

## ***BIG EYES*** (whole film to be used with edited scenes)

### **Themes for Discussion**

- Abuse
- Gender bias
- Relationships
- Identity
- Expression through art

### **Materials needed**

- DVD or Digital Copy of MOVIE (Director Tim Burton, 2014)
- Equipment for showing film screen/monitor/dvd player/computer/speakers
- Paper/Journals/Writing Utensils
- Activity Descriptions/Directions
- 8x10 canvas and paint supplies
- Discussion Questions

### **Purpose of activity**

- To promote awareness of abuse and how to respond
- To discuss finding and protecting one's identity
- To consider ways that women and girls sometimes hide their abilities
- To discuss ways to combat this

### **Plot summary**

- “Margaret Keane’s paintings of wide-eyed women and children were hugely popular in the 1950s and 1960s, and yet no one knew who she was. This is because her husband Walter Keane claimed that he painted them. Unraveling this intriguing story, Tim Burton uses his trademark eccentricity and magical realism to reveal the extent to which Walter Keane not only manipulated Margaret but also his audience. An intimate and sometimes sinister portrait of an oppressive relationship, the film also acts as a microscope on American society - marriage, sexism, culture - of the time.” –Into Film  
<https://www.intofilm.org/films/18280>

### **Description of activity**

- Using the content from the film *Big Eyes*, develop engaging sentence structures using the prompts and examples in the activity pictured below.
- Choose 6 of the 12 sentence structures.
- Record sentences in your journal and be prepared to share
- Choose one of your sentences and depict it visually using the artist's medium. (Canvas and paint supplies are provided).

Spruce up your writing and raise the maturity level of your communication by using diverse sentence patterns instead of relying solely on subject/verb structures. Accurately using varied punctuation can elevate the sophistication of your writing.

1. Use a compound sentence.  
Protestors converged on the Capitol primarily to exercise their right to assemble and their freedom of speech, but they also congregated for the purpose of learning more about new environmental issues.
2. Start a sentence with a verb.  
Consider the possibility of world peace.  
Assume for one moment that freedom of speech has been abolished in America.
3. Carefully choose an adverb to begin your sentence.  
Shrewdly, the salesman made his spiel to the potential customers.  
Intellectually, the war made no sense to the poet.
4. To use or not to use an infinitive phrase—an interesting approach.  
To earn the respect of his constituents, the politician strove to fulfill his campaign promises.
5. Beginning with a participial phrase, you might create more reader interest.  
Burdened by his kids' poor choices, the father set out to reconnect with his family.  
Frustrated with her poor performance, the opera singer pledged to practice more.
6. Begin with a prepositional phrase.  
In the past, the mysteries of astronomy have been based more on imagination than objectivity.  
Under the guidance of the virtuoso, the flamenco guitarist greatly improved his skills.
7. When starting your sentence with an introductory clause, don't forget to include the subject.  
Whenever the gymnast attempted the difficult vault, she struggled with the fear of failure.  
As the President pondered his flagging opinion polls, his competition exploited the bad news.
8. Writing is a challenge, especially when starting with a gerund.  
Sunbathing is tantamount to slow-roasting your flesh.  
Swimming in the Mediterranean is like bathing in a turquoise tub.
9. Insert an appositive.  
Dr. Maxwell Schuman, the nation's finest heart surgeon, practices at Johns Hopkins University.  
Antarctica, which makes up ten percent of the world's landmass, is not colonized.
10. Use an imperative.  
Eat your spinach. Clean your room. Bathe now.
11. Try a series of staccato phrases for creative effect.  
The cresting waves, the snapping canvas, the briny breezes—all capture the sailor's imagination.
12. Provide emphasis with a series of sentences using repetitious sentence beginnings (anaphora), or sentence endings (epistrophe).  
Better to try and fail, than to live in paralyzed mediocrity. Better to dream and pursue, than to slowly starve on indifferent reality. Better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all.  
(Anaphora)  
The errors in this essay are unacceptable. Run-on sentences are unacceptable. Fragments are unacceptable. Shifts in tense are unacceptable. Almost every word you have written is unacceptable! (Epistrophe)

FIGURE 39-2 Syntax Variety Bank

(continues)

(Activity reference: Dr. James, UWF)

### Discussion questions

- What is one image from the film that caused you to feel a lot of emotion? Describe.
- Did anything anger you in this story?
- How do you think the abuse in this film affected the main character and her daughter?
- What do you think she should have done to protect herself and her daughter?

- Give an example of a difficult situation in the story. Do you agree or disagree with how the main character handled the situation? What could she have done differently?
- How was the main character's identity threatened?
- How do you think she should have gone about maintaining her identity?
- Do you think this is particularly difficult for women to do? Why or why not?
- Can you think of other examples of women who were overshadowed by the accomplishments of men?
- Does this ever happen in classroom settings?
- How can parents, teachers, and other adults advocate for girls in the classroom so that they feel comfortable showing their abilities and talents?