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HOW TO SUCCEED IN ENGLISH BY UNDERSTANDING MUSICAL MOVIES:
AN ELECTIVE COURSE FOR SOPHOMORE STUDENTS

Trabajo de Titulación para optar al
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How to Succeed in English by Understanding Musical Movies:
An elective course for sophomore students

Formulating a conclusive definition of culture has been, for years, an unsolved task. This is because of the infinite elements comprised in the concept and the different perspectives each person has of it. For example, it is usual to find people that restrict their concept of culture only to certain manifestations, such as arts. This leads to a division of culture into high and low categories. This restrictive culture is questioned by Spencer-Oatey (2012), who regards the concept of "culture" as something more descriptive than evaluative:

> (…) Culture is often linked with terms and concepts such as civilized, well educated, refined, cultured, and is associated with the results of such refinement – a society's art, literature, music, and so on. However, our notion of culture is not something exclusive to certain members; rather it relates to the whole of a society. Moreover, it is not value-laden. It is not that some cultures are advanced and some backward, some more civilized and polite while others are coarse and rude. (p. 15)

As stated above, culture is a term that is not confined to certain elements. It actually evokes the way people live, interact and transcend. Cultures are evidenced through manifestations that make them understandable for other communities. Two of these manifestations, both important yet apparently distant, find a common bond to turn themselves into universal expressions of culture: language and movies.

Language and culture in movies

Johnson and Rinvolucri (2010:14) state that language and culture are "inextricably linked" because language itself is a cultural manifestation. At the same time, language delimits and organizes a person's view of the world into a meaningful order. Languages also imply the creation of experiences and significations that have cultural meaning by themselves (Kramsch, 1998). Considering these perspectives, language would be regarded as the most feasible way in which cultures can interact.

Language in its role of means of interaction can be found embedded in other cultural manifestations: literature, music, television and movies. In those cases, language is used differently from everyday interaction but as accurately as possible.

Language in movies is usually described as "artificial" because it is commonly not instinctively produced by the interlocutors (however, some filmmakers such as Mike Leigh and John Cassavetes are widely known for allowing actors to improvise dialogues). The screenplay determines the words and context of a movie. This script can be modified during production stages not only by its author(s), but also by other entities such as the director or the actors themselves. Although those modifications would provide little portions of authenticity, dialogues still cannot be considered "faithful representations of their real-life counterparts" (Bleichenbacher, 2008:2) because these dialogues are created for actors who may not appropriately know the culture to which their characters might belong. In addition, the cultural context of the movie is narrowed by an endless list of filmmakers from different departments of the production—the director, consultants, producers, among others. Black (2014) confirms that movies might not be a clear cultural manifestation because "a film is not what happened: a film is an impression of what happened" (*Academy Originals*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrvawtrRxsw 2014).

Considering these notions, movies could not be regarded as a reliable expression of a certain culture. Although this may be true, it is important to take into account the thorough research process behind every production. The objective of this process is to provide fidelity and accuracy to the film. The most known part of this research is, perhaps, the one conducted by the pre-production team. However, it is the screenwriter who actually creates the new world for the production that, implicitly, has features of the culture in which the story is contextualized. Based on these assumptions, it could be inferred that feature films are not a reproduction of a certain culture, but a depiction of the culture seen from a determined perspective and presented accurately. Black (2014) himself suggests that creating the story and writing the screenplay for a movie has a cultural importance and background that may lead to either showing or changing the culture.

The movie can also be influenced by the cast and crew's culture. Because of this, some filmmakers decide to work with people who belong to the culture to be depicted. For instance, during the filming of *Evita* (1996), Alan Parker, director and producer, worked mainly with

Argentinian crew members during its production in Buenos Aires to make the movie as accurate as possible.

Movies may not be a direct source of cultural information. Scripts sometimes do not present a language that could be considered authentic, and making a movie as factual as possible may require an expensive, exhausting and long investigation. However, some movies become reliable portrayals of culture thanks to the features implicitly embedded in them.

Using movies in the EFL classroom: Motivation and skills development

The use of movies in an EFL classroom has not been easily accepted by teachers. Ismaili (2013) mentions that most criticisms are related to time constraints, mainly because showing a movie might take longer than class time. Nevertheless, recent studies have reported multiple purposes that can be given to a movie in the classroom beyond entertainment. Moreover, the uprising inclusion of technological resources and media in language teaching/learning has created a valuable opportunity for films to enter this area.

An advantage of using films in the EFL classroom is the motivation of students. Educational resources used in the classroom are frequently considered mere complements to a lesson that does not evoke students' potential response to them. Krashen (1982) states that this response (besides the input and outcomes) is straightly affected by students' emotions and feelings. If the class is boring for students, the outcome will not be as expected. The "affective filter," term coined to refer to these emotions, involves three main components: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Students with high motivation, strong self-confidence and low anxiety perform better in the EFL classroom. Movies could motivate students to work because feature films are part of their everyday life. For instance, learners can take the movies as examples of real linguistic performance. This develops self-confidence and decreases the levels of anxiety and tension at the moment of participating in the lesson (Berk, 2009). In addition, Xhemaili (2013:65) comments that the visual aspects of the movie such as image, color, sound and movement "stimulate students' perceptions directly," making it a "more sensory experience."

Using feature films in the EFL classroom also contributes to the development of language skills. Listening comprehension instantly becomes the fundamental skill because of the wide range of input available in movies—namely, dialogues and songs. King (2002) identifies

several sub-skills that can be developed by using movies as a source of listening practice. The most interesting fact is, perhaps, that students may infer from the context and identify meaning of certain words not only from what they listen, but also from what they see. In this case, listening comprehension is complemented with "inferring strategies by visual clues, facial expressions, voice, and sound track(s)" (515).

Developing listening comprehension may lead to oral production improvement. Brown (2001:275) argues that "skills in producing language are often initiated through comprehension." Therefore, speaking and listening are naturally linked; their goals may be very similar, and the two skills could act as support for each other. Speaking skills might be improved by using feature films as samples of oral language. Despite the fact that screenplays are usually fixed and limited sources of language, their bases come from real-life language, providing students with "an opportunity to be exposed to different native speaker voices, slang, reduced speeches, stress, accents, and dialects" (King, 2002:511). All these aspects provide input in terms of fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, intonation and context.

Reading comprehension and written production skills may also be improved by using films. Inference levels and understanding of expressions in context are helped again by the complement of visual features. Sets of specific vocabulary, new expressions and collocations, and patterns implicitly exposed in the screenplay could also be inferred from dialogues. In order to improve writing skills, these elements act as a cultural background and a source of authentic writing (Brown, 2001). Equally important, skills such as critical thinking of controversial topics, contrasting and comparing, analyzing situations and error analysis might also be extended by using motion pictures (Xhemaili, 2013).

Musical films in the Anglophone culture

The role of music in movies is described by Cohen (1999:258) not only as a contribution to a movie's continuity, aesthetic aspect and meaning, but also as an element that evokes audiences' emotions, intensifying "the sense of reality of or absorption in film (…) by augmenting arousal and increasing attention to the entire film." For musical films, these roles become more important. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines *musical film* as a "motion picture consisting of a plot integrating musical numbers." In this kind of movie, dance numbers, music score and songs may be included to tell the story—the lyrics of the songs

being usually part of the dialogues. Musicals, as most narrative forms and canons in the movie industry, were born on the stage, where they were first considered just flamboyant spectacles that earned money for theater owners. To film musicals was difficult because production costs were high, and huge stars were required to assure the movie's success.

Fortunately, in both theater and film industries, musicals proved to be hits that attracted audiences and generated money. Some musical films were created directly for the screen—for example, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Mary Poppins*. However, the adaptation of triumphant staged musicals would become the most popular movies among viewers and critics—for instance, *West Side Story*, *My Fair Lady* and *The Sound of Music*. Despite these successes, the golden age of musical films suddenly vanished during the mid-1970s. Since then, musicals have become isolated hits, and their success is based mostly on their popularity as Broadway or West End favorites.

Today's audiences have suddenly started detesting musicals. Keegan (2007) suggests that contemporary viewers cannot handle "the implausibility of spontaneous song and dance numbers" (*Time.com*). If so, how have the few hits become what they are? Conversely, Keegan (2007) also states that modern musicals are successful because they present contemporary themes that are interesting for audiences. In addition, some musicals nowadays provide some explanation to the singing and/or dancing on the screen; and putting mainstream actors in this kind of films makes musicals more attractive to moviegoers.

Even though musicals are not very successful today, these films should be considered relevant because of their cultural importance. Musicals are embedded in the Anglophone culture mainly because of the American and British theatrical tradition. Staged musicals have achieved great popularity in the U.S. and several other countries around the world. But musicals are not only important because of their success: they have also changed and shaped the culture of the United States. Wolf (2011) emphasizes the impact of musical films on American culture:

> Musicals have achieved supreme artistry and have influenced culture as much as if not more than any other art form in America (…) Reflecting, refracting, and shaping U.S. culture since the early twentieth century, musicals converse with shifting dynamics of gender and sexuality, ethnicity and race, and the very questions of what it means to be American and to be human. The musical explores identity, self-determination and the American dream. (p.3)

Finally, the Anglophone community have learned about other cultures through musicals that, despite being written in English, explore the cultures in the same format as the one used in other musicals—for instance, *Evita* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Musicals have earned both love and hatred throughout years. Some audiences may still argue that presenting situations through songs and dance numbers makes no sense at all. What cannot be denied is that musicals present and examine cultures in a more attractive and dynamic way, even when the story has nothing to do with music.

Creating a culture course based on musical films

As has been noted, movies can be used as significant tools in the EFL classroom because some of them can be accurate sources of language and culture. In the case of musical movies, they are an important part of the Anglophone culture because they present it in an attractive way by using songs and dialogues combined. Considering all of the above, the creation of an elective course of culture based on musical movies is herein proposed.

In this course, students will formulate reasons for the use of songs in filmed versions of American and British stage musicals. These reasons are based on their knowledge of three areas: technical elements of filmmaking, historical and social context, and personal perceptions.

The course consists of four didactic units: an introduction to musical films and three analytical units about some of the songs and the contents from the films selected.

The two films selected for the introductory unit were released between 1996 and 2004 and set in Argentina and France: *Evita* (1996), directed by Alan Parker, and *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004), directed by Joel Schumacher.

The three live action musical films selected for the other units were released between 1996 and 2013 and set in the U.S. and the U.K.: *Chicago* (2002), directed by Rob Marshall; *Hairspray* (2007), directed by Adam Shankman; and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), directed by Tim Burton.

The course has been designed with an integrated-skills approach. The integration of skills permits the mutual reinforcement of them. This gives students more chances to enhance their performances through diverse, meaningful tasks, making the lessons more motivating and

interesting. In addition, an integrated-skills course can "still utilize a strong, principled approach to the separate, unique characteristics of each skill" (Brown, 2001:233).

A content-based model is suitable for the course's syllabus. Developed mainly in English for specific purposes (ESP) courses, this type of syllabus is characterized by content "usually derived from some fairly well-defined subject area" (Nunan, 1988:48). This subject area becomes the point of departure for the syllabus, providing a logical parameter under which activities will be created and contents will be selected. Linguistic and cultural outcomes have the same importance, as well as product and process.

When it comes to using a content-based syllabus, Eskey (1992) identifies two main problems: First, linking language as a form to both language function and cultural contents—pointing directly to the traditional conflict between focusing on either accuracy or fluency; and second, the progress of the learner in terms of exploiting his/her opportunities for learning. This happens because teachers usually separate culture from language and do not create useful links between both areas. Therefore, a first approach to a solution should start from recognizing that "what we teach in any kind of content-based course is not the content itself but some form of the discourse of that content" (Eskey, 1992:19). In addition, teachers must take advantage of this "to negotiate with the learners and demonstrate the relationship between language and content" (Nunan, 1988:49).

In terms of cultural contents, Byram, Morgan and colleagues (1994) suggest that these should be selected based on contextual relevance, relation to language and students' interests. To obtain this information, an analysis of the students' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), and of what students expect from the course (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998) can be applied.

The target audience for this course are sophomore students (Tenth grade). This level was chosen because of the time spent in EFL lessons. Glas (2013) states that secondary level students (Ninth and Tenth graders) are expected to have four hours per week, although this could vary depending on the school (some private schools spend up to 6 hours per week). This number of hours should allow students to develop an intermediate or upper level of English, which would be required for this course. In addition, sophomore students might have other skills, such as critical thinking and capacity of inference, which could be developed at early stages by analyzing cultural themes presented in musicals.

This course also aims to overcome the problem of the minimal inclusion of Anglophone cultural contents. Graddol (2006:82) recognizes that "EFL tends to highlight the importance of learning about the culture and society of native speakers." In the Chilean curricula, this does not happen. In fact, learning outcomes presented in the EFL program for tenth grade are based on contents exclusively from Chilean culture and environment. In addition, the units presented in this program—sports and hobbies; technology; the world around us: Relationships and social networks; and means and ways of communication (MINEDUC, 2011:35)—are based on topics that are too broad. The inclusion of cultural contents does not mean that Chilean culture will be left aside in the course because, although one of the purposes of this course is to present the musicals as part of the Anglophone culture and their importance, the final aim is not only to have students understand the target culture but also to raise awareness of their own culture (Moran, 2001).

Needs analysis and data collected

A 14-question questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed to gather valuable information about the target audience's needs and wants. Thirty three students from a Viña del Mar private school in responded to this questionnaire about their experience in the EFL classroom, knowledge about musicals and personal views on culture.

Students' answers (see Appendix 2) provide interesting information that not only supports this proposal, but also presents some challenges. The main question was answered favorably because 82% of the students think that working with musical films could be useful in the EFL classroom.

In relation to the EFL experience, listening was rated as the most difficult skill by 20 students, in contrast to only 7 who rated it as the easiest. Vocabulary was ranked as the easiest skill by 20 students. In addition, most students believe that an integrated skills approach is more suitable for the EFL lessons (see Graph 2). As previously stated, the integration of skills can have a special focus on a determined skill. In the case of this pedagogical proposal, the other skills (speaking, reading and writing) will reinforce the students' listening comprehension.

While the role of culture in EFL instruction was mainly described as interesting, useful and necessary (see Graph 4), only 9 students regard movies as part of culture. In contrast, 24 students consider music to be an important cultural component. This data might question the

use of movies for the course. However, it is contradictory to the fact that students consider musicals culturally important (see Graph 6). What can be interpreted from this information is that the importance of musical films lies more in the value placed on music than in their value as movies themselves; the above supports the idea of working with the movies' songs.

Regarding movies, most students have seen both live action and animated musicals. These movies are mostly productions released after 1990 (see Graph 8), produced or distributed by Walt Disney Pictures (see Graph 9). Although this information asserts the selection of live action musicals released between 1996 and 2013, none of the movies is related or similar to a Disney musical. The challenge for this is to motivate students to work with the movies selected for the elective course herein proposed, and demonstrate that they can be as interesting and important as a Disney musical.

An interesting fact is that most students recognize that musical films are not important in the Chilean culture (see Graph 10). Nevertheless, they claim that Chilean communities should be more interested in these films because they are dynamic, entertaining and motivating.

In conclusion, the course meets the students' main needs. First, the reinforcement of listening comprehension through the integration of linguistic skills; second, the use of songs from movies as main materials for the lessons; third, working with live action musicals released after 1996; and fourth, the need to raise awareness of the cultural importance of musicals among Chilean communities. At the same time, two main challenges must be faced: to give importance to a musical film not only for its music, but also for its cinematic value; and to introduce students into musicals that may be unknown to them.

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Syllabus Design

Name of the course:	How to Succeed in English by Understanding Musical Movies
Type of course:	Elective
Audience:	Sophomore students
English level:	Intermediate and upper-intermediate
Duration:	Semester
Class hours:	Two hours a week (90 minutes)
Teacher:	Mr. Andrés Lara Pérez
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Rationale

This elective course was created to raise awareness of the cultural importance of musical films. This underrated genre is important for English-speaking communities because these movies depict cultures in an attractive and motivating way. Using musical films helps to improve the students' linguistic performance. The combination of songs and dialogues provides variety of oral input and vocabulary, and the visual features contribute to enhancing the comprehensive skills. In addition, movies also help to develop critical thinking at early stages. Because of this, an integrated skills approach was chosen. Finally, using these movies can overcome the lack of Anglophone cultural contents in the Chilean EFL program for tenth grade. To do so, a suggestion included in this program was taken up: the use of movies or songs to enhance students' skills.

Course organization

This course is organized into four units. The first unit is an introduction to musical films, in which students explore basic concepts of filmmaking, the differences between staged and filmed musicals, the use of songs and the importance of these movies in culture. In the other three units, students analyze some of the songs and the contents from the movies chosen. These cultural contents are mainly related to customs, life styles, historical events, ideals and values. Each unit ends with a consolidation lesson, in which students are evaluated in terms of content and L2 performance.

Evaluation criteria

Students' performance is evaluated through activities that are done in class—individually, in pairs and in group. In addition, students' participation in class is assessed together with their work. Students' progress is evaluated, as mentioned above, through the consolidation lessons. A final project that fulfils the main objective evaluates the students' work during the whole course. Finally, a self-evaluation is included to make students assess their own performance in terms of participation and responsibility.

Grading Plan

1. Work in class activities: 20%
2. Consolidation lessons: 30%
3. Final project: 40%
4. Self-evaluation: 10%

General objective

At the end of this course, students will be able to formulate reasons for the use of songs in filmed versions of American and British staged musicals.

Icons for the activities.

Warm up activities

Follow up activities

Listening activities

Video activities

Speaking activities

Writing activities

Reading activities

Table 1: Specific objectives for units and lessons.

Unit 1: Musicals in Our Lives	
Movies selected: *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004) and *Evita* (1996)	
1.1. Let's Talk about Movies!	• Identify specific words and verbs used in the filmmaking field. • Recognize the different crew departments and their work. • Identify diverse film genres. • Provide examples of different film genres. • Define what a musical is. • Characterize a musical film.
1.2. From the Stage to the Screen	• Select iconic elements from staged musicals. • Compare staged and filmed musicals. • Contrast staged and filmed musicals. • Evaluate the accuracy of stage musicals adapted into films. • Rewrite the definition of "musical film."
1.3. Are Songs Important in Movies?	• Identify the two main components of a song. • Compare the use of music in musicals with its use in other films. • Contrast the use of music in musicals with its use in other films. • Characterize the score employed in a musical film. • Identify common patterns of music and/or language in the score of a musical. • Argue about the usefulness or uselessness of songs in movies.
1.4. Music, Lyrics and Beyond	• Select elements embedded in the general concept of culture. • Write a definition of the word "culture." • Select key visual elements from the musical movie that reflect the culture portrayed in it. • Identify key cultural elements included in the songs. • Infer some ideals and social themes from the songs. • Explain why musicals are culturally significant.

1.5. **This is what I've learned so far**	• Elaborate a complete definition of a musical film. • Recognize the work of a movie's crew. • Explain the differences and similarities between staged and filmed musicals. • Assess the importance of musical films as cultural portrayals.

Unit 2: There's No Place like London	
Movies selected: *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007)	
2.1. **London in the Time of Victoria**	• List important information about the movie (characters, setting, plot). • Identify people that represent the Victorian society. • Describe what life in London was like in the 19th Century. • Identify aspects of the socio-economic crisis during the Victorian era. • Give examples that evidence the crisis. • Compare this crisis with similar ones that have occurred in Chile.
2.2. **The Murder out in the Street**	• Identify the radical measures taken by the two main characters. • Discuss the implications of adopting desperate measures in times of crisis. • Evaluate the role of the law forces (judges and police) in the story. • Summarize stories about famous serial killers and unsolved crimes in the UK. • Create meaningful links between those crimes and the movie story. • Compare similar criminal situations that have happened in Chile.
2.3. **Good and/or Evil?**	• Categorize characteristics of a story's villain. • Give examples of well-known villains in movies. • Describe how the characters' actions can reveal their intentions. • Determine which characters(s) is (are) the villain(s) in the story. • Justify the choice(s) by providing evidence from the songs

2.4. **This is what I've learned so far.**	• Characterize life in Victorian London. • Distinguish key features of a story's villain. • Criticize the characters' actions in relation to possible real-life situation. • Formulate reasons for the inclusion of a specific song in the film.

Unit 3: And All that Jazz	
Movies selected: *Chicago* (2002)	
3.1. **People vs. the Eighteenth Amendment**	• List important information about the movie (characters, setting, plot). • Recognize characteristic elements, events and people from the Prohibition era. • Distinguish how some of these elements are included in the movie. • Infer how people lived in Chicago during the 1920s. • Assess the advantages and disadvantages of the Prohibition laws. • Predict what would happen if a Prohibition law were passed in Chile today.
3.2. **Women Got Their Gun**	• Elaborate a definition of "feminism." • Identify ideals of the feminist movement. • Examine the role of women in the U.S. throughout history. • Identify gender differences in terms of behavior. • Compare one main female character with the other main female character in terms of physical appearance, personality and attitudes. • Contrast one main female character with the other main female character in terms of physical appearance, personality and attitudes. • Formulate reasons for women to start revolting during this period of time • Assess the role of women in Chile in the 1920s and nowadays.

3.3. **Law and Media: A Three-ring Circus**	• List main elements of the U.S. Legal System in the movie's plot. • Contrast the 1920s U.S. judicial system with the current one. • Appraise the importance of mass media (radio, newspapers) for the characters. • Characterize the main male character in terms of attitudes and ethics. • Compare the main male character's modus operandi with that of Chilean professionals.
3.4. **This is what I've learned so far.**	• Synthesize facts and events from the Prohibition era. • Describe how women gradually strengthen themselves in the 1920s. • Judge the characters' actions to obtain what they need/want. • Formulate reasons for the inclusion of a specific song in the film

Unit 4: You Can't Stop the Beat	
Movies selected: *Hairspray* (2007)	
4.1. **Teens in the JFK Years**	• Identify the movie's main characters. • Describe the main characters' appearance and personality. • Predict the historical context of the story from specific elements. • Compare teenagers' lives in the 1960s with teenagers' lives nowadays. • Contrast teenagers' lives in the 1960s with teenagers' lives nowadays. • Recognize stereotypes of teenagers. • Give examples of similar stereotypes in other movies. • Judge the vision of a perfect teen, providing evidence from the movie and from personal experiences.

4.2. **That Noisy Box in the Living Room**	• Construct a timeline of milestones in the history of American television. • Relate some events of American television history to the movie story. • Compare the role of American mass media in the 1960s with its role in 1920s. • Contrast the role of American mass media in the 1960s with its role in 1920s. • Evaluate how TV can influence people's lives and thoughts. • Appraise the role of television in Chilean teenagers' lives nowadays.
4.3. **Black-White**	• Describe what the Civil Rights movement was. • Identify elements of this movement in the movie's plot. • Assess the characters' stand towards African-American people. • Examine situations in which discrimination is present in contemporary society. • Predict the movie's end based on careful examination of the events.
4.4. **This is what I learned during this course**	• Summarize one of the movies analyzed in the course. • Produce a review of the movie chosen. • Create the lyrics for a song as part of the movie reviewed. • Give reasons for the inclusion of the song in a specific moment of the movie selected. • Assess the cultural importance of musicals.

Self-Assessment Rubric

Name: _____				
Objective: To assess your own performance in this course in terms of responsibility and participation.				
Criteria	**Always (4)**	**Often (3)**	**Rarely (2)**	**Never (1)**
I participated actively by doing in-class activities and checking answers as required (as class, with a partner, etc.)				
I was prepared with assignments and required class materials.				
I proactively contributed to class by offering ideas and asking several questions related to the class contents.				
I actively sought and suggested solutions to problems, or contributed to solutions suggested by other classmates.				
I respectfully listened to, discussed and asked questions.				
I respectfully listened to my classmates' opinions, even if those were different to mine.				
I had a positive attitude towards the tasks and work class.				
In group/pair work, I worked to complete all goals. I contributed positively and performed all duties of assigned group/pair role.				
Total Score: ____ / 32			**Grade: _____**	

Adapted from http://www.cbd.int/ibd/2008/Resources/teachers/appendix3.shtml

Final Project Rubric

Name: _____				
Summary and Review	**Excellent (5)**	**Good (4)**	**Fair (2.5)**	**Poor (1)**
1. Content Student's work includes key information about the movie, an appropriate summary of the plot, and a personal opinion of it appropriately justified.				
2. Use of English Student's work includes appropriate grammatical structures related to the contents. Varied vocabulary can be identified. Errors are minimal or acceptable in terms of context/use.				
Total Score: ____ / 10				
Song	**Excellent (5)**	**Good (4)**	**Fair (2.5)**	**Poor (1)**
1. Cultural background The song's lyrics evidence cultural elements from the US/UK. These elements evidence a thorough research process that include contents that are relevant to the movie's plot.				
2. Use of English Student's work includes appropriate grammatical structures related to the contents. Varied vocabulary can be identified. Errors are minimal or acceptable in terms of context/use.				
Total Score: ____ / 10	**Final score: ____/20**		**Grade: _____**	

UNIT 1

LESSON 4

Music, Lyrics and Beyond

BEFORE WE START

Do you remember what we covered in the last session? Write **three** sentences that summarizes it. Keep them at hand, because you will need them later.

SPEAKING TIME

1) In groups of three, create a mind map about the concept of **CULTURE**, including every word, element or action you think could be part of this concept.

2) In no more than 2-3 minutes, explain to the rest of your group why you chose those words, elements or actions.

3) Did you or your classmates include "movies," music," or "musicals"? Discuss the reasons why/ why not as a class.

4) Using the information from activities **1** and **2**, how would you define culture? Write a short yet concise definition.

GET PREPARED TO WATCH

1) Write a short list of ideas that come to your mind when you think of **Argentina**.

2) As a class, choose the ideas you think most represent the Argentinian culture. Write them down on your notebook.

3) Look at these pictures. Do you know these cities?

4) After you recognize the cities, search for some information about them on Internet or in books. For example: location, population, most known streets/places, etc.

TIME TO WATCH!

1) You will watch a scene from *Evita* (see Appendix 3), in which Eva arrives at a particular city. Select **visual** elements (sets, costumes, places, etc.) from the scene that, in your opinion, provide evidence of the Argentinian culture.

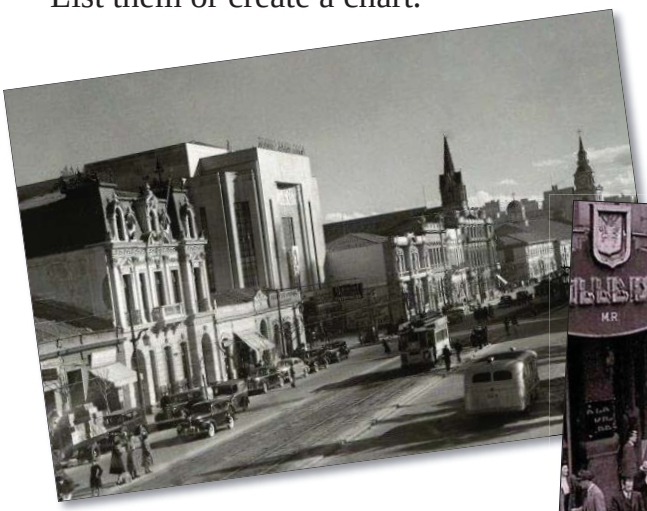
2) Watch the scene again. Now, focus on what you listen. Identify elements from the **song** that also provide evidence of the Argentinian culture (places mentioned, specific words, music style, etc.)

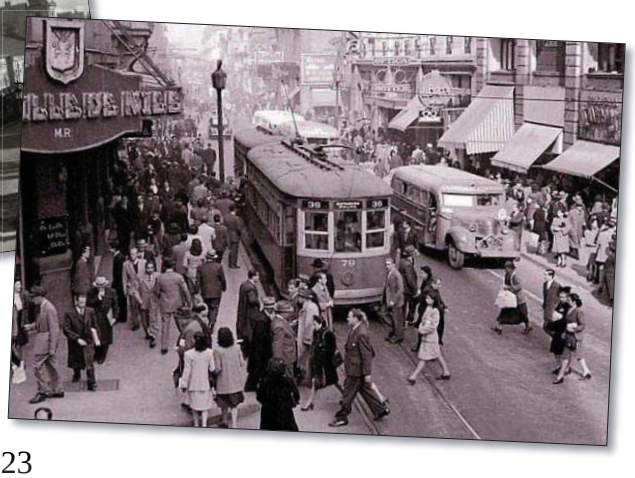
3) You will watch the video a third time—now with English subtitles (see Appendix 3). Check the information gathered in the previous activity. Compare your answers with the person sitting next to you.

AFTER YOU WATCH

1) Using the information from the two previous sections, write a description of the city in no more than 100 words.

2) Get in pairs. Look at the pictures of Santiago de Chile in the 1940s. Which similarities and/or differences can you find between Buenos Aires and this city? List them or create a chart.





BEFORE WE MOVE ON

You have just learned about the setting of *Evita*, but do you really know who Eva Peron was? Or where did she come from? If not, don't worry! In the next activity, you will expand your knowledge about this particular lady.

GET READY TO READ

1) Read the words from the parchment scroll. Then, match those words with their definitions below. Be careful! There are **two** extra words you don't need to use.

sponsor ● (to) hail ● polarizing ● (to) laud ● homeland ● (to) resent
hypocrisy ● (to) loom ● dashing ● fierce ● (to) evoke ● tenacity

a) _____: When someone pretends to have certain beliefs or opinions that they do not really have.

b) _____: Someone with a lot of energy and strong (sometimes violent) feelings.

c) _____: To give money to a person or institution in exchange for advertisement or for charity.

d) _____: To feel angry or upset about a situation, especially because you think that it is not fair.

e) _____: To produce a strong feeling or memory in someone.

f) _____: Something that divides people into clearly separate groups with opposite beliefs, ideas or opinions.

g) _____: To have been born in a particular place.

h) _____: To praise someone or something (formal manner).

i) _____: To appear as a large unclear shape, especially in a threatening way.

(Definitions retrieved from *Longman Online English Dictionary*)

2) Check your answers with those of two of your classmates.

READING TIME

1) Read the following text about Eva Peron. Fill in the gaps with the words from the previous exercise. Don't forget you **must** conjugate the verbs!

A Woman Called Eva

Eva Peron remains as a fascinating, controversial and **(1)** …… figure for the people of Argentina and elsewhere. Born into poverty in rural Argentina, the beautiful Eva went to Buenos Aires at the age of 15 to pursue an acting career. Instead, she met the dashing Colonel Juan Domingo Peron, married him, and eventually became the First Lady of Argentina.

Evita became an idol of the Argentine poor and working classes. Her greatest contribution to social justice was probably the Eva Peron Foundation, established in 1948. This foundation created hundreds of schools, old age homes, and hospitals across Argentina. The organization also **(2)** …… thousands of scholarships and other benefits to the country's poor.

Thanks to her tenacity, Argentine women were granted the right to vote in 1947 – indeed, Evita became so popular she was able to form her own party. In addition, Evita was widely admired for her great beauty and fashion style.

Her supporters claim she truly loved and cared for the poor since she **(3)** …… from the lowest classes herself, while others believe she cynically used the public to gain power behind the scenes. In fact, the Argentine military and upper classes, her **(4)** …… detractors, **(5)** …… Eva and were able to prevent her from running for Vice President in 1951.

She died in July 1952 from cancer at the age of 33. She was given a state funeral, something usually reserved for heads of state. Nowadays, Evita's shadow still **(6)** …… across Argentina. According to Argentine historian Norberto Galasso, "her figure has remained and was claimed by different political groups. Her name still awakens love, but also hate, and it resounds beyond Argentina's borders." Even Cristina Fernández, current President of Argentina, **(7)** …… Eva Peron as an inspiration, **(8)** …… her as "a woman who signified not only the entry of women into Argentine politics, but who assumed without **(9)** …… the representation of the people and the homeland, perhaps with more passion and love than anyone else."

(Adapted from "Eva Peron: Argentina's Joan of Arc or Marie Antoinette?" by Palash Ghosh)

2) Read the text again and write what is so significant in the following numbers and years. Use your own words.

a) 33 : _____
b) 1947 : _____
c) 1951 : _____
d) 15 : _____
e) 1948 : _____

AFTER YOU READ

1) Listen to a song from *Evita* (see Appendix 3) and complete the lyrics below. You are going to listen to it **twice**.

And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out)

Eva's _____ reached out and they reached _____
Now you may feel it should have been _____
But that's not the point my friends.
When _____, you don't ask how.
Think of all the people guaranteed a good time now.
Eva's called _____ to her–open up the doors!
Never been _____ like the Foundation Eva Peron!

Would you like to try _____?
Own your landlord's house, take the family on vacation?
Eva and _____ can make your dreams come true.
Here's all you have to do my friends:
Write your name and your dream on _____.
Throw it high in the air and should our lady pick it.
She will change your way of life for a week or even two.
Name me anyone _____ Eva Peron!

And the money kept rolling out in all directions
_____, to the destitute of all complexions.
Now cynics claim a little of the cash has gone astray,
But that's not the point my friends.
When the money keeps rolling out, _____.
You can tell you've done well by the _____ looks.
_____ only slow things down, figures get in the way.
Never been _____ Eva Peron!

2) Compare your answers with those of your classmates. Now, to check your answers, watch the scene with subtitles (see Appendix 3). You can watch the clip once or twice (if needed).

3) Did some information from the reading text appear in the song? Create a short list of the items present in both texts.

FINAL DISCUSSION

1) Get in groups of 3 or 4. Think of the way Che "talks" about Eva's work. What do you think is Che's position towards Eva and her foundation? Explain briefly.

2) Discuss how different perspectives and social themes are presented in the song. Try to come up with reasons for the use of determined elements, such as lyrics elements from the movie.

WRITING TASK (HOMEWORK)

1) Write a short text (200-250 words) about how musicals portray cultures and lives. Use the scenes and information from this class as examples—you can include examples of your own experience.

UNIT 3

LESSON 2

WOMEN GOT THEIR GUN

BEFORE YOU START

As you might have noticed, the main characters of *Chicago* are women. Velma and Roxie and Mama Morton are three different ladies that share a common bond. Do you want to know what that bond is? If so, let's start working!

GET READY TO READ

- Get in pairs (ideally, one boy and one girl). Look at the images below and then answer the questions.

1) What do you think these images represent?

2) Have you ever heard the word "feminism"? If so, what do you think it means?

3) Read the definition of "feminism" below. Is that definition similar to yours?

> The idea that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. People who support this idea are called feminists.

(*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*)

4) Do the images shown above reflect what feminism is? Why? Why not?

READING TIME!

- Read the following text. Then, answer the questions. Use your own words.

Women's Long Walk to Rights

Women's rights movements are primarily concerned with making the political, social, and economic status of women equal to that of men and with establishing legislative safeguards against discrimination on the basis of gender. Women's rights movements have worked in support of these aims for more than two centuries.

In the United States the first definitive position on women's rights was taken in 1848 under the leadership of Elizabeth Cady Stanton at the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, N.Y. In 1850 the National Women's Rights Convention was held, led by Lucy Stone, an early activist. Both groups coalesced in the formation (1863) of the Women's National Loyal League, under Susan B. Anthony. Anthony wrote and submitted in 1878 a proposed right-to-vote amendment to the Constitution.

In 1890, Wyoming became the first state with women's suffrage. The movement was accelerated by the formation (1890) of the National American Women's Suffrage Association and the election (1900) of Carrie Chapman Catt as president. The ensuing campaign attracted many educated, wealthy, and influential women to the cause, with resultant political professionalism, increased funding, and the development of massive parades and demonstrations in the major cities. The Anthony amendment, as written in 1878, was ratified as the 19th Amendment and became law in 1920.

Since the 1980s the women's movement has focused on diverse issues. These include reproductive rights, that is, preserving a woman's right of choice to have an abortion against the fervent pro-life movement; sexual harassment; and the "glass ceiling" that impedes women in corporate advancement.

(Adapted from "Women's Rights Movements." Retrieved from *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*.)

1) Who was Carrie Chapman Catt?

2) What was the first name given to the 19th Amendment? Why did it have that name?

3) What has happened with the movement since the 1980s?

4) Why is the state of Wyoming a milestone for women's rights movement?

AFTER YOU READ

1) Rewrite your definition of feminism. Add some ideas from the text. Then, read it aloud to your classmates.

2) Look at the pictures. Read the information about the four women. Based on that, infer how they have contributed to women's rights.

Eleanor Roosevelt was Franklin D. Roosevelt's wife and First Lady of the United States from 1930 to 1945. She was also the First Chair of the United Nations Organization's Commission of Human Rights.

Susan Sarandon is an American actress. She won an Academy Award in 1996 for her role in *Dead Man Walking*. She was appointed UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 1999, and she is an active advocate for human rights.

Sandra Day O'Connor is a former judge. She was the first woman to be appointed as associate justice to the U.S. Supreme Court, serving from 1981 to 2006. She is currently a member of the board of trustees of the National Constitution Center.

Oprah Winfrey is one of the most famous TV host in the United States. Although she is also a media proprietor, actress and producer, she is mostly known for her philanthropic work and support to diverse charities.

3) Do you know any other important American women? Make a list.

BEFORE YOU GO ON

While some women changed the world through peace, others got their gun and just shot. Is that feminism, too? Start thinking of that.

GET PREPARED TO WATCH

1) Put a "**T**" if the statement is true, or an "**F**" if it is false in the blank space provided.

a) _____ American authorities started separating women from men in jails in 1870.

b) _____ The first women's prison in the U.S. was established in Boston.

c) _____ Women are more than 2% of inmates on death row nowadays.

d) _____ In women's prisons, inmates were in charge of doing domestic chores such as washing uniforms, cooking meals and cleaning.

e) _____ Alcohol and drugs were related to most women arrested during the 1920s in the U.S.

f) _____ Up to 40% of women convicted of murdering a man were abused by that man.

2) Check your answers against the information provided by your teacher. Takes notes to add important details if needed.

3) Get together in two groups: boys and girls. Complete the statements below with annoying habits or situations.

What really annoys me is...

The most annoying habit I have is...

I hate when people do not...

I don't like when someone...

People usually get angry when I...

4) Compare your answers. Do you have the same answers as the other group? If not, why do you think that happens? Share your ideas with your classmates.

TIME TO WATCH!

1) You are going to watch a scene from the movie *Chicago* (see Appendix 3). Listen to the song features and match the crimes with the person who committed them.

> **Note:** The ladies' names are not mentioned, so you can refer to them by using each woman's characteristic sound: "pop," "six," "squish," "uh-uh," "Cicero" and "Lipschutz"

a) _____ did not speak English, so her crime is still unknown.

b) _____ killed her husband and her twin sister.

c) _____ gave his husband two shots with a gun.

d) _____ killed her artist husband because he was unfaithful.

e) _____ killed her husband with a knife.

f) _____ poisoned her husband using arsenic.

2) Watch the video again and check your answers.

3) Watch the video again. In pairs, create a checklist about elements of feminism you may infer from the context and the lyrics of the song. Then, share some of your answers with your classmates.

AFTER YOU WATCH

1) Now that you have met the two main female characters, create a chart to categorize their differences and similarities. You can use the sample presented below.

	Physical appearance	Personality	Attitudes
Velma Kelly			
Roxie Hart			

FINAL DISCUSSION

1) Get in pairs. Do you think that the characters from movie represent feminist ideals? Provide examples.

2) Does women's "revolting" behavior in the 1920s have any basis for feminist ideals? Explain.

3) What about women in Chile then (1920s) and now? Think of some important Chilean women throughout history and their contributions.

4) Could gender equality be actually achieved nowadays? Expand and discuss this idea as a class.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of a research process for a graduation project based on the use of musical movies in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Please, answer the questions based on your experience as an EFL learner. Do not hesitate to ask me if you have any question. Questions **6**, **9**, **13** and **14** can be answered in Spanish.

01. Based on your own performance in the English class, list the following linguistic skills in terms of difficulty.
Most difficult = **1** Easiest = **6**

_____ Speaking _____ Listening _____ Writing
_____ Reading _____ Grammar _____ Vocabulary

02. Based on your own experience, which way has been the most effective one to improve your performance in the EFL class?

a) _____ Evaluation of the skills separately.
b) _____ Evaluation of reading/writing and listening/speaking skills.
c) _____ Evaluation of speaking/writing and listening/reading skills.
d) _____ Integration of all the skills.

03. Do you think you could learn English by working with musical films?

a) _____ Yes b) _____ Perhaps c) _____ No

04. How could you describe the role of culture in your EFL lessons? You may choose more than one option.

a) _____ Important b) _____ Useless c) _____ Irrelevant
d) _____ Interesting e) _____ Necessary
f) Other: _____

05. Read the concepts inside the box. Circle the one(s) you consider is (are) important for culture.

Arts	Customs	Politics	Movies	Holidays
Daily life	Identity	Theater	Tolerance	Language
Music	Food	Television	Communicating	Literature

06. Do you think musicals are part of culture? Explain briefly.
a) _____ Yes b) _____ No

_____
_____
_____

07. Do you think music is important in movies?
a) _____ Yes b) _____ No

08. Do you think songs are important in movies?
a) _____ Yes b) _____ No

09. How could you define what a musical movie is? Use your own words.
_____
_____
_____

10. What kind of musical movies have you seen?
a) _____ Only live action musicals.
b) _____ Only animated musicals.
c) _____ Both of them.

11. Name at least 3 musical movies you have seen.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

12. Choose 3 of the following elements you consider are the most important in a musical movie.

a) _____ Story b) _____ Dance Numbers c) _____ Music
d) _____ Songs e) _____ Costumes f) _____ Camera work
g) _____ Sets h) Other: _____

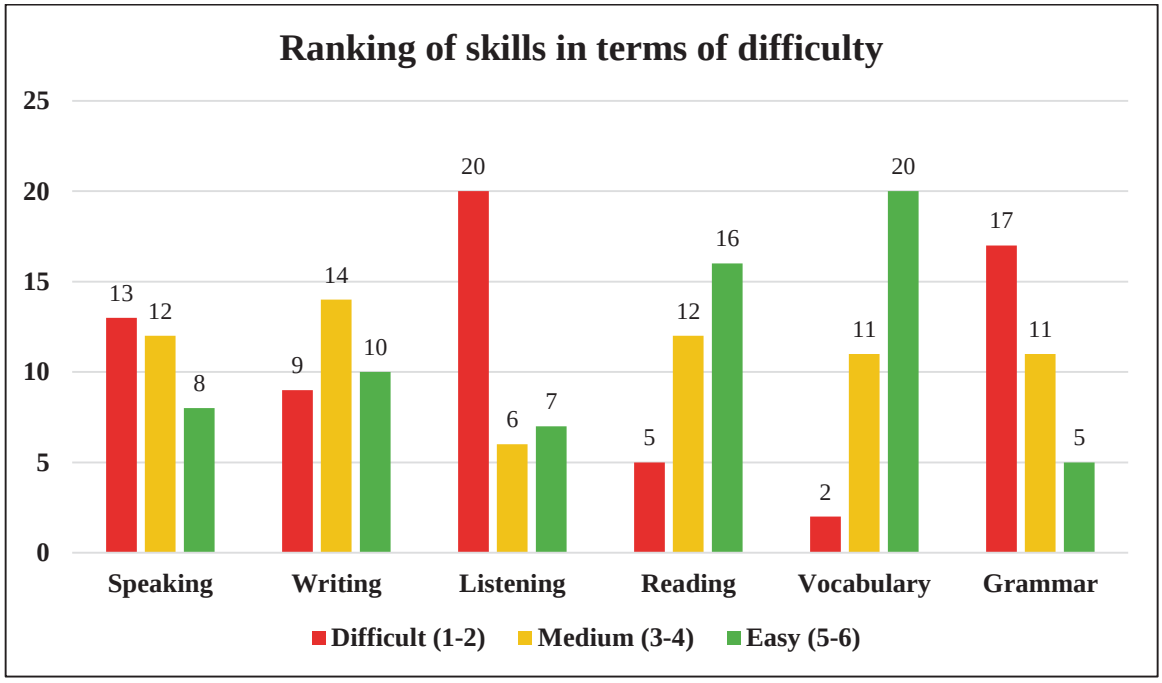
13. If you had to create a musical, what would it be about? Which type of music would you use?
_____
_____
_____

14. Do you think musicals have an important place in your country's culture? Explain.

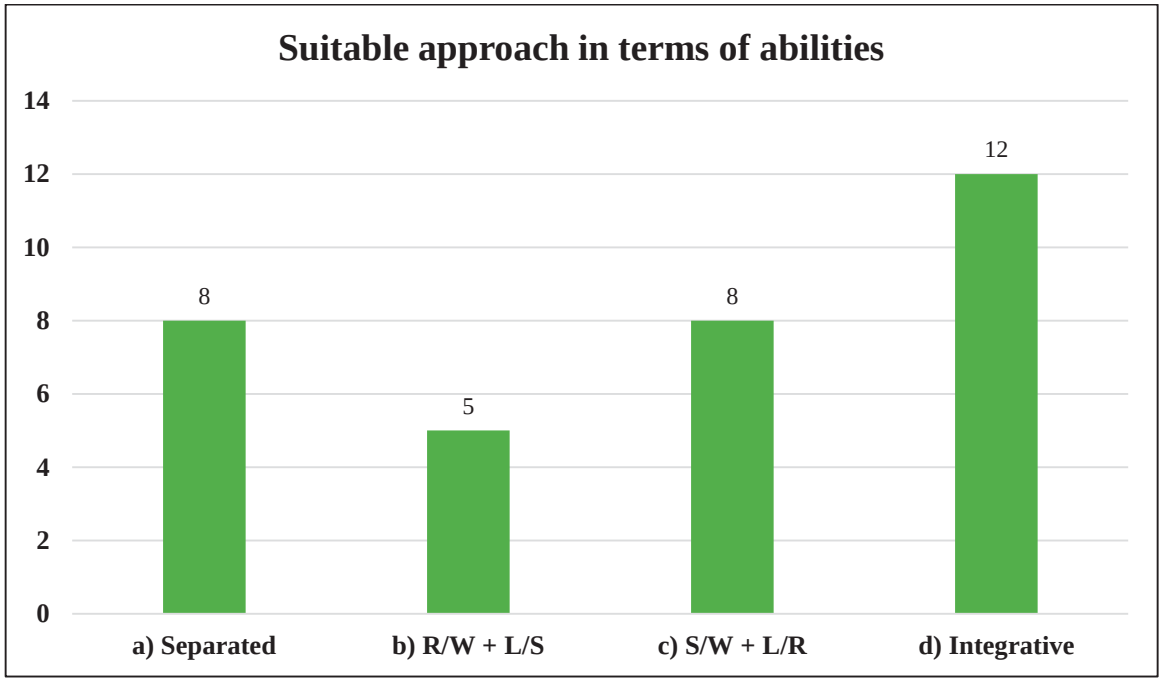
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 2: Graphs of analysis' results

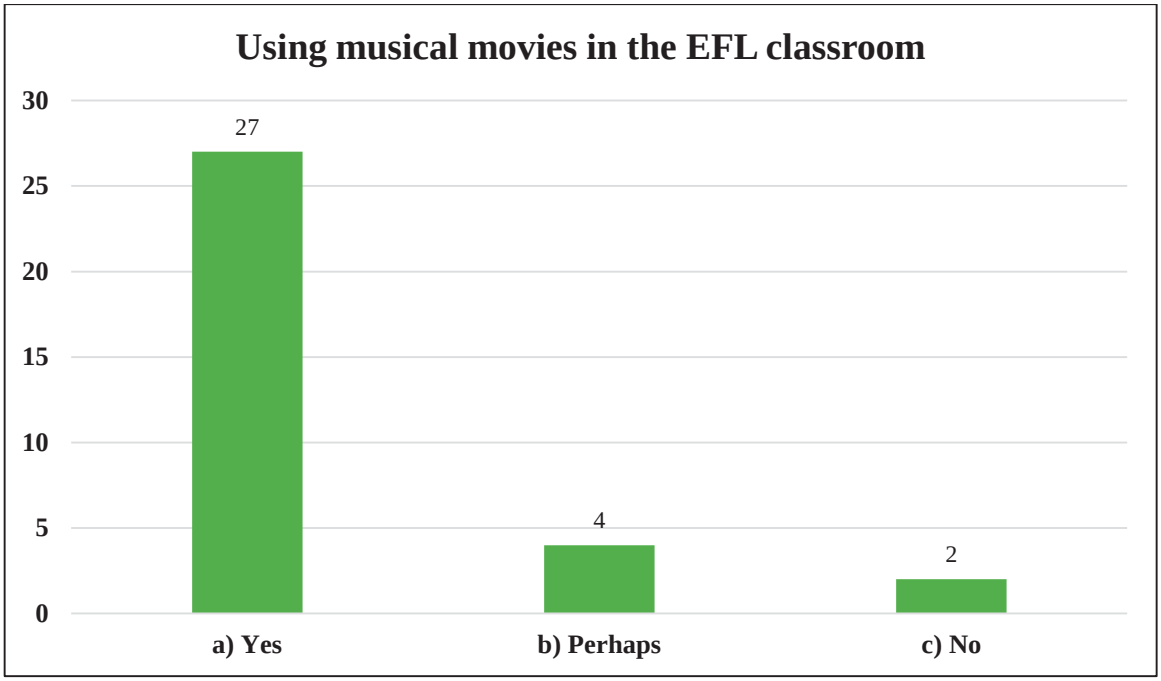
Graph 1



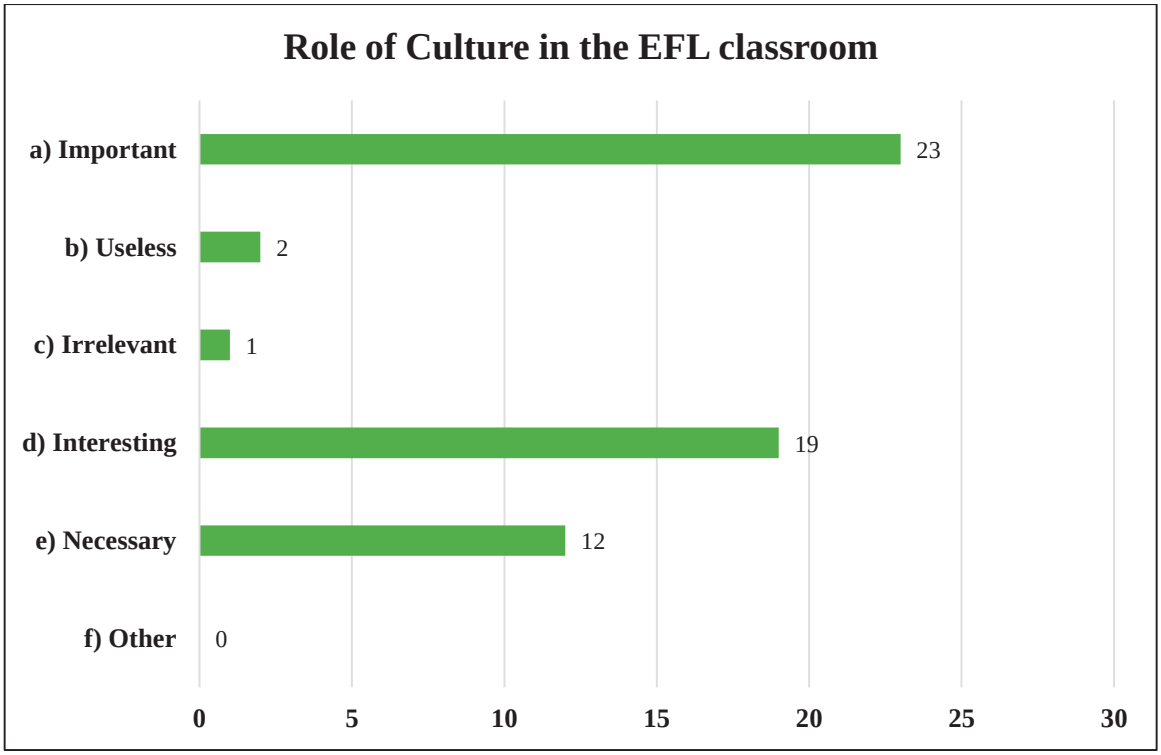
Graph 2



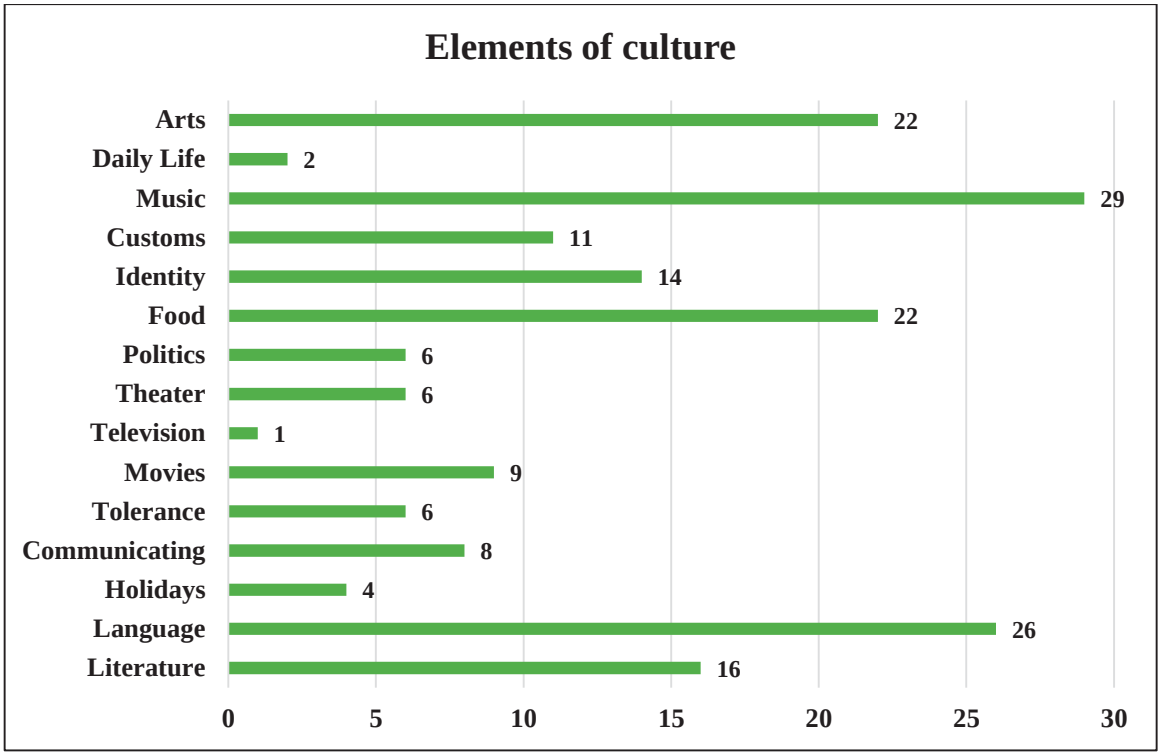
Graph 3



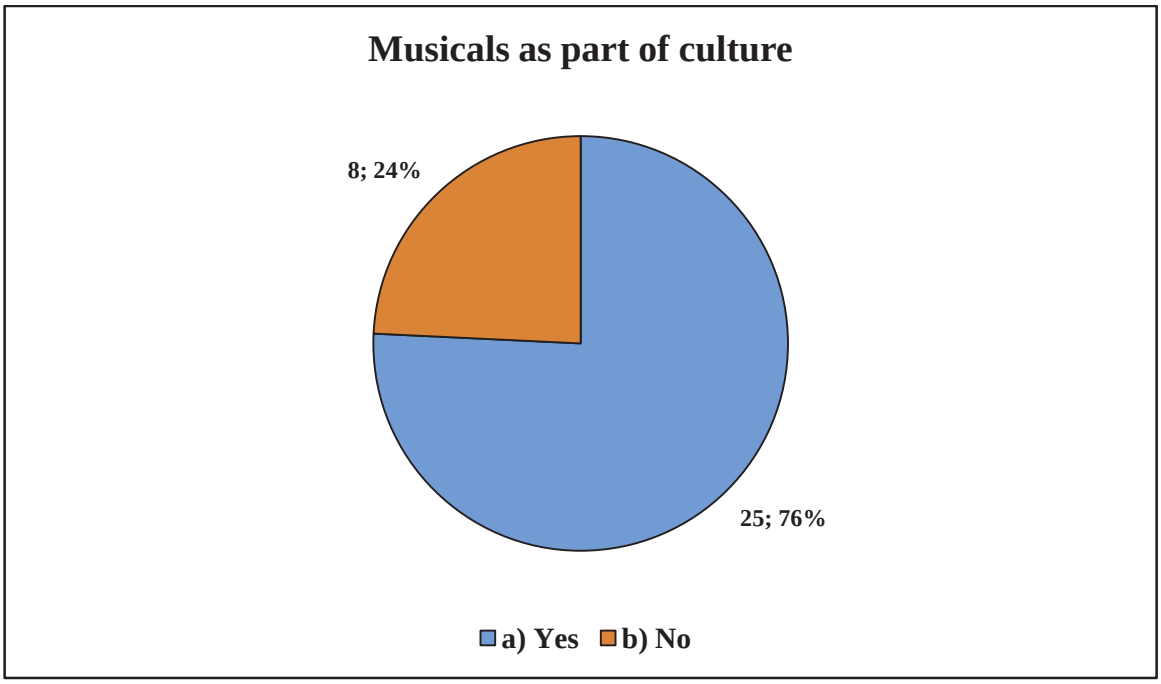
Graph 4



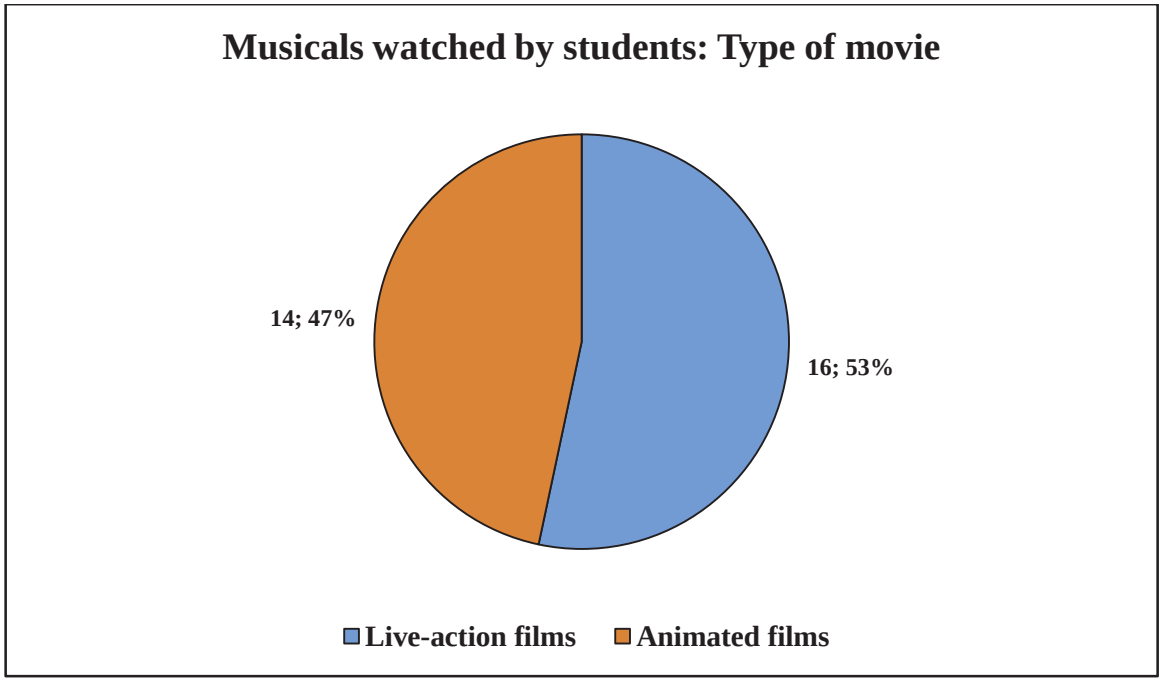
Graph 5



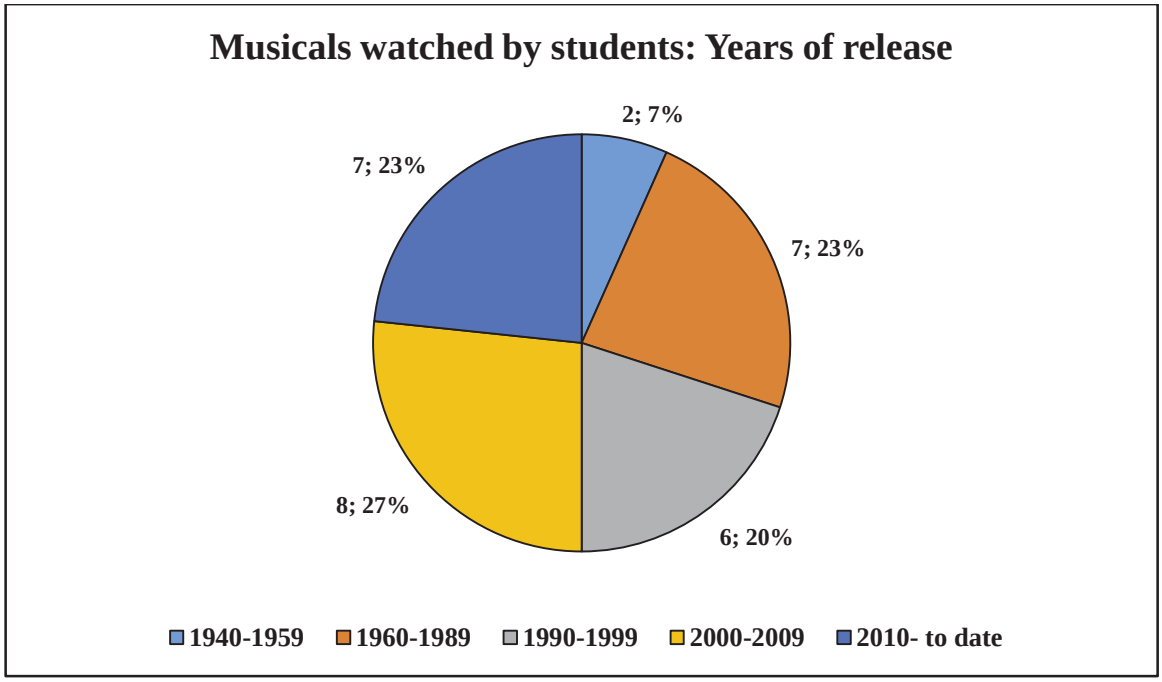
Graph 6



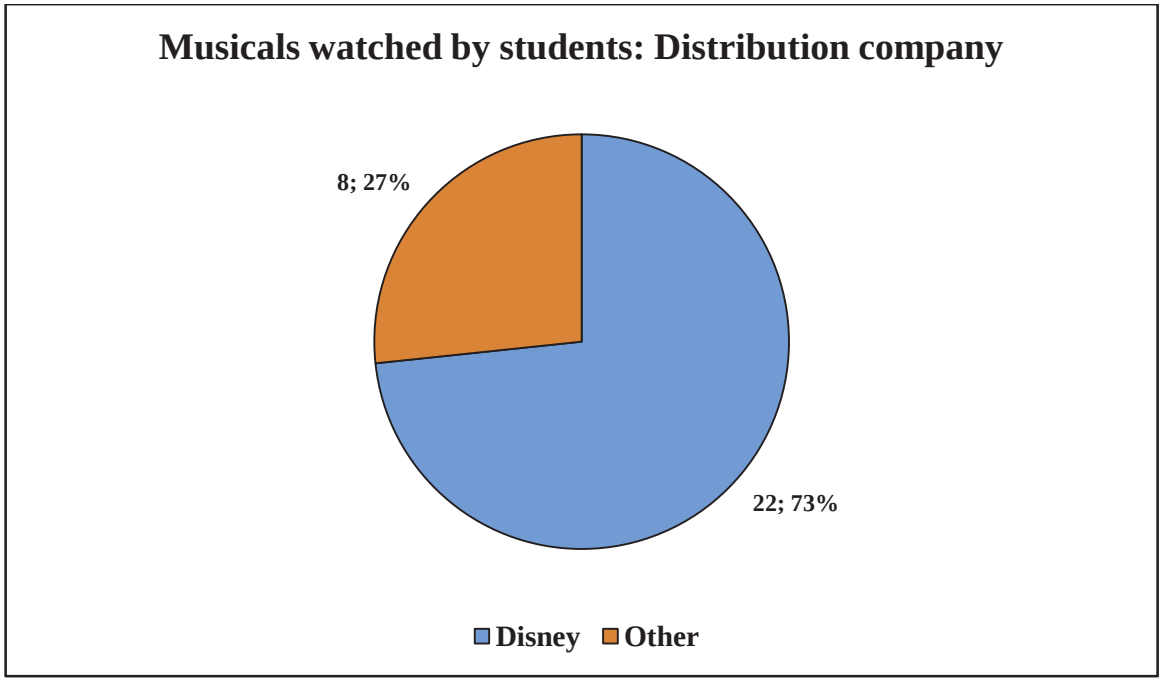
Graph 7



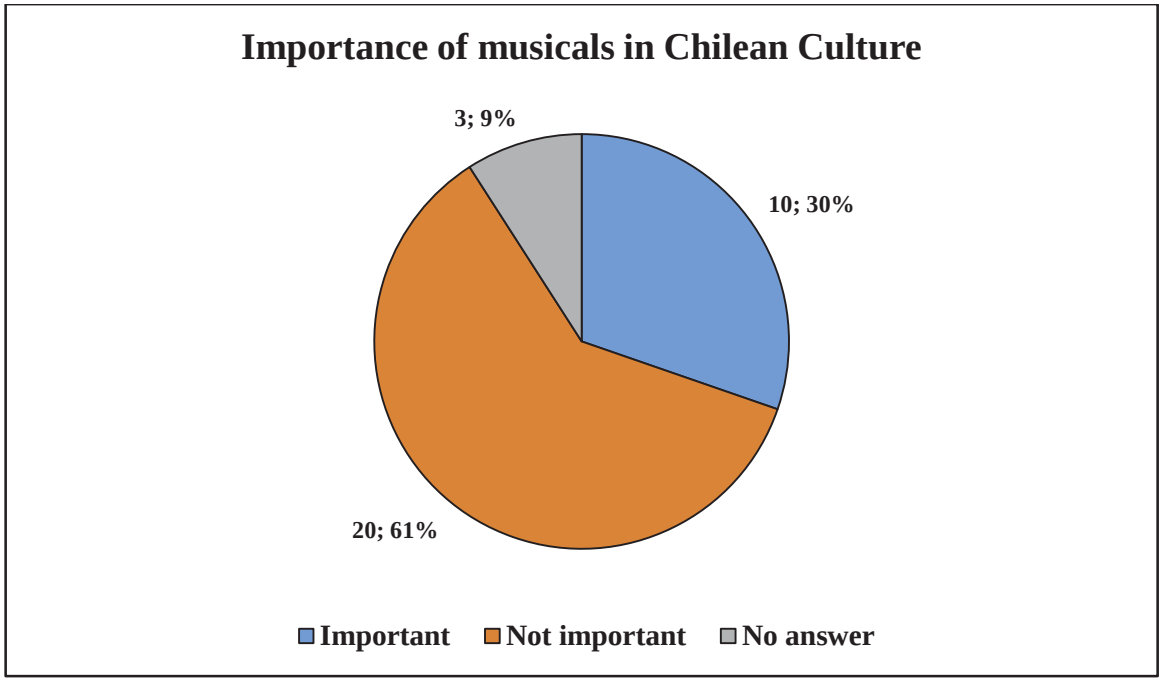
Graph 8



Graph 9



Graph 10



Appendix 3: Audio and Video Materials (available from the CD)

- Unit 1 – Lesson 4, Section "Time to Watch," Activities **1** and **2**: "Buenos Aires" scene from *Evita* (1996) (MP4 video).
- Unit 1 – Lesson 4, Section "Time to Watch," Activity **3**: "Buenos Aires" scene from *Evita* (1996) with English Subtitles (MP4 video).
- Unit 1 – Lesson 4, Section "After You Read," Activity **1**: "And the Money Kept Rolling In (And Out)" from *Evita* (1996) (MP3 Audio).
- Unit 1 – Lesson 4, Section "After You Read," Activity 2: "And the Money Kept Rolling In (And Out)" scene from *Evita* (1996) with English subtitles (MP4 video).
- Unit 3 – Lesson 2, Section "Time to Watch," Activities **1** and **2**: "Cell Block Tango" scene from *Chicago* (2002) (MP4 Video).