

Google Arts & Culture

Lesson Plan:

Hindi Cinema

Created in
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This Lesson Plan is prepared for a global audience. It is most suitable for students above the age of 15.



Concept Overview

Estimated Duration: **3 Sessions (45 Minutes Each)**

1

In this module, **YOU** will become familiar with the history of Hindi Cinema. You will appreciate its humble beginnings, the influences that shaped it, its varied genres, and its admirable evolution.

2

YOU will become aware of rare memorabilia and archives to construct your perception of Hindi cinema.

3

YOU will become aware of the basic steps needed to make a film, beginning from the germination of an idea to the editing process of the film footage.

Google Arts & Culture offers a plethora of pictures, exhibits, and virtual walkthroughs that you can zoom into. Prepare yourself for an exciting adventure!

Resources

A List of Resources Required for This Lesson Plan



Any IT device with an internet connection



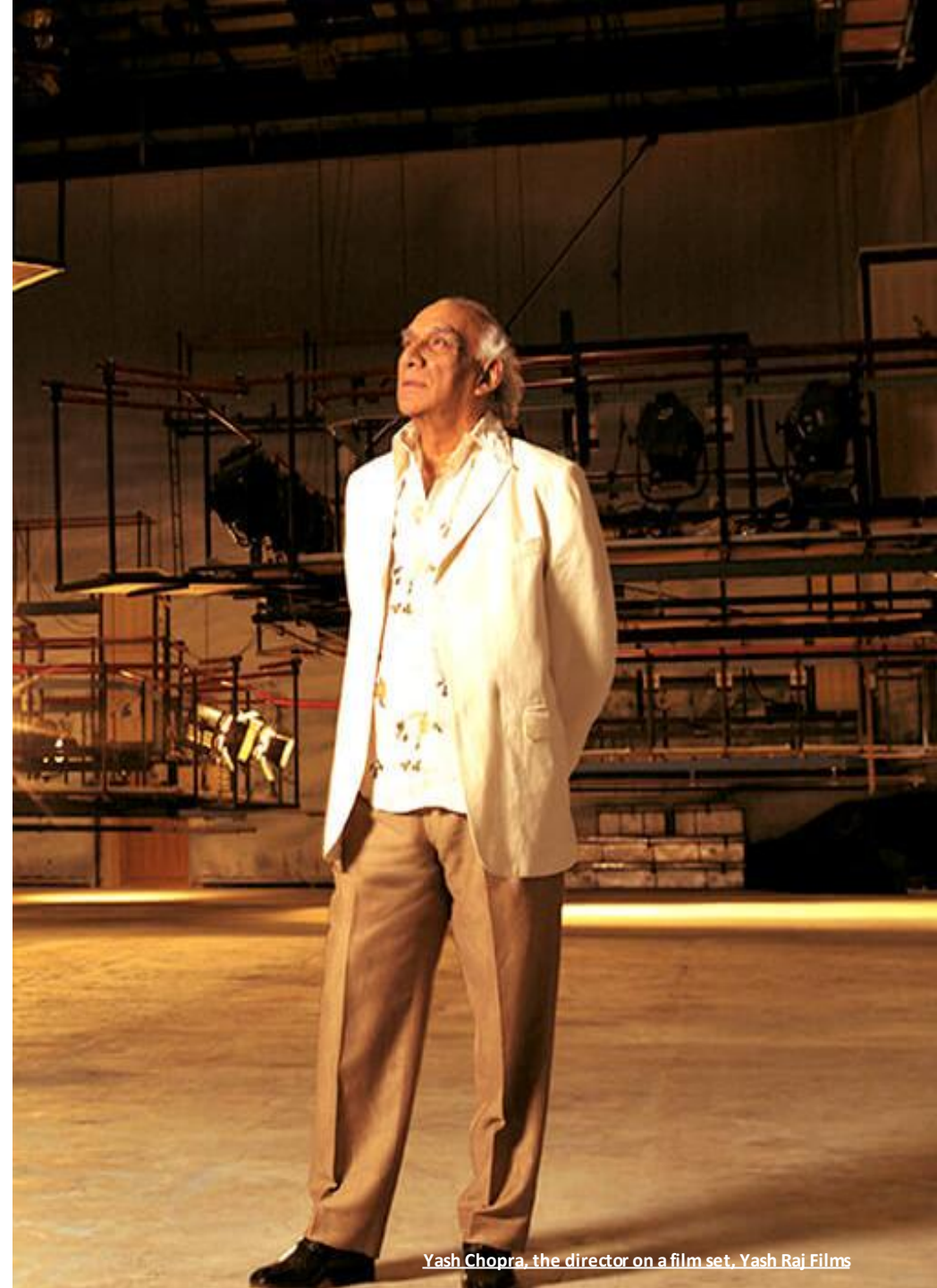
Stationery such as paper/notebook, pens, pencils, scissors, glue, etc.



Art materials such as paints, brushes, etc.



Other miscellaneous items that you may need to make a short film (such as, a camera, a smartphone, or any available recording device)

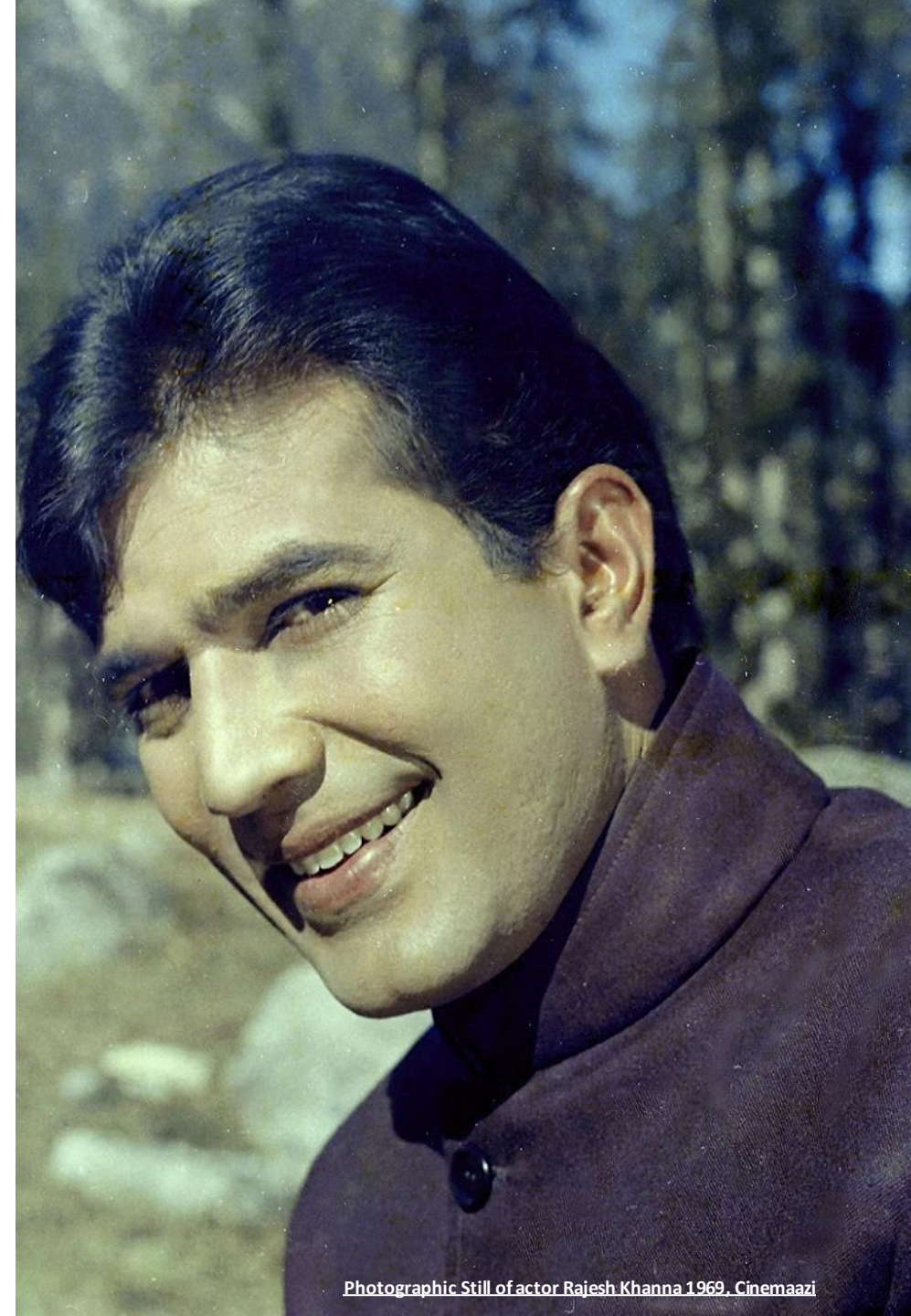


Yash Chopra, the director on a film set. Yash Raj Films

Vocabulary

Words That You May Need to Look Up

Archive, audition, Bollywood, cabaret, choreography, design, expatriate, filmstrip, genre, lobby card, lyricist, melodrama, memorabilia, *mise-en-scène*, oeuvre, production, sartorial, styling, splicing, synchronization, tableau, talkies, technicolour, triumvirate



Symbols

A Glossary of the Symbols Used



This is used for leading questions or important instructions.



This is used to denote a response to leading questions.



This is used to denote questions which require independent research.



This is used to denote stories where you can learn more about relevant topics.



This is used to denote stories or videos which contain audio elements.



Film poster for *Mughal-E-Azam*. Unknown. Museum of Art & Photography, Bangalore

Session-1

The History of Hindi Cinema: An Introduction



Estimated
Duration:
45 Minutes



Film still of actors Rajesh Khanna and Sharmila Tagore from the Hindi film *Aradhana*, 1969, Cinemaazi

The antecedents of Hindi cinema can be traced back to the Silent Era (1890's). The success of the first silent film, Dadasaheb Phalke's *Raja Harishchandra* (1913), led to its phenomenal growth. Hindi cinema provided a novel yet familiar perspective on the challenges faced by the common masses. This made it engaging and cathartic.



Read the story on the right. Then complete the **'Connect & Reflect'** routine given below with the assistance of a peer:

Connect.

Identify an interesting scene to role-play with your peers using non-verbal cues.

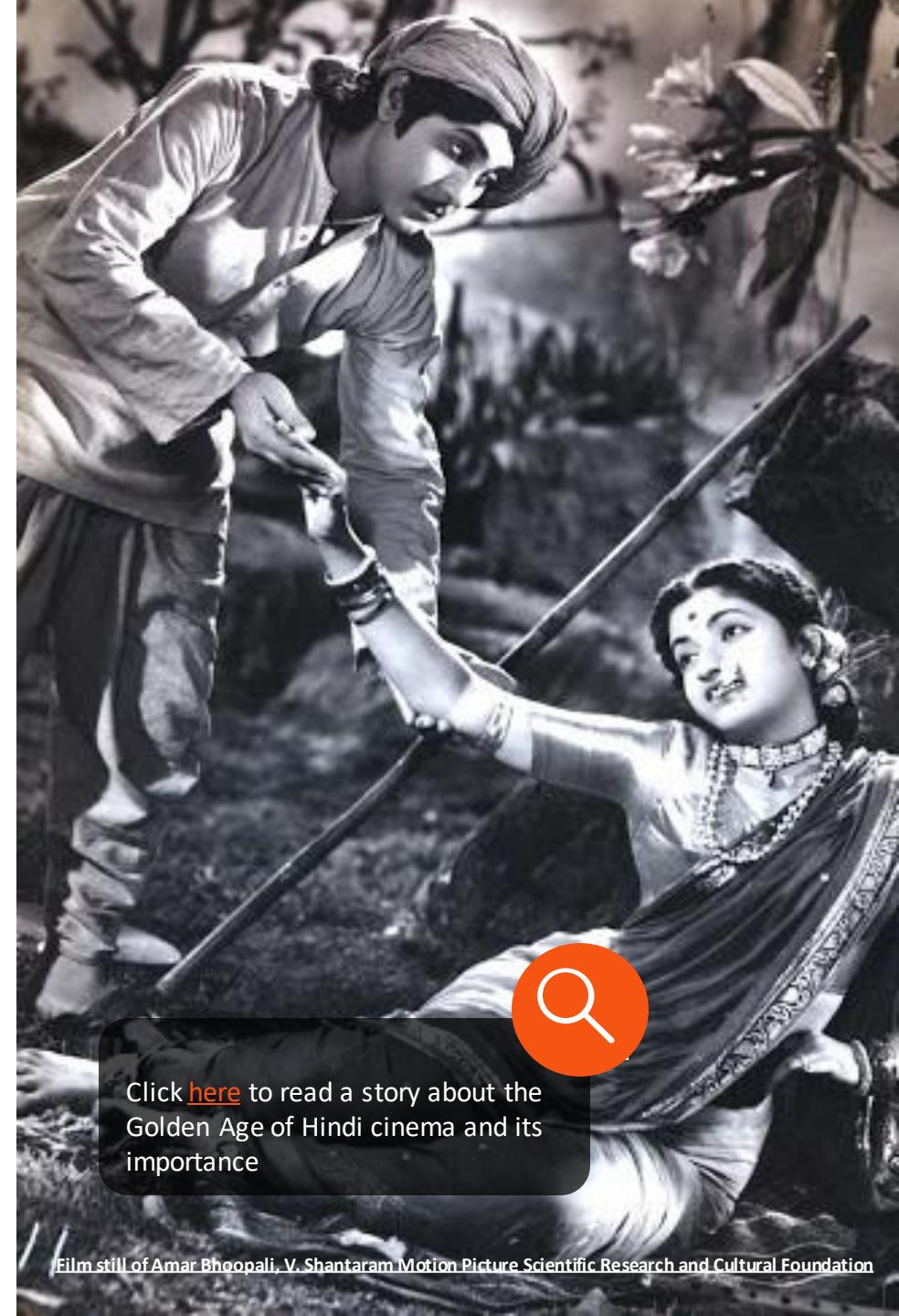
Since the enactment has to be silent, how can you use emphatic gestures and mannerisms to convey your point?

Follow the role-play with a reflection session.

With your peers, reflect and share your observations about the Golden Age of Hindi cinema.

&

Reflect.



Click [here](#) to read a story about the Golden Age of Hindi cinema and its importance



Click [here](#) to view how the socio-cultural landscape of India affected the aesthetics of Hindi cinema.



Still from the film *Mughal-e-Azam*, 1960



Read the story on the left, research online and **create a list** of elements that evolved through different time periods in Hindi cinema.

Focus on the stylistic and narrative elements of Hindi films through the decades.

Were some common elements being worked upon repeatedly? What were the consequences of the same?

Think about a film you saw recently

Research and note down how the stylistic and narrative choices have been altered to fit the theme. What are some elements that indicate the socio-cultural aspects of the period the film is set in?

Click [here](#) to view Madhubala performing 'Pyar Kiya Toh Darna Kya'

Throughout its long history, Hindi cinema has inherited and drawn inspiration from a variety of sources including the Indian Epics, folk traditions, Parsi theatre, Urdu literature, and Hollywood musicals, amongst others. This rich tapestry of influences has facilitated Hindi cinema's capacity to evolve and adapt, over the years.

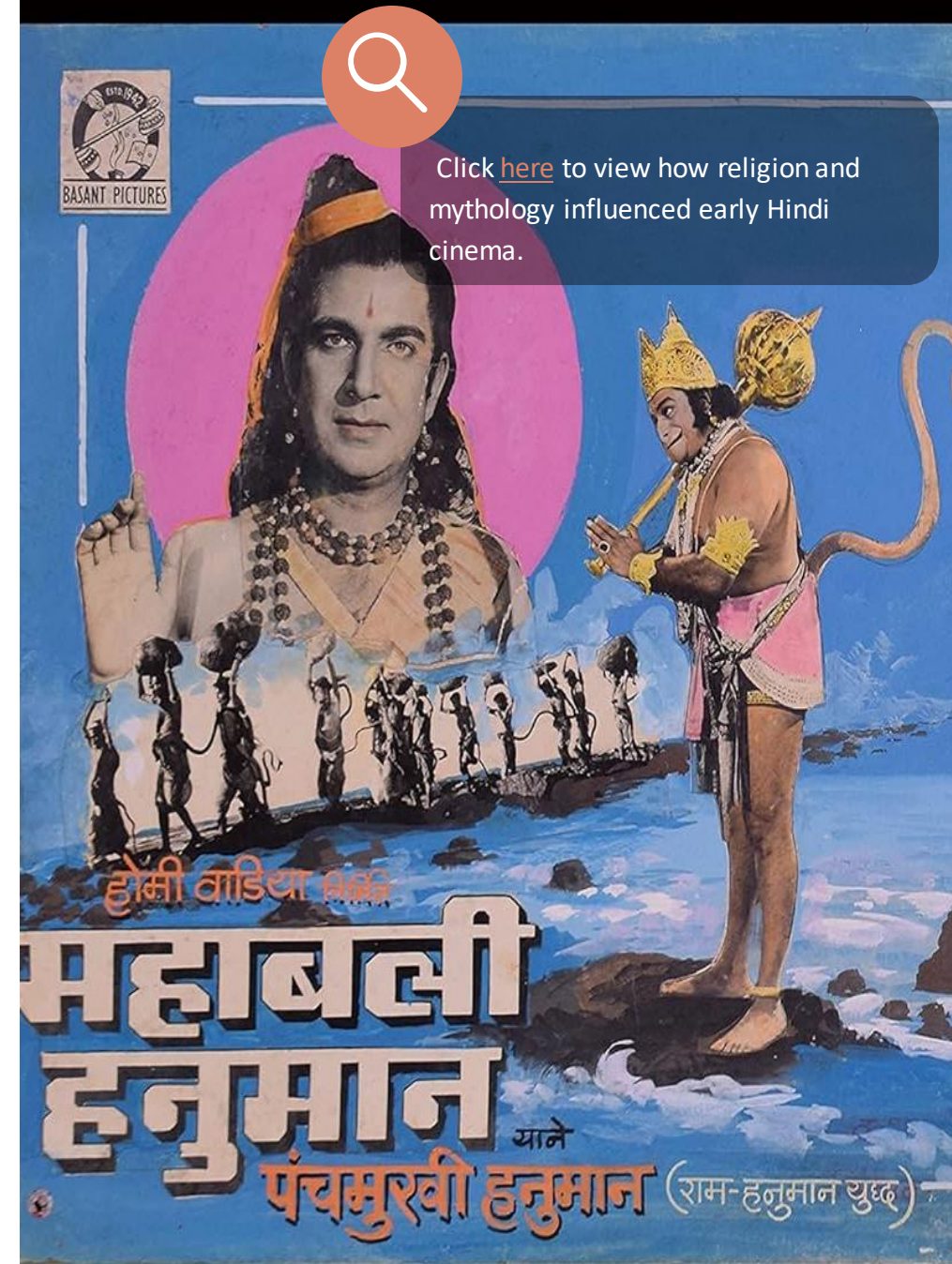


Read the story on the right, research online and create a **'3-2-1 Graphic Organizer'** by following the instructions below:

3. Draw an inverted pyramid and divide it into three sections. In the section at the top, note any three questions that you have about the influences that shaped Hindi cinema.

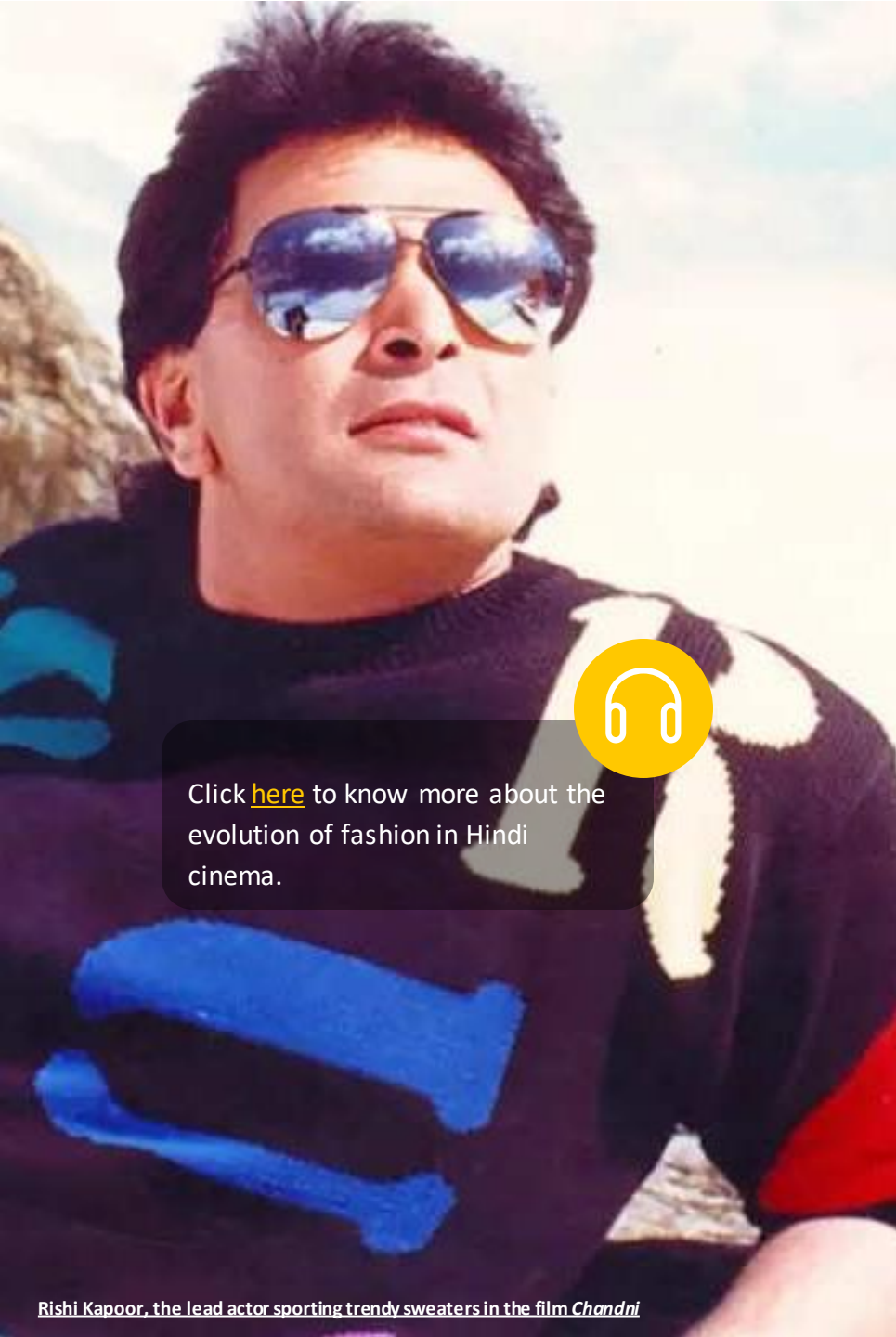
2. In the middle-section record any two facts that you discovered.

1. In the section at the bottom, make an analogy. For example, 'Hindi cinema has changed the way the world looks at India just as Hollywood has done for the US.'



Click [here](#) to view how religion and mythology influenced early Hindi cinema.

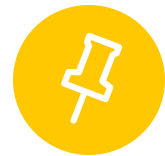
Mahabali Hanuman Poster. Ultra Media & Entertainment



Click [here](#) to know more about the evolution of fashion in Hindi cinema.

Rishi Kapoor, the lead actor sporting trendy sweaters in the film *Chandni*

The fashion and style of Hindi film icons shaped the sartorial senses of the Indian as well as other South Asian communities. *Bandhgala* coats, the varied styles of draping *sarees*, *Anarkali kurtas*, and distinct hairdos are unabashedly emulated. Accessories like large aviators, neck scarves, differently styled caps, and several other style statements have dictated the fashion trends over time. Exposure to global fashion trends in the 90s increased the demand for fashion designers in Hindi movies.



Read the story on the left. Then complete the **‘Think, Design, Discuss’** routine using the instructions given below:

Think about the essential visual elements of costume design.

While designing a costume for your favorite character, think about the varied design elements like line, mass, shape, color, and texture.

Design a costume using material of your choice.

You can use leftover cloth pieces, old newspapers, recycled material like cardboard boxes, paper towel rolls, brown paper, etc. You can also choose to sketch on paper or online.

Discuss the importance of costume design with reference to character design.

With your peers, discuss how changes in the basic design elements help in adding subtle details about a character.

Serious social, economic, and political themes found screen space in Hindi cinema during turbulent times like World War II, India's struggle for independence and the subsequent Partition. In the contemporary era, mainstream *masala* films are a mix of comedy, action, and romance. Contrastingly, 'Parallel Cinema' or 'Art Cinema' is based on realism and is less concerned with catering to the masses.



Read the story on the right. Research more and then complete the **'Engage, Deliver, Reflect'** routine given below with the help of your peers:

Engage.

Engage with any one film deeply by delivering dialogues before your peers.

Complement the delivery of your dialogues with related mannerisms and actions.

Deliver.

Take turns to deliver chosen dialogues.

Is the tone of a dialogue defined by the genre of film?

Reflect.

Reflect on the dialogues you and your peers chose.

Each performer will reflect on what makes their choice of dialogue classic.



Click [here](#) to know more about the influential people, films and voices that defined the Golden Age of Hindi Cinema.



Click [here](#) to know more about the portrayal of actresses in Hindi cinema from 1949 to 1984.

At the outset, societal norms led to male actors portraying female roles. A shift in perspective was hinted at owing to the work of pioneers like Durga Khote, Devika Rani, amongst others. However, even when women appeared on-screen, they were often limited to depicting stereotypical roles. Today, the industry's consistent evolution has led to women taking on diverse, inspiring and strong characters.



Read the story on the right. Then follow the **'Think, Explore, Reflect'** routine given below.

Think.

List some actresses for whom specific roles were written in Indian films

Explore.

Do you think there is a dearth of female protagonists in Hindi cinema? Do female characters appear less important than male characters? Why or why not?

Reflect.


How has the portrayal of women changed in films over a period of time?

With advanced film technology enhancing production, outreach, and preservation, Hindi cinema flourished on the global stage. International acclaim and festival accolades reaffirm its universal charm.




Research about a few visionary filmmakers of Hindi cinema and their notable films. Then, attempt the ‘See, Think, Wonder’ routine given below.


See.

 Did you learn something new about the evolution of Hindi cinema in the process of your research?

Think.

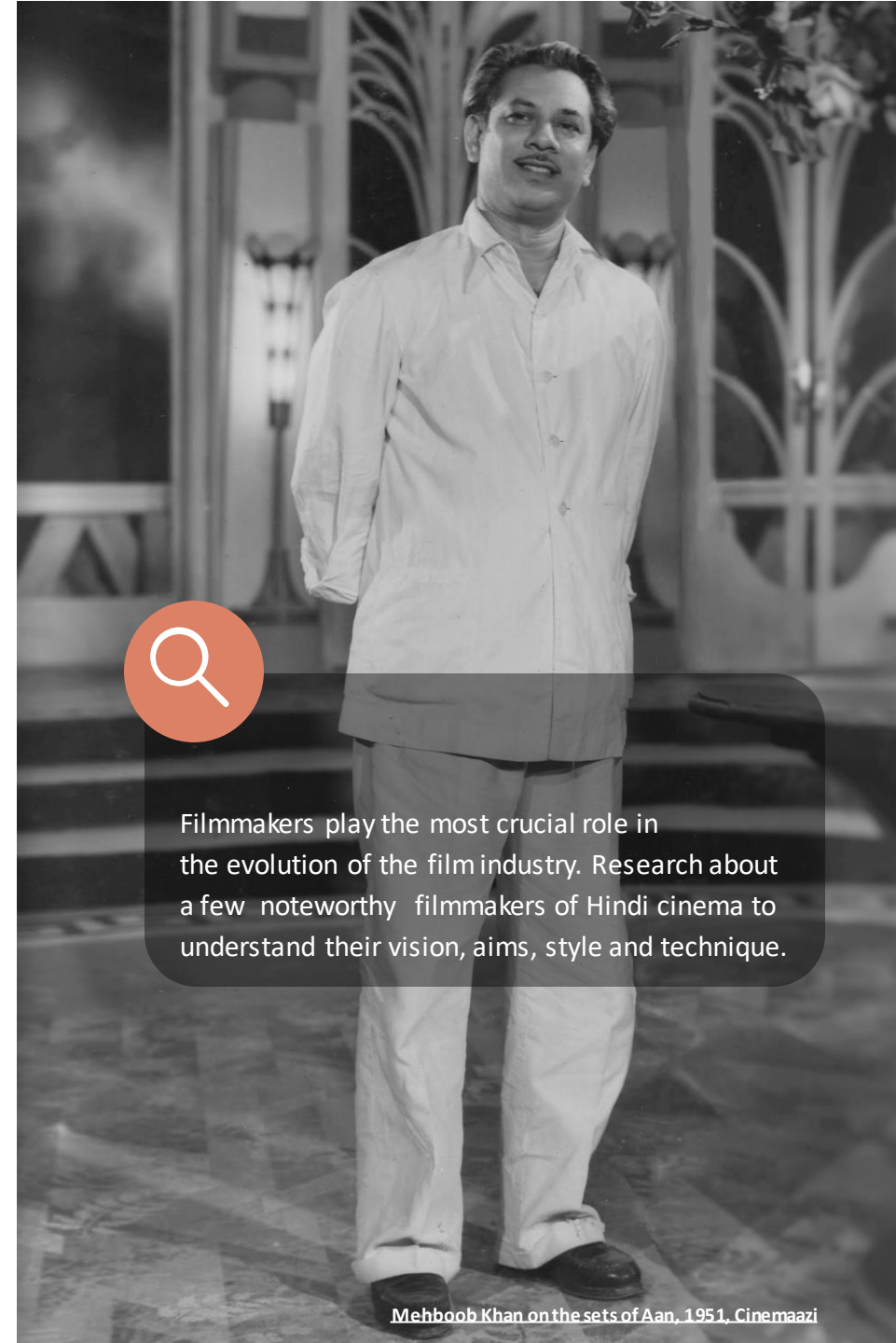
 How does a filmmaker's vision help in the evolution of cinema? Share your views. Use an example to support your claim.

Wonder.

 How have certain Hindi films achieved the status of 'great art' while also serving as powerful social commentaries?



Filmmakers play the most crucial role in the evolution of the film industry. Research about a few noteworthy filmmakers of Hindi cinema to understand their vision, aims, style and technique.



Mehboob Khan on the sets of *Aan*, 1951, *Cinemaazi*

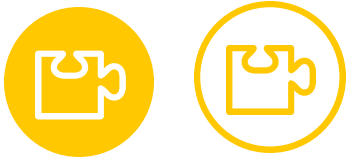


Imagine you are a journalist. Which film star, director, or singer would you like to interview?

Frame a list of questions that you would like to ask the celebrity of your choice. Try to be original and witty in framing these questions.

Then, do a mock interview with a peer and make a video of it. You could add some special sound effects (for example, the sound of audience clapping). Share the interview with your peers to get their feedback.

Take a short quiz to ascertain your progress.



1. Made in 1913 by Dadasaheb Phalke, which of the following was Hindi cinema's first silent film?

- A. *Shakuntala*
- B. *Alam Ara*
- C. *Kishan Kanhaiya*
- D. *Raja Harishchandra*



2. Which period in Hindi cinema was dominated by the star triumvirate of Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, and Dev Anand?

- A. The Silent era
- B. The Golden Age
- C. The 80's and 90's
- D. 21st century



3. Which of the following Hindi film actresses brought the bohemian style of fashion from the west to the silver screen in the 70's?

- A. Meena Kumari
- B. Nargis
- C. Zeenat Aman
- D. Sharmila Tagore



4. In India, the genre of *masala* films is mainly –

- A. Mainstream
- B. Art-oriented
- C. New Wave
- D. Multilingual



5. If a film aims at making the audience laugh, which genre would it belong to?

- A. Tragedy
- B. Comedy
- C. Action
- D. Family drama

Session-2

Memorabilia and Archives



Estimated
Duration:
45 Minutes

Film memorabilia like posters and lobby cards have been collected and preserved because of their association with noteworthy films, actors, or directors. Film posters work as a marketing tool to convey the film's plot, theme, and star cast. Hand-painted film posters have become rare and are found in museums. Printed film posters have been around since the early 20th Century while digital photo printing came into being in the 1990s.



Read the story on the right. Then complete the **'Explore, Reflect, Wonder'** routine with the help of the instructions given below:

Explore.



Research online to explore posters of films from varied genres

Are the aesthetics of a poster defined by the genre or plot of the film?

Reflect.



Write a few lines on the differences you noticed in each poster

How are posters styled to promote and advertise films?

Wonder.



Can you come up with a few ways in which each poster differs?

Pay close attention to the imagery, text, font-style, color, and/or symbolism being used to establish a film's genre or plot.



Lobby Cards

Since 1913, lobby cards were found in theatres to portray the main plot and protagonist(s) of the film. They are akin to posters but are of a smaller size. The significance of lobby cards declined since film theatres lost their importance as sole exhibitors of films. Lobby cards are rare collectibles now.



Read the story on the left and complete the 'Capture, Explain, Wonder' routine given below.



Click [here](#) to understand the aesthetics and purpose behind tableau shots in Hindi cinema.

Capture.

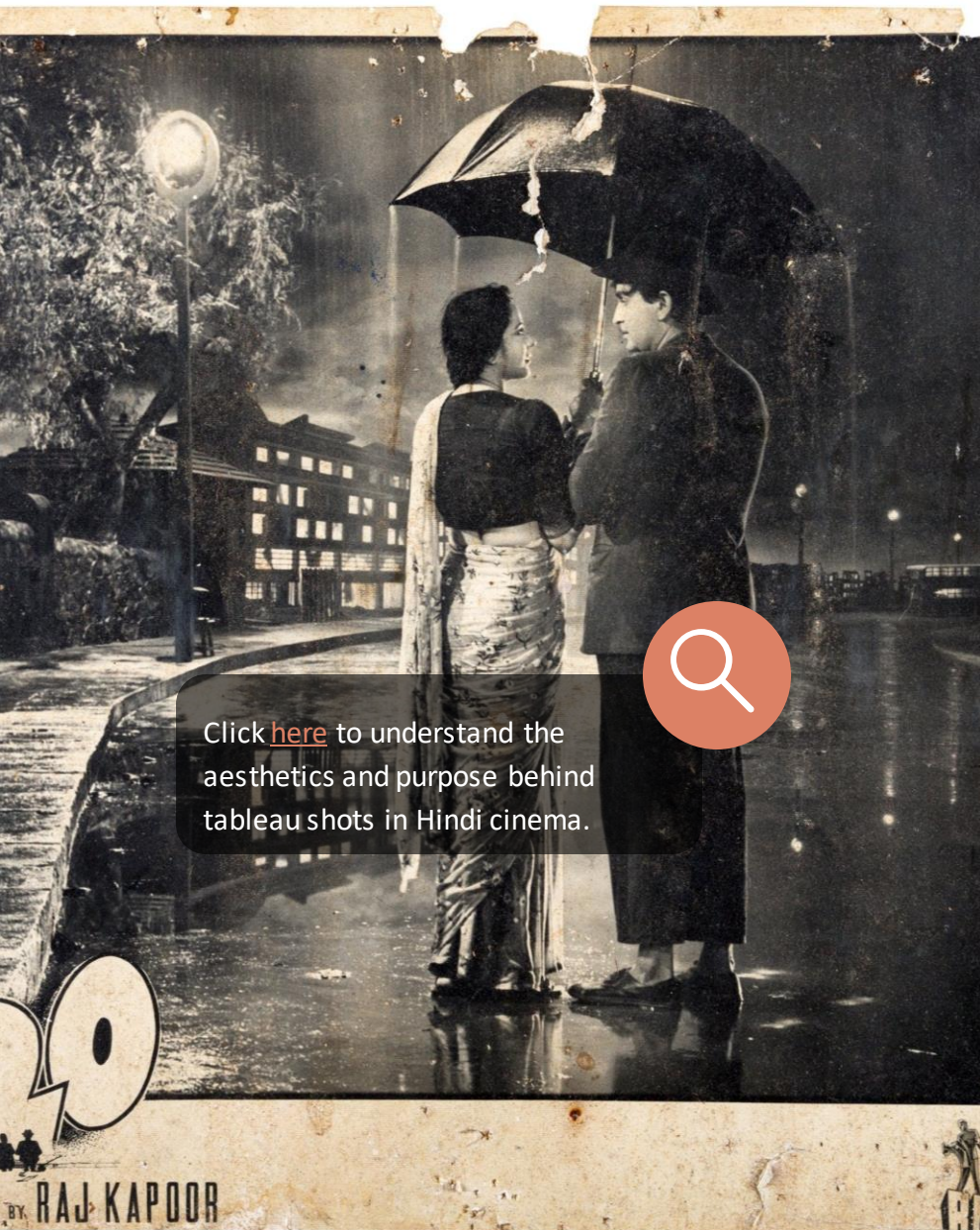
Take some time to look carefully at the lobby card you liked the most in the story and observe its details. Capture it by slowly making a drawing of it. You may observe the photographs at different magnifications.

Explain.

Then, write a paragraph or tell a friend about how the lobby card is complex in nature.

Wonder.

What new ideas and questions do you have after making your observations?



Film archives aim to preserve film footage in environments specially designed to protect film. Only a few of the countless silent films have been preserved at the National Film Archives of India, Pune, since most prints have been lost to decay or fires. This has been a major setback in the reconstruction of the history of Hindi cinema.



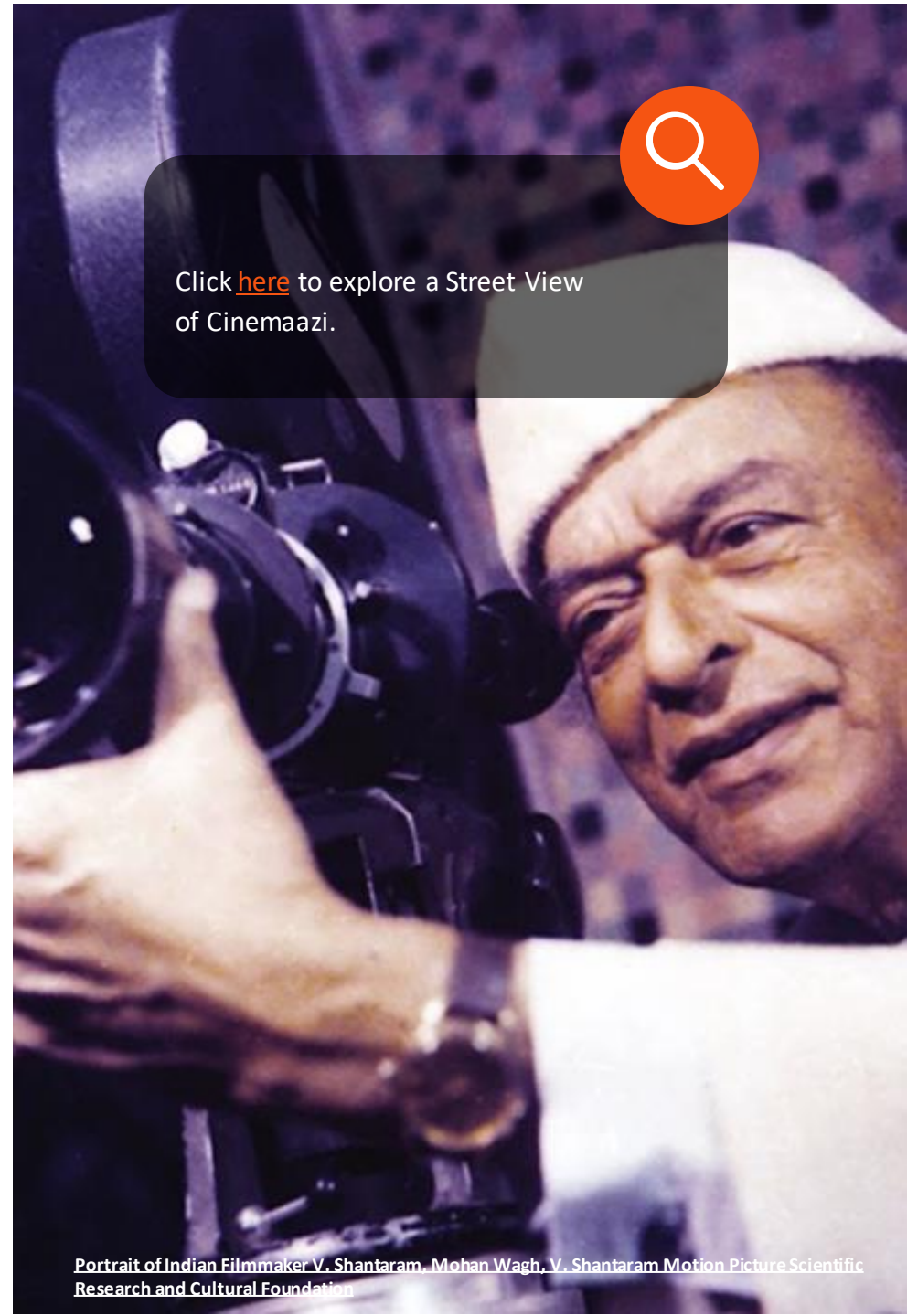
Explore the Street View on the right and complete the ‘Looking: Five Times Two’ routine given below to make detailed observations about the exhibition of film posters at Cinemaazi.

1. Observe the Street View for at least 30 seconds. Let your eyes wander.

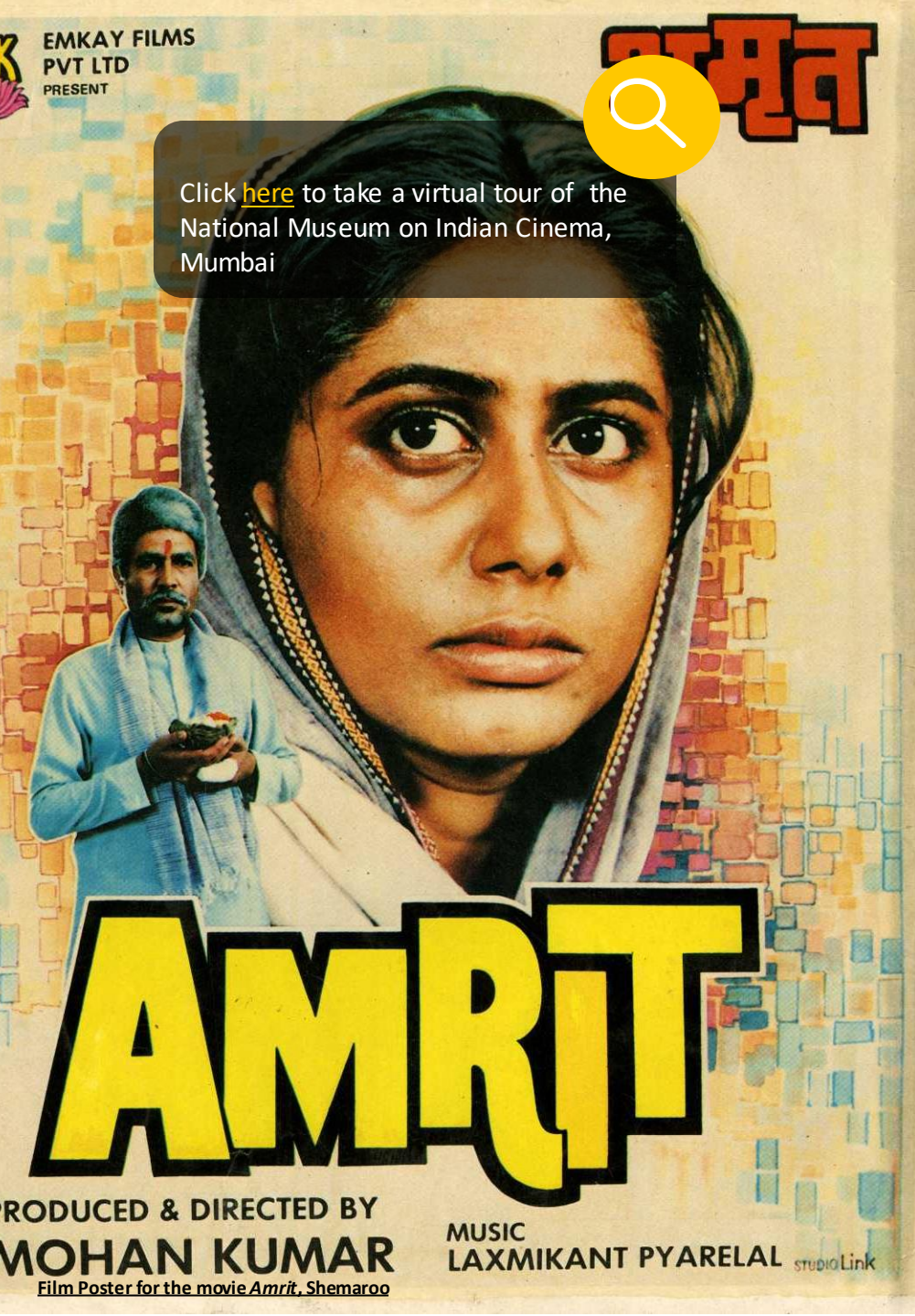
2. List or draw five things that you notice about any aspect of this exhibition or film posters at Cinemaazi.

3. Repeat the first two steps – observe and try adding another five aspects of your observation to the list.

You can share your list after both observation sessions with your peer and exchange notes outlining each other's observations.



Click [here](#) to explore a Street View of Cinemaazi.



Click [here](#) to take a virtual tour of the National Museum on Indian Cinema, Mumbai

Films museums in India, such as the National Film Development Corporations' National Museum on Indian Cinema (NMIC) and National Film Archives of India, exhibit and preserve the history of cinema through artefacts, film posters, and memorabilia. They also feature digital interactive screens to enhance the visitor's experience.



Take a virtual tour of the NMIC, Mumbai through the video given on the left and write a **'One- Minute Paper'** in response to the questions posed below.



Based purely on your observations, what stood out to you in the virtual tour of the NMIC, Mumbai?



In this virtual tour of the NMIC or the Street View of the exhibition of film posters at Cinemaazi, what could you relate to the most?



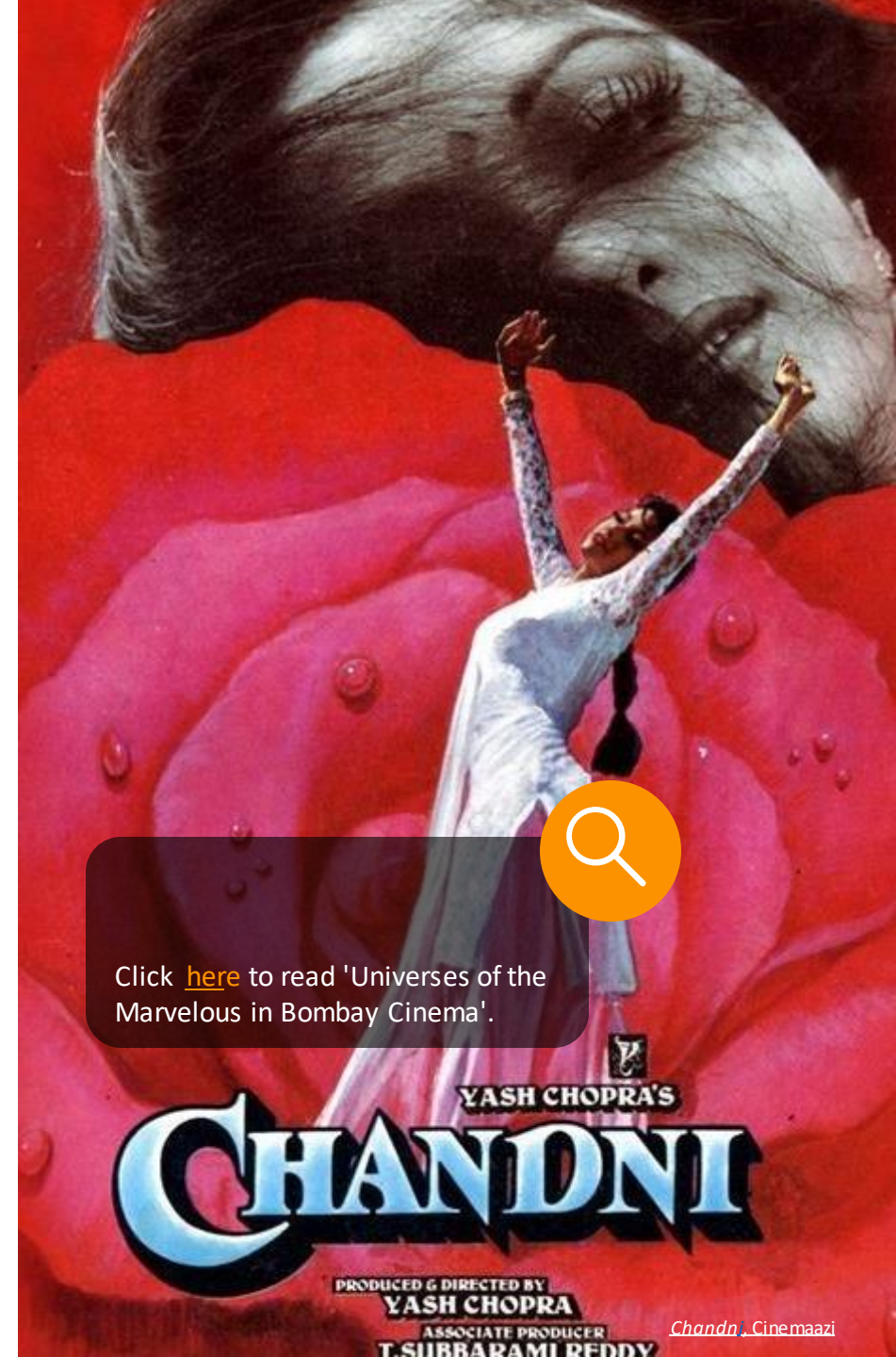
On the basis of your virtual exploration, write a brief note about what influenced your opinions or viewpoints about Hindi cinema and how.

Get behind the scenes of filmmaking and design a film exhibition on your favorite actor/director, using memorabilia/props/costumes/ props/costumes from his/her remarkable films.

You can display character masks or use available fabric to put together easy costumes. You can also exhibit distinct props related to the characters, such as a pair of sunglasses, a hat, an umbrella, a torch, etc.

Memorabilia like lobby cards, magazines, posters, scripts, and still photos can be found online.

Invite your peers to the exhibition and get them to fill up a feedback form.



Click [here](#) to read 'Universes of the Marvelous in Bombay Cinema'.

Take a short quiz to ascertain your progress.



1. Film posters are a tool for –

- A. Art
- B. Archives
- C. Marketing
- D. Museum



2. Lobby cards were found in –

- A. Theatres
- B. Streets
- C. Studios
- D. Shops



3. Few prints of several Indian silent films have survived in National Archives because

- A. they were lost to decay and fire
- B. the country lacks suitable storage facilities
- C. the country lacks an instinct for preservation
- D. All of the above



4. Since the 1990s, which type of posters are dominant in Hindi films?

- A. Digital photo printed posters
- B. Printed film posters
- C. Hand-painted film poster
- D. Lobby cards

Session-3

How To Make a Film



Estimated
Duration:
90 Minutes



Cinema is not merely a visual documentation of events but also an important medium of storytelling which was effective and successful even in the Silent Era. Films do not necessarily need a narrator to summarize the story. The shot sequences, songs, dialogues, and music, as helmed by the director, enable the viewer to understand the story.



Complete the **'Think, Talk, Find Common Ground'** routine given below. This routine needs to be completed with at least two other peers.

Think

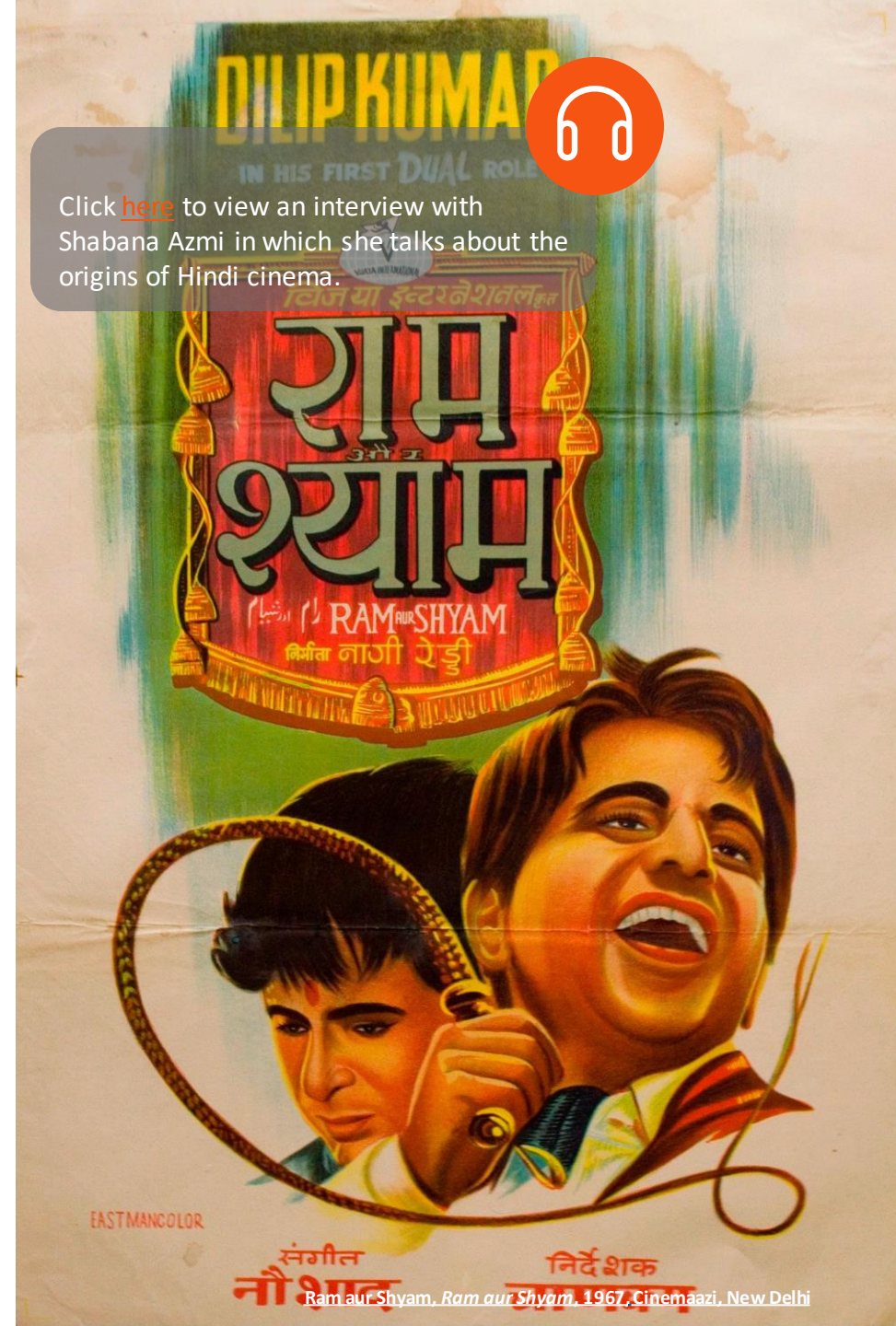
Compare and contrast two films that depict a similar theme in distinctly different ways.

Talk

You and your peers will now take 2-3 minutes each to share observations and opinions with each other.

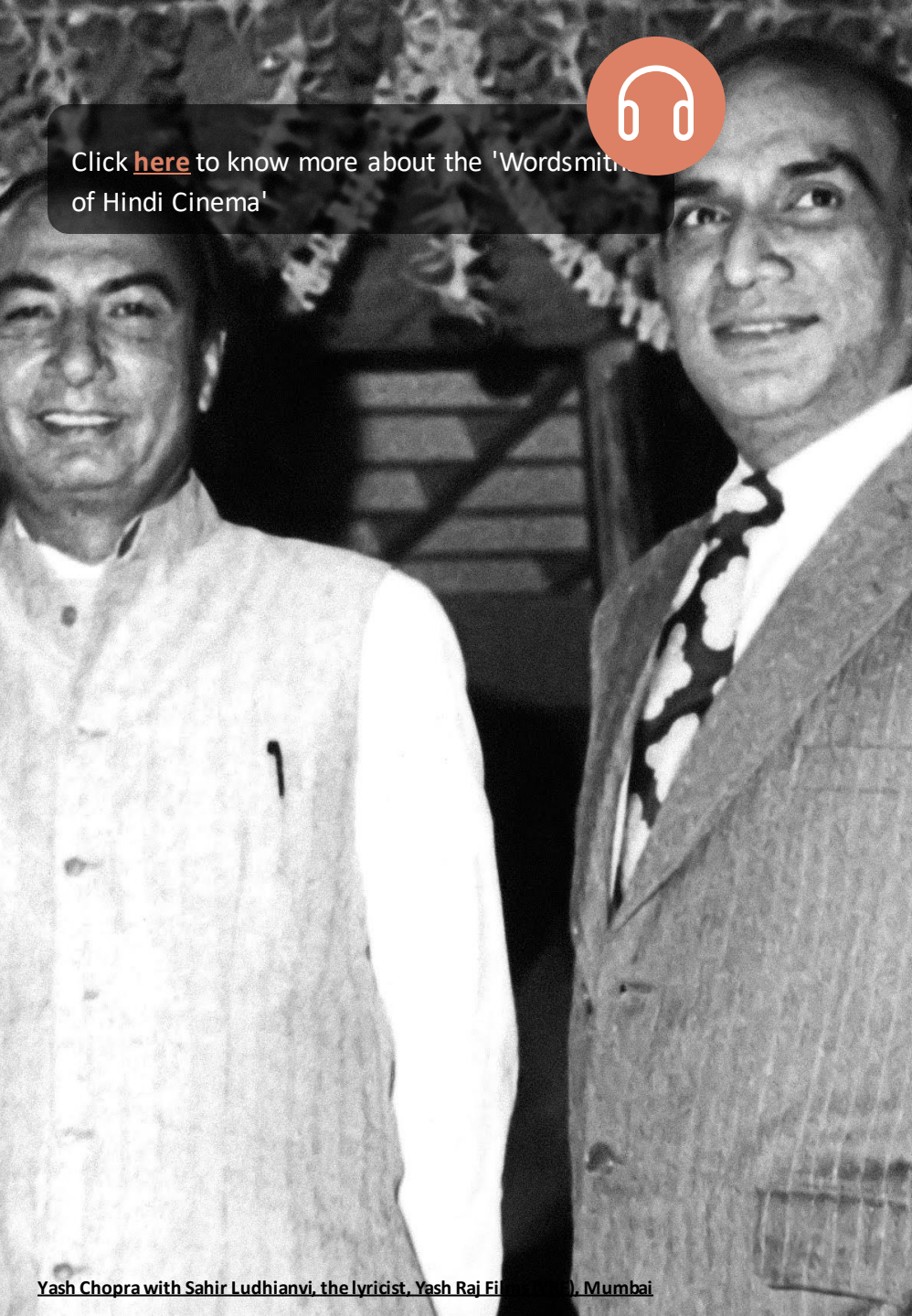
Find Common Ground

Once the sharing session finishes, discuss and identify the different perspectives about the methods of storytelling that were common amongst you and your peers.





Click [here](#) to know more about the 'Wordsmiths of Hindi Cinema'



Yash Chopra with Sahir Ludhianvi, the lyricist, Yash Raj Films, Mumbai

Film scripts often mirror contemporary life. The art of storytelling is a requisite skill for a compelling screenplay. The characters' dialogues, the scene settings and actions should be firmly etched out. For instance, in the magnum opus *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960), the dialogues were written in Urdu by Amaah Khan, Ehsan Rizvi, Kamal Amrohi and Wajahat Mirza. This became a significant factor in the film becoming a runaway success.



Read the story on the left, research online, and **write a draft script** for a two-minute short film. Follow the instructions given below.

Sketch out your basic concept

First, identify a theme for your short film. Then, outline plot details and give the characters certain traits as you set the tone of your story.

The body of the story

Write brief subplots (if any) to add conflict to your story to make it more engaging. Write scenes and dialogues that help structure the storyline and its flow.

Resolution

Add a twist to the story before the final resolution of conflict. Make sure to remove unwanted details. Share your script with peers to get constructive feedback.

Casting is a process of selecting actors to play characters in films. This involves a series of auditions, screen tests, look tests, etc. Some roles are written keeping the persona of specific actors in mind while casting for a film.



Read the story on the right. Then follow the **'List & Reflect'** routine given below.

List.

Find about a few memorable supporting roles in Hindi films.

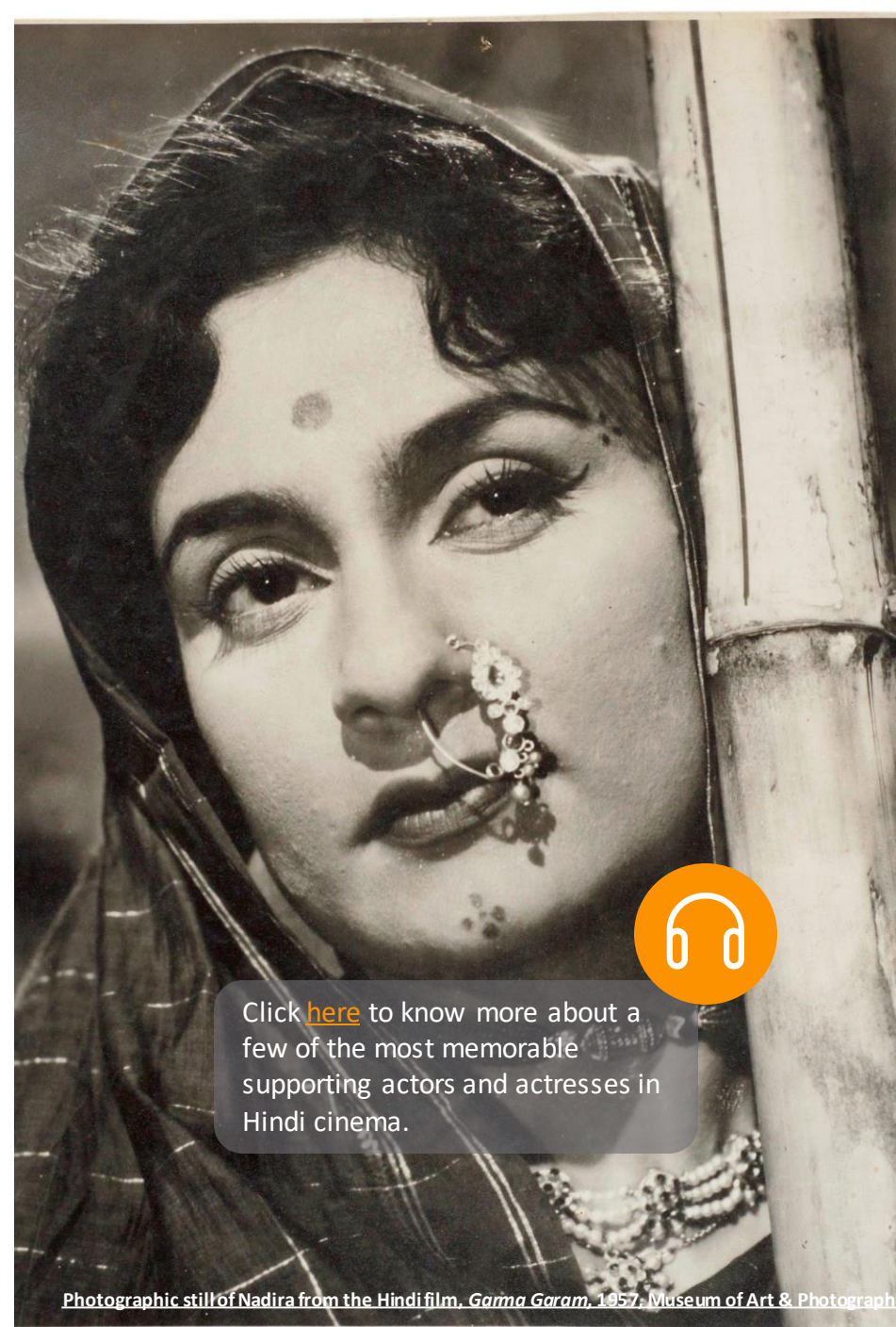
Based on your findings, make a list of the names of the supporting characters and the role they play in the film.

&

Analyse your observations.

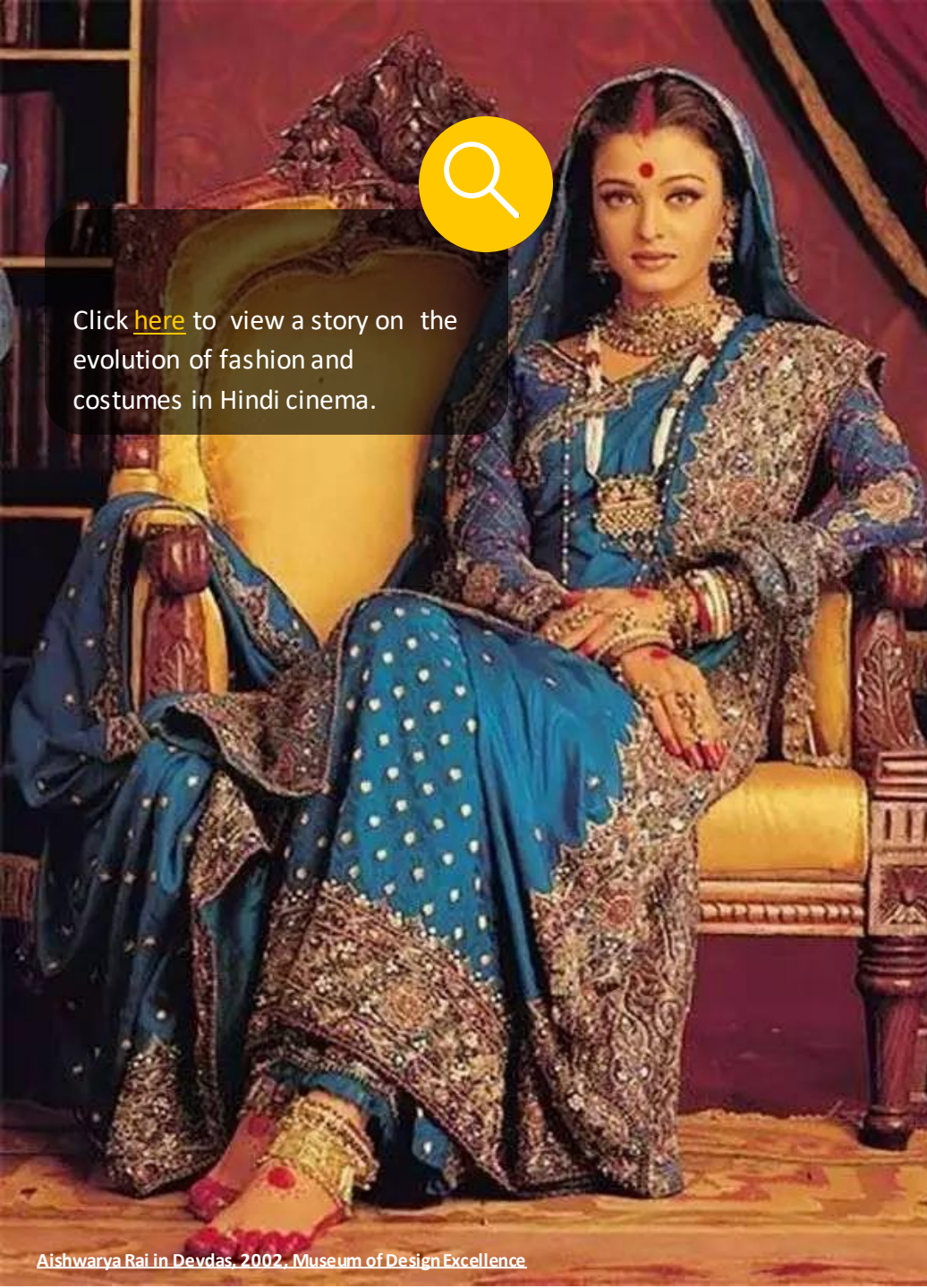
Reflect on the common ways in which a supporting character assists the lead or advances the overarching plot of the film.

Reflect.



Click [here](#) to know more about a few of the most memorable supporting actors and actresses in Hindi cinema.

Photographic still of Nadira from the Hindi film, *Gama Garam*, 1957. Museum of Art & Photograph



Click [here](#) to view a story on the evolution of fashion and costumes in Hindi cinema.



Read the story on the left, research online and follow the instructions below to complete the **‘Creative Questions’** routine.

Brainstorm a list of questions about what you have learned so far about iconic film costumes

Think of questions, such as ‘How can fashion be made a part of a character’s portrayal on screen?’

Explore these questions through an avenue of your choice

You could write a story, draw a picture, or make a presentation.

Reflect upon what you have learned

Did this information generate new ideas? List them out and discuss them with a peer.

A film director supervises the screenplay, set design, actors, camerawork, and editing to give shape to the form and content of the film. He/she oversees the entire movie-making process. Therefore, he/she should possess the ingenious skill of storytelling which is reflected in his/her choices and portrayal of the scenes.



Read the story on the right and complete the **'Layers'** routine given below. Each layer consists of possible elements to seek out and identify in the life and times of V. Shantaram.



Identify the narrative

What is the story and the message being conveyed in this narrative?



Note its aesthetics

Which aspect of the story appeals to you? What is the takeaway? What is new/different/unusual about the skill of the director?



Explore the mechanical element

Which technique, form/structure, symbolism is visible in V. Shantaram's direction?



Puzzle over the connections

What connection does it have with the other works (in and out of the medium/genre), with history, and with your own life, or surroundings?



Click [here](#) to know more about the life of V. Shantaram and his contribution to Hindi cinema.



Click [here](#) to know more about the element of 'dance' and its evolution in Hindi cinema.

Hindi cinema is known for its song and dance sequences. Bollywood dance is an amalgamation of Indian dance forms (both, classical and folk) and non-Indian dance forms. Meanwhile, lyricists, singers, and music composers put together unforgettable melodies. The song and dance sequences are often able to express a moment in the film better than dialogues or narration.



Complete the **'Explore, Create, Reflect'** routine with the help of your peers using the instructions given below:

Explore various Bollywood songs

Find the lyrics of the song that you liked the most. With the help of a karaoke app, sing along.

Request a peer to record a video of you as you sing

You could also choreograph some simple dance steps to match the rhythm of the song.

Take a moment to reflect

Think about how this song worked better than a dialogue could have in the film.

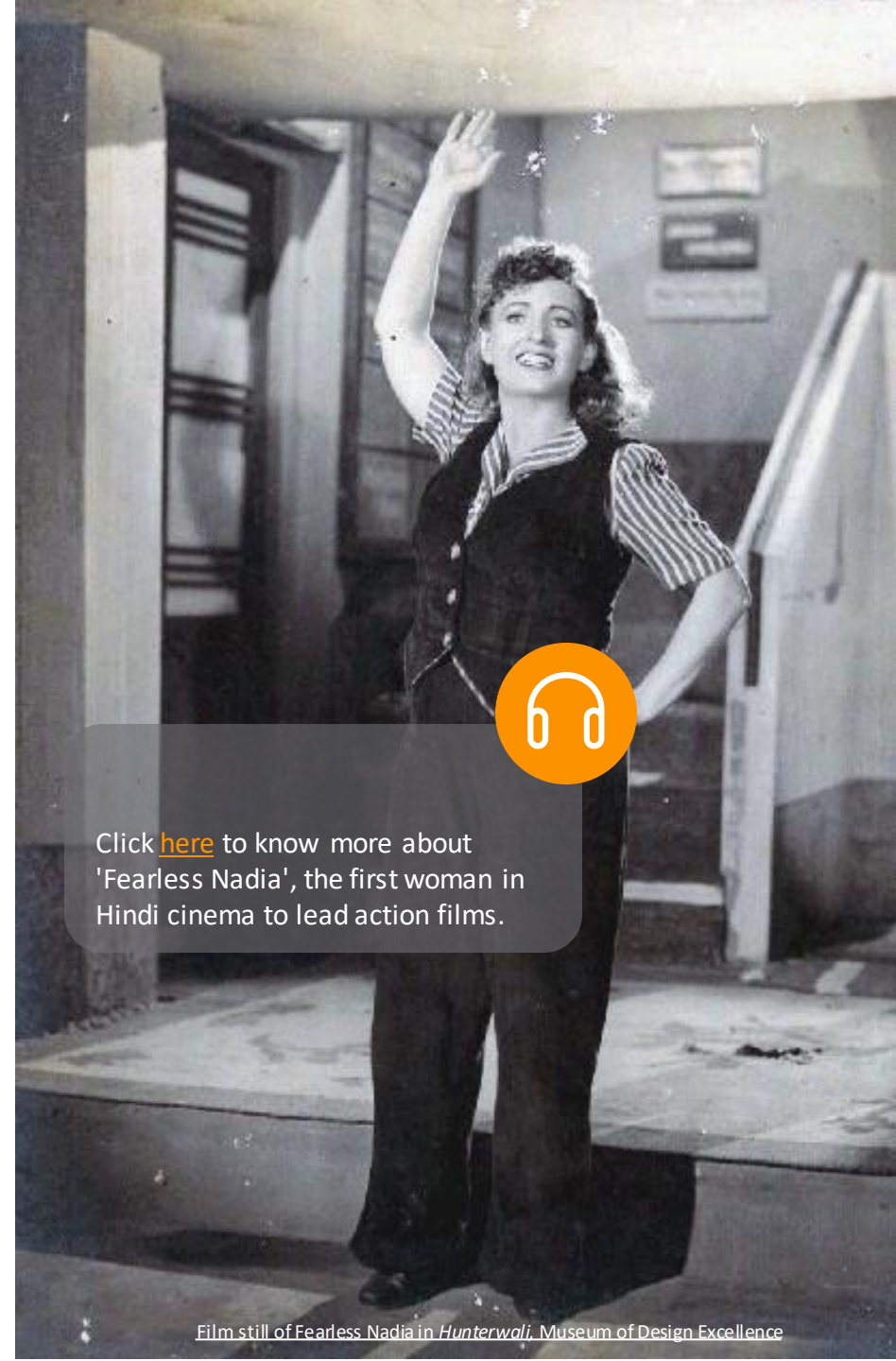
Daring action stunts in Hindi cinema gave it a marketing edge. The early action films, like those of 'Fearless Nadia', were forerunners of the action sequences performed in later films. Martial arts, in Hindi cinema, was an influence that came primarily from Hong Kong with Bruce Lee's and Jackie Chan's films in the 1970's.



Read the story on the right and draft an **action sequence** lasting only a few seconds. This can then be included in the script you worked on earlier in this session.

This sequence should focus on physical activity rather than dialogues. The action sequence can include the thrill of a chase or display the characters' superpowers.

The details of your action sequence should help in steering your story forward.



Click [here](#) to know more about 'Fearless Nadia', the first woman in Hindi cinema to lead action films.

Editing and Advertising

Film editing is the process of assembling shots in a clear sequence by deleting, arranging, and splicing. The striking visuals are synchronized with a strong cinematic sound design. An editor works on raw film footage. Dialogues are dubbed as a remedy for defects which arise from synchronized filming. Finally, posters are made to market the film.



Now read the story on the left and complete the **‘Claim, Support, Question’** routine given below with the assistance of a peer.

Claim.

A sequence is a collection of scenes which, in turn, is made up of shots. Now, make any claim about what you have just learned.

Support.

Make sure that you are supporting your claims with a reputable source of information. You may need to research online for this purpose.

Question.

Your peer will then ask you questions, if they have any, on the basis of your claims. Take turns to make claims and ask questions.



Click [here](#) to understand the editing and direction style that V. Shantaram is known for.

In groups, create 2-minute short films. Give each group member a specific role. Each member should also provide assistance to others.

Edit the draft script

You had prepared a draft script earlier. Edit it to remove unnecessary details so that the tone of your dialogues convey your characters' personality traits.

Shoot your film using a smartphone or any other video recording device

Once you have finalized the cast, put together their costumes and the set with the help of your group members. Then, prepare for shooting. Ensure that the lighting is as per the ambience you want to convey and the sound is clear. Edit the final version of your film to make it terse and engaging.

Create posters to market your film (optional)

Let the artist in the group take the lead in designing the film poster which will be used to advertise the film.

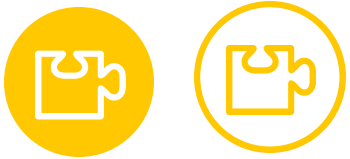
Showcase the film (optional)

Hold a screening of the films and invite the school to watch.



Click [here](#) to view the details of Yash Chopra's oeuvre.

Take a short quiz to ascertain your progress.



1. The process of filmmaking begins with a/an –

- A. camera
- B. script
- C. idea
- D. set



2. What is the first thing a costume designer will do on beginning a new film project?

- A. Purchase material for the costumes
- B. Starts drawing costume designs
- C. Reads the film script
- D. Meets the cast



3. Whose overall vision steers a film?

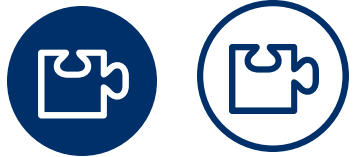
- A. The lead actor's
- B. The director's
- C. The script writer's
- D. The producer's



4. Editing is a part of –

- A. Post-production
- B. Production
- C. Pre-production
- D. Development

Answers to the questions on Quiz 1



1. Made in 1913 by Dadasaheb Phalke, which of the following was Hindi cinema's first silent film?
D. *Raja Harishchandra*



2. Which period in Hindi cinema was dominated by the star triumvirate of Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, and Dev Anand?
B. The Golden Age



3. Which of the following Hindi film actresses brought the bohemian style of fashion from the west to the silver screen in the 70's?
C. Zeenat Aman

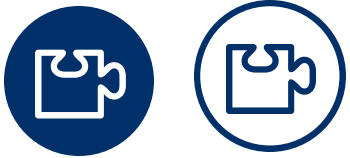


4. In India, the genre of *masala* films is mainly –
A. Mainstream



5. If a film aims at making the audience laugh, which genre would it belong to?
B. Comedy

Answers to the questions on Quiz 2



1. Film posters are a tool for –
C. Marketing



2. Lobby cards were found in –
A. Theatres

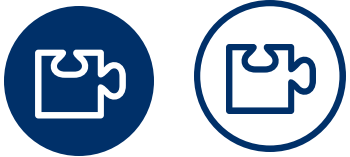


3. Few prints of several Indian silent films have survived in National Archives because
D. All of the above



4. Since the 1990s, which type of posters are dominant in Hindi films?
A. Digital photo printed posters

Answers to the questions on Quiz 3



-
- 1. The process of filmmaking begins with a/an –**
C. idea



-
- 2. What is the first thing a costume designer will do on beginning a new film project?**
C. Reads the film script



-
- 3. Whose overall vision steers a film?**
B. The director's



-
- 4. Editing is a part of –**
A. Post-production
-

