

Project Assignment
Crime & Punishment: The Movie

You have quite a task: to work together as a collective to create the 20 minute definitive movie version of *Crime & Punishment*. Having such a tight length restriction forces you to make some clear and intentional decisions.

There are many right ways to do this. How you decide to focus this project is up to you as a group. What I will require is that you clearly articulate the reasons for your decisions. I will be grading this project primarily for analysis: you need to show me that your choices are solidly based on the text.

Here are some questions that may help. I suggest that you take as much time as you need to discuss them as a group before you begin to make artistic choices...

1. Does Dostoevsky have a central “message” in this book? If so,
 - what is it?
 - how does he get that message across
 - ... by means of characters
 - ... by means of themes or symbols or imagery
 - ... by means of structure
 - ... by means of????

2. Aside from any central message, what questions/issues/themes does Dostoevsky explore in this novel?

How does he explore, develop and connect these questions/themes

- ... by means of characters
 - ... by means of symbols or imagery
 - ... by means of structure
 - ... by means of????
3. If you were forced to decide, would you say *Crime & Punishment* is primarily
 - a psychological novel?
 - a spiritual novel?
 - a political or sociological novel?
 -???

 4. Dostoevsky is thought to have said, “We all came out of Gogol's Overcoat.” (It's an unsubstantiated quote.) Does your prior knowledge of the literature of St. Petersburg throw any additional light on your reading of *Crime & Punishment*?

Have fun with this!

***Crime & Punishment* Movie Assignment Cont'd**

Individual Accountability and Assessment

This is a group project. The goal is for you to think together, work together, and make something you're all proud of. However, I also need to assess you individually. To that end, the written part of this assignment will be an individual artist's statement, in which I will ask you to:

1. Articulate the decisions made by the group as a whole and explain the textual analysis they were based on. Be as thorough as possible. (Hint: take good notes during group conversations and process! These will give you a useful outline for this part of the statement.)
2. Reflect individually on those decisions. Is there another analysis or approach you would have liked to take? Based on what? How might you have brought out other visions/elements of the book?

Important: this part of the statement is not about venting or blaming:

NO: *"I wanted to do X but the group over-ruled me."*

YES: *"As a group, we chose to do X. If I had been on my own, I might have done Y because..."*

3. Reflect on the final project. What do you think worked? What didn't work as well? In what ways did you capture the novel? In what ways were you not able to?

The film should be complete by November 21. The artist's statement will be due on November 25. Artist's statements should be 2 – 4 pages, double spaced.

Artist's Statement Rubric

Analysis:

- You articulate the group's decisions throughly, explaining the textual analysis behind them and their intent.
- You articulate your own critical thinking about the group's decisions (in a respectful and constructive way).
- You reflect specifically and critically on the effectiveness of the final project
- You use specifics to demonstrate that your analysis and reflection are text-based

Composition

- Your artist's statement is clearly organized: it's easy to follow your reasoning
- Your language is clear and direct
- You embed quotes smoothly
- You adhere to formal conventions of syntax, punctuation, spelling, etc

Group Assessment

The group grade will be a much smaller assessment, but it will count. I will not grade the film for composition, as film-making is not a skill I expect you to have. I will grade it for analysis, and everyone will receive the same grade. My evaluation on that front will be largely informed by the thinking that you articulate collectively and individually.