard"?

2. Have students share what they think about when they hear the term "storyboard." Define "storyboard" (showing examples if possible), and enter the definition into the class **media glossary**.

   Storyboard: A storyboard uses drawings and words to represent the shots in a scene.

3. Post a large 6-box storyboard on the chalkboard. View a brief clip (e.g. PSA from Concerned Children's Advertisers). Using a **think aloud** strategy, model

for students the creation of storyboard. Pause at the end of each shot and then record information onto the storyboard. For example:

In this shot we see a wide shot of a boy being chased down the street by three girls. So, I am going to quickly sketch the boy and the girls. We also see that this is taking place in a neighbourhood, and we are watching this from afar. So, I will quickly sketch some hedges to show that we are far from the action. Notice that my sketches are just stick drawings. I just need to get the idea. Now, under my sketches, I am going to make a few notes. We heard playful music, so I had better jot that down under the title "What We Hear."

4. Using a **shared viewing/representing** strategy, view the next shot and invite students to help you record the next frame on the storyboard.

5. Continue until the storyboard is complete (approximately six frames). Ask students to turn to an elbow partner and decide who will be Partner A and Partner B. Invite Partner A to read the storyboard to Partner B (i.e. retell the complete story). Partner B then has a chance to read the storyboard to Partner A.

6. View the clip for a final time. Ask students to reflect on the storyboard and the clip using the following focus question: *How well did the storyboard represent what we actually saw?*

7. Divide students into groups (one group for each frame in your storyboard, plus one). Assign each group a frame from the storyboard to create in a tableau. Assign the extra group to create a tableau for an imagined "next frame." Then, ask each group to form their tableau. Invite a few students to leave their tableau, one at a time, to stand in front of and read the "live" storyboard.

Activism

Students could visit the school or local library to find graphic novels or comic books. The teacher can explain how graphic novels and comic books are very similar to storyboards (i.e. they show action, dialogue, and often sound effects). Students then could select sections of the graphic novel or comic book to dramatize.

Assessment Opportunities

Oral discussions
Storyboard tableaux
Dramatizations of graphic novel or comic book scenes

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Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

In Lesson 7, students will follow up on their learning from this lesson by creating their own storyboards, based on a selection of texts.

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Drama and Movement

Student Handout 6.1

Shot # ____	Shot # ____	Shot # ____
Image:	Image:	Image:
Setting:	Setting:	Setting:
Action:	Action:	Action:

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Lesson 7

Creating Storyboards: Part 2

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
  ▪ *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
  ▪ *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

CREATING MEDIA TEXTS
Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 3.3
  ▪ *Identify conventions and techniques appropriate to the form chosen for a media text they plan to create.*

Lesson focus:
Having analysed and dramatized storyboards in the previous lesson, students now will create their own storyboards.

Big Ideas *(All media are constructions; each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics)***:**
Moving image texts are carefully constructed and planned out, applying techniques in order to convey meaning.

Materials/Resources:

  ▪ Favourite kindergarten stories
  ▪ Student Handout 6.1 – Storyboard (from last lesson)
  ▪ Student Handout 7.1 – Storyboard Self-Assessment

Introduction/Overview

In the previous lesson, students had the opportunity to create a storyboard from a media text, through a shared process. Students now will apply their learning in the creation of their own storyboard. The purpose of this lesson is to plan a film adaptation of a poem or very short story for a kindergarten audience. Students

will create a storyboard outline of about six shots for a single scene from a story. In the boxes, students will draw the shot, using stick figures, showing what the camera will see. On the lines below, students will describe the setting and action in the shot.

Key questions for students to consider:
- *How might a storyboard help me when creating a media text?*
- *What will the audience see?*
- *What will the audience hear?*
- *What will the characters say?*
- *What techniques might I use to communicate my message?*

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Activate students' prior knowledge by asking them to reflect on what they know about storyboards.

2. Assign students to work in pairs (**production pairs**).

3. Have each pair choose a story or poem from a special collection of kindergarten literature.

   Note: Students could be given the opportunity to poll kindergarten students for their favourite stories. Then, students could choose from the top five stories identified by the kindergarten classes.

4. Read aloud a story identified as a favourite by the kindergarten class (perhaps number six on the list so it is not one that your students will choose). As you are reading, model for students how to break the story into scenes (use sticky notes to mark breaks). Once you have completed the story, return to one scene that you would like to storyboard. Then, model for students how you would break the scene into shots. For example:

   I enjoyed the story Cheese Louise! The scene that I would like to storyboard is this one right here, where the Leader calls an emergency meeting for all the food in the refrigerator. This scene begins with the Leader calling everyone to the top shelf by flickering the lights. That will be my first shot. So, I will draw Louise and Seymour looking surprised. I want this to be a close-up, so all I will really see is their eyes and open mouths. I also want the camera to be looking down on them, because I want them to seem small or less important than the Leader who is calling for them. I will note here that the setting is the bottom shelf, and that the lights are flickering. Next...

5. Have production pairs read over their own story. Using sticky notes, students will break the story into scenes, and then break the scenes into shots.

6. Have students draw shots on storyboard sheets. Drawings must show the shot type (i.e. close-up, medium, or long shot, high or low angle). Beneath the sketches, students must write brief notes about the setting and action.

7. Have production pairs make brief presentations of their storyboards to the class.

Activism

As a whole-school activity, students could post their storyboards around the school, inviting other students to guess the stories from which the scene has been adapted. Using a graffiti board strategy, students could be encouraged to respond to storyboards by "graffiti-ing" comments based on the following prompts:
- *From what story has this scene been adapted?*
- *What is the message of the scene?*
- *How have the producers created that message?*

Assessment Opportunities

Storyboard
Partner conversations
Presentation
Storyboard Self-Assessment (Student Handout 7.1)

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students could create puppets, clay figures, or costumes to stage shots from their storyboards. Students then could shoot their shots with a digital camera. Digital images then could be bound into a book, or downloaded to create a slide show. Final products could be shown to a kindergarten class.
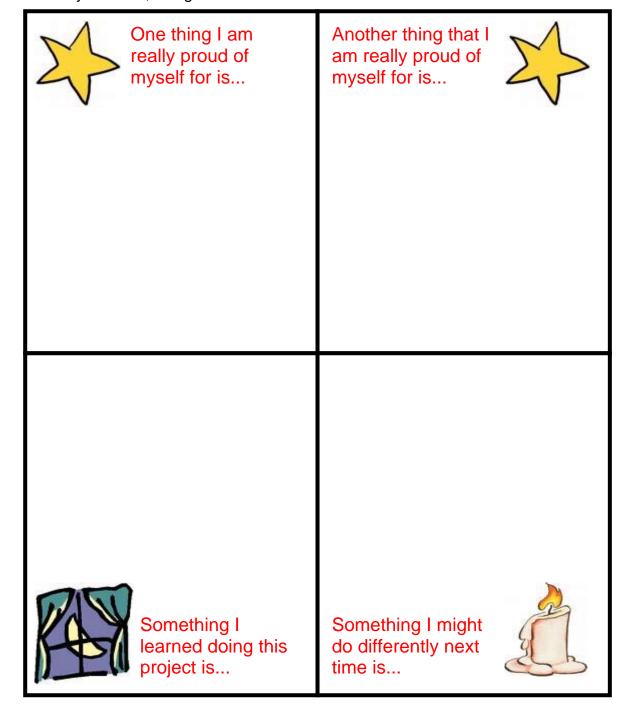
Cross Curricular Connections

Mathematics – Data Management
Reading
Oral Language
Visual Arts
Drama and Movement

Storyboard Self-Assessment

TWO STARS, A WINDOW, and a WISH

Take a moment to think about how you created your storyboard. What helped you? What did you do if you ran into difficulty? When did you decide that your storyboard was completed to the best of your ability? Now, share your thoughts about your work, using the self-reflection chart below:

⭐ One thing I am really proud of myself for is...	Another thing that I am really proud of myself for is... ⭐
🪟 Something I learned doing this project is...	Something I might do differently next time is... 🕯️

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Lesson 8

Sound and Image

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.1
  - *Identify some of the elements and characteristics of selected media forms.*

Conventions and Techniques
Grades 2 and 3 – 2.2
  - *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.*

Lesson focus:
Music, sound, and sound effects are chosen carefully to convey meaning.

Big Idea (*Each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics):*
Moving-image texts combine visual images with sound in order to convey meaning.

Materials and Resources You Will Need

  - A short moving-image text
  - Video/DVD player
  - TV or screen
  - Cover for screen,
  - Sound and Image (Student Handout 8.1)

Introduction/Overview

Music is a powerful partner in moving-image production, because it has the power to evoke strong feelings and to strengthen memory for associated visual imagery and ideas. In moving-image products, sound (i.e. voice, music, sound effects and silence) conveys important elements of mood and meaning. Sound can intensify the meaning of visual imagery, making the images more memorable and meaningful. Indeed, most students quite easily remember the theme songs for their favourite shows.

Sound, particularly music, can set the mood of a text and establish its generic identity (e.g. comedy, thriller). Sound effects can do more to pin down the meaning of a visual sequence than visual images can. Sound effects can affect not only the way viewers interpret the images, but also what they actually think they can see. Off-screen sound can help create the impression of three-dimensional space, and silence has a powerful effect on the interpretation of a sequence (*Look Again!*).

In this lesson, students will listen to a soundtrack without the images (or conversely, this lesson could be replicated by watching images without the soundtracks), before viewing the complete text. This is done in order to gain a better awareness of how sound and image might combine to create meaning.

Key questions for students to consider:
- *How does music influence the message of this text?*
- *What was my reaction before I heard the sound?*
- *How is my reaction different after having heard the sound?*
- *How might I use sound when I create my own media?*

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Activate students' prior knowledge by asking them to think about their favourite television show or movie. Then ask students to turn to a partner and sing (or hum) the theme song to that show or movie. If some students are reluctant, ask them to describe the song.

2. Ask whether anyone had any trouble remembering a theme song. Explain that music and images have a powerful relationship, and that music is another technique used by producers to create meaning and position viewers. Add the following terms to the class **media glossary**:

    Soundtrack: the music, dialogue, or sound effects for a moving-image text

    Dialogue: what characters say in films (moving-image text)

    Sound effects: sounds other than music or dialogue in film (moving-image text)

    Music: songs that are used in films (moving-image texts)

3. Show a scene from a television show or movie, but cover the screen so that students cannot see the images. Ask students to listen carefully to the soundtrack and to describe exactly what they hear. Students can record their responses either pictorially or in written form in the Sound Only column of the "Sound and Image" worksheet – Student Handout 8.1 – dot jot notes will do). The following questions may help guide the listening:

- *What exactly can you hear and what might it represent?*
- *How would you describe the music?*
- *What feelings and images does it suggest to you?*
- *What can you tell about the speakers from their voices and what they say?*
- *What does the silence mean?*

4. Ask students to identify the type of text it is (e.g. drama, animated program, comedy, documentary), and to make an assumption about the content and style of the images in the sequence, based on what they heard.

5. Show the complete sequence and discuss the ways sounds and images affect each other. The following questions may help guide students' thinking:
   - *What difference would it make if either the music or sound effects elements were missing?*
   - *Does the sound change (e.g. increase or decrease in volume, build to a crescendo)?*
   - *What do these changes mean? (Look Again!)*

6. To consolidate thinking, have students complete the Image and Sound portion of Sound and Image – Student Handout 8.1.

Activism

Students could re-examine the storyboards that they created in Lesson 6, and consider what music (or type of music) they would choose if they were to film the sequence. As a **school-wide activity**, students could invite members of other classes to view slide shows of their storyboards set to three different types of music. Students from other classes then could be polled as to which soundtracks they liked or disliked, and which they felt was most appropriate to the message they interpreted.

Assessment Opportunities

Keep anecdotal records for participation in class discussion.
Student responses to Sound and Image – Student Handout 8.1

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

This lesson could be replicated by watching images without the soundtracks.

Ask students to choose a song from a favourite movie soundtrack and bring it in to play for the class. Students could introduce the song by naming the movie, the

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song and its purpose in the film. Students then could explain why this song was chosen, and why it has personal meaning.

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Music

Sound and Image

Sound Only	Image & Sound
What did you hear? *What is happening?* *How do you know?* *What feelings are suggested?*	*Are the images like or unlike what you thought before?* *What reactions do you have now that you have seen the images?*

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Lesson 9

Attracting Audiences

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
Audience Responses
Grades 2 and 3 – 1.4
- *Describe how different audiences might respond to specific media texts.*

Lesson focus:
Moving image texts, such as films, frequently are marketed to target audiences using carefully selected merchandising to appeal to particular audiences.

Big Ideas (*Media have commercial interests):*
Media texts are created for a specific purpose, which is usually to make money.

Materials and Resources You Will Need

- Promotional materials from a currently popular film/TV program (e.g. t-shirts, computer games, dolls, action figures, posters, cereal)

Introduction/Overview

Many students own merchandise connected with their favourite characters from moving-image texts. Marketing and promotional strategies are central to most moving-image industries. It is important for students to become aware that marketing strategies are aimed at attracting audiences so that they will spend money, which benefits those connected, both directly and indirectly, with the production.

Moving-image texts are promoted in many different media. Marketing a film/program involves promotion through a range of mutually reinforcing products. Children particularly are targeted as a valuable market for products. The goal of this lesson is to help students become aware of the ways in which media marketing plans influence the decisions they make in many important areas of their life.

Key questions to consider:
- *Why do I like my favourite movie characters so much?*
- *Where else do I see my favourite movie characters? Why?*
- *Who makes money from the sales?*
- *Who might buy these different pieces of merchandise?*

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. To activate prior knowledge, ask students to collect and bring in as many varieties of promotional materials as they can find for a current film/TV show (e.g. knapsacks, lunch bags, pencils, tee shirts, shoes, key chains).

2. As a class, sort the material into categories (e.g. dolls, action figures etc).

3. Engage students in a class discussion, choosing from the following prompts to guide the conversation:

    ▪ *What kinds of products are offered? (e.g. free gifts, promotional packaging related to the film)*

    ▪ *Who is the merchandise/promotional material aimed at? (e.g. mainly boys? girls? both?)*

    ▪ *How do you know?*

    ▪ *How is gender represented in the design of the products?*

    ▪ *What makes this a boy toy, a girl toy? How do you feel about that?*

    ▪ *Are children the only people to whom the merchandise will appeal?*

    ▪ *How else did people know about this film?*

    ▪ *Why do you think the makers of the film/program might be eager to appeal to a young audience? (Look Again!)*

4. Record student responses on a chart like the one below:

Object *What is it?*	Target Audience *Who is it for?*	Evidence *How do you know?*

5. Have students work in groups to continue the analysis of objects. Each group will be given a number of items. Students will use a chart (Student Handout 9.1) to guide their conversation.

6. To consolidate learning, students could respond to the following prompts in their media journals (or you might use a shared or interactive writing strategy with a class media journal):

    ▪ *How do marketers target boys?*

    ▪ *How do marketers target girls?*

    ▪ *What messages do marketers make about the roles of boys and girls?*

    ▪ *How do I feel about these messages?*

Activism

Students could talk about the messages that are sent by marketers about the roles of boys and girls. As a school-wide activity, students could respond to these messages by creating posters to raise awareness of the stereotypes entrenched in marketer's messages. Students also could write letters to marketers, challenging their messages.

Assessment Opportunities

Group discussions
Student Handout 9.1
Journal response

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

To consolidate and extend learning, students could create a class graph or pie chart to compare the various types of promotional items collected and their target audiences (e.g. boys, girls, teenagers, adults, etc.). Students could respond to the following prompts in their journals:

- *What do the results indicate?*
- *Give evidence from the graph to support your point of view.*

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Reading
Health
Mathematics – Data Management

Materials/Resources:

Promotional materials from a currently popular film/TV program, (e.g. t-shirts, computer games, dolls, action figures, posters, cereal)

Student Handout 9.1

Object *What is it?*	Target Audience *Who is it for?*	Evidence *How do you know?*

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Lesson 10

Narrative Genres in Moving-Image Texts

Grades 2 and 3 Language Arts

Curriculum Expectations

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
Responding to and Evaluating Texts 1.3
   ▪ *Express personal opinions about ideas presented in media texts.*
Audience Responses 1.4
   ▪ *Describe how different audiences might respond to specific media texts.*

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA FORMS, CONVENTIONS, AND TECHNIQUES
Form 2.1
   ▪ *Identify elements and characteristics of some media forms.*
Conventions and Techniques 2.2
   ▪ *Identify the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms and explain how they help convey meaning.*

Lesson focus:
There are characteristics of particular moving-image genres that influence how the film is created (e.g. dark lighting and sharp, piercing music for horror films).

Big Idea (*Each medium has its own language, style, form, techniques, conventions and aesthetics*)**:**
Some techniques are unique to specific genres.

Materials/Resources:

   ▪ Moving-image texts representing a range of genres (e.g. science fiction, action-adventure, comedy, fairy tale, family drama)
   ▪ Video/DVD player with pause function
   ▪ Chart paper and markers

Introduction/Overview

By creating moving-image texts in a wide variety of genres, producers are increasing their markets, with products for a range of groups with different interests. Genre exerts a strong influence on narrative, setting and character. The pleasure we get from watching films/programs of a particular genre is based on a balance between the familiar and innovation.

The purpose of this lesson is to help students recognize a variety of genres and understand how genres influence the structure of moving-image texts.

> **Key questions to consider**:
> - *What do you know about genres?*
> - *What genres do you like to read?*
> - *What genres do you like to watch?*
> - *What are some of the things you expect in [name genre] stories or films?*
> - *How might you use these ideas to create your own [name genre] stories or films?*

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. To **activate prior knowledge**, direct students' attention to a chart on the blackboard with the title "Genres We Know." Ask students to help you generate a list of different genres. Beside each genre, write the name of an example given by students. You may want to use a **think aloud** strategy to begin this activity. For example:

   *Please take a look at this chart. It is titled, "Genres We Know." **Genre** means a category, or type of text. We just finished reading <u>Sideways Stories at Wayside School.</u> That book really made us laugh, so we could say that its genre is comedy. There also are many different genres of moving-image texts. My favourite television show is <u>House</u>. You likely don't watch that show, but it is a serious show that takes place in a hospital. So, its genre is medical-drama. What different genres can you think of? Can you share examples with the class too?*

2. After having generated a list with examples, give students a moment to reflect on the chart. Point out the wide variety of genres. The following questions also may help deepen understanding:
   - *Which genre(s), or type of text(s), do you enjoy most?*
   - *Who else might enjoy that genre? Why?*
   - *Who might not enjoy that genre? Why?*
   - *When might you expect to see this genre of program on television? Why?*

3. Introduce students to the chart below (on the board or on chart paper):

Moving Image Text (Title)	Genre (Type of Text)	What We Expect To See (Characteristics of Genre)
Shrek	Fairy Tale	Magical characters, Good/evil characters, Happy endings

4. Explain to students that they will view a few brief clips from different moving-image texts. Write the name of the media text (i.e. title) into the first column of the chart. As the students view these texts, their task is to consider the following questions:

   - *What type of moving-image text is this? What is its genre?*
   - *What do you know about this genre?*
   - *What might you expect to see in this genre?*

5. Ask students to describe the genre of the text and add the group consensus to the second and third columns of the chart. The following prompts may continue the conversation if necessary:

   - *What do you know about this genre that might help you make a prediction about it?*
   - *Why do we enjoy watching films/programs when we know what is going to happen?*

6. Repeat this activity with one or two more genres (e.g. action-adventure, comedy, historical fiction, family drama, fairy tale, documentary).

7. To consolidate learning, have students write a journal entry in which they respond to the following prompt:

   - My favourite genre is _____ because _____. Things I know about this genre are…

Activism

As a school-wide activity, students could poll students across the school as to their favourite genres of television shows or movies. The results could be organized into graphs or other pictorial representations and then posted on bulletin boards. The bulletin boards also could contain information about the different genres (e.g. what we expect from "comedy" or what we expect from "action-adventure"). Students also could interview other students about their reactions to how gender roles or power relationships are portrayed through the different genres. Students could write a report or journal entry comparing the responses they got.

Assessment Opportunities

Journal response
Anecdotal records of participation in class discussion

Implications for Future Lessons/Homework

Students can compare genres in print and moving-image texts. It will benefit students to see that many genres in printed texts are the same as those in moving-image texts. This is due partially to the fact that many moving-image narratives are adapted from books.

Cross Curricular Connections

Oral Language
Reading

Important Technology/Background for Teachers:

Some students will be fans of particular genres of moving-image texts outside of school. (e.g. Science Fiction: Star Wars). Encourage those students to explain the elements of the science fiction genre to their classmates, using Star Wars examples. Discuss your favourite movie genres with your students, explaining why you enjoy them.