



Recreating Camelot

Etape 4 – Film reviews

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Enjeu de l'étape 4 - Lire une critique du film afin de percevoir la manière dont le film a été reçu : critique positive ou négative ?

Objectifs principaux visés

Lire et comprendre une critique de film
Repérer les éléments d'une critique
Emettre un avis et donner des conseils

Supports principaux utilisés : documents modélisants

Star Tribune by Coline Covert
NBR - Film Reviews

Nombre de séances envisagées : Minimum 1 à 2

Objectifs visés :

Objectif Culturel	Objectif lexical et grammatical	Phonologique	Socio-pragmatique
	Vocabulaire journalistique et cinématographique : headlines, kickers, edit, underscore, sharp, tone, condoling, reporter, composer, filmmakers, to inform, Centre frame, to command a scene, to provide the framework needed, supporting players, to cast, to blur the line between documentary and fiction, behind the scenes, to involve the director, it's no wonder that, the final fade.	Nouveau lexique	Articulation d'une critique de film Percevoir le ton et style de la critique Coopérer au sein d'un groupe

Activités langagières travaillées : Compréhension écrite et production orale.



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DEROULEMENT DU PROJET

SEANCE 11

Activity 1 – Anticipation - Faire réfléchir les élèves sur ce qui pousse les lecteurs à choisir un article (travail sur la mise en page)

- **Support utilisé** : projection articles tableau
- **Modalité de travail** : groupe classe (5 min)
- **Activité langagière** : production orale

Consignes de mise en activité et réponses attendues

Look at the articles. Which one would you choose and why ?

What could be improved to make it more attractive ? Formatting : *change the font, size, photos, indented, too dense, too many columns, the text is justified.*

Activity 2 - Emettre des hypothèses sur le ton de l'article et des critiques possibles

- **Support utilisé** : headlines and subtitles
- **Modalité de travail** : in pairs
- **Activité langagière** : production orale

Consignes de mise en activité et réponses attendues

1. Give the headlines and subtitles only. Read and discuss the tone of this article.

Réponses possibles :

Catchy titles, tone given, positive, sinister, mocking, ironic, light, negative, aggressive, straightforward, to make brutal remarks, derogatory.

2. Based on the title, what points are likely to be analysed ?

Réponses possibles :

Jackie's emotional condition, state of mind, her private life, her political views, involvement, her marital life, trauma, inner feelings.

3. Share with the class : ideas written on the board

Activity 3 - Compréhension écrite - Lecture des documents afin de vérifier les hypothèses et de s'informer sur la réception du film

- **Support utilisé** : article découpé en quatre pour permettre à chacun d'informer les autres membres du groupe
- **Modalité de travail** : par groupe de 4
- **Activité langagière** : compréhension écrite vers production orale

Consignes de mise en activité et réponses attendues

1. Read your part and share with your partners.
2. Read the questions and share the work according to the part of the text you have and answer the questions.
3. Put your answers and ideas together in order to give a brief summary of your article to the rest of the class : positive points versus negative points
4. Suggest another title

Activity 4 – Présentation des articles par chaque équipe. Autres élèves en prise de note et au tableau pour remplir critiques positives et négatives.

Bilan : What is the overall opinion on the film and what is your opinion?



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Text 1

In 'Jackie,' Natalie Portman pulls the veil off American icon Jacqueline Kennedy

This realistic portrait follows the struggles of JFK's widow in the days after his harrowing death.

By [Colin Covert](#) Star Tribune
DECEMBER 22, 2016 — 11:15AM



Our collective minds have been permanently etched by iconic imagery that reveals little below her cool, mannequin surface. She is remembered as the demure 33-year-old hostess of 1962's televised "Tour of the White House," the blood-spattered widow in news photos of John Kennedy's assassination the following year and the veiled widow in mourning dress at his solemn state funeral.

We have seen her again and again without knowing her. Now Natalie Portman, director Pablo Larrain and writer Noah Oppenheim portray the mystery woman's measure with a novelist's sense of psychological nuance in "Jackie."

They have accomplished a minor miracle, rendering an uncompromised artistic vision that puts documented and imagined history believably on the screen. It presents the well-established story of the days before and after the assassination with singularity of vision, mature mastery of the medium and near-reckless courage in exploring issues still too painful for some to confront. Hauntingly scored by composer Mica Levi, it is a dark, deeply sad, nearly perfect communing with her spirit.

The film is framed around an interview Jackie gives a journalist (Billy Crudup) at the Kennedy family's Hyannis Port, Mass., compound a week after the assassination. She has agreed to the conversation to begin shaping the late president's public mythology. The writer probes her guarded remarks, trying to dig deeper into her head.

From there the film flashes back to memories. We see her formal Washington life. Her seven-minute drive to the Dallas hospital with her husband's shattered head on her lap. The political power struggles occurring around her as she oversaw her family's belongings packed in shipping containers to move to their homestead. Her tender explanation to her children what has become of Daddy.

"Nothing's ever mine," she says, "not to keep." Jackie is savaged by fate before our eyes. We not only see it, we see what it means to experience it. Seeking guidance from her priest, played with suitable wisdom by John Hurt, she confesses that she considered suicide.

This is a movie about power, and its spectacle is that of a woman almost losing all of it. Larrain portrays all of this with the appropriate degree of horror and sorrow. He's too compassionate to milk it for sensationalism. When making a movie set in the recent past, you're doomed if it lacks realism. And "Jackie" is remarkably credible. Danish actor Caspar Phillipson as JFK and John Carroll Lynch as Lyndon Johnson capture their characters' images and body language with relative precision. As Robert Kennedy and Jackie's aide and friend Nancy Tuckerman, Peter Sarsgaard and Greta Gerwig are deeply committed.

Portman's performance and appearance are almost flawless. Both her mouth and the nose are a trifle too large, but she burrows into Jackie's emotional life flawlessly. She perfectly echoes Jackie's lithe body, wide eyes, pale ivory skin, the polite laugh she seems to deliver from her front teeth and a gaze that seems to come from some private world too secret to be spoken of.



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45 Larrain films her in tight close-ups that reveal everything about the character's unspoken interior struggles. The role demands a lot of Portman: youthful composure, its instant disintegration in crisis, and her masterful control as a mythmaker for her husband's historic legacy.

It is not the sort of comforting biographical sketch that we are conditioned to expect in movies about recent history. The filmmakers have created a view of the past informing us not through its characters but with them — in visceral sensations of anguish, personal struggle, grace, restraint and eruptions of uncontrolled, passionate anger.

50 Much of the credit belongs to Larrain, a Chilean native whose homeland has experienced its share of political bloodshed and upheaval. Detailed, magnetic and disturbing, "Jackie" is an austere epic, but an epic it surely is.



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Text 2

NBR Film Review - Peoples



Don't expect "Jackie" to be a biopic of Jacqueline Kennedy, her days of Camelot through to her marriage to Onassis and her tragic end in 1994. This slightly unusual film by director Pablo Larraín (*The Club*, *Neruda*) is mainly set in the days after President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and follows First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy (Natalie Portman) as she deals with her grief, confronting the protocols around the funeral of JFK, leaving the White House and explaining their father's death to the children as well as her efforts to ensure her husband's legacy. There are also scenes with her Catholic confessor (John Hurt) who tries to comfort her with meaningless religious claptrap.

While the film mainly focusses on those few days after JFK's death there are flash backs to earlier days in the White House including a recreation of the 1962 CBS tour of the White House hosted by Jackie. All the interiors for the film were created with remarkable exactitude in Paris studios, the furniture, decorations and even the wallpaper researched and reproduced.

In re-creating events, director Pablo Larraín begins with the interview Theodore White (played by Billy Crudup) had with Jackie for *Life Magazine* which was conducted at her house shortly after the assassination. The narrative then moves backwards and forwards looking at various elements of the political and personal events surrounding her life. The notion of the JFK years being some sort of Camelot is briefly alluded to when, in a semi-fantasy sequence Jackie plays a track from the Camelot record.

She also reflects on what her life has been and at one point in her interview says "I never wanted fame. I just became a Kennedy".

The interview is used to link to the other events with the reporter asking the insensitive question "What did the bullet sound like?" We then hear the gunshot and then follow the motorcade racing to the hospital with Jackie holding the President's bloody head. This leads on to an intense emotional sequence where she wipes the blood off her face and removes her bloodied clothing.

The film deals with wrench both physically and emotionally she had to go through in dealing with the funeral, making arrangements for his burial and the conflicting demands of the state and the Kennedy family. There is also her preoccupation on seeing parallels with Lincoln's assassination and burial. – insisting on a huge cortege to walk through the streets of Washington.

There is also the shock at having to leave the White House. In a pre-assassination sequence, we see her with her interior designer speaking about decorations. Then, just as she leaves The White House for the last time she sees the same designer holding swatches of material talking to Lady Bird Johnson, the incoming new First Lady. Her loss of power, status and influence gone.

The music by composer Mica Levi initially feels over emphatic and aggressive but it suits the slightly disjointed and dreamlike nature of the film which often feels like a psychological investigation.

Natalie Portman gives a remarkable performance reflecting both her strong public persona as well as her often brittle private personality, creating a densely layered emotional character. Even though she may not be a look-a-like, the combination of clothing, voice, body language and general demeanour she gives a real sense of Jacqueline Kennedy. The clothes are easy to recreate, her movements and deportment easily copied from existing film and television but the voice has to be more than copied with Portman imbuing her character with all the nuances and subtlety needed to paint a true psychological portrait, not just of the First Lady but an individual.



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QUESTIONS

Star Tribune Article

1. What does the title immediately reveal ? Why ?
2. Pick out at least 5 adverbs used in this review.
3. Pick out at least 3 positive elements with examples and two negative if any.
4. Identify the various parts of the article.
5. What elements are part of the introduction?
 - a. Iconic elements about Jackie : general statement
 - b. Quick presentation of cast
 - c. Quick summary of the plot
6. What elements are included in the conclusion ?
7. Find two or three phrases which, through their style, wording or use of imagery, have a particularly strong effect in your opinion as a reader.
8. Explain in your own words why Portman's performance is brilliant. Then pick out words in the text that underline Portman's brilliant performance.
9. Why is this film a masterpiece according to the writer ? Explain in your own words.
10. Pick out 3 words that beautifully sum up the film.
11. Give a brief summary of this article to the class in your own words.

NBR Film Review

1. Read your part of the text and tell your partners what you understand.
2. Identify the introduction and the conclusion.
3. Pick out at least 5 adverbs used in this review.
4. Find two or three phrases which, through their style, wording or use of imagery, have a particularly strong effect in your opinion as a reader
5. Pick out words that underline some positive aspects and words that underline negative aspects.
6. Highlight the positive aspects that are mentioned in the text, then explain them in your own words.
7. Highlight the negative aspects mentioned in the text, if any, then explain in your own words.
8. According to this critic, explain the role played by the music.
9. Find elements in this article that you agree with and elements you disagree with and justify.
10. Give a brief summary of this article to the class in your own words.



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Teacher's sheet

Star Tribune Article

1. What does the title immediately reveal ? Why ?
2. Pick out at least 5 adverbs used in this review.
3. Identify the various parts of the article.
4. What elements are part of the introduction?
 - a. Iconic elements about Jackie: general statement
 - b. Quick presentation of cast
 - c. Quick summary of the plot
5. What elements are included in the conclusion ? Clear opinion about the movie and what the filmmakers have created. Not just a good or bad movie but what it is not. A final sentence stating the positive aspect of the movie.
6. Find two or three phrases which, through their style, wording or use of imagery, have a particularly strong effect in your opinion as a reader
7. Explain in your own words why Portman's performance is brilliant. Then pick out words in the text that underline Portman's brilliant performance : Portman successfully portrays Jackie because she has managed to master not only her voice but her style and movement. The costumes she wears are extremely well designed and researched adding to her credibility as Jackie. Physically, Portman also has some of the elegance and beauty Jackie had.
8. Why is this film a masterpiece according to the writer ? Explain in your own words.
9. Pick out 3 words that beautifully sum up the film. Because it is an unusual perspective on Jackie who has mainly existed through JFK. In this movie, the focus is on Jackie as a woman of power who is shaping her husband's legacy and her place in American history. Unlike most films, this one focuses only on the following days after the assassination and is an attempt to penetrate Jackie's inner world and her struggle to overcome her grief, her loss. The audience experience Jackie's emotions with her, as she voices the unspeakable to the journalist.
10. Give a brief summary of this article to the class in your own words