

Book and Film Comparison Paper

DATE DUE: _____

The Project: Read a book that has been adapted to film. The book should be age, content, and reading level appropriate. No books read as assigned reading for previous classes will be accepted. Make sure you take notes as you read the book and watch the film.

The Question: How does the book "translate" to film? Is the film a successful adaptation? Why or why not?

The Assignment: Write a 3-4 page paper (double spaced, typed, 12 point size font) in which you respond to the following questions and directions, supporting your statements with evidence and examples.

Part I – Introduction

Begin with a hook to interest the reader. Explain why you have chosen to read this book and watch this movie.

Part II - THE BOOK

1. **Book Details:** List the title, author, publisher, date of 1st publication, and number of pages in your chosen book. Be certain to *italicize* the title.

2. **Précis** (summary):

Include the setting of the book. Mention the place and time in which your book's story occurred, for example: San Francisco, 1920's.

In a carefully written paragraph, summarize the plot of your book. This should be no longer than a page and if done carefully it may be much shorter.

3. **Classic/Noteworthy:** Write an evaluation or explanation of why this piece of literature is considered classic or noteworthy. Why has it endured or been read and recommended to others? What does the book have to "say" that lasts? In this section of your report, you might consider such literary elements as: characterization, conflict, description, plot, theme, style, setting, tone or point of view. You need NOT discuss all of these but you could focus on one that stands out in your mind as noteworthy.

Part III - THE FILM

1. **Film Details:** List the title, director, producer, primary actors/characters and year of the film. Be certain to *italicize* the title. (Provide basic film facts)
2. **Comparison/contrast:** In carefully written paragraphs summarize the similarities and differences between the book and the film. Compare and contrast the basic elements of the setting, plot, characters, etc. Be specific, but select the primary differences and similarities.
3. **Adaptation of the book to screen:** In a paragraph or two discuss what techniques and devices are used to "translate" the book to the screen? (scenery, setting, music, camera techniques, editing, lighting, type of shots, mise-en-scene, cinematography, art design, costuming, special effects, etc.)

Part IV - Effectiveness/Success of the Adaptation?

Discuss the following topics in a well written paragraph(s):

- a. Is the film a successful adaptation of the book? **Why or why not? *****
- b. Which is preferable - -the book or the film? Why?
- c. If you could direct the film what would you do to enhance the adaptation of the book to film? (For example: different cast, setting, add or delete characters or sections of the book, different method of narrating the story.)
- d. If you wouldn't change anything about the film, then discuss what was done particularly well. Focus on the specific and provide examples.
- e. End with a solid clincher sentence.

Remember: Support your opinion and ideas with specific evidence from the book and film. Avoid generalities.

*****Consider the following facts as you make your argument.** Keep them in mind and perhaps address some of these issues if they are relevant to your book/film adaptation:

- a. POV is crucial: many stories are told in the 1st person; films are usually told in the 3rd person. Therefore it is sometimes difficult to "get into" the protagonist's mind very well.
- b. Film usually relies on one protagonist and a handful of characters.
- c. Film usually utilizes the 3 act structure.
- d. Scripts: 1 page = 1 minute of screen time. Films are usually 120 pp. long. Books are generally longer.
- e. Some books are more "cinematic" than others: visual/narrative structure/ "edited" to move through time and space like a movie
- f. Sometimes a faithful adaptation doesn't make for a good film. Some works need to be "opened up" for the screen.
- g. Science fiction is sometimes difficult to adapt due to abstract/philosophical content that can't be conveyed through dialogue (unless the director or someone else makes a speech) or visuals.