

**ENGL105**  
**Unit Project 3 – Humanities: Film Trailer and Reflection**

| Genre                       | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Audience                                                                                          | Role              | Rhetorical Situation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Film trailer and reflection | To convince the producers at a major film company to fund your movie by showing them that your film will be entertaining, lucrative (by appealing to modern audiences), and faithful to the original text | Producers at a major film company who are interested in adapting a short text into a feature film | Film screenwriter | Producers at a major film company are interested in adapting a short text into a feature film. You need to prepare for a “pitch” meeting with them by creating a trailer for the film you’d ultimately like to write/make with their funding as well as a reflection piece that will accompany the trailer and explain the choices you made in making the trailer. |

**Scenario**

You are a struggling Hollywood screenwriter. Your agent calls you and excitedly explains that the producers at a major film production company want to adapt a short story, fairy tale, myth, religious parable or story, or some other relatively small text into a feature film. You need to prepare for a “sales pitch” to the producers.

To prepare for this meeting, you will have to create a number of documents:

- A close textual analysis of your selected text, analyzing the story and determining how this story can have mass cultural appeal or relate to current cultures, topics, and issues.
- A detailed plan or storyboard for a trailer for the film adaptation of this text you would like to eventually make. This plan will also include explanations or justifications for each decision you make in constructing your trailer. Attached to this reflection will be a Works Cited page listing all of the elements included in your trailer.
- Your actual “sales pitch” to the producers will involve a trailer you make for your suggested film, accompanied by a 45-second “elevator pitch” you deliver orally as well as a written reflection that explores the process of making a trailer in general as well as issues in adapting a text into another medium (such as film).
- During our final two class meetings of the semester, you will all deliver these “elevator pitches” and premiere your trailers for the class.

### **Feeder 3.1: Textual Analysis/Close Reading**

First, you have to *choose a short story, fairy tale, myth, religious parable or story, or some other **short text** with which you are already familiar (or with which you can quickly become familiar)*. Try to avoid a text that has been adapted into a movie recently or multiple times unless you can justify how *your* version is unique. (Note: There needs to be an actual written text to which you can reference, not just a story that is common knowledge. When selecting your story, make sure you have access to the actual text in which that character appears. For instance, if you're doing a fairy tale, don't use a generic retelling of the tale. Use the original text from the Brothers Grimm, etc.) Write a brief document in which you state your selected text, and a sentence or two on why you chose that story. To make sure you have an actual text, also include the MLA citation for your text (as it would appear on a Works Cited page), even if that text is something you access online. We will be using MLA formatting throughout Unit 3. Refer to the *Tar Heel Writing Guide* as a citation guide. **Create a new folder in your Sakai dropbox called "Unit 3," and upload this document to your Unit 3 Sakai dropbox by 11:59pm on Thurs. March 21. The file name for this document should be "[Your last name]\_3.1 Topic." We will discuss these in class on Fri. March 22.**

To successfully adapt a short text into another medium, you need to become extremely familiar with the text itself by reading it, rereading it, studying it, and writing about it. You need to be able to prove to the producers that you understand and appreciate the complexities and nuances of this story. You now need to form a carefully crafted argument explaining why this story, or aspects of this story, has current social or cultural relevance to modern movie-going audiences. For instance, your text might be an ancient Greek myth. How are aspects of this story (the events, the characters, the themes) still culturally relevant to a contemporary audience? Are there aspects of the story to which current audiences can relate?

For Feeder 3.1, you will write a literary analysis of your short text. Remember to have a clear thesis at the end of your introduction and to explain the significance of your thesis in terms of the overall text in your conclusion. You need to make some kind of an argument regarding the text, based purely on your own careful examination of the text itself. This means you will be summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting from your primary text to support your claims. This also means you'll need to cite your text as a source in MLA format. This textual analysis should be relatively short, 4-6 double-spaced pages, plus a Works Cited page.

If you need to include some background or historical information into your paper, that's fine as long as you appropriately cite your sources within the text and in your Works Cited page. In terms of actually analyzing your text, I'd prefer if you rely strictly on your own close-reading of the text. If you're really struggling, however, and you need to integrate one or two critics or scholars as well, that is acceptable, as long as you cite them as well. Ultimately, though, this paper needs to be your own argument (supported by other scholars if necessary) and not a summary of other people's arguments.

Each draft should be submitted to your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox by the due date, including your final draft.

**1<sup>st</sup> draft due Sun. March 24 by 11:59pm (for peer review on Mon. March 25).**  
(This should be at least a rough idea of a thesis or possible theses as well as an outline or a list of points you want to make.) **The file name for this document should be “[Your Last Name]\_3.1 Draft 1.”**

**2<sup>nd</sup> draft due Tues. March 26 by 11:59pm (for peer review on Wed. March 27).**  
(This should be a rough draft or most of a rough draft.) **The file name for this document should be “[Your Last Name]\_3.1 Draft 2.”**

**3<sup>rd</sup> draft due Thurs. March 28 by 11:59pm (for peer review on Fri. March 29).**  
(This should be a complete draft, so you only have to make final touches and relatively minor revisions after the workshop on Fri. March 29.) **The file name for this document should be “[Your Last Name]\_3.1 Draft 3.”**

**Final draft due Fri. March 29 by 11:59pm (for a grade). The file name for this document should be “[Your Last Name]\_3.1 Final Draft.” This draft will be graded and will be worth 5% of your final grade.**

### **Feeder 3.2: Trailer Storyboard**

Now that you are extremely familiar with your text and have an idea of its themes, especially themes that are relevant to a contemporary audience, it is time to think about how you would adapt this text into a feature-length film for that audience. Eventually, you will be constructing a trailer to hype up this hypothetical film adaptation to the producers. Before you can make your trailer, however, you need make a plan.

Your trailer should be a minimum of 90 seconds and absolutely no longer than 3 minutes. (The Motion Picture Association of America [MPAA] only allows movie trailers to be two minutes and thirty seconds, but I'm giving you a bit more room here.) It should incorporate audio (such as music or songs, sound effects, and/or voice-overs) and visuals (mostly video clips but also possibly on-screen text or titles). (When we visit the MRC, the staff will show you how to lift clips from films or videos in their collection to use in your trailer and will discuss copyright and citation issues regarding that content. You can also download video clips from the internet. If you wish, you can also record your own video and/or audio footage.)

In this trailer, you're obviously attempting to be engaging, to get potential movie-goers interested in seeing your film and to convince the producers that this can be an entertaining and lucrative film. However, you also need to remain faithful to the themes and emotional core of the original text. Additionally, your essay from Feeder 3.1 should guide or focus what you want to highlight in your trailer. What makes this story relevant to modern audiences? Your answer to that question should be the frame through which you approach the original text and craft this trailer. What images, symbols, or other aspects you mentioned in your textual analysis belong in your trailer? Remember to also stay true to the story and your character. (For instance, if your story is a love story, the trailer shouldn't make it seem like a horror film.)

Now that you understand the expectations for your trailer, you can begin planning the trailer. Before you begin composing a writing project, you develop an idea and an outline. Similarly, before you begin constructing a trailer, you should develop a detailed plan for what you want your trailer to look, sound, and feel like. Although this written plan won't technically be an actual storyboard like filmmakers use (which involve sketches of individual shots), I want you to think about this written document in a similar manner, envisioning each individual shot or cut that will appear in your trailer.

You will write out a document that walks me through each shot of your trailer. Don't worry about actually finding or filming the footage just yet. Just imagine what you would want your trailer to be like and walk me through it. Explain each scene, shot, or cut. What will we see? What will we hear? In addition, explain each decision you're making in terms of how it will affect the audience. For example, if you have a shot in which the audience (via the camera) is looking up at the hero of the story, explain you want a shot like that because it will make the character look imposing or

powerful. If you have a sudden cut to black, explain that you want to do that to create a sudden shock or suspenseful moment. Think about music, sound effects, voice-overs, transitions. Will the music gradually get louder or softer or suddenly stop? Why?

This document needs to prove that you are being intentional about the decisions you make in constructing your trailer, and it also needs to explain how your choices are attempting to create a trailer that is compelling but still resonates with one or more of the themes you highlighted in Feeder 3.1. For instance, if one of the themes is defiance in the face of tyranny, then perhaps you will have shots of your hero looking small yet defiant in front of an imposing antagonist. Justify each decision you make in your trailer. You only have 3 minutes, so there's no room for extra material randomly thrown in without a specific intention behind it.

As you develop your trailer storyboard, I want you to find a balance between feasibility and ambition. Although you *do* need to be aware of what's realistic (certain shots might be impossible to obtain or film yourself), it's definitely okay if your final trailer does not match the storyboard you submit. In fact, it's likely that your plan and your final trailer itself will end up changing after you submit this document. But by carefully thinking about these many options, you will be better prepared when the time comes to actually begin constructing your trailer and ready to deal with changes or alterations as they arise.

Although this is a plan, it is still expected to be written as a formal document. You can certainly use the first-person, but remember to still proofread carefully, etc. Each draft should be submitted to your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox by the due date, including your final draft.

This plan should not need to incorporate any outside source unless you mention specific lines you plan to reference from your primary text, in which case, you should cite your primary text.

**1<sup>st</sup> draft due Sun. March 31 by 11:59pm (for peer review on Mon. April 1).** (This should be a general list of ideas, etc. so you can have a productive brainstorming session in class on April 1.) **The file name for this document should be "[Your Last Name]\_3.2 Draft 1."**

**2<sup>nd</sup> draft due Tues. April 2 by 11:59pm (for peer review on Wed. April 3).** (This should be a rough draft or most of a rough draft.) **The file name for this document should be "[Your Last Name]\_3.2 Draft 2."**

**Final draft due Fri. April 5 by 11:59pm (for a grade).** **The file name for this document should be "[Your Last Name]\_3.2 Final Draft."** This draft will be graded and will be worth 5% of your final grade.

### **Unit Project: Film Trailer (and Reflection with Works Cited)**

The Unit Project will consist of three components:

- Film trailer
- 45-second “elevator pitch” delivered orally to the class
- Written reflection on crafting the trailer and on the task of adapting a written text into a visual medium, accompanied by a Works Cited page for media included in your trailer

The final product you’ll need before you meet with the producers to pitch your idea is *a trailer for the film you’re pitching*.

In actually making and editing your trailer, I recommend using Adobe Premiere as it is an amazing program to which you all have free access. You can also use Adobe Spark to make this trailer or, if you have access to and experience with other video-making software, you can use that software, including Windows MovieMaker, iMovie, etc.

(On Fri. April 5, we will have a class dedicated to getting comfortable with software for editing digital media and video at the Media Resources Center [MRC] in the Undergraduate Library. The MRC also provides online tutorials at <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/c.php?g=9249&p=5076556>. You will most likely need to make subsequent visits to the MRC on your own to get additional assistance as you make your trailer.)

(Note: In the interest of transparency, if you make your video public, please include in your title that this is a fan-made trailer. We don’t want to mislead people.)

When your trailer is complete, you’ll need to somehow post this trailer online via YouTube, Vimeo, or make it accessible via Adobe Spark. (For instance, if you upload your trailer to YouTube, make sure you edit the viewing permissions to make your video “unlisted” to avoid being blocked because of copyright issues but to still make it accessible to the class and to me.) When you submit your final trailer, you can either upload the file directly to Sakai or upload a link to the video as it appears on YouTube, etc.

*You’ll also need to compose a brief reflection and explanation of the choices you made (2-3 double-spaced pages) in crafting your trailer.* Begin by stating the core themes or elements from Feeder 3.1 you wanted to communicate and then briefly touch on the major design choices you came up with in Feeder 3.2. The majority of this document, however, should discuss not what you intended originally but reflect on the process as you had to alter your original storyboard (Feeder 3.2) in order to make this trailer work. What alterations had to be made? Explain why you had to make them? Between writing your plan and actually constructing your trailer, you had to make new decisions. Explain to me what those decisions were and justify them, displaying to me how those decisions helped you create an effective trailer

that still communicated the issues from Feeder 3.1. What did you learn about yourself, the text, or the overall process of adapting a text into a visual medium? What did you learn about the process of composition itself?

*Attached to this reflection, include a Works Cited page for your trailer. This will be a list of any media (photos, images, video clips, animations, sound clips, or music) used in your trailer that were not your original creation. This list should be in MLA format in the style of a Works Cited page to give credit to the owners of those pieces of intellectual property and would be a document the producers would want.*

On the final due date, *each student will give a 45-second "elevator pitch" accompanying their trailer.* It is your choice if you give your "elevator pitch" before or after we watch the trailer itself. This oral pitch should quickly introduce us to the story or character, highlight one or two points from your written reflection, and concisely explain the appeal of your suggested film. We are the producers at a major film company. This is your chance to "sell us" on your idea.

#### **Timeline for Unit Project:**

**Beginning cut of trailer due by 11:59pm on Sun. April 7 via your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox.** This is to make sure you have at least begun compiling actual audio and video footage. It is not, in any way, expected to be complete, polished, or even make sense. Whatever you have thus far, export it into a video file, and then upload that file into your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox. ***The name of this video file should be "[Your last name]\_UP3 Trailer Draft 1."***

In the event of technical difficulties uploading your trailer (this draft or any other draft), make sure you begin the upload process well before the deadline. If technical difficulties arise, email me immediately explaining the difficulties, and attach the rough cut to the email via an upload or link. We will do an in-class workshop of your rough cuts on Mon. April 8. (If you have headphones for your laptop, bring them to class on April 8.)

**Rough cut of trailer due by 11:59pm on Tues. April 16 via your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox.** Remember the above advice regarding technical difficulties. This cut should be more cohesive and closer to a finished product. ***The name of this video file should be "[Your last name]\_UP3 Trailer Draft 2."***

**Rough draft of written reflection and Works Cited due by 11:59pm on Sun. April 21 via your Unit 3 Sakai dropbox.** ***The file name for this document should be "[Your last name]\_UP3 Reflection Draft 1."*** On Mon. April 22, we will do an in-class workshop on your reflections, and this will also be your last chance to get feedback from your peers on your trailer.

**Written Reflection:** Upload the final draft of your written reflection (accompanied by a Works Cited page for all non-original media included in your trailer) to your Unit 3 Sakai dropbox by 11:59pm on Tues. April 23. ***The***

*file name for this document should be “[Your last name]\_UP3 Reflection Final Draft.”*

**Film Trailer:** When your film trailer is absolutely complete, submit the final draft of the trailer via your Sakai Unit 3 dropbox. *The title for your file upload or hyperlink should be “[Your last name]\_UP3 Trailer Final Draft” and is due by 11:59pm on Tues. April 23. We will watch these trailers in class on Wed. April 24.*

**“Elevator Pitch”:** Deliver orally to the class on Wed. April 24 when we premiere your film trailer for the class.

*On Wed. April 24, all students should be prepared to deliver their “elevator pitch” and premiere their trailers in class. I will use a random integer generator to select the order of pitches. About half of you will present on Wed. April 24, followed for constructive feedback from the audience. I will take notes on everyone’s participation during the feedback sessions as well. Those who do not present on Wed. April 24 will present on Fri. April 26, during which we will follow the same structure. If you are randomly selected to present but are absent, your absence will affect your grade on this unit project significantly.*

### **Grading**

Feeder 3.1 (Textual Analysis/Close Reading): 5% of your final grade

Feeder 3.2 (Trailer Storyboard): 5% of your final grade

Unit Project 3 (Film Trailer, “Elevator Pitch,” Written Reflection): 15% of your final grade

*This Unit, as a whole, will then amount to 25% of your final grade.*

See also: “Unit 3 Grading Rubric – Humanities – Film Trailer and Reflection” at Sakai>Resources>Unit 3: Humanities.

## **Grading Rubric for Feeder 3.1: Textual Analysis/Close Reading**

### **Organization & Content: 70 points**

- Student has displayed considerable investment in the revision process.
- Introduction provides basic background info on the primary text (the story, fairy tale, etc.)
- Thesis clearly states a specific argument or interpretation of the primary text
- Thesis addresses the following questions:
  - Why or how does this story—or aspects of this story—have current social or cultural relevance to modern movie-going audiences?
  - How are aspects of this story (the events, the characters, the themes) still culturally relevant to a contemporary audience?
- Body of the paper includes concrete and specific examples from the primary text to support overall argument or interpretation stated in the thesis
- Minimal reliance on outside scholars or critics (the paper uses them to support an original argument and does not merely summarize other people's interpretations)
- Strong conclusion explains the significance of your thesis in terms of the overall text and ideally touches on larger implications

### **Style: 20 points**

- Employs proper style in terms of analyzing a text
- Employs formal vocabulary
- Free from typographical errors, spelling or grammatical mistakes

### **Layout & Design: 10 points**

- Follows proper MLA formatting (page numbers, in-text citations, etc.)
- All sources are cited both within the text and in a Works Cited page
- Appropriate length (4-6 double-spaced pages, plus Works Cited page)

*Final grade for Feeder 3.1 will be worth 5% of student's final course grade.*

## **Grading Rubric for Feeder 3.2: Trailer Storyboard**

### **Organization & Content: 70 points**

- Student has displayed considerable investment in the revision process.
- Storyboard carefully delineates all elements of the planned trailer (beginning, middle, and end; audio, video, text, voice-overs, music, etc.)
- Storyboard explains the intended effect of all such elements (what is purpose of including this shot, this music, of increasing the volume, etc.?)
- Storyboard also explains how such decisions and intentions relate back to key themes or elements discussed in Feeder 3.1.
- Planned trailer is true to the original spirit of the primary text.
- Storyboard reveals intentionality, thoughtfulness, and creativity in the design and planned execution of the trailer.

### **Style: 20 points**

- Employs proper style in terms of describing the planned trailer and justifying the choices made in creating that plan
- Employs formal vocabulary
- Free from typographical errors, spelling or grammatical mistakes

### **Layout & Design: 10 points**

- Follows proper MLA formatting (page numbers, in-text citations, etc.)
- All sources (if any are used) are cited both within the text and in a Works Cited page

*Final grade for Feeder 3.2 will be worth 5% of student's final course grade.*

**Grading Rubric for Unit Project 3:**  
**Film Trailer, Written Reflection, “Elevator Pitch”**

**Organization & Content: 70 points**

- Student has displayed considerable investment in the revision process.
- Film trailer is coherent and unified by a few specific themes, images, or symbols from Feeder 3.1
- Film trailer at least attempts to follow the plans laid out from Feeder 3.2.
- Film trailer is engaging but still faithful to the source text (story, fairy tale, etc.)
- “Elevator pitch” adequately pairs with film trailer and is engaging (proper eye contact, not reliant on cue cards, well-rehearsed)
- “Elevator pitch” should:
  - Quickly introduce the story or character
  - Highlight one or two points from your written reflection
  - Concisely explain the appeal of your suggested film
- Written reflection should:
  - Refer to cultural relevance or appeal of source text from Feeder 3.1
  - Explain what point or argument you were trying to achieve in your trailer, and how you attempted to make that point or prove that argument
  - Explain the decisions that had to be made between Feeder 3.2 (storyboard) and actually creating the trailer (What changed? Why?)
  - Reflect on the process of adapting a text into a visual medium
  - Be accompanied by a Works Cited list of all external media used in film trailer

**Style: 20 points**

- Employs proper style depending on genre: film trailer, “elevator pitch,” written reflection
- Reflection and “elevator pitch” employ formal or professional vocabulary
- Reflection is free from typographical errors, spelling or grammatical mistakes
- “Elevator pitch” is engaging and well-rehearsed and appropriate in length
- Film trailer is engaging and polished

**Layout & Design: 10 points**

- Film trailer is proper length and fully functional
- Written reflection is proper length (2-3 double-spaced pages) and has a Works Cited page attached
- Works Cited page follows proper MLA formatting and includes all outside media used in trailer

*Final grade for UP3, Film Trailer with Reflection, will be worth 15% of student's final course grade.*