

Scary Tactics

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If you watched all of the horror films released in October, you would not sleep a wink. Have you thought about the ways filmmakers use creative techniques to make their audiences tremble with fright? Have some Halloween fun with this activity.

Deconstruct a clip of a scary movie trailer to identify creative techniques.

AHA! Suspensful music and creative photography make this movie seem really scary!

Grade Level: 5-8

Key Question #1: Who created this message?

Core Concept #1: Media messages are constructed.

Key Word: Author

Key Question #2: What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?

Core Concept #2: Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.

Key Word: Format

Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent?

Core Concept #5: Most messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

Key Word: Purpose

Materials: Movie trailer from an appropriately rated scary movie. This link is for the new

Goosebumps Haunted Halloween movie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EbOgr>

[4aTvM](#)

rated PG. For younger audiences

try

[Coraline](#) rated G or visit [Comm](#)

[on Sense Media](#)

list of scary movies for children.

Activity: Show the trailer three times, in this order: Sound only (no video), Video only (no sound), and full video with sound. Do not comment between showings. At the end, ask students which version was scariest, why? Using Key Question #2, discuss the effects of sound, music, lighting, and camera angles. Reinforce that all media messages are constructed by someone (Key Question #1) for a specific purpose (Key Question #5).

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