

Name: _____

Background: Movies were a major feature of American life during the depression. The thirties were, in some respects, the Golden Age of Hollywood. More than 60 million tickets were bought each week in the early thirties. Movies, like automobiles and radios, had by this time come to seem a virtual necessity to most Americans - so much so that they did all they could to avoid giving them up entirely, even in hard times. As in earlier times, people went to movie theaters in the thirties to escape their troubles for a couple of hours- during the depression this need was more intense than ever before. But if that was all there was to it, movies could not reveal very much about the depression and its effects on Americans' thinking and values. In fact, a large number of 1930s films reflected the changing values of the U.S. under the impact of the depression.

Directions: For each of the clips below, identify whether the film's theme is a form of escapism or reality. Provide evidence from the film clips for each.

1930s Film Clips

Duck Soup (1933)

**I Am a Fugitive
From a Chain
Gang (1932)**

**The Wizard of
Oz (1939)**

King Kong (1933)

**Modern Times
(1936)**

**Frankenstein
(1933)**

If you were living in the 1930s, which film would most appeal to you? Why?