

Genre of the Arch Villain
Lesson Plan
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ENG 101

Scaffolding: This is an initial activity to talk about genre, and thus students need very little previous knowledge.

Considerations: This activity only works if done in fun and jest, a tone which must be established early on. Be cautious to distinguish that the ransom notes we create are movie-style, coming from the tradition of over-the-top action films and especially super-hero tradition. This activity is in no way related to actual kidnapping as it occurs in the real world.

Homework Completed Before: Create a “shopping list” of what a super villain would need to create a ransom note, and then bring any of those materials you have available to class.

Preparation: Instructor should bring some materials as well, including magazines and newspapers, basic art supplies (markers, paper, glue sticks, scissors).

Objective: Think about how style, format, grammar and content are unique in specific genres and consider the ways technology, audience, context and professionalism affect the production of texts.

Discussion- 20 to 30 min

First, talk about the creation of the shopping list and what “features” exist in that genre. This offers a great opportunity to consider that although our genre for the day is the ransom note, there are other genres involved... demonstrating how vast the idea of genre really is. Think about who is the creator of the list, and how that affected it’s production. What other factors shape the shopping list genre?

Then, discuss the ransom note as a genre and identify its features and context...

- why those elements are necessary
- what limitations they have
- uses of technology
- consideration of audience and context

Activity- 20 to 30 min

Spend about 20 minutes actually making the ransom notes, can work in groups of three or four. While students work, walk around and chat with groups about their ideas.

Discussion- 10 to 15 minutes

Come back to whole group and talk about how their ideas (our list of features) changed after actually working with the materials. How were they limited by the materials at hand? How does that affect production?