



LOW HANGING FRUIT

We're Off to See the Wizard!

By Jeannie Standal

2019 is the 80th Anniversary of the Wizard of Oz movie, but the story was first published in 1900! The Technicolor sensation of 1939 wasn't the first production based on the L. Frank Baum book; it wasn't even the first movie. There are also 12 other books by Baum set in Oz! The movie starring Judy Garland, though, is the one that lives on in our imaginations and on our hearts.

Interesting,

but what has that to do with my classroom?

The Wizard of Oz is ripe for cross-curricular teaching and a handy opportunity to collaborate with other faculty and staff. Just a few ideas for a Wizard of Oz extravaganza day for students of any age might be:

ELA: the story arc of the hero's journey (with a female hero)!

Science: Tornadoes: will they really carry a house over the rainbow?

Geography: Kansas and the great plains: are they really gray?

History: The Great Depression and The Dust Bowl. Why was this the right movie at the right time? What was happening in Kansas and the United States?

Music: What's with people bursting into song? What makes an effective song in a musical and what is a song's purpose? How many versions of Over the Rainbow exist?

Symbolism: Identify and explore symbols in the story. There are lots of theories about the Yellow Brick Road.

STEM: Conduct an examination of the film's special effects and how those were achieved with 1939 technology.

And the list goes on.



Remember to collaborate with your school librarian. Perhaps kids could use the library to research how often they find a Wizard of Oz reference in their print and digital reading. "We're not in Kansas anymore" and "There's no place like home" have become part of our everyday language. How have other movies influenced our lexicon?

At the end of the day, pop some popcorn and enjoy the show!

LINKS TO MORE LEARNING



The Wizard of Oz: An American Fairy Tale

Digital exhibit at the Library of Congress website featuring photos, bits of script, musical scores and more.

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oz/ozsect2.html>

Want more ideas for using movies?

Using movies in lessons can be an effective occasional departure from the same-old, same-old. Overused, though, they become the same-old.

<http://teachwithmovies.org/>

Take a look at some artifacts and photos:

The museum of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences hosts a collection of photographs connected with the movie.

<https://www.oscars.org/search/site/wizard%20of%20oz>

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



IMDb

The [Internet Movie Database \(IMDb\)](https://www.imdb.com/) is the know-all source for movies. Everything from a cast and crew roster, including company credits, to filming locations, biographies and complete film/discographies of each cast member. Enriching details like trivia, interviews with those associated with the movie, and a "similar movies" list, much like read-alike lists on NoveList. It's an easy to search, comprehensive free resource. For hard-core fans, there is a paid, professional account available that also lists agents, publicists and lots more.

DIGITAL TOOLS



VideoHound's Golden Movie Retriever

Available on lili.org, in our Gale Virtual Reference Library collection, this eBook offers movie reviews and a wealth of information on a vast catalog of films, from MPAA rating, country of origin, cast, awards, and made-for-television/cable/video designations. Find it by title under the Full Resource Index:

<http://lili.org/>



