



MEDIA SURVEY

Modern Americans encounter many different kinds of media each day. The media influence the way we see the world, but their descriptions may not show things the way they really are. For example, each media source—television, the Internet, newspapers, billboards—has a specific purpose or several purposes. Movies provide entertainment, but they can also have political or social messages. Each source has a point of view and uses a variety of techniques to persuade an audience that its point of view is the best or only one. Advertisements may use humor, popular music, or sentimental stories to convince viewers to purchase their product.

On the back of this sheet, keep a media log for one week, listing all the different types of media you use and how much time you spend with each one. Do you use YouTube, Facebook, Google? Read newspapers or magazines? See billboards or other advertising? Do you watch TV, listen to music, surf the Web, play video games? How many hours a day do you do each of these things? How many days a week? Record the type of media and how much time you spend on each one for each day of the week. Then use the chart below to summarize your habits.



Though **NETWORK (1976)** was produced in an era when television was dominated by three major networks, and the dissemination of news has undergone tremendous changes in the three decades since, the basic conflict of packaging news as entertainment for the sake of ratings is still a contemporary issue.

Summary

Type of media	Hours per day	Days per week
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

For what purposes do you use the media? _____

Which media do you trust? _____

Why? _____

Which media do you enjoy? _____

Why? _____

Pick one story you read or heard about from a media source that you use. How did you find out about it? _____

Who created this story? _____

What techniques, such as music, pictures, or comments from others, did this source use? _____

Imagine the story if it had been presented using completely different techniques. Would you feel the same about the information? Why or why not? _____



READING *a* FILM

Movies are not reality, but filmmakers use all their skills to convince the audience that what's on screen is genuine. In about two hours of screen time, filmmakers can convey stories that take place over several days, weeks, or years. Dialogue, costumes, makeup, and hairstyles help actors create believable characters. Music lets the audience know how those characters

feel. Camera angles call attention to the important relationships or situations in a scene.

When watching the scene your teacher has chosen, take notes to help you remember plot events, emotions, character details, and information about the movie's setting and time period.



Documentaries and fiction films both use similar approaches to storytelling, yet because each film has a distinct point of view, each is often perceived very differently when it comes to "truth." Muhammad Ali appears in the documentary **WHEN WE WERE KINGS** (1996) (above left) and Will Smith portrayed him in

ALI (2001) (left center). Anne Frank's story is told in the documentary **ANNE FRANK REMEMBERED** (1995) (right center), and she is portrayed by Millie Perkins in **THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK** (1959) (right).

Describe what happened in the scene you just watched:

How does the scene make you feel? _____

What techniques did the filmmakers use to make you feel that way?

How did the pacing of the scene (fast or slow) or the movement of the camera (dynamic or static) affect your reactions?

List all the visual qualities such as framing, camera angles, colors, setting, costumes, décor, lighting:

What was the mood of the scene? _____

How did the colors used in the scene contribute to the mood?

What did the costumes tell you about the characters?

How did the music contribute to the mood? _____

What did the music tell you about the characters?

What did you learn about the characters from the dialogue?

What were the values and opinions expressed in this scene?



SUBJECTIVE *or* OBJECTIVE?

PART A. BIAS

Filmmakers want the audience to respond to their movies, whether with laughter, sorrow, anger, excitement, or fright. Generally, movies try to appeal to as many people as possible, but every viewer responds in a different way for different reasons. You and your parents might both like the same movie, but while you relate to the characters in the story, your parents might respond more to the movie's theme. The qualities that make you like or dislike a movie reveal your biases. Just like you, all media have biases. Identifying these biases helps you evaluate the information you get from them. Use the back of this sheet if necessary for your answers.

List some movies that you really like and some of the things they have in common:

Now list some movies that you dislike and some of the things they have in common:

List the qualities that would make you see a movie:

List the qualities that would make you avoid a movie:

Pick one medium that you use regularly, such as a magazine, television show, or blog. What biases can you find?

Are they similar to your biases? If so, how?



Throughout the history of cinema, racial and ethnic stereotypes have prevented actors in front of the camera, as well as many of the professionals behind it, from achieving their full potential as artists. Some of the pioneers who blazed the trail for the next generation include Dorothy Dandridge, the first African-American actress to be nominated for Best Actress (for her role in *CARMEN JONES*, 1954), Rita Moreno, the first Latin-American actress to win a Supporting Actress Oscar (for her role in *WEST SIDE STORY*, 1961), Sidney Poitier, the first African-American to win a Best Actor Oscar (for his role in *LILIES OF THE FIELD*, 1963) and Sessue Hayakawa, the first Japanese actor to be nominated for Best Supporting Actor (for his role in *BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI*, 1957).

PART B. STEREOTYPES AND GENRES

To stereotype a person or a group is to assume that people who share certain characteristics are all the same. For example, political stereotypes would suggest that all Republicans are for mainstream businesspeople, while all Democrats are for minorities and the poor. Some people believe that stereotypes are based on actual fact. Others believe they are always false. In films, stereotypes can be a quick way to define characters. A high school drama might include a popular girl, a nerd, a jock, and a student body president as character types people will instantly recognize.

List as many stereotypes as you can:

Is there any truth to the stereotypes you listed? If yes, how?

Give an example of one of the stereotypes being used in a movie and why you think it was used.

Was your reaction to the stereotype positive or negative, and why?

List as many film genres or types as you can:

Do any of the genres you listed use specific stereotypes? What are they, and how are they used?



YOUR TURN



Each year, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences screens dozens of films at its Samuel Goldwyn Theater in Beverly Hills. Many of these screenings are for the more than 6,000 actors, writers, producers, directors, and other professionals who make up the Academy's membership to help them determine which films are worthy of Oscar nominations that year.

Who knows how many distinguished filmmakers started as students, dreaming of one day seeing their work on the big screen?

With your group, choose a main character whose life experience is similar to yours. Describe your character and his or her background.

List the names and images of three or four other characters in your movie. Describe one quality or detail that's important to know about each.

Character's name	Age	Description
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Write a paragraph describing the plot of your movie.

How does the story reflect your experience?

Have you seen a similar story in a movie or on television?

What is the genre of your movie?

Who is the audience for your movie? _____

Will the purpose of your movie be to entertain, to educate, or to raise important questions? _____

What is the message of your movie? _____

What is the title of your movie? _____
