



Mixed Media

**15 POP CULTURE LESSONS
FOR SECONDARY ELA**



<u>"The Blind Bandit"</u> by Avatar, <i>the Last Airbender</i>	<u>"Paused Play"</u> taken by Danielle Hall
<u>Subnautica's</u> opening scene	<u>Terminus Chapter 1</u>
<u>"Burning House"</u> by Cam	<u>Poetry Bell Ringers Sample</u>
<u>Horizon Zero Dawn's</u> opening scene	<u>"Poor Unfortunate Souls"</u> by Disney's <i>The Little Mermaid</i>
<u>"Sound the Bells"</u> by Dessa	<u>"The Rashomon Job"</u> by <i>Leverage</i>
<u>"Lock Up"</u> by Bloody Cut Films	<u>"Be Prepared"</u> by Disney's <i>The Lion King</i>
<u>"Bao"</u> by Disney's Pixar	<u>"Lifted"</u> by Disney's Pixar
<u>"Dear Mama"</u> by 2Pac & <u>"Mother to Son"</u> by Langston Hughes	

Students practice
media literacy in
a skills-based
& ENGAGING way
with 15 high-interest
short texts



Nouvelle ELA

"Poor Unfortunate Souls"

Disney's *The Little Mermaid*

SONG

Text: [1989 version](#) - 4 min, 25 sec

[2023 version](#) - 3 min, 30 sec

Audience: middle or high school

Have you watched Disney's 2023 version of *The Little Mermaid*? If you haven't yet, it is an adorable adaptation with MUCH more diversity and inclusivity. The storyline stays predominantly the same, so for this activity, you can use either version.

If you need a refresher, Ariel, a mermaid, has a strict father, King Triton, who prohibits her curiosity and exploration of humans. However, this does not stop her. One night above the sea, a storm causes a ship to crash and nearly drowns a human, Prince Eric. After Ariel saves him, her desire to be "where the people are" grows astronomically.

Enter "Poor Unfortunate Souls." Ursula, the conniving Sea Witch, sees Ariel's vulnerabilities and uses her mighty persuasiveness to take advantage of the moment. This song is rich with rhetorical appeals. Your students will have so much fun dissecting a familiar song with an analytical lens.

This activity focuses specifically on ethos, pathos, logos, and flattery. There are certainly other persuasive techniques you can include too. Students will practice transferable skills like close reading, annotating, collaborating, and analyzing from different perspectives.

Students are likely to have more interest in the newer version, but either works. Since the lyrics do change between the two versions, use one OR the other.

KEY ELEMENTS & TEACHING TOPICS:

Rhetorical Appeals (Ethos, Logos, Pathos)
*Flattery



Each lesson plan includes:

Background information on the short text



"Poor Unfortunate Souls"

Each lesson plan includes:

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Pre-knowledge	Before this lesson, students should know an introductory level to common rhetorical appeals, such as ethos, pathos, and logos. Here's a resource that lays the groundwork for you! Students will also need to know what and how flattery functions as a persuasive technique.
Objective(s)	Students analyze the rhetorical appeals Ursula uses to persuade Ariel to give up her voice. (RL.8.4).
Materials	1989 version - 4 min, 25 sec // 2023 version - 3 min, 30 sec. Either version works! I love to show the 2023 version because of the increased diversity and higher student interest.



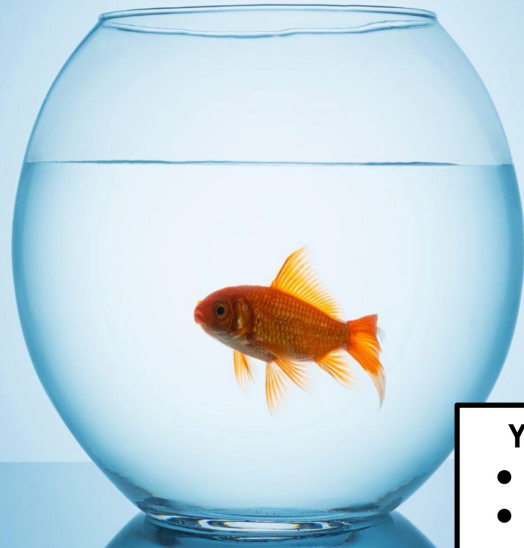
*Pre-knowledge (if needed)

*An objective *Materials

"Poor Unfortunate Souls" lesson plan

Each lesson plan includes:

You are a salesperson selling **water** to a **fish** OR **sand** to **beachgoers**.



Your sales pitch should:

- Be 4-6 sentences long
- Use ethos, pathos, AND logos

Bonus! Use **FLATTERY** to convince your buyer.

A bell ringer aligned with the lesson that activates prior knowledge & buy-in



Nouvelle ELA

"Poor Unfortunate Souls" bell ringer

Each lesson plan includes:

Anticipation (5 minutes)

Students will complete the “Poor Unfortunate Souls” bell ringer on slide 23. This activity will activate students’ prior knowledge of rhetorical appeals and evoke high-interest immediately. Have a few students share their pitch aloud. I suggest hearing at least one pitch from each of the scenarios and have listeners identify the rhetorical appeals as they share.

Depending on the time you have, students can deliver their pitch to one other student. Example: existing partners can share with one another or water salespeople can share with sand salespeople.

1st Viewing (5 minutes)

Distribute copies of the lyrics or have students pull them up on devices. During this 1st listen, they should be able to connect the topic of the anticipatory activity to the song.

2nd Viewing (5 minutes)

During their 2nd listen, have students annotate their lyrics for examples of ethos, pathos, logos, and flattery; if need be, explain what flattery is and how/why it can be used as a persuasive technique. Students can create a key and use different colors as they annotate each of the persuasive techniques.

Guidance for the bell ringer, 1st and 2nd read of the text

“Poor Unfortunate Souls” lesson plan



Each lesson plan includes:

Group analysis (20 minutes)

In groups of 4, assign each group a specific persuasive technique to become an expert on. They will review and explicate their annotations for their assigned persuasive technique. They can add this to their annotations.

Use the guiding questions below to support them:

- **From Ariel's Perspective:** Why might this specific technique be effective in persuading Ariel?
- **From Ursula's Perspective:** Why might Ursula use this specific technique to try to effectively appeal to and persuade Ariel?

Then, conduct a jigsaw. Students should add to their annotations as they listen to other experts share.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Have students return to their original group. Students will share their response to the following question:

- Which of Ursula's persuasive techniques was MOST effective in convincing Ariel to make the deal? Why?

Extension

- Using persuasive techniques, write a speech that Ariel would use to convince her dad to allow her go to the surface with humans
 - Have students revise their sales pitch from their anticipatory activity and rationalize their use of persuasive techniques
- Students can engage in a "rhetorical wrangle" where two salespeople deliver their speeches back-to-back and the class votes on which used the most effective persuasive techniques

* A group analysis

* A wrap-up

* Extension idea(s)



"Poor Unfortunate Souls" lesson plan

Opening Scene

from *Horizon Zero Dawn*

VIDEO GAME

Text: *Horizon Zero Dawn* video game opening scene

Timing: 5:30

Audience: middle and high school

"Horizon Zero Dawn" is an action role-playing video game set in a post-apocalyptic world. The game combines elements of open-world exploration, action combat, and a compelling narrative. In the distant future, humanity has once again become a tribal society, and the world is overrun by robotic creatures resembling various prehistoric animals. Players take on the role of Aloy, a young hunter and outcast who embarks on a quest to uncover the mysteries of her world, including the origins of the robotic creatures and the advanced technology that surrounds her.

The video students will watch provides introductory context to Aloy's birth story. We meet Rost, an outcast who has agreed to care for her, along with high-standing matriarchs who seem to disagree with Aloy's place in their society. We uncover the world's secrets throughout the game.

The scene to the video game is not only for its stunning graphics, but also for its rich setting, and thematic elements all in a span of 5 short minutes! The scene does not answer all of our questions, but it sets the stage for the rest of the game.



Examples of short texts:

- Songs
- Short films
- Video games
- TV episodes
- Photos
- Poetry



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TEACHER'S GUIDE:

Discussion Strategies & Editing

Each lesson in this resources includes a group-based discussion. Below are some ways to implement these group discussions:

Jigsaw	Groups of 4-5 students work together on a discussion topic. Then, one member from each group joins one member from every other group to create new configurations. This is an excellent strategy if you have different topics in the first round of discussion (ex: Plot, Characters, Conflict, Theme) – then, your groups would have one “expert” from each original topic.
Snowball	This is sort of like “Think-Pair-Share” but with an extra step. Students mull over a discussion question alone, then share with a partner. That pair joins another pair to discuss. That quad joins another quad to discuss, etc., until you have a class discussion.
Station Rotations	Several questions, tasks, and/or materials (ex. articles, QR codes, etc.) are placed around the room. In groups, students travel to each station and complete all of the tasks. Typically, students spend about 5-10 minutes at a station. This is a great way to get students moving around the room which increases their focus!
	You can use paper or Google docs for this. Students are able to write simultaneously or take turns and share their thoughts on a discussion question. I love this strategy as a way to get quieter students engaged, especially English Language Learners who may struggle with “getting a word in edge-wise.”



More about your resource:

- Designed to take 45-50 minutes
- Editable lessons, bell ringers, & worksheets
- Includes suggested discussion strategies
- Use with any unit or as sub plans