

Text/Prose versus Cinema/Drama

In this comparison/contrast assignment, you have three main goals:

1. examine the psychological makeup of central characters
2. examine the developing plot structures between a product of prose and a product of cinema
3. examine the end product of the two art forms—decide which is more effective and explain why
 - use parallel structure when citing evidence based on your observations of the text and movie
 - discuss what elements of plot changes between the two art forms and what elements remain constant
 - remember the focus is not on the actors' performance but on the events that make up the plot

1,250 words or more / follow MLA guidelines (Other requirements will be discussed soon.)

Choose from the following list of possibilities:

1. Grimm Brothers folk tale “Aschenputtel” (1857 version) || Walt Disney animated film *Cinderella*,
 - Propose a strong thesis statement discussing your observations
 - Provide a brief synopsis of story and film. No more than five sentences (1 paragraph) each.

Examine and Compare the following:

- Use of magic (detail how it is performed and by whom; what results?)
- Protagonist's presentation and characterization; who/what aids the protagonist?
- How is the father figure presented in both versions?
- How are the issues with the antagonists resolved; how is punishment/retribution delivered?
- What is the overall portrayal of the antagonists? —cite physical descriptions.
- Explain the conflict type in detail: cite examples from text and film; how do they differ?

Confirm:

- Does the story uphold the European definition discussed in class? Why or why not?
- Does the film uphold the European definition discussed in class? Why or why not?
- What plot strategies does the film add? —what plot strategies does the film take away?
- Propose why the changes exist; are they effective? —do they distract?
- What is the ultimate message for each art form? Is the message the same for each version?

Bonus:

In addition: Research the French author Charles Perrault's version of the story.

How does this additional version factor into your hypothesis?

For Perrault's text, visit: <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0510a.html#perrault/>.

2. Jonathan Nolan short story “Memento Mori” || Christopher Nolan film *Memento*
 - Propose a strong thesis statement discussing your observations
 - Provide a brief synopsis of story and film. No more than five sentences (1 paragraph) each.
 - Determine how each is presented to the audience. (Explain the basic concept of story presentation.)
 - What forms of the narrative voice are explored in the short story? —how does the film treat this?
 - How are flashback scenes shown in comparison to the protagonist's “real” time?
 - Examine in detail the presented weaknesses/illness of the protagonist for each art form
 - Does the actor's presentation match your expectations of the prose version?
 - Define the protagonist and his characteristics in each version; how does he meet qualities for an Antihero?
 - Define the antagonist in each version; how is a resolution delivered?
 - Explain the conflict type in detail: explain choice with examples from text and film
 - What elements/techniques does the film add? —what elements/techniques does the film take away?
 - Propose why the changes exist; are they effective? —do they distract?
 - You can examine reviews of the film; do be cautious however. Critics like to present themselves as authorities or celebrities— and in some cases, their opinions are heavily biased.
 - Propose why changes exist between the story and the film; which version is more effective?
 - What is the ultimate message for each art form? Is the same message achieved?

3. Grimm Brothers folk tale “Godfather Death” || Ingmar Bergman film *The Seventh Seal*
- Propose a strong thesis statement discussing your observations
 - Provide a brief synopsis of story and film. No more than five sentences (one paragraph) each.
 - Examine how the personification of Death is presented: do the characters react to events in common? –any differences? How is Death’s presence explained?
 - Consider Death’s role in the stories. Does he serve a different purpose for the text as opposed to the film?
 - Are the personifications similar in physical presentation?
 - Declare in each story who is the protagonist and who is the antagonist— defend your choice with evidence and short summary of details; due to the complex nature of the tale, any interpretation must be justified as soon as possible; how is a resolution delivered?
 - Can it be argued that both stories are allegories? See definition in class lecture: 09/06 Friday, page 10
 - Examine how each version can meet the definition; explain how each goes in an independent direction
 - Explain the conflict type in detail: defend choice with in-depth examples from text and film
 - Contrast the two journeys presented <explain how they operate as plot devices
 - Examine the closing message; how similar is the tone and outcome of the plot?
 - What is the ultimate message delivered for each art form? Is the message the same for each version?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbgiWPJLSsM> (film)

<http://www.davidglensmith.com/wcjc/1302/PDFs/GodfatherDeath.pdf> (short story)

Students are responsible for finding any means of watching the full film they have chosen to discuss. If you do not own a particular video, *YouTube* offers options. For instance, *Youtube* does sponsor a “DisneyMoviesOnDemand” Channel at: http://youtu.be/Q0SgsTop_as
This entails a \$14.99 viewing fee however.

Depending on school policies, other options will be available.

For critical essays discussing Grimm Brothers’ stories, visit:

<http://www.davidglensmith.com/wcjc/1302/PDFs/Grimm/>

Copies of the short stories will be made available to students shortly.

Likewise be sure to read: *Portable Legacies*, pages: 932-941(to be provided).