

TEACHER'S OUTLINE

LESSON 3: "Show Business"/GRADES 9-12

Key Concept: The Cherokee Kid & Indian Cowboy

While the beginning of this chapter describes Rogers' Vaudeville roots, the focus of this segment moves towards Will Rogers' rise as an entertainer through political commentary. As he gained popularity, "journalists, businessmen, and entertainment people would come to see him night after night." It was through these early experiences that Will Rogers learned to hone his skills in topical commentary monologues for which he is so well known.

Learning Objectives

1. Increase understanding of the historic significance of Vaudeville
2. Recognize humorous political commentary
3. Analyze Will Rogers' unique wit and ability to relate to many people
4. Examine Will Rogers' relationship with American politicians
5. Demonstrate ability to correlate Will Rogers' humorous political commentary with contemporary individuals in American popular culture.

Will Rogers Video Clip

Before completing the Learning/Media Activity or Student Handouts for this lesson, students should watch Chapter 3 of the documentary Will Rogers & American Politics. If time or resources do not allow, students should at a minimum, view the short video clips for Lesson 3. These clips can be found here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVvnLWm15t4> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_1JNmVYIRc

Learning/Media Activity: Will Rogers Movie Poster Creator

Using the supplied activity sheet and their own creativity, students will create their own Will Rogers movie poster. Will was featured in more than 70 movies throughout his career. As an instructor, you should score students based upon their use of creativity, originality, thoughtfulness, and artistry.

Student Handouts:

Students will be challenged to demonstrate their comprehension of material covered in Lesson 3. Additionally, students will be given the opportunity to further explore and discuss various topics covered in the lesson material.



Oklahoma
Historical
Society

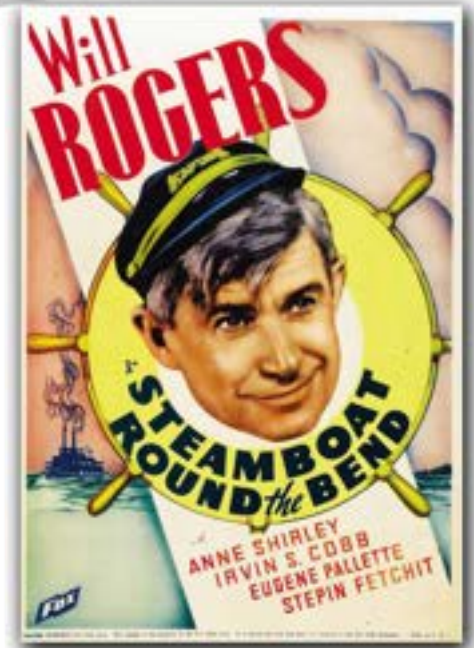


LIGHTS...CAMERA...ACTION!

MOVIE POSTER CHALLENGE

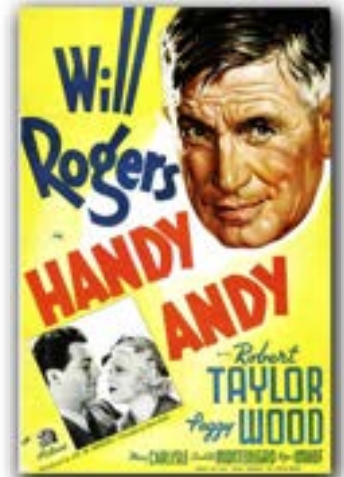
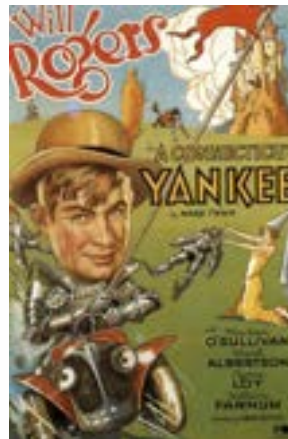
INTRODUCTION

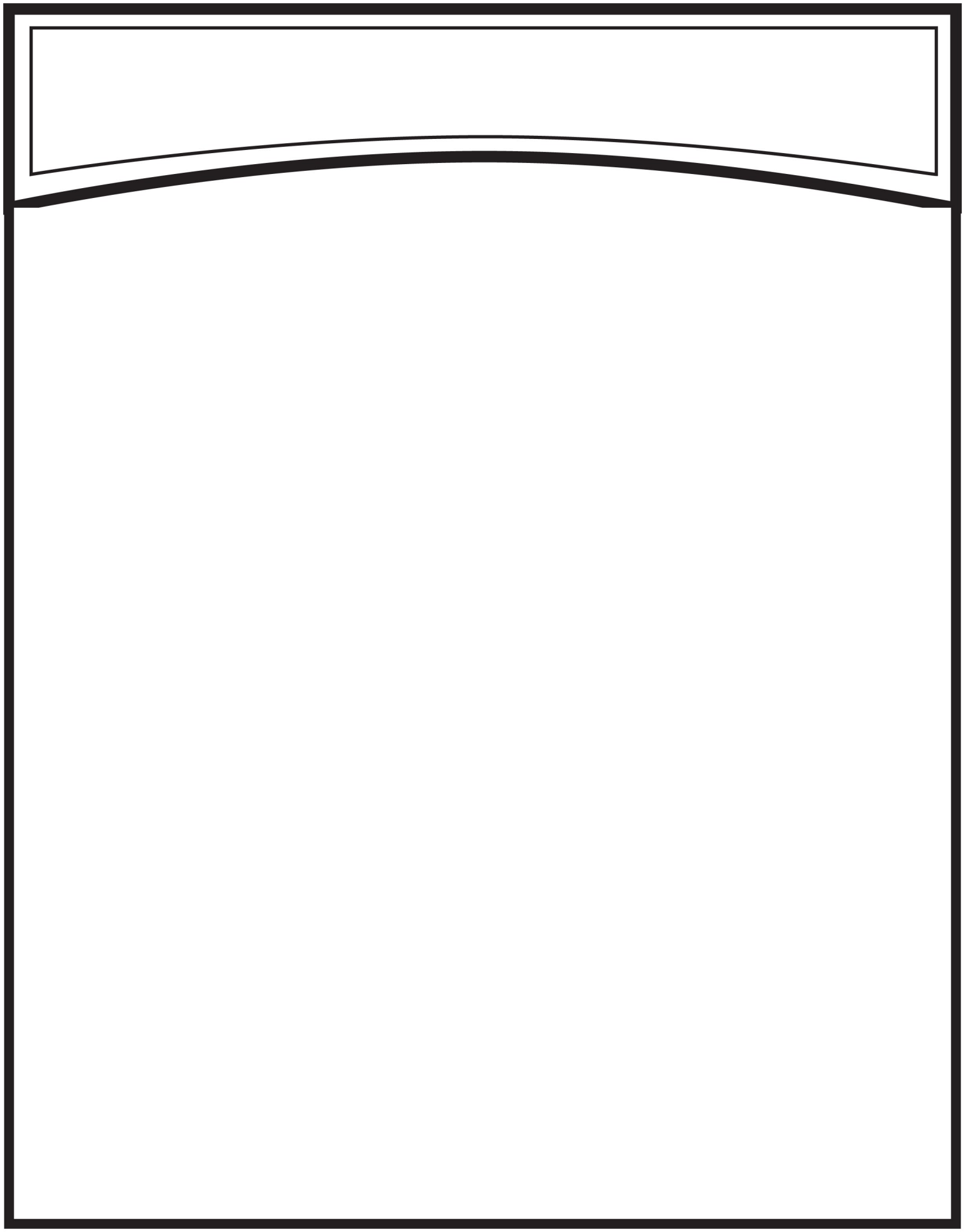
Will Rogers was known for a variety of successful ventures in his life, and his performances on the big screen were no different! One of the most interesting collections of archived Will Rogers print material are the many movie posters featuring Will along with other great performers. These posters were a major advertising tool for movies in Will's day, so colors and design were extremely important in drawing the attention of people passing by.



ASSIGNMENT

Using a standard size sheet of paper, create a fictional movie poster featuring Will Rogers. You may choose to draw your poster, or print, cutout, and paste images from online sources such as www.willrogersed.org. You should create the title of your movie and include additional actors or actresses who will star in your film along with Will Rogers. Be creative! Additionally, on a separate sheet of paper, provide at least a one-paragraph description of your movie, describing the main plot. You will be graded based on your creativity, use of color, and originality.





STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 3: "SHOW BUSINESS"
9TH-12TH GRADE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CLASS: _____

CONTENT REVIEW

1. Vaudeville is where Will Rogers got his start, not as a "talker" but as a _____.
2. The film mentions the different types of acts that Vaudeville provided to entertain audiences. List three of the types of acts/talents mentioned in the film.
3. According to the film, what American President did Will Rogers "gibe?"
4. What unique method did Will Rogers incorporate into his political commentary that often allowed him to talk about controversial issues in a way that put people at ease?
5. Humorous commentary about politicians was unique to the people in the United States at the time Will Rogers was joking about them. Why?
6. How did Will Rogers react when he heard that he might have hurt a politician's feelings as a result of one of his jokes?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare and contrast the differences and similarities between Vaudeville during the days of Will Rogers with contemporary forms of entertainment.
2. Will Rogers often joked about American presidents throughout his career. According to the film, Will Rogers' unique style of joking about the president was not acceptable at the time? If this is a fact, why do you think Will Rogers was allowed to remain so popular?
3. The film explains that "politicians were not afraid of him, though he often joked about them." In fact, politicians often enjoyed being in his company? Why? Could/are similar methods of political commentary utilized by any individual in today's popular culture?
4. According to Lewis Black's comments in the film, Will Rogers was unique for his time. What did Black say about Rogers' unique style of commentary?

STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 3: "SHOW BUSINESS"
9TH-12TH GRADE

ANSWER KEY

CONTENT REVIEW

1. Vaudeville is where Will Rogers got his start, not as a "talker" but as a trick roper.
2. The film mentions the different types of acts that Vaudeville provided to entertain audiences. List three of the types of acts/talents mentioned in the film.
singing, acting, dancing, juggling, comedy, trick roping
3. According to the film, what American President did Will Rogers "gibe?"
Woodrow Wilson
4. What unique method did Will Rogers incorporate into his political commentary that often allowed him to talk about controversial issues in a way that put people at ease?
Humor
5. Humorous commentary about politicians was unique to the people in the United States at the time Will Rogers was joking about them. Why?
Because Will was doing something that no one else dared to do.
6. How did Will Rogers react when he heard that he might have hurt a politician's feelings as a result of one of his jokes? **He was very sensitive about it.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare and contrast the differences and similarities between Vaudeville during the days of Will Rogers with contemporary forms of entertainment.

TEACHER'S DISCRETION

2. Will Rogers often joked about American presidents throughout his career. According to the film, Will Rogers' unique style of joking about the president was not acceptable at the time? If this is a fact, why do you think Will Rogers was allowed to remain so popular?

TEACHER'S DISCRETION

3. The film explains that "politicians were not afraid of him, though he often joked about them." In fact, politicians often enjoyed being in his company? Why? Could/Are similar methods of political commentary utilized by any individual in today's popular culture?

TEACHER'S DISCRETION

4. According to Lewis Black's comments in the film, Will Rogers was unique for his time. What did Black say about Rogers' unique style of commentary?

Will was ready to deal with the issues that people were facing in life.