

The Women of 'West Computing': A Viewer-Response Approach

BASED ON THE UNTOLD TRUE STORY

HIDDEN FIGURES



MEET THE WOMEN YOU DON'T KNOW,
BEHIND THE MISSION YOU DO

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About *Journeys in Film*

Founded in 2003, *Journeys in Film* operates on the belief that teaching with film has the power to prepare students to live and work more successfully in the 21st century as informed and globally competent citizens. Its core mission is to advance global understanding among youth through the combination of age-appropriate films from around the world, interdisciplinary classroom materials coordinated with the films, and teachers' professional-development offerings. This comprehensive curriculum model promotes widespread use of film as a window to the world to help students to mitigate existing attitudes of cultural bias, cultivate empathy, develop a richer understanding of global issues, and prepare for effective participation in an increasingly interdependent world. Our standards-based lesson plans support various learning styles, promote literacy, transport students around the globe, and foster learning that meets core academic objectives.

Selected films act as springboards for lesson plans in subjects ranging from math, science, language arts, and social studies to other topics that have become critical for students, including environmental sustainability, poverty and hunger, global health, diversity, and immigration. Prominent educators on our team consult with filmmakers and cultural specialists in the development of curriculum guides, each one dedicated to an in-depth exploration of the culture and issues depicted in a specific film. The guides merge effectively into teachers' existing lesson plans and mandated curricular requirements, providing teachers with an innovative way to fulfill their school districts' standards-based goals.

Why use this program?

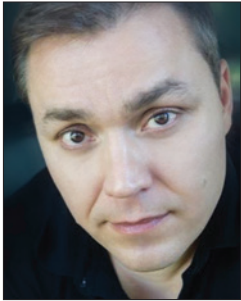
To be prepared to participate in tomorrow's global arena, students need to gain an understanding of the world beyond their own borders. *Journeys in Film* offers innovative and engaging tools to explore other cultures and social issues, beyond the often negative images seen in print, television, and film media.

For today's media-centric youth, film is an appropriate and effective teaching tool. *Journeys in Film* has carefully selected quality films that tell the stories of young people living in locations that may otherwise never be experienced by your students. Students travel through these characters and their stories: They drink tea with an Iranian family in *Children of Heaven*, play soccer in a Tibetan monastery in *The Cup*, find themselves in the conflict between urban grandson and rural grandmother in South Korea in *The Way Home*, watch the ways modernity challenges Maori traditions in New Zealand in *Whale Rider*, tour an African school with a Nobel Prize-winning teenager in *He Named Me Malala*, or experience the transformative power of music in *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma & the Silk Road Ensemble*.

In addition to our ongoing development of teaching guides for culturally sensitive foreign films, *Journeys in Film* brings outstanding documentary films to the classroom. *Journeys in Film* has identified exceptional narrative and documentary films that teach about a broad range of social issues in real-life settings such as famine-stricken and war-torn Somalia, a maximum-security prison in Alabama, and a World War II concentration camp near Prague. *Journeys in Film* guides help teachers integrate these films into their classrooms, examining complex issues, encouraging students to be active rather than passive viewers, and maximizing the power of film to enhance critical thinking skills and to meet the Common Core Standards.

Journeys in Film is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

A Letter From Theodore Melfi



When you find a career you love, fame is far from your mind. Passion, excitement, and challenging work are instead the driving factors that motivate on a daily basis. Such is the case for Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson—the

brilliant trio of African-American women working at NASA in the early 1960s—who helped serve as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the Mercury space missions, culminating in the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit.

For decades, until the publication of Margot Lee Shetterly's book *Hidden Figures*, the story of Johnson, Vaughan, and Jackson, NASA's so-called "human computers," went untold. But when their story crossed my path—a story that blurs gender, race, and professional lines—I knew this was a part of history that had to be told. Fifty-five years later, *Hidden Figures* is a rich and moving true story that deserves a spot in our collective consciousness.

The backdrop for the movie is one of the most defining, complex periods in American history: the high-stakes Cold War, the space race, the Jim Crow South and the birth of the civil rights movement. Exploring these historic events serves as a reminder that we must learn from our past experiences while continuing to catapult ourselves forward.

It was also important for me, as a son raised by a single mother and as the father of two daughters, to explore the importance of STEM as a compelling and viable career choice for young girls. The media, cinema, and other public discourse often do society a disservice by not presenting strong, independent women in the fields of science, technology, engineering and

math on a regular basis. Drawing attention to these figures, often hidden in plain sight, will hopefully help to chart a new course for female students and change the composition of these vital industries.

At its core, *Hidden Figures* is the story of three remarkable women who overcame every obstacle stacked against them, despite gender, race, and the political landscape of the time. Illuminating this universal experience for the next generation was critical. My goal was to showcase how skill and knowledge are equalizers, how hard work and determination are the cornerstones to every pursuit, and how uniting under a common goal is more powerful than staying divided.

Johnson, Vaughan, and Jackson were pioneers who broke down commonly held perceptions and achieved something phenomenal. Their legacy of persistence serves to empower people of all circumstances and teaches us, as NASA points out in its webpage on Katherine Johnson,

- To love learning.
- To follow your passion.
- To accept the help you're given, and help others when you can.
- To follow new leads and don't give up. Keep trying.
- To go beyond the task at hand; ask questions; be inquisitive. Let yourself be heard.
- To do what you love, and love what you do.

I hope that through the exploration of *Hidden Figures*—and your own passions—you, too, will achieve the seemingly impossible.

Theodore Melfi

Director, *Hidden Figures*

Introducing *Hidden Figures*

Space exploration in the modern age is entering a new phase, replete with private space companies, prospective lunar tourism, and even projected travel to Mars, the closest planet in our solar system. It is fitting, therefore, to pause to look back at the early years of the United States space program, and particularly the early efforts to launch astronauts into orbit, a preliminary step toward a moon landing.

Hidden Figures tells us about a generally unheralded group of women whose brilliance and dedication provided a foundation for the space program—the Black women known as “human computers” who worked at the NASA Center in Langley, Virginia. Faced with obstacles to their own education and to job prospects because of race and gender, these women succeeded in earning places and eventually respect in a workplace dominated by male supervisors and colleagues, many of whom were reluctant to hire women, and marked by segregated facilities, from office to restroom, that reflected the pre-civil rights era.

Katherine Johnson, physicist and mathematician, calculated the orbits, trajectories, and launch windows that would put John Glenn and others into space and bring them back safely. Dorothy Vaughan, another mathematician, became the first African-American supervisor at NASA, learning the computer language FORTRAN on her own and teaching it to her staff. Mary Jackson, an aerospace engineer as well as a mathematician, had to go to court to earn the right to take graduate-level courses at a previously all-white school; she eventually also served as a program officer helping other women succeed at NASA.

Their story is also the story of the world in which they lived and worked—the racism and segregation that made their lives more difficult; the beginnings of the civil rights movement in the South; the Cold War with Russia that gave such impetus to the drive for superiority in space; and the space race itself. The film weaves these events into the dramatic personal stories with skill and accuracy, making it an ideal film for the classroom. It is sure to serve as inspiration to many young women considering a career in science and mathematics.

Hidden Figures has been nominated for many awards, including the Academy Awards, BAFTA, the Golden Globes, the NAACP Image Awards, the Screen Actors Guild, and the African-American Film Critics Association.

Film credits

DIRECTOR: Theodore Melfi

SCREENPLAY: Allison Schroeder and Theodore Melfi, based on the book with the same title by Margot Lee Shetterly

PRODUCERS: Donna Gigliotti, Peter Chernin, Jenno Topping, Pharrell Williams, Theodore Melfi

ACTORS: Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monáe, Kirsten Dunst, Jim Parsons, Mahershala Ali, Aldis Hodge, Glen Powell, Kimberly Quinn, Kevin Costner, Olek Krupa

The Women of ‘West Computing’: A Viewer-Response Approach

Enduring Understandings

- Prejudice can blind people to the reality and potential around them.
- With determination and courage, people can face and overcome challenges.
- Friendship and love are enduring values that sustain people through adversity.
- The United States always has been and continues to be growing in multiple cultural, scientific, and political arenas.

Essential Questions

- What do the characters in *Hidden Figures* teach about dealing with adversity?
- To what extent do the characters change during the course of the film?
- In what ways do the three main female characters catalyze changes in others?
- Who or what are the “Hidden Figures” of the title?

Notes to the Teacher

Hidden Figures includes some remarkable and famous people who had a great impact on the world around them: President John F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Col. John Glenn, and Col. Yuri Gagarin. The main characters, however, are Kathleen G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, extremely talented women, but in many ways just ordinary people. As the movie progresses, we see not so much dramatic character changes as a deepening of who they are as multi-faceted individuals. Living and working in a racist and sexist environment, they demonstrate self-esteem, intelligence, delightful feistiness, and down-to-earth practicality.

The movie’s opening demonstrates Kathleen Goble Johnson’s early signs of extraordinary genius at mathematics, a trait that clearly flourished as she grew into maturity. Like her friends, she is keenly aware of both racial and gender biases that surround them, but she works within the system until her innate ability and fascination with math draw her into key work in the United States space program. Far from being a single-minded career woman, she is also a loving mother of three, a widow who still grieves the loss of her husband, a loyal friend, and a woman ready to move on with new love.

Mary Jackson, from the first, is lively, mischievous, and fun-loving, as well as highly intelligent. Working in the computing process at Langley, she at first sees herself as hamstrung by the culture in which she lives. A conversation mobilizes her determination to become an engineer, which leads her

to confront a judge and integrate an all-white classroom as she begins to actualize her dream. As the actress who plays her role, Janelle Monáe, commented in an interview, Mary Jackson's life demonstrates a commitment to justice and to the right to pursue aspirations.

Dorothy Vaughan, from the beginning doing a supervisor's job without the benefits of the position, demonstrates persistence in the face of frustration. She has an amazing ability to fix things and make them work. She also recognizes and prepares for change, learning the computer programming language Fortran, teaching it to her team, and thus preparing them to move ahead rather than to be outdistanced by changing technology.

In this lesson, the film itself is the central text as students focus on characters and themes. Part 1 involves viewing the film and writing journal responses to specific questions, as well an analysis of selected quotations from the movie. Students clarify their understanding of what happens and of the people involved.

Part 2 engages students, working in small groups, in intensive character analysis as well as in preparing class presentations. The primary focus is on the three main characters; however, if you have a large class and want to vary topics a bit more, you can consider including Al Harrison and Vivian Mitchell, both of whom play prominent roles. You will find it helpful to have multiple points of access to view the film so that groups can scan the movie for scenes that focus on their characters.

Part 3 begins with an investigation of the significance of the title *Hidden Figures*. This leads students to consider the many themes conveyed by a film that is essentially optimistic, but does not veil darker aspects of individuals and cultures. In all three parts of the lesson, you will want to emphasize an open-ended approach that encourages a rich diversity of responses and insights.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED BY THIS LESSON****CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1**

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.

CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Duration of the Lesson

Two to five class periods, plus time to view the film

Assessment

Journal responses to the initial viewing of the film

Class discussion

Presentation of character analysis

Short essays

Materials

The full movie *Hidden Figures* (preferably multiple points of access to view the film)

HANDOUT 1: HIDDEN FIGURES VIEWER RESPONSE JOURNAL**HANDOUT 2: WHO SAID THAT?****HANDOUT 3: CHARACTER ANALYSIS****HANDOUT 4: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE**

Procedure

Part 1: Viewing and Responding to the Movie

1. Before students view the movie, distribute **Handout 1** and review the ten journaling topics. Then start the film. Pause after the brief section about Katherine as a child, and allow the class to write responses to the first question. Pause again after the section on the road on the way to Langley, so that students can respond to the second question. Then allow the film to proceed and encourage students to respond to the rest of the questions at appropriate moments along the way. (Note: Invite students to ask you to stop and replay some clips along the way. The film moves along quickly, so it can be easy for first-time viewers to lose track of impressions.)
2. Collect the handouts for use to assess honest viewer responses more than for specific information.
3. Conduct a discussion based on the following questions.
 - a. What struck you the most about the three main characters? (For example, all three are highly intelligent and express themselves well. Although keenly aware of the prejudice around them, they have a sense of personal dignity and know their own capabilities. They are amazingly courteous, not a bit arrogant, and capable of self-assertion.)
 - b. Did you find yourself more interested in one character than in the others? Why? (In response to this subjective question, students may mention the main characters, but also figures such as Mr. Harrison, Mrs. Mitchell, and John Glenn.)
 - c. What do you think the main actors thought of their roles? Do you think making the movie was important to them? Do you think they enjoyed making the film? (Answers will vary.)
 - d. How did you respond to the other workers at Langley? (Coming from perspectives half a century later, viewers are often surprised and even angered by attitudes based on color and gender differences.)
4. Distribute **HANDOUT 2**, and have small groups complete the activity. Then review and discuss student responses.

Sample Responses:

1. Dorothy Vaughan adeptly turns the police officer's question into one focusing on gender, not race. She is quick-thinking and able to handle challenging situations gracefully. Her response is linked with the film's treatment of both topics as they are presented in a context of strictly limited roles for women, especially African-American women.
2. Mary Jackson sees the ironic humor in this role reversal and thoroughly enjoys the situation, racing down the road to Langley.
3. Mary Jackson replies to the question of whether she would want to be an engineer if she were a white man. The question is an attempt to encourage her not to submit meekly to limitations.
4. Dorothy Vaughan vouches for Katherine Johnson's mathematical genius. Dorothy is well aware of and respects her friend's abilities; she is also not shy about standing up for others.

5. Katherine has been doing and re-doing work because of changes made behind closed doors—not a very efficient way of working or organizing things. She is able to be self-assertive with no arrogance.
6. Mary is exasperated by obstacles to her goal of becoming an engineer at Langley, a situation that she recognizes as parallel to many others. She uses a metaphor comparing it to an unfair race in which at least some participants are prevented from reaching the finish line.
7. In an uncharacteristic moment of blunt criticism, Katherine chides Mr. Harrison into action. She is essentially a no-nonsense kind of person, impatient when others dawdle or behave in a wishy-washy manner.
8. Katherine speaks of one of the beauties of mathematics, which is by its very nature factual, unbiased, and incapable of falsehood. She expresses a similar idea at several other points in the movie.
9. To take a bathroom break, Katherine must race all the way across campus to another building—a time-consuming process. When Mr. Harrison criticizes her absence from her work area, she explodes in frustration.
10. Dorothy Vaughan responds to a librarian's effort to limit her to the section of the building intended for African-Americans, which clearly lacks the text she needs. In a perfectly polite way, she resists the limitation.

Part 2: Intensive Character Analysis

1. Share the following quotations from interviews with the actors who play the three major roles.
 - a. Octavia Spencer, who plays Dorothy Vaughan: "When I realized it was a true story, I knew that I had to be a part of it."
 - b. Taraji Henson, who plays Katherine Johnson: "We should all come together in love to move humanity forward."
 - c. Janelle Monae, who plays Mary Jackson: "I'm so excited to celebrate these three women, these true American heroes. Their genius transcended race and color."
2. Ask students how the comments may have related to the characters' words and actions during the movie. (All three express admiration, empathy, and pride in a little-known story that is now being proclaimed. They seem to have a sense of personal investment and commitment beyond merely playing roles.)
3. Tell students that they are now going to begin detailed character analyses. Distribute **Handout 3** and review the directions. Divide the class into small groups, and assign one of the characters to each group. Clarify your expectations, including presentation length and use of visual aids such as PowerPoint and posters. Make viewing the film accessible and allow sufficient time for students to complete analyses and prepare presentations. (Note: Besides the three main characters, the central focus of this activity, you may also include Mr. Harrison and Mrs. Mitchell for analysis.)

4. Have groups present their findings to the class as a whole. Evaluate the presentations based on the following criteria: effective selection of film clips; in-depth understanding of the character's personality, motivation, and development; a well-designed visual aid; individual poise and professionalism in presenting information. While possible outcomes can vary greatly, here are a few possible suggestions regarding scene choices and insights.

Katherine Johnson: Her evident pride in the job with the space program in the conversation with the police officer; her no-nonsense response during her first conversation with Jim; the fascination with mathematics that is evident when she creates diagrams; the frustration evident in her explosion over the need to travel to another building to use the bathroom; her ability to assert herself about attending meetings instead of just hearing results later; the work ethic and sense of responsibility evident both on the job and in her private life.

Mary Jackson: The irrepressible feistiness evident in many scenes, including the opening with the police officer; discouragement at roadblocks to success; facility at quick verbal responses; the detailed and careful preparation evident in her conversation with the judge; her poise entering the engineering class of white men; her desire for love and understanding from family and friends; her awareness of bigotry based on color and gender and determination to break through barriers.

Dorothy Vaughan: Her persistence and professional demeanor in discussions with Mrs. Mitchell; her perception that "any upward movement is movement for us all"; her sense of her own rights in the library scene, both with the librarian and with the police officer outside;

her mechanical genius, including the ability to teach herself and others to use new technology; her evident skill as a supervisor; the team spirit that makes her aim to elevate others, not just herself; her belief in the potential of her two close friends.

If you include Mr. Harrison and Mrs. Mitchell in the study, students will most likely note his single-mindedness in pursuing a goal and appreciation of genius where he finds it. Mrs. Mitchell appears not as an evil bigot, but as a person simply incapable of taking off cultural blinders.

5. **Assessment:** For homework, have students write short essays in which they discuss responses to three moments in the film that are witness to the personality of one of the characters. Emphasize that students should include both a description of events and an explication of the thoughts and feelings evoked.

Part 3: Focus on Themes

1. Ask students if they ever played a game in elementary school based on the question, "What's missing?" (This type of puzzle is often included in children's activity books. For example, a page might show a symbol for winter, spring, and summer, and then the child draws something for autumn, like a falling leaf.) Give other examples of the idea of "hidden": In what sense are hidden figures part of problems in mathematics? (Equations include variables that represent hidden figures. For example, in the simple equation $2x + 4 = 18$, 7 is a kind of "hidden figure.") When children play hide-and-seek, one individual plays the role of a hidden figure. In detective mystery stories, the culprit is often a hidden figure until the very end. In other words, hidden figures are not rare in everyday life.

2. Point out that the choice of a title often relates directly to the theme of a movie or book. The title is also often a significant force in attracting readers and viewers. Indicate that the title *Hidden Figures* can seem vague, even mysterious. It does not indicate that the movie features major historical events and issues. Only after viewing the movie can one begin to think about and appreciate the significance of the title.
3. Distribute **HANDOUT 4**, review the directions with students, and have small groups complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. Synonyms for “hidden”: concealed, secret, invisible, unseen, veiled
 Antonyms: visible, obvious, exposed, revealed, overt, evident
 Phrases: hidden in plain sight, hidden treasure, hidden motives, hidden ingredients, hidden benefits
2. The word can seem hopeful, promising, and optimistic in some contexts; in others, it is quite negative, suggesting dishonesty, deceit, even malevolence.
3. “Figure” can be a noun representing a number (e.g., a statistic or piece of financial information); a person (such as a public figure or someone notorious for some reason); a shape (for instance a geometrical figure such as a trapezoid, or the shape of a human being); an illustration like a graph or chart or the shape of a physical body. The word can also be a verb meaning “to play a prominent role” or “to serve as a cause”; we also sometimes speak of “trying to figure something out.”

4. The mathematical issues in the movie are full of numbers of great significance to the success or failure of the space program; much of the work done in the film involves calculating and checking the accuracy of figures. The problem of returning John Glenn safely to Earth engages Katherine in an important search for an elusive figure. She herself is a hidden figure in the first reports we see her typing, as her name is not included, thus her key role is concealed. The three women featured in the movie, as well as all the others who work in West Computing, are hidden figures, secluded from everything else going on at Langley. There is an evident fear of hidden or secret agents in the space race. And, of course, the women, having different physical figures from the men, have in a sense been hidden from history until now.
4. Explain that a theme of a movie or literary work is an idea, a view, or an insight about reality, life, or human nature. Ask students whether they think *Hidden Figures* is essentially optimistic or pessimistic in the views it projects. (Viewers can be glad about a lot that happens: the three main characters do succeed both professionally and in their private lives despite obstacles; Langley did have success in the space race; John Glenn did make it back to Earth. On the other hand, we also see a dark side to human nature, all too often prone to prejudices based on misperceptions and false assumptions.)

5. Suggest to students that *Hidden Figures* is a complex film with multiple overlapping themes. Emphasize that a theme is a concept, not just a topic. If necessary, clarify with an example: “love” is a topic; “love can prevail over obstacles” is a theme. Ask students to brainstorm themes, and record responses on the board. (Possible answers: Genius is not linked to a specific gender or race. Science can make great strides in understanding the universe. People can overcome obstacles and scale barriers to success. Despite differences, people can unite in pursuit of a goal. It is difficult to modify or eradicate long-standing biases. People and organizations can fail to recognize and can even suppress valuable assets that are right in front of them. People must adapt to change to avoid being left behind. Technology is only as smart as the people who create and use it. Persistence can be an effective change-agent.)
6. Assessment: Have students write short essays in which they identify one theme they find particularly relevant or meaningful, describe how the movie handles that theme, and explain why they find it so significant.

Handout 1 ► P. 1

Hidden Figures
Viewer Response Journal**Directions:**

As you view the movie, respond to the following questions.

1. What did you learn from the scenes about Katherine's childhood? Do you think it was important that they were included in the film? Why, or why not?
2. What thoughts or opinions came to mind during the encounter of the police officer with the three women on the road to Langley?
3. The movie shows several encounters between Dorothy Vaughan and Mrs. Mitchell. What were your responses to the words and actions of Mrs. Mitchell?

Hidden Figures
Viewer Response Journal

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Handout 1 ► P. 3

Hidden Figures
Viewer Response Journal

8. What humorous moments are included in the presentations of the characters? Did they add to your appreciation of the story? Why, or why not?
9. Although divided and even estranged in many ways, the characters are united in their long-term desire for the United States space program to succeed and in the more immediate goal of a safe mission for John Glenn. How do the unifying factors add to the movie as a whole?
10. If you had to select one scene as the best way to lure audiences to see the whole movie, which one would it be? Why?

Who Said That?

Here are a few memorable quotations from *Hidden Figures*. For each, identify the speaker; then explain how the quotation shows the character's personality and how it connects with the movie as a whole.

1. "There are quite a few women working in the space program."
2. "Three Negro women are chasing a white police officer down the highway in 1961. That is a God-ordained miracle."
3. "I wouldn't have to. I'd already be one."
4. "She can handle any numbers you put in front of her."
5. "I need to be in that room hearing what you hear."

**Handout 2 ▶ P.2**

Who Said That?

6. “Every time we have a chance to get ahead, they move the finish line.”

7. “You, sir, you are the boss. You just have to act like one.”

8. “Math is always dependable.”

9. “Excuse me if I have to go to the bathroom a few times a day.”

10. “It doesn’t have what I’m looking for.”

Handout 3

Character Analysis

Directions:

Skim through the film *Hidden Figures* to view only the scenes in which your assigned character plays a prominent role and prepare a presentation in which you analyze characterization. Be sure to include the following elements.

- Three carefully selected clips that shed light on motivation and personality. You might want to look for one near the beginning, one in the middle, and one near the end. The clips should take no more than 10 minutes of your presentation time.
- Analysis of how the characterization evolves and deepens over the course of the film.
- You will be looking for two things here. First, how does the character change from the beginning to the end? Second, how does our insight into the character shift along the way?
- Identification of dominant character traits, including abilities, motivation, and personality.
- Take the time to make careful word choices as you describe who and what the character is, both on the job and at home.
- Explanation of the character's most important relationships. Which individuals connect most intensely with the character? How would the absence of those individuals have altered the character's choices?
- A description of your responses to the character and what prompted those responses.
- Responses can come in a myriad of forms: amusement, empathy, admiration, skepticism, criticism, disappointment, etc.
- An overall statement (thesis statement) in which you identify the character's main contributions to the impact and success of the movie as a whole.

Handout 4

The Significance of the Title

Hidden Figures

1. Focus on the word “hidden.” Fill in the diagram below with synonyms (words that mean the same), antonyms (words that mean the opposite), and familiar phrases that use the word “hidden” or another form of the verb “to hide.”

Synonyms	Antonyms	Phrases

2. Does the word “hidden” have positive or negative connotations? Explain.
3. In what different ways do we use the word “figure”? Provide specific examples.
4. What hidden figures did you discover in the movie *Hidden Figures*?



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