



OwlTeacher
Teaching with Movies & Literature

CASABLANCA

Good for the following school subjects:

- ✓ World History
- ✓ World War 2

Directed by Michael Curtiz
1942; Rated PG (some graphic war violence); Classic Romance/Drama;
102 minutes; Black & White;
Available from www.OwlTeacher.com bookstore

Synopsis: This film was made in 1942. At the time, the United States of America was rethinking the idea of staying out of World War II and realizing they had to help the rest of the world fight Hitler and the Nazis. During World War II, Europeans who were escaping from Nazi Germany looked for protection in America. In order to get to America, however, they must first to go Casablanca to acquire exit visas which were extremely difficult to come by. Casablanca is a town in Morocco where the hottest nightclub, Rick's Café, is owned by an exiled American and former freedom fighter, Rick Blaine. A woman from Rick's past shows up asking Rick to help her fugitive husband, Victor Laszlo escape to America. The drama unfolds against the backdrop of World War II. It is a timeless, heartbreaking story about lost love, war, and honor.

Educational Benefits of this movie: Although this film centers mostly on the characters and their dilemmas, it serves as a decent addition to a unit on World War II. It is especially beneficial if the teacher wants her students to understand how World War II impacted other parts of the world such as Africa. World War II began as a European conflict, but soon enough many more countries of the world became involved, whether voluntarily or not. Casablanca helps students to see the war through the eyes of ordinary citizens in a Moroccan nightclub.

Study Questions:

1. Describe what was happening in the United States of America in 1939 – 1942. How are these changes the same as the changes that Rick goes through in the movie?
2. Define the word redemption:

3. Define the word redeem:
4. Define the word ethical:
5. Define the word citizenship:
6. How do each of these words concern Rick?
7. Research World War II in Morocco and write a brief summary of your research. How does the movie portray the war in Morocco? Is it accurate? Give reasons and examples for your answers.
8. Rick had sunk pretty low. He had abandoned his principles and was just looking out for himself. Remember his famous saying "I stick my neck out for nobody"? However he did a wonderful and courageous thing. What did he do?
9. What does this action that Rick did say about the power of redemption?
10. Can a person ever sink so low that he cannot redeem him or herself?
11. By the end of the movie, Rick does what he should have been doing all along, helping in the fight against the Nazis. What finally brought him to do this?
12. Which of Rick's actions demonstrated that he actually did care for others?
13. Should you stop being ethical and using good citizenship if you are no longer in your own home or your own country?
14. When should you ever stop being ethical and using good citizenship?

Project:

Create a visual presentation about Africa in World War II. You may choose one country, one region, or the entire continent. Make sure your presentation is covered with illustrations, graphics, maps, and photos (at least 15). Include a caption for each image, explaining it. You may type, print, and paste your captions attractively on your display or you may neatly handwrite the captions. They must be legible, though! Create a bold title for your presentation. In your presentation show how that particular country, region, or all of Africa was touched by World War II and affected by the war as well. Attach a bibliography of all the resources you used in your research. Presentation can be on large poster board.