

Lesson Plan for “What They Were Watching” Podcast

[Podbean Link for What They Were Watching](#)

[Spotify Link for What They Were Watching](#)

[Apple Podcasts Link for What They Were Watching](#)

Overview

Film Culture in Germany and Canada (Post-War Context)

Grade: 11 (Canadian History 30F / German / World History)

Subject: Film, Propaganda, and Immigration

Duration: 75 minutes

Objective

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain how film evolved and influenced society.
- Analyze the role of propaganda in Nazi Germany.
- Understand immigrant experiences in post-war Canada.
- Evaluate how media reflects and shapes culture and identity.

Manitoba Curriculum Connections (Canadian History 30F)

This lesson aligns with the following **clusters and learning outcomes**:

Cluster 2: Canada, 1914–1945

- **KH-033:** Describe social and cultural changes in Canada during this period.
- **VP-006:** Appreciate the influence of media and propaganda on public opinion.

 *Connection:*

Students examine how film functioned as propaganda in Nazi Germany and compare this to broader wartime messaging and media influence.

Cluster 3: Post-War Canada, 1945–1982

- **KH-037:** Describe factors that influenced immigration to Canada after WWII.
- **KH-039:** Describe social and cultural changes in post-war Canadian society.
- **VH-012:** Appreciate the contributions of immigrants to Canadian society.

Connection:

Students explore how German immigrants adapted to life in Canada and how film helped them learn language and culture.

Historical Thinking Skills (applied across clusters)

- **Evidence & Interpretation:** Analyze film as a historical source.
- **Cause & Consequence:** Understand how Nazi control of media influenced society.
- **Historical Perspective:** Consider experiences of immigrants and Germans post-WWII.
- **Ethical Dimension:** Reflect on propaganda, responsibility, and memory of the Holocaust.

Citizenship and Identity

- Examine how media shapes national identity and cultural understanding.
- Reflect on diversity and inclusion through immigration experiences.

Materials

- Podcast: “What They Were Watching”
- Audio equipment
- Podcast Listening Worksheet (included below)
- Pens/highlighters
- Presentation on What They Were Watching (forthcoming) to use along with the podcast

Lesson Outline

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Discussion:
 - What role do movies play in society today?

- Can movies influence beliefs or politics?
- Introduce: film as culture, propaganda, and learning tool

2. Podcast Listening (20 minutes)

- Play podcast twice

Ask students to fill in the worksheet under Materials as they listen along.

3. Discussion & Review (20 minutes)

- Go over worksheet
- Connect explicitly to curriculum:
 - Propaganda → WWII influence (Cluster 2)
 - Immigration experience → Post-war Canada (Cluster 3)

4. Small Group Activity (15 minutes)

Groups analyze one theme:

- Propaganda
- Immigration
- Post-war identity
- Media influence

Students answer:

- What is the historical significance?
- How does it connect to Canadian history?

5. Wrap-Up and Interdisciplinary Connections (10 minutes)

- **History:** WWII and immigration
- **Media Studies:** Film as persuasion
- **ELA:** Interpretation of visual texts
- Exit ticket:
 - How does media shape identity or beliefs?

6. Optional Extension (Strongly Recommended for Manitoba Assessment)

- Short written response:
 - *“To what extent did film shape public opinion in the mid-20th century?”*
- OR: Compare modern social media to historical propaganda

Podcast Listening Worksheet – What They Were Watching

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part A: Key Facts (Fill in the blanks)

1. The film *M* was directed by _____.
2. Silent films were common until the late _____.
3. One second of film contains about _____ frames.
4. Germany produced about _____ films per year during the Weimar period.
5. The first German “talkie” mentioned is _____.

Part B: Short Answer Questions

1. Why were movies helpful for immigrants learning English?

2. What role did film play in Nazi Germany?

3. What were “rubble films”?

4. What are Heimatfilme and why were they popular?

Part C: True or False

Write T or F.

1. _____ Silent films included spoken dialogue.
2. _____ Nazi propaganda films made up most films during the Third Reich.
3. _____ Many German filmmakers fled Germany after 1933.
4. _____ Canadian film industry was very strong before WWII.
5. _____ Movies helped immigrants understand North American culture.

Part D: Reflection (3–4 sentences)

How can film influence people's beliefs or understanding of history?

Answer Key

Part A

1. Fritz Lang
2. 1920s
3. 24
4. 250
5. *The Blue Angel* (Der blaue Engel)

Part B (Sample Answers)

1. Movies used visual storytelling, so immigrants could understand plots even without strong English skills.
2. Film was used as propaganda to spread Nazi ideology, promote anti-Semitism, and influence public opinion.
3. Rubble films were post-WWII films shot in destroyed cities that dealt with war aftermath and guilt.
4. Heimatfilme were sentimental films set in rural areas that ignored war realities and promoted nostalgia and traditional values.

Part C

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T

Part D (Sample Response)

1. Films can shape beliefs by presenting certain ideas as normal or desirable. For example, propaganda films influenced people's views during Nazi Germany. Movies can also educate audiences about history or culture, but they can sometimes distort reality.