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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1995 Volume II: Film and Literature

The Wonder Behind the Wizard of Oz

Guide for Curriculum Unit 95.02.02
by Cleo M. Coppa

My unit is intended for seventh and eighth grade drama students. This unit is structured to be taught over a 6-8 week period. One of the major objectives of my unit is to expose my students to how the classic film “The Wizard of Oz” was created. In order to accomplish this objective, I have reviewed the process in which the L. Frank Baum novel The Wizard of Oz was adapted into the 1939 screenplay written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf.

I have provided some background information on the author, L. Frank Baum. I think students will find Baum a very interesting character. In addition, I have provided a set of study questions for each chapter in Baum’s unabridged version of his novel that I feel teachers will find useful. Finally, a major portion of my unit compares the book to the film.

(Recommended for Drama, grades 7 and 8)

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