

Educational material

Postal Hero



CLASS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: 1st grade

TEACHING AREA: Culture and media

TEACHING UNIT: *Postal Hero*

CLASS TYPE: Analysis of a short documentary film

DURATION OF A TEACHING UNIT: 45 minutes

POSTAL HERO

Corina Kovačić, Palovec, 2025

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. How important is it to you to know something about the lives of your family members (parents, grandparents) before you were born?
2. What are some ways you can find out something about their lives?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch the short film *Postal Hero* by Corina Kovačić from Palovac, Croatia.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. Notice which leitmotif shows up multiple times.
2. Pay attention to the sound in the film.
3. Determine what type of film this is and list the main elements of that type in this film.

WATCHING THE FILM

STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS

What do you think of this film? Be sure to provide arguments for your impressions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM

1. How does the film start?

The film starts with a black shot while we hear the sounds of dialing numbers on an old telephone and the sound of a call being connected, followed by an extreme close-up of a woman's lips and a telephone receiver in a public telephone booth, while the girl simultaneously explains that there is a postal hero which connects the world that's at the top of the telephone pole. As she says that there's a postal hero on the telephone pole, we see a photo of what she's describing and the name of the film appears in yellow. After the girl finishes speaking, we hear the noise of a disconnected phone line.

2. What comes next?

The following are shots of archival photos projected on a white wall. The first photo shows two young men in blue work suits, and the second photo shows several young men gathered around a telephone pole. This is followed by shots of different telephone poles from a low angle.

3. What is the transition from the exterior to the interior like?

After several shots of telephone poles, the dynamic camera (pan) films the wire on a telephone pole, and in the next shot we see a wire connecting a projector and a computer. After that we see a shot of the projector, and hear the recognizable sound of a camera shutter.

4. When and how do we see the girl for the first time?

After the shot of the projector we see a medium shot of the girl and a photo of a man projected on the wall behind her.

5. What is the camera movement like in that shot?

The camera is static and the girl never changes her facial expression, only the photos behind her change.

6. What comes after that?

A shot of hands flipping through a photo album while the girl recalls imagining her grandfather appearing like a ghost from the carpet in her room when she was a child.

7. From whom do we learn some family details about the grandfather?

We find things out from the girl's mother (the grandfather's daughter), who says that she found out she was pregnant on his birthday and that he said that he would like her to give birth to a girl as beautiful as she was. Also, the girl's mother adds that he would make an excellent grandfather.

8. What does the next shot show? What is revealed?

The next shot once again shows photos projected on the wall behind the girl, while we hear the mother's voice saying that her father died the day after she told him she was pregnant and that he never got to meet his granddaughter.

9. What do we see after that?

A photo of the grandfather, while the girl speaks to him through the voice-over, asking him what he thinks their relationship would be like, would they get along, would he be proud of her, and why he had to leave so soon. This is followed by archival footage of the grandfather in a suit, probably at a wedding, as the camera zooms in to a close-up of him crying, while the girl continues to speak to him, asking him if he can hear her.

10. How is the grandmother introduced?

With archival footage of a celebration where she and her husband are in a medium close-up while they kiss each other on the cheek. This is followed by a projection of photos of the grandparents on a cabinet in the grandmother's kitchen, while the grandmother talks about her memories of her husband. This scene ends with a medium shot of the grandmother walking through her kitchen.

11. When does music appear in the film? Is the music diegetic or non-diegetic?

After the scene with the grandmother in her kitchen, there's a shot in which the girl exchanges photos from the album. The music is non-diegetic, and the lyrics of the song further underline the film's topic and the girl's feelings.

12. What are the last shots in the film?

The film ends with photos of the grandfather, accompanied by the recognizable sound of a camera clicking. This is followed by a shot of a camera taking a photo. Then we see a shot of the analog photos being developed, accompanied by non-diegetic music.

13. How does the film end?

The film ends with a film title saying it's dedicated to the grandfather.

14. What do we find out from the end credits?

We find out that Croatia Records has given the rights to use the song *Zbog jedne divne crne žene* by Krunoslav Kićo Slabinac and that that was the grandfather's favorite song.

15. What type of film is this?

A documentary film.

16. What elements of a documentary are present in this film?

Authentic locations, archival footage and photos, protagonists, the interview method.

EVALUATION

- monitoring student activities while watching a film
- checking the understanding of the film by asking questions
- teaching sheet (quiz)

THE TEACHING SHEET (QUIZ) is available on the Film EDUcation website.