**Media Analysis**

**Generating Ideas**

When choosing a movie or series that depicts writing, I recommend working with one you’re already familiar with and one you have access to so you can watch it again easily.

THE BIG PICTURE

1. Title of movie or television show:
2. Is writing an overarching theme of the entire movie or series? For example, is the main character a writer or is the main plot about writing? Explain.
   1. If writing *is* an overarching theme, how are the writers portrayed—as smart, ridiculous, evil, heroic, pathetic, etc.? Explain.
   2. Does the movie seem to be showing how writing *ought* to be done or how writing should *not* be done? (Often, if the person doing the writing is not a good role model in most ways, the approach to writing is not meant to be a model for viewers to adapt.)
   3. Do you immediately think of a theme from a course reading when considering the movie or tv show? For example, does the movie seem to highlight a particular *purpose* of writing, does it focus on the writing *process*, or does it depict discourse communities?
3. If you’re working with a series, what 1 or 2 episodes will you focus on?

TAKE NOTES WHILE WATCHING THE MOVIE OR TV SHOW

1. While viewing the movies, write down how writing is portrayed with as many details as possible.

* 1. Think about rhetorical situations and include notes about the writer, audience, message, purpose, genre, exigence, occasion, and so forth—as many elements as you can notice.
  2. Also write down ways that the writing process is represented, whether written communication is effective or not, what motivates people to write, and so forth.

1. After viewing the movie and making all the descriptive notes above (and more if you can!), review these notes. What are the various messages about writing being implied through these portrayals?

IDENTIFY THE MAIN MESSAGES ABOUT WRITING

1. Review both the overall portrayal of writers and writing in the movie or tv show *and* what you’ve noticed from viewing and taking notes on details (from the 2 sections above). Summarize: What are the main 2-4 points about writing the movie seems to be communicating?

1. For each of these main points about writing, identify one or two sources from class readings that provide writing research and expertise to address the topic.
2. Go back to these class readings and identify specific passages that address the topics. Take notes using direct quotes and paraphrase; make sure you include page numbers and authors so you will have an easier time using these notes as you write.
3. As you compare the messages in the movie or tv show and the information about writing from experts, do the messages about writing in the movie or tv show seem to be helpful and accurate; inaccurate and thus not helpful; or mixed?