

Innovative Iowans: Movie Posters

Activity Overview: Iowa has served as the location for many movies over the past century. From *The Music Man* to *State Fair*, Iowa has inspired writers, animators, musicians and filmmakers. Movie posters were created to help promote these films and are typically displayed outside theaters to draw in the public. This Innovative Iowans activity highlights a famous Iowa movie theater and provides instructions to create your own movie poster.

Connection to Iowa History

Did you know Iowa is home to the longest continuously running movie theater in the world? The State Theater is located in Washington, Iowa and opened its doors to the public on May 14, 1897. Originally called the New Graham, it first served as an opera house for the community before showing movies. The first picture shown in the State Theater was made in Paris, France, and tickets were 15, 25, and 35 cents. The theater was officially proclaimed the longest continuously running movie theater in the world by Guinness World Records on April 26, 2016 after operating for 118 years and 348 days.

Instructions

- 1 Gather Materials.** To complete this activity, gather the necessary materials to create your movie poster.
- 2 Find a Topic.** Pick a movie or topic for your movie poster. You can be inspired by a movie from the Goldie's Movie Recommendations with an Iowa Connection list (found at iowaculture.gov/goldie) or focus on an Iowa history event or historical person.
- 3 Watch.** If choosing a movie, sit down and watch the film. Take notes to identify main parts of the plot and anything special to include within the poster.
- 4 Be Inspired.** If you need a little more inspiration before creating, check out other movie posters for ideas. For example, search "Disney Movie Posters" to find illustrated examples.
- 5 Create.** Using the provided worksheet or a sheet of paper, begin to draw your movie poster. Be sure to include the following information about the film on the poster: movie title, movie tagline (a short sentence to draw people into the movie), actors and actresses and director(s).
- 6 Share.** If you would like to share your creation with the State Historical Museum of Iowa, please email photos to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with other young historians!
- 7 Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Before the internet, what role do you think movie posters played? Now, with instant access to information, how are movie posters still important?
 - What ways, besides movie posters, can films be advertised to the public?
 - If you had to create a movie poster of your life, what would you want the poster to look like? Why?
- 8 Additional Resources**

Explore these resources below to learn more about the history of movie posters and theaters.

 - [Des Moines Register: "This Iowa Movie Theater is the Oldest of its Kind in the Entire World"](#)
 - [Guinness World Records: Oldest Continually Operating Cinema Theater](#)
 - [The Movie Poster Collector: History of Movie Posters](#)

Materials

- Pen/Pencil
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Worksheet

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Directions: Use this space to write important information about the movie. Use the rectangle below for your movie poster design.

Movie Title: _____

Movie Tagline: _____

Actors/Actresses: _____

Director(s): _____