

MODERN *PYGMALION* PROJECT

Although *Pygmalion* may seem outdated to many students, the plot and themes transcend time and are still applicable today. Societal expectations are still in place. How many times have we seen someone scoff at the uneducated? At the low class? How many women have stood up to men? What is the importance of education today? When are people not how they seem to be?

The people Shaw writes about—their conflicts, issues, obstacles, and personalities—are as true today as they were in the past; human nature does not change. And yet, as timeless as these basic situations and themes are, someone has yet to make a good modern remake of *Pygmalion* since *My Fair Lady*! Therefore, the question posed to you is, what if the play were set in modern times? Where would it take place? Would the cornerstone of the play still be phonetics, or would it be appearances? How would the specific events change? How would the lessons of Pickering and Higgins change? Would Mrs. Higgins host an at-home, or a party? Also consider who would play the roles of the main characters... Would Higgins be played by the notoriously pompous, yet brilliant David Duchovny? Who would play the young Eliza, eager to transform yet strong-willed and passionate?

Now prove it. You will complete a project of your choice that in some way develops a modern interpretation of *Pygmalion*. While the setting, characters, and events will be from the modern day, the general plot, motivations, and themes will remain the same (thus demonstrating that you understand the play and can apply its lessons to life today.) The superlative project will thoroughly show how it appropriately modernizes *Pygmalion* by incorporating specific details from the play.

The final project is a mastery (test) grade and is due _____.

Your projects will be **graded** primarily on how well you represent the most important characters and events of the play in a modern setting/situation and how these reveal one or more of the universal themes that are still so relevant today. However, to do this effectively, the quality of your project (thoroughness, quality of writing, neatness, effort) will also play a large role. Just doing the minimum will guarantee a lower grade. Some projects may (and perhaps should) be done with a partner. Otherwise, work independently.

MODERN *PYGMALION* PROJECT IDEAS

FILM/YOUTUBE (SMALL GROUP)

Create an original script and enact a modern version of at least **three** (or more depending on group size) important scenes from *Pygmalion*; this could be in the form of a clip from a movie, a soap opera/mini series, or even a reality TV series. Rewrite your scenes from the text as it would be in your chosen media format. Turn in your film of the scene and your written scripts. As you will be filming all of your scenes, you do not need to include stage directions in your written scripts. Your film should be at least 5-10 minutes in length and represent important characters, themes, etc.

LIVE PLAY (SMALL GROUP)

Create an original, modernized script for **three** (or more depending on group size) important scenes from *Pygmalion*; rewrite the scenes using Shaw's work as a formatting guide, and include stage directions for **all scenes**. Choose **one** scene to perform in front of the class. Use the guidelines and examples on mdlivingston.weebly.com.

NEWSPAPER (INDEPENDENT)

Create a newspaper (minimum of one full front/one full back of a page) in which you relate the important events and messages of the play...as they would occur in the modern day. Include at minimum two news articles, a feature, an editorial or letter to the editor (this is a great place to promote the themes), and images (pictures, illustrations, etc.) with captions. See mdlivingston.weebly.com for a template, though my template is not required.

PLAYBILL (PARTNER OR INDEPENDENT)

You will create a playbill for a modern remake of the play (this could be a regular drama or a musical) that provides the important details about this modern-day tragedy. As with any playbill, yours should include an illustrative cover, brief (but comprehensive) plot summary, list of scenes OR a list of the musical numbers (each with a brief explanation of the related setting and actions performed by characters), a cast list (along with cast photos), and a “note” from the director explaining why they are so eager and proud to be presenting this important play with themes for all the ages.

TWEET TWEET (INDEPENDENT)-

Rewrite the story of *Pygmalion* using a series of tweets and stage directions. Create Twitter handles for each character and a character identification key that shows the Twitter handle that corresponds with each *Pygmalion* character. Include the major scene(s) from **each** act, and write a minimum of **300 words** per act. On your final copy, include a word count for each act.

COMIC STRIP/GRAPHIC NOVEL (INDEPENDENT)

You will compose a modern, illustrated version of *Pygmalion*—this need not represent the play in its entirety, but it should reflect essential elements of the story (i.e. important event(s), characters, theme(s), etc.)—in at least 6 panels. Be sure to include a detailed, modern setting, well-composed characters, well-chosen dialogue/thought bubbles, and illustrative captions. You may use the link on mdlivingston.weebly.com OR a poster board.

YOUR IDEA

This is an option for those very creative students who have an even better idea for a project than one listed on this assignment. You may complete another project of your choice, provided you meet with me with a brief proposal outlining the project and how it will meet the objectives of the assignment (see the rubric). If this is approved, you can complete your choice project.

EXTRA CREDIT (APPLICABLE ON ANY PROJECT)

Option 1: For UP TO 10 points extra credit, write well-developed paragraph explaining the inspiration for your project to submit when you turn in your final project. Consider which parts of the play convinced you to choose this modernization, and explain the connections you made between the play and your interpretation. To earn extra credit, you must include textual evidence from *Pygmalion* to prove your claims.

Option 2: For UP TO 25 points extra credit, you may complete two projects.

The project rubric is available at mdlivingston.weebly.com.