

Educational Activity

***Cinema's Influence
on the Youth of Yesterday and Today***

Guidelines

Silent Cinema in Quebec, 1896-1930

www.cinemamuetquebec.ca

Cinema's Influence on the Youth of Yesterday and Today

Students are invited to present a paper comparing the influence of cinema on kids (10 to 15 years old) of today and kids of the beginning of the last century.

This activity is oriented towards students in secondary 3, 4 and 5 for classes in French, History, and Ethics and Religious Culture.

Introduction and Objectives

There have been many debates over the years around the influence of cinema on children. Similar debates exist today on the influence of video games, the Internet, etc.

Over the course of this activity, students will learn to collect information and develop critical ideas about the material.

Are the concerns of the past the same as those of today?

Length: 2 sessions of 60 minutes.

Sources: The main early reference will be the newspaper *La Patrie*, accessible in PDF format at the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. There are many sources available for the other part of the activity dealing with the present day.

Preparation

Start by screening a short clip from a violent film (*Apocalypse Now*[Francis Ford Coppola] or *No Country for Old Men* [Ethan Coen / Joel Coen, for example]). Following the clip, open a question period and ask students to offer their opinion on the impact of such violence on children.

Next, ask them to read an open letter from 1910 by a father asking for more censorship of films (*La Patrie*, 3 March 1910, page 16).

Finally, reading an excerpt from *La Patrie* (7 November 1913, pages 1-2) will provide students with a better understanding of the mindset of people at the time.

Activity Guidelines

For early newspapers, students can use the digital press kit available on our site in PDF format. Time permitting, students can also benefit from the search engine available on the “Silent Cinema in Quebec” website.

Ask students to search the Internet for recent articles on the influence of cinema on children.

Researching and collecting the information can be done in groups.

However, papers should be written individually. This will give students an opportunity to personally reflect on the material they have gathered and shared with their classmates.

Reviewing the Knowledge the Students Have Gained

Review the results of the activity:

- In the form of a debate.
- During a question period.

Have adult views on the issue of “the influence of film and television violence on children” changed?

Should parents have the right to censor what their children watch?