

Silent narratives

Activity set 4

Activities

- Develop a storyline
- Create and present a silent movie

Goals

- To explore the idea of "narrative" through primarily non-verbal means
- To discover connections among visual images and create logical sequences
- To work as a team to tell a story

Levels

- Elementary
- Intermediate
- Senior

Curriculum connections

- Language arts
- Drama
- Visual arts

Materials

- Images set
 - Elementary students: Image set D-1
 - Intermediate students: Image set D-2
 - Senior students: Image set D-3
- Information sheets
 - B2. Byron Harmon's Banff
 - B4. Mountain recreation and exploration
- Paper or card and markers or crayons for titles
- Videotaping equipment (optional)

Background

- Byron Harmon was a storyteller. As well as taking photographs, he also had a movie camera. He often took both still and moving pictures in the mountains.
- Harmon ran a movie theatre in Banff where he showed his own films between the feature presentations.
- Harmon attended and photographed numerous Banff events, such as Banff Indian Days and Banff Winter Carnival.

ACTIVITY - ELEMENTARY

1. Ask students to imagine that the photographs in Image set D-1 may be stills from one of Byron Harmon's movies.
 - What order could they go in?
 - Who would be the main character or characters?
 - Are there any images that do not fit the movie?

ACTIVITIES - INTERMEDIATE / SENIOR

1. Put students into groups of 3 to 5. Using the appropriate Image Set (D-2 or D-3) for the grade level, have each group select five or more photographs that look like they could have come from the same movie. The group then puts the images into a sequence and creates a storyline by imagining what could have happened between individual photographs to connect the scenes. In this way, each group will create their own "silent movie" based on Harmon images.
2. Early movies had no spoken dialogue. Rather, they had written "titles" and / or dialogue to help connect the scenes and tell the story. Have students create titles and written dialogue for their "silent movie", but these should be kept to a minimum and used only when necessary. Let the images and drama tell the story.
3. Have each group act out their "movie" live, without speaking. Or, if video equipment is available, students can present a filmed version of their presentation.
4. Have the audience determine which Harmon photographs each storyline was based on. (Provide the audience with a full selection Harmon images through hand-out sheets, a display board, or other method of presentation.)