

Presentation on film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays

AUDIO - open this URL to listen to the audio:

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Questions 1-4

Complete the table below.

Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.

Presentation on film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays

Stages of presentation	Work still to
Introduce Giannetti's book containing a 1..... of adaptations	Organise not
Ask class to suggest the 2..... adaptations	No further w
Present Rachel Malchow's ideas	Prepare som 3.....
Discuss relationship between adaptations and 4..... at the time of making the film	No further w

Questions 5-10

What do the speakers say about each of the following films?

Choose **SIX** answers from the box and write the correct letter, **A-G**, next to questions 5-10.

Comments

- A** clearly shows the historical period
- B** contains only parts of the play
- c** is too similar to another kind of film
- D** turned out to be unpopular with audiences

E presents the play in a different period from the original

F sets the original in a different country

G incorporates a variety of art forms

Films

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 5 | Ran | 5 |
| 6 | Much Ado About Nothing | 6 |
| 7 | Romeo & Juliet | 7 |
| 8 | Hamlet | 8 |
| 9 | Prospero's Books | 9 |
| 10 | Looking for Richard | 10 |

Solution:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1. classification | 6. A |
| 2. worst | 7. E |
| 3. slides | 8. C |
| 4. issues | 9. G |
| 5. F | 10. B |

Audioscript:

KATIE: Joe, you know I'm giving a presentation in our film studies class next week?

JOE: Yes.

KATIE: Well, could we discuss it? I could do with getting someone else's opinion.

JOE: Of course, Katie. What are you going to talk about?

KATIE: It's about film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. I've got very interested in all the different approaches that film directors take.

JOE: Uhuh.

So I thought I'd start with Giannetti, who's a professor of film and literature, and in one of his books he came up with a straightforward classification of film adaptations based on how faithful they are to the original plays and novels.

JOE: Right.

I've already made some notes on that, so I just need to sort those out before the presentation. That next I'd ask the class to come up with the worst examples of Shakespeare adaptations they've seen, and to say why. That should be more fun than having their favourite versions.

JOE: Yes, I can certainly think of a couple!

KATIE: Right. Next I want to talk about Rachel Malchow. I came across something on the internet about her work on film adaptations, and I was thinking of showing some film clips to illustrate her ideas.

JOE: Will you have enough time, though? Both to prepare and during the presentation? After all, you'll be able to find all the clips you want.

KATIE: Hmm. Perhaps you're right. OK, well, I'd better do some slides instead, saving how various she is to what she says. That should encourage discussion.

JOE: Mmm.

KATIE: Next I want to say something about how plays may be chosen for adaptation because they are concerned with issues of the time when the film is made.

JOE: You mean things like patriotism, or the role of governments?

KATIE: Exactly. It's quite tricky, but I've got a few ideas I'd like to discuss.

KATIE: And finally I want to talk about a few adaptations, that I think illustrate a range of approaches. I'll have some comments on them. Do you know the Japanese film Ran?

JOE: I haven't seen it. It was based on Shakespeare's King Lear, wasn't it?

That's right. It was a very loose adaptation, using the same situation and story, but moving it to 17th century Japan instead of 16th century Britain. So for example the king's daughters become concubines because in Japanese culture at that time, women couldn't succeed to the throne.

JOE: OK. I hope you're going to talk about the 1993 film of Much Ado About Nothing, I think that's one of the best Shakespeare films. It really brings the play to life, doesn't it?

KATIE: Yes. I agree. And I think filming it in Italy, where the play is set, makes you see what life was like at the time of the play.

JOE: Absolutely, Right, what's next?

KATIE: Er, next. I thought Romeo & Juliet the 1996 film, which moves the action into the present day.

JOE: Yes, it worked really well, I thought - changing the two feuding families in the original to two rival gangs.

business empires, even though they're speaking in the English of the original play.

KATIE: You'd expect it would sound really bizarre, but I found I soon got used to it.

JOE: Me too.

KATIE: Then I thought I'd include a real Hollywood film, one that's intended to appeal to a mass audience.

JOE: There must be quite a number of those.

KATIE: Yes. but I've picked the 1996 film of Hamlet It included every line of the text, but it's more action hero movie - there are loads of special effects, but no unifying interpretation of the play.

JOE: All show and no substance.

KATIE: Exactly. Then there's Prospero's Books, based on The Tempest That was really innovative from a stylistic point of view.

joe: Didn't it include dance and singing and animation, as well as live actors?

KATIE: Yes. it did. I also want to mention Looking for Richard. Did you ever see it?

JOE: No. but I've read about it. It was a blend of a documentary with a few scenes from Richard III.

KATIE: That's right. It's more a way of looking into how people nowadays connect with the playwriting. This is really just the starting point. And that'll be where I finish.

JOE: Well, it sounds as though it'll be very interesting.