 Resource 19 – Game Motif

The hidden message of games

In Run Lola Run Tykwer takes a common human activity (choosing someone to seek help from) and he uses a game motif (Roulette) to add layers of meaning and impact audiences.

As a class, in pairs or individually, analyse the messages, rules, structure and aesthetic of various familiar games. Consider the possible messages:

| Game | Rules/purpose | Visual aesthetic/ iconography | Hypothesised and hyperbolised ideas/messages |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Roulette | * A game of chance
* One ball
* 37 possible outcomes- 0-36
* Red or black can also be bet on
 | * The wheel
* Spinning
* Red and black, gold
* Carpeted
* Dealer in black and white
 | * Life is a game of chance
* Those with money have the power to play the game.
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| Monopoly |  |  | * Money is the key to power.
* Society controls the outcome of our life.
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| Guess Who |  |  | * Society only cares about outward appearance.
* Discrimination based on gender and ethnicity.
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| Chess |  |  |  |
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Using Game Motifs in Our own Writing

Like Tykwer, we want to experiment with gaming imagery and motifs to engage audiences and create meaning in our own narratives.

For each game listed below, consider the rules, purpose, aesthetic, and key ideas and messages and turn this into a sentence or two of creative writing. See the examples below to give you ideas:

| Game | Rules, purpose, aesthetic etc. |
| --- | --- |
| Monopoly | * Sometimes I feel like I can’t even stop on the street without someone wanting money from me.
* My brother got arrested for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. He went directly to jail and it was only by a roll of the dice that he was released.
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| Guess Who | * In this world, people only care about what your face looks like and if you don’t have what they’re looking for they slam you down into darkness.
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| Chess | * In my city, the king has the least power.
* My father was used as a pawn and died because of someone else’s carelessness.
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| Uno | * We’re only allowed to socialise with people of the same colour, occasionally we get to meet people who are a different colour but the same age. It’s nice to be that connection between your own kind and another’s.
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