Movie Guide Project for the film
*Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*
Created by: Matthew Holcomb and Carson Mellow
RE 3070: Media for Young People
Spring 2015
Dr. Redmond
Appalachian State University
Introduction

This Movie Guide provides an interdisciplinary unit concept focusing on the 2008 film, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. The lesson activities will be directed toward a seventh grade class with the main subject areas being social studies, English Language Arts (ELA), and music. The film is set in the 1950s and there are numerous references to the United States’ involvement in the Cold War with the Soviet Union throughout the movie. In fact, most of the plot is centered on this rivalry that existed between the two nations. In addition, the film also shows various elements of U.S. culture in the 1950s such as music, leisure, and fashion. By examining the different parts of the film that focus on international tensions, specifically between the USSR and the United States, we will meet specific seventh grade learning outcomes that the importance of understanding global interactions in contemporary times. Furthermore, the focus on music is important to understand what genres were important in the 1950s and how the score in a film affects particular scenes.

Using This Guide:

This final installment in the *Indiana Jones* series is one which will be both enjoyable and appropriate for a seventh grade classroom. In addition to being a fun film for students to watch, the movie also connects to several North Carolina Essential Standards and Common Core State Standards. The subjects chosen for this guide are: English Language Arts (ELA), Social Studies, and Music. When using this guide, teachers should ask students higher-order thinking questions which will help broaden their understanding of the movie as they watch. Also, different aspects of the film such as camera techniques and character traits should be analyzed throughout the course of the film.

It is noteworthy that the film received a PG-13 rating by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) for adventure violence and scary images. Since some students in the classroom might not be 13 yet, only scenes appropriate for children under this age have been selected.

About the Movie: In 1957, Indiana Jones and his partner George "Mac" McHale are kidnapped by Soviet agents under the order of Colonel Dr. Irina Spalko. The Soviets take Jones and Mac to a warehouse, and force Jones to locate a non-human corpse containing a crystal skull. After finding the skull, Mac reveals that he is working for the Soviets. Luckily Jones escapes, but fails to retrieve the skull, and ends up fighting one of the soviet agents which leads them both to an ignited rocket sled that takes them away from everyone else. Even though Jones staggers away while being pursued, he realizes that he arrived in an atomic bomb testing site, causing him to take shelter in a refrigerator. After Jones is rescued and arrested by FBI agents who suspect him of working for the Soviets, he is put on indefinite leave of absence from Marshall College. Later on, a young man named Henry "Mutt" Williams, who gives off the impression of being a “greaser,” approaches Jones and tells him that Harold Oxley found a crystal skull in Peru. Mutt gives Jones a letter from his mother that contains a riddle written by Oxley in an ancient Native American language. After arriving at Peru, Jones and Mutt find that Oxley's scribbles on the walls and floor of his cell lead them to the grave of Francisco de Orellana, a Conquistador searching for Akator. Once the skull was discovered, Jones reasoned that Oxley had returned it there.

While leaving the grave site, Mac and the Soviets kidnap Jones and Mutt, and take them to their camp in the Amazon jungle, where Oxley and Mutt's mother, Marion Ravenwood, are located.
Eventually, Ravenwood reveals that Mutt is Jones' son. Mac makes the claim that he is really a CIA double-agent, and that he's trying to regain Jones' trust. Meanwhile, Spalko believes that the crystal skull holds great power, and that locating more skulls in Akator will give the Soviets the advantage in warfare. Spalko uses the skull on Jones to enable him to understand Oxley and identify a route to Akator. However, Jones and his allies escape with the skull into the Amazon, where they would survive three waterfalls as the Soviets continued to pursue them. Jones and Oxley then identify a rock formation that leads them to Akator, unaware that Mac is still loyal to Spalko and has been dropping transceivers to allow the surviving Soviets to track them. After finding access to a temple filled with artifacts from several ancient civilizations, Jones comes to the conclusion that the aliens were studying the different cultures of Earth. Jones and his allies enter a chamber containing skeletons of thirteen enthroned skeletal crystal beings, with one missing its skull. Spalko arrives and presents the skull to this skeleton, which flies from her hands to the skeleton and rejoins. A portal to the alien’s world becomes activated, and Spalko demands the aliens’ knowledge. In the process of receiving the overwhelming knowledge, Spalko is disintegrated and sucked into the portal. Jones and his allies escape, while Mac and the Soviets are drawn into the portal. The survivors watch as the temple walls crumble, while the hollow in the valley is flooded by the waters of the Amazon.

Character Profiles:

Dr. Henry ‘Indiana’ Jones (played by Harrison Ford) is the eponymous protagonist in the film. Jones is a professor of archaeology at fictional Marshall College in the state of Connecticut. While Jones finds his job as a teacher to be laborious sometimes, he curbs this boredom by going out on trips to find archaeological relics to store in Marshall College’s museum. In this film, Jones is much older than he was in the previous ones (by about 20 years), which is a recurring theme in the film. While still relatively agile, he is not able to perform physical tasks with the ease that he once did. Other factors of age such as coping with the death of loved ones (his father and former Dean of the college, Marcus Brody) force him to come to terms with his own mortality. Despite his vulnerabilities, Jones is still able to use his extensive knowledge of world languages and cultures to help him out on his adventure.
Marion flashing a fake, jovial smile upon being reunited with Indiana Jones.

**Marion Ravenwood (played by Karen Allen)** plays the role of the former “lover” of Indiana Jones, and tags along with Jones on the adventure to view the secrets of the crystal skull. Allen first appeared in the 1981 film *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*, entering the story when Indiana Jones visits her in Nepal, needing her help to retrieve an artifact in her possession in order to locate the Ark of the Covenant. The artifact was originally obtained by her father, archaeologist Professor Abner Ravenwood, who was also Jones’ mentor. Her connections with Indiana Jones and the audience was so effective, fans nearly demanded for her to play this role when rumors of the movie first came out.

**Mutt Williams (played by Shia LaBeouf)** is introduced as a motorcycle-riding “greaser” who teams up with Indiana Jones and Marion Ravenwood, the mother of Williams, on the adventure to acquire the crystal skull. During the events of the adventure, Williams and Jones are unaware of their relationship until Ravenwood reveals that Williams is Jones’ son. Williams has never graduated from school, but he’s highly intelligent with an effective set of adventuring skills, and also excels at fencing, which is proven to be useful in his duel with Irina Spalko during the chase for the crystal skull.
Colonel Dr. Irina Spalko (played by Cate Blanchett) is the main antagonist of the film. She leads a group of soviet agents in the search for the Crystal Skull of Akator, competing against Indiana Jones as the two opposing forces travel to Peru to retrieve the artifact. Spalko is skilled in fencing and hand-to-hand combat, and seeks to bring the crystal skull to Akator to utilize the power there for her country's militant purposes. More specifically, Spalko desired the use of the crystal skull to brainwash and manipulate the minds of American Forces, giving the Soviets a tactical advantage during the Cold War.
George ‘Mac’ Michale (played by Ray Winstone) is Indiana Jones’ old friend from the U.S. Army. Both men served in Germany during World War II. Although he is resourceful and quick-witted, one of Mac’s biggest flaws is that he is greedy. He likes to gamble which as referenced in the film has cost him a lot of money in the past. These gambling debts result in his siding with the Soviets to find the lost city of gold, simply because they agree to pay him more money than he ever earned in the U.S. Army. This horrifies Jones, who is in disbelief that his old friend would side with “the Reds.” However, despite his betrayal of his own country, Mac still tries to stay loyal to his old friend and help him escape dangerous encounters with Spalko’s group.

Harold Oxley (played by John Hurt) also referred to as “Ox” is an old friend of Dr. Jones and a fellow archaeologist. According to Jones, Oxley “could put you to sleep just by talking.” While widowed Marion was raising Mutt, Oxley stepped in and decided to help care for the child becoming a father-figure for Mutt. Oxley’s work as an archaeologist mainly focused on the Mitchell-Hedgkiss skull (the crystal skull) which could be used to find Akator, a supposed lost city made entirely of gold which is thought to be located in South America. After finally discovering the skull, Oxley’s prolonged contact with it causes a strange reaction which results in him losing some of his sanity and becoming incomprehensible. After being kidnapped by the Soviets in hopes that they can rely on Oxley’s knowledge of the skull to help them find Akator, Jones, Mutt and Marion then take it upon themselves to rescue him.
Pictured right is the new Dean of Marshall College, Charles Stanforth (played by Jim Broadbent), and pictured left is former Dean, Marcus Brody who appeared in the first and third films. Brody’s character was killed off, and Stanforth became the new replacement for him. Stanforth plays a somewhat minor role in the film, but he is faced with the unfortunate task of temporarily firing Jones from the school following Jones's skiff with the CIA. Stanforth’s replacement of the deceased Brody also serves to show how Jones is having to cope with issues related to growing older following the deaths of his own friends.

**Subject Area 1: Social Studies**

**NC Essential Standards for Social Studies**

**7.H.2.1**

Analyze the effects of social, economic, military and political conflict among nations, regions, and groups (e.g. war, genocide, imperialism and colonization).


**Warm-up Activity**

Show the students the opening scene of the film (0:00-2:08) and have them identify aspects of the scene that suggests the movie was based in the 50’s. Some of these representations may include car styles, clothes, and background music.

**Activity 1**

With the selected scenes, focus on the tensions that existed during the 1950’s between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. What sort of dialogue from the film suggests that the two sides were uneasy with one another? Specifically, think of the ways that Indiana Jones refers to the communists, the conversation between Jones and the Dean and Mac’s speech about the effects of capitalism.
Key Scenes

(4:18-7:20) Indiana and Mac meet Irina Spalko

(13:10-14:31) Indiana’s in trouble

(23:32-24:14) Interrogation scene

(24:33-27:32) Leave of absence

(56:20-57:54) “A Gigantic Pile of Money”

In this scene, we are provided with a visual representation of Mac’s betrayal to both Indy and his country.

Dialogue to Consider

**Indy:** Why, Mac?
**Mac:** Well, what can I say, Jonesey? I’m a capitalist, and they pay.
**Indy:** After all those years we spent spying on the Reds? I thought we were friends, Mac?

**Dean Stanforth:** I barely recognize this country anymore. The government's got us seeing Communists in our soup. When the hysteria reaches academia, I guess it's time to call it a career.

**Mac:** You had a Luger pointed at the base of your skull the first time we met.
**Indy:** I had the situation under control.
**Mac:** You owe me.
**Indy:** What do you owe them? After the war, when you turned! How many names did you give the Reds? How many good men died because of you?!
**Mac:** You're not looking at the big picture here!
**Indy:** Eventually, they're gonna let me out of this chair, comrade, and when they do, I'm going to break your nose.
**Mac:** "Comrade"? You think this is about flags? About uniforms? You think this is about lines on a map?
**Indy:** It's just about money, isn't it?
**Mac:** No. Not only money. A gigantic pile of money!
Activity 2
In the 1950s, films, comic books, novels, etc. frequently featured topics relating to aliens. Also, during the 50s there were an unusually high number of claimed UFO sightings reported. These sightings most likely stem from the Roswell Incident which occurred in 1947. The film pays tribute to this incident by implying that Indiana Jones was part of a research crew which investigated the accident. Although there is proof that the unidentified object which landed in Roswell was an Air Force Surveillance balloon, there is still speculation even to this day that the aircraft might have been from somewhere other than Earth. Why might aliens/UFOs have been such a fascinating topic in these early stages of the Cold War? Are there any connections between aliens invading the U.S. and the American people’s general anti-Soviet attitude?

Actual headline from Roswell, New Mexico's “Daily Record” newspaper announcing the capture of a “flying saucer.”

Key Scenes
(7:30-13:10) “Magnetic Box”
(57:57-1:00:15) “Saucer Men from Mars”

What sort of differing views of aliens do you see in these scenes? Have the students relate this to how most people probably felt about aliens in this time.
Guiding Questions

What is communism? Why do you think the U.S. was worried about its spread? How do the values and concepts of communism differ from most Americans ideals of democracy and freedom?

Subject Area 2: English Language Arts (ELA)

National Common Core State Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.9
Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.
Source: http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/7/

Activity 1
The character of Mutt Williams played by Shia LaBeouf would fall into the stereotype of the “greaser” of the 1950’s. Below are scenes from the films The Wild One (1953) and Rebel Without a Cause (1955). Have the students compare Marlon Brando’s character (Johnny Stabler) from The Wild One and James Dean’s character (Jim Stark) from Rebel Without a Cause with Shia LaBeouf’s character (Mutt Williams). What similarities do you see within these characters’ roles? What differences do you see? Think about dialogue, actions, and attitudes displayed by each character.

Key Scenes

Introduction of Mutt’s character from the film
(27:38-33:31)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwB_Mrnwr_8
The Wild One

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E1QdvCC0Eg
Rebel Without a Cause
Images of Brando, Dean, and LaBeouf respectively. Notice the similarities in dress and hair. Interestingly enough, in preparation for this role, LaBeouf based his look and acting style off both of these characters.

**Mutt’s Dialogue**

**Indy:** I haven't talked to Harold Oxley in 20 years. He's a brilliant guy. He could put you to sleep just by talking.  
**Mutt:** Yeah. Yeah. When I was a kid, that's how I did get to sleep. Oxley's voice was better than a glass of warm milk, you know.

**Mutt:** The name's Mutt, Mutt Williams.  
**Indy:** Mutt?  
**Mutt:** Yeah.  
**Indy:** What kind of name is that?  
**Mutt:** It's the one I picked. You got a problem with it?  
**Indy:** Take it easy.

**Indy:** The Ox and I were obsessed with the Mitchell-Hedges skull in college. How do you know about it?  
**Mutt:** Are you kidding? It's all he talked about. He'd talk about that thing till’ the cows come home.
Here, we see a very hostile Mutt confronting Indy over a comment he made. This confrontational attitude is one shared by Brando and Dean’s characters.

**Guiding Questions**
What is an archetype? Why are archetypes useful in understanding the development of a character?

**Subject Area 3: Music**
NC Essential Standards for Music
6.MR.1.3
Identify criteria for evaluating performances, compositions, and musical ideas and apply the criteria in personal listening and performing.
In this scene, the winds and string instruments create a whirling sound to show that danger is looming.

Whole-Class Activity
- As a class watch various scenes of the movie where the score interacts with the action occurring in the film. Examples of this could be the opening scene, the warehouse escape scene (14:00-16:16),* or the Jeep chase scene (1:14:50-1:18:22). Ask the students to analyze how the music connects to what is occurring in the film. Examples could include the relation between the dynamics of the music and the characters in scenes where they must be quiet in order to avoid danger.

*At (14:51) mute the sound, because Indiana Jones uses a curse word.

Group Activity
- Have the students in groups of four listen to the main score for the Indiana Jones movie (Raiders March) and then research and listen to other scores that composer John Williams wrote for movies i.e. Star Wars, Jurassic Park, Jaws. Ask them to note any similarities between the scores such as instrumentation, tempo, etc. After listening to several pieces, have them decide together if any of the other scores would be able to replace Raiders March as the main theme for the movie. If not, ask them to defend why the Indiana Jones theme cannot be replaced.

Key Scenes

Places where the main score can be found: Arrival at Warehouse (4:20-4:40)
“Of great interest” (24:20-24:37)
Escaping Akator (1:50:30-1:51:06)
Wedding/Credits (1:54:40-1:57:32)
Mutt attempts to try on Indy’s hat at the very end, only to have it taken away from him by Jones. As this occurs, the main score begins to play, letting the audience know once and for all that only one man can wear that hat: Indiana Jones.

**Guiding Questions**
What sorts of things are important to listen for in a film score when judging its effectiveness in capturing a scene?
Resources

filmRatings provides information for reasons for the film’s rating.
http://filmratings.com/search.html?filmTitle=indiana+jones+and+the+kingdom+of+the+crystal+skull&amp;x=59&amp;y=8

Indiana Jones: The Exhibition is an “interactive museum adventure” entirely online that is sponsored by the National Geographic Society. The website provides opportunities for you to extend students’ learning by engaging them in archaeology as though they are part of the film story and characters.
http://www.indianajonestheexhibition.com/home.html

Indy in the Classroom is an online resource that provides teachers with a range of resources and lesson plans for integrating the topics of the Indiana Jones movies, such as archaeology and WWII, into their curriculum.
http://www.indyintheclassroom.com/about.asp

Keys to the Kingdom gives additional facts about the movie, and lists interesting details about the cast members.

Movie Mistakes lists interesting film-related questions proposed by fans.
http://www.moviemistakes.com/film7362/questions

Script-o-rama provides free transcripts for nearly any movie. We used them to find exact dialogue of our key scenes.
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   Dean Charles Stanforth

https://laescenaperdida.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/marcus-brody1.jpg
   Dean Marcus Brody

http://wir.skyrock.net/wir/v1/resize/?c=isi&im=%2F2062%2F84742062%2Fpics%2F3167890186_1_36_vUN5xxBh.jpg&w=350
   Harold Oxley

http://vignette1.wikia.nocookie.net/indianajones/images/2/23/Mac.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20080509031627
   Image of Mac

https://iankayfilm.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/rebel.jpg
   James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*

   Marion Ravenwood
   Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*

http://starsmedia.ign.com-stars/image/object/142/14251922/mutt-williams_pictureboxart_160w.jpg
   Mutt on his Motorcycle

http://www.ufoevidence.org/cases/pictures/RoswellRecord3.jpg
   Newspaper headline about the Roswell Incident

http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2008/05/18/372jones2.jpg
   Picture of Indiana Jones