

Lesson #2: Integrating Anime and Manga into my Art of Motion Picture course

Introduction:

While increasingly popular in the U.S.—even Beachwood High School has an anime club—these interconnected media are wildly popular in Japan and cover far more topics than are available in the U.S. Anime would connect with the film-course unit on animation; Walt Disney and Superman comics inspired the growth of anime and manga in Japan in the 1960s. Many anime have led to manga and video games or have grown out of manga and video games, a phenomenon that is beginning here. Anime and manga focus not only on adolescents but also on adults. As a result, their content ranges from comedy, social issues, science fiction and fantasy to pornography.

Objectives:

- Awareness of animation style, especially the big eyes, large hair, and clean lines
- Awareness of types of plots, characters and themes
 1. ordinary people with shadow lives—fantasy worlds and creatures (from Shinto, Buddhist, Daoist and folktale backgrounds)
 2. shape changing and identity
 3. complex characterization at the heart of this genre
 4. death often presented along with unhappy endings
 5. “Shakespearean” dimension as actions have consequences, leading to characters’ change and potential growth through struggle
 6. sense of communal connection—teamwork, friendship
 7. often scenes of violence-- urban violence reminiscent of “Mad Max” and urban *anomie* as well as reminders of destruction from WWII
 8. sexist presentations, very male oriented often with submissive females
 9. some subversive elements with social criticism of Japanese society
- Comparison with contemporary American animation including the Simpsons and South Park as well as with graphic novels, including Frank Miller’s Sin City comics and the film based on this series.
- If students are interested in the artistic elements, they might obtain one of many “how to” draw anime and manga characters to attempt their own graphic novel or even animated film.

Methodology: R-rating permission from parents

Watch “Spirited Away” after reading the Japanese folktale “Sparrows’ Inn”

1. Divide students into small groups to follow different topics: See bibliography that follows.
 - a. female character
 - b. role of sound
 - c. themes
 - d. insight into Japanese culture
 - e. changes in adaptation from folktale
2. Report out to the group as a whole.
3. Read relevant articles about Shintoism, Miyazaki, anime, “Spirited Away”
3. Look at episodes of The Simpsons and South Park to cover the same topics and note similarities and/or differences.
4. Students who are especially interested might want to watch “Princess Mononoke” which is much more demanding of western audiences.

Resources:

Books:

Clements, Jonathan & Helen McCarthy. *The Anime Encyclopedia: A Guide to Japanese Animation Since 1917*. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press. 2001.

Drazen, Patrick. *Anime Explosion: The What, Why & Wow of Japanese Animation*.

Berkeley,CA: Stone Bridge Press. 2003.

Hart, Christopher. *Anime Mania*. New York: Watson-Guption Publication. 2002.

Napier, Susan. *Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke*. New York: Palgrave. 2000.

Internet materials of use:

Izawa, Eri. "The Romantic, Passionate Japanese in Anime: A Look at the Hidden Japanese Soul"

----- "Gender and Gender Relations in Manga and Anime"

_____ "Toshio Okada on the Otaku, Anime History and Japanese Culture"

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anime>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manga>

www.koyagi.com/Libguide.html (The Librarian's Guide to Anime and Manga)

Spirited Away

<http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/sen/>

<http://www.midnighteye.com/reviews/spiraway.shtml>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/films/2003/09/09/the_strange_world_of_hayao_miyazaki_article.shtml

http://www.sshe.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue9/broderick_review.html

<http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/interviews/sen.html>

<http://www.answers.com/topic/spirited-away-1>

<http://www.sparknotes.com/film/spiritedaway/canalysis.html>

<http://www.filmfreakcentral.net/dvdreviews/spiritedaway.htm>- evaluates DVD supporting material

<http://www.brightlightsfilm.com/38/Spirited.htm>

http://www.moviewave.net/titles/spirited_away.html- evaluation of the music

<http://www.calendarlive.com/movies/reviews/cl-et-turan20sep20.story>- about the dubbing

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sento>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tengu>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirited_Away#External_links

several New York *Times* articles:

Considine, J.D. "Making Anime a Little Safer for Americans". January 20, 2002.

Smith, Roberta. "From a Mushroom Cloud, a Burst of Art Reflecting Japan's Psyche," April 8, 2005

State Standards: from Technology. Arts standards in process.

Standard I: Students develop an understanding of technology, its characteristics, scope, core concepts* and relationships between technologies and other fields.

Students learn that technology extends human potential by allowing people to do things more efficiently than they would otherwise be able to. Students learn that useful technological development is a product of human knowledge, creativity, invention, innovation, motivation and demand for new products and systems. They learn that the natural and human-made designed worlds are different, and that tools and materials are used to alter the environment. Students learn that the development of emerging technology is exponential, driven by history, design, commercialization, and shaped by creative/inventive thinking, economic factors and cultural influences.

Standard 5: Technology and Information Literacy: Students engage in information literacy strategies, use the Internet, technology tools and resources, and apply information-management skills to answer questions and expand knowledge.

Students become information-literate learners by utilizing a research process model. They recognize the need for information and define the problem, need or task. Students understand the structure of information systems and apply these concepts in acquiring and managing information. Using technology tools, a variety of resources are identified, accessed and evaluated. Relevant information is selected, analyzed and synthesized to generate a finished product. Students evaluate their information process and product.