

VAMPIRES: FOLKLORE, FANTASY AND FACT

1. Uwagi ogólne

Materiał został przygotowany dla studentów zarządzania kulturą i mediami oraz filmoznawstwa na II stopniu studiów, ale może zostać wykorzystany również na innych kierunkach, ponieważ dotyczy powszechnie znanych odniesień kulturowych oraz filmów. Ze względu na specyfikę tematu doskonale wpisuje się w tematykę Halloween, choć nie ma tu bezpośrednich nawiązań do tego święta.

2. Poziom zaawansowania: B2+, C1, C1+

3. Czas trwania opisanych ćwiczeń: 90 minut

4. Cele dydaktyczne

Zasadniczym celem tych zajęć jest rozwijanie u studentów sprawności rozumienia ze słuchu oraz rozumienia autentycznego (jedynie skróconego) tekstu pisanego. Aby studenci mogli osiągnąć te cele, teksty oraz materiały wideo zostały wzbogacone o zadania wymagające dyskusji oraz wyciągania wniosków na podstawie przeczytanego/usłyszanego fragmentu mimo braku możliwości zrozumienia każdego słowa.

Dodatkowym celem jest przeciwiczenie i utrwalenie zdań pytających, z którymi czasem problem mają nawet studenci na tak wysokim poziomie zaawansowania językowego.

5. Uwagi i sugestie

Proponowany schemat lekcji

Lekcja koncentruje się na zmieniającym się wizerunku wampira w kulturze popularnej, od czasów pierwszych horrorów z XVIII wieku do dnia dzisiejszego, kiedy te stwory postrzegane są jako atrakcyjne, a nie przerażające. Do tematu wprowadza dyskusja (ćwiczenie 1).

Pierwsza część lekcji (ćwiczenia 2–3) skupia się na rozumieniu ze słuchu. Ukazany jest tu klasyczny wizerunek wampira jako istoty z kart dawnych horrorów, a przy okazji wprowadzone/utrwalone jest słownictwo związane z tym tematem.

Druga część lekcji (ćwiczenia 4–7) skupia się na obecnym wizerunku wampirów w popkulturze. Najpierw studenci próbują sami ocenić tę zmianę (ćwiczenie 4), a następnie sprawdzają swoje przewidywania w krótkim filmie reklamowym (Kinder Bueno) oraz w tekście z tygodnika „Newsweek”. Dalsza praca nad artykułem koncentruje się wokół zadawania pytań do podanych odpowiedzi.

Ostatnia część lekcji (ćwiczenie 8) służy podsumowaniu tematu i wyciągnięciu własnych wniosków na podstawie usłyszanych i przeczytanych źródeł.

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I. Discuss in pairs.

1. What vampire stories (in books or films/TV shows) do you know?
2. Why are such stories so popular?
3. What do the stories tell us about the vampires' looks and habits?

II. Vampires or vampire-like creatures have been present in myths and folktales around the world for centuries. Watch the video and match the country to the appearance of the creature.

Find the video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0ThKRmySoU.

Mesopotamia	a) a flying female head with dangling entrails
Ancient Greece	b) a small creature with a huge head, big mouth and bloodsuckers on its hands and feet
the Philippines	c) a bird
Malaysia	d) a severed torso with huge wings
Australia	e) the head of a lion, the body of a donkey

III. Count Dracula is by far the most famous vampire in popculture, reimagined many times in different versions of the classic story. What do you know about the character? Do the quiz and then watch the video to check.

Find the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uiyz3139tE>.

1. Dracula was the first fictional vampire. T/F
2. Vampires had been a part of Slavonic folklore for over 8 centuries before the book about Dracula was published. T/F
3. The word *vampire* comes from an Old Russian word for a monster. T/F
4. Stories of vampires started after the discovery that some people were buried alive. T/F
5. Putting poppy seeds in the coffins was one of the ways of preventing vampirism. T/F

6. Vampire legends first appeared in Western Europe in the 18th century. T/F
7. Doctors who were then sent to study the problem confirmed that vampires actually exist. T/F
8. *Dracula* was Bram Stoker's most successful work. T/F
9. The makers of the classic silent film *Nosferatu* paid almost \$25,000 in royalties to Bram Stoker's widow for the rights to the story. T/F
10. The Broadway adaptation starring Bela Lugosi made considerable changes to the original story. T/F

IV. Work in pairs to finish the sentence with ONE adjective:

Modern vampires are

V. Discuss in pairs, then read the article to check.

1. What is the word that describes the change of the character of vampires from cruel, monstrous creatures to soft, almost innocent ones, not wanting to hurt humans?
2. Why do the ladies love vampires?

Why The Ladies Love Vampires

By Joan Raymond On 7/15/09 at 8:00 PM

There are three things that Kendra Porter of Cleveland looks for in a man. She likes them smart, funny, and tall. Warm, conscious, and breathing are givens. That's why Porter, 27, says she's more than a little bewildered about her latest crush: a 1,000-year-old hunk of vampire Viking eye candy named Eric, just one of the incredibly beautiful creatures populating the HBO series *True Blood*, based on the bestselling "Southern Vampire Mysteries" of Charlaine Harris. "This is so embarrassing," says Porter, an interior designer, who plans her Sunday nights around the show. "I was never into that whole vampire thing. Now I'm like vampire central. I want to say, 'Bite me.' But, you know, in that really good way."

Poor Ms. Porter. She's missed out on years of the undead's appeal. But vampires have never been as hot as they are now – in a steamy, let's-step-in-the-shower-together way. Women are now so sexually attracted to vampires, advertisers are even getting in on the action. In a new Gillette billboard that ties into *True Blood*, a vampire hunk caresses his cleanly shaven face next to the phrase "Dead Sexy." In another ad, for Marc Ecko cologne, a male vampire nibbles at a naked woman's neck with the line "Attract a Human." As if they needed any help.

Unless you've been sleeping in a coffin for the last few months – and if you have, lucky you! – you'll know that the hottest genre around is the bloodletter, with vampire-based movies, fan clubs, and, of course, the ever-popular vampire-based

paranormal romance literature all competing for our attention. In the fall, the CW debuts *Vampire Diaries*, a teen soap opera that will make the *Gossip Girl* crowd want someone other than Chace Crawford to bite them. Next week's Comic-Con International, a celebration of all things pop culture held in San Diego, offers up a heavy dose of vampire-themed events, including a panel discussion with members of the *True Blood* cast and executive producer Alan Ball. And Southern California will see yet another vampire frenzy next month, with Vampire-Con. Billed as the first vampire-centric convention, the two-day Hollywood event includes a vampire-film festival, panel discussions, and a *danse macabre* featuring “vampirerotica” go-go girls and boys. “People are really excited about this,” says Heidi Johnson, Vampire-Con’s PR director. “Even my grandmother is into vampires now.”

Vampires and sex have been inexorably intertwined since Bram Stoker’s iconic sexual predator Count Dracula took a little nip of Mina and Lucy back in 1897. And well before Robert Pattinson (*Twilight*’s Edward Cullen) or Stephen Moyer and Skarsgård (*True Blood*’s vampire duo of Bill Compton and Eric Northman) set the female heart aflutter, a young, virile Frank Langella did the same thing with his sly portrayal of the count in John Badham’s 1979 big-screen adaptation of the story. So did an oddly sexy, bespectacled Gary Oldman in Francis Ford Coppola’s 1992 *Dracula*, and Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt when they bared their fangs in the movie version of Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire* in 1994. But there’s something about the modern-day vampire that’s even more alluring than any of these. It’s not just that they’re sexy. It’s that every girl wants to have sex with them.

In some ways, these new vamps have been defanged – a few wear condoms and others sparkle in the sun like Abercrombie & Fitch models (OK, that’s just the *Twilight* vampires). But these changes in the vampire myth also have helped to humanize the characters, turning them into modern-day Romeos for all the angsty Juliets in the tweenage world. *True Blood*’s Ball says that his vampires are part of a “story of people trying to assimilate, trying to find a way in the world. The notion that a group like the vampire is feared and misunderstood, that they’re outsiders, it’s really very interesting.” The hypersexuality, coupled with the potential for danger, makes some of the most unlikely women yearn for the vampire embrace.

But the current vampire obsession isn’t all about the fangs. It may be an excellent balm for bigger issues, says Donovan Gwinner, assistant professor of English at Aurora University. In Gwinner’s class “Got Blood? Vampires in Literature, Film and Popular Culture,” students were required to read several vampire-related books, including Stoker’s *Dracula* and popular literature by Rice, Harris, and Stephenie Meyer. “We talked a lot about how things suck,” jokes Gwinner. “But in times of economic contraction, fear of job loss, and war, the vampire myth really speaks to people. What’s so bad about being powerful, almost immortal, always in control, and incredibly desirable?”

Very little, as contemporary writers of vampire fiction can attest. The imagery has always been sledgehammer-subtle, says Laurell K. Hamilton, bestselling author of the “Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter” series. “It’s fang, penetration, ecstasy,”

she says. "Our readers know that vampire sex is somehow going to be the very best sex a woman has ever had."

And why shouldn't it be? After all, "they've generally had centuries to practice," says author Charlaine Harris. Plus, her bloodsuckers are out, proud, and mainstreaming with humans due to a blood substitute they can buy at the corner store. But their appeal, she believes, is eternal youth. "We're obsessed with staying young," she says. "And vampires never worry about Social Security or knee replacements. That's almost irresistible to us."

But it's that potential for death that gives vampires a lot of their sexual edge. "It's kind of like autoerotic asphyxia, except that's real," says Katherine Ramsland, professor of psychology at DeSales University. "In terms of fantasy, the vampire mystique is 90 percent sexual. It's a metaphor for dangerous sex. Because if it goes wrong, you're gone." For her book, *Piercing the Darkness*, Ramsland spent several years researching the rabid vampire fan, those folks who actually act out the Dracula fantasy. Many are professionals (lawyers, stockbrokers, politicians); some are simply lost. What struck Ramsland as rather odd was that most women wanted to be the victim rather than the hunter. "I think it's kind of weird to be the impaled one, the seduced one," she says. "There were so many women who wanted to lose control. And I thought women had come a little further than that."

If message boards, chat rooms, and fan clubs are any indication, the whole seduction, lose-control routine is a huge part of the fantasy. "I think a lot of women wouldn't mind someone else taking control of things for a while," says Melissa Lowery, 34, editor and co-owner of popular fan site true-blood.net. In the last 30 days, the site has had more than 140,000 unique visitors. And after wading through 3,700 comments, Lowery has noted at least one theme that keeps popping up: "Even if a vampire is your lover and gentle and kind, he still has the power to rip someone's leg off," she says. "Sometimes I think women just want to be protected, and that's not so bad."

That may have something to do with all the adolescent angst we still have bottled up. In his paper "Vampires and Those Who Slay Them," published in the journal *Academic Psychiatry*, Dr. Steven Schlozman, assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, argues that the *Buffy*-verse, for example, speaks to key developmental challenges of adolescents, some of which even many adults have never quite mastered. In the episode "Gone," Buffy teases bad-boy vamp Spike while she's invisible, which Schlozman sees as the "perfect" metaphor for the adolescent longing adults can feel for the vampire lover. "It's like you want to do it, but you sure don't want anyone to know that you are into vampires," he says. "But it sure can be a good time."

VI. Write questions for the following answers.

1.
Because women find vampires so attractive that they will be willing to buy the product they've seen in such a spot.

2.
It's vampire-based paranormal romance, both on paper and on the screen.

3.
Introducing such changes to the myth made vampires even more attractive for teenage girls.

4.
Their strength, immortality, eternal youth, attractiveness and total control.

5.
Because they're strong and dangerous, and any sexual intercourse with them is potentially fatal.

VII. Prepare two more questions to the text in pairs and exchange them with another group. Try to answer theirs and see if they can answer yours.

1.

2.

VIII. Discuss.

1. Do you know any of the stories (books, films, TV shows) mentioned in the article? What do you think about them?
2. Do you agree with Dr. Schlozman's statement, "you want to do it, but you sure don't want anyone to know that you are into vampires"? Why (not)?
3. Will vampires become more repulsive again or will they stay "defanged"?

KEY

I. Discuss in pairs.

1. What vampire stories (in books or films/TV shows) do you know?
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Stories – e.g. *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *The Vampire Chronicles* by Anne Rice, *the Twilight saga* by Stephenie Meyer, *Salem* by Stephen King, the vampire series by Charlaine Harris. There are films based on all of these stories.

TV shows – *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *True Blood*, *Vampire Diaries*.

Vampire characteristics (which differ from author to author, though) – supernatural strength, pale and ice cold skin, the ability to fly, the ability to transform into a bat, sleeping in a coffin, aversion to sunlight and to garlic, no reflection in the mirror, killed by a wooden stake through the heart, by decapitation or by fire, extremely attractive to humans.

II. Vampires or vampire-like creatures have been present in myths and folktales around the world for centuries. Watch the video and match the country to the appearance of the creature.

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- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mesopotamia (e) | a) a flying female head with dangling entrails |
| Ancient Greece (c) | b) a small creature with a huge head, big mouth and bloodsuckers on its hands and feet |
| the Philippines (d) | c) a bird |
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IV. Work in pairs to finish the sentence with ONE adjective:

Modern vampires are *attractive / sexy / rich / mysterious /*

Play the Kinder Bueno commercial with vampires that chooses chocolate over blood as a lead-in to the next point.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qOwDzHl8zg>

V. Find ONE word that describes the change

1. "defanged"
2. Student's own answers.

VI. Write questions to the following answers.

1. *Why are there more and more adverts focused on vampires?*

Because women find vampires so attractive that they will be willing to buy the product they've seen in such a spot.

2. *What's the "hottest genre" these days?*

It's vampire-based paranormal romance, both on paper and on the screen.

3. *Why were vampires made more human and "defanged"?*

Introducing such changes to the myth made vampires even more attractive for teenage girls.

4. *Which vampire characteristics seem to be attractive for all people?*

Their strength, immortality, eternal youth, attractiveness and total control.

5. *Why are vampires sexually attractive – or even irresistible – to women?*

Because they're strong and dangerous, and any sexual intercourse with them is potentially fatal.