NAME OF FILM: The Notebook

A romance movie for all ages!
The Notebook (2004)

Directed by Nick Cassavetes

Starring: Ryan Gosling, Rachel McAdams, James Garner,

Genre: Romance, Drama.

Nudity warning: Low level coarse language, Adult themes.

Rating: PG

Every once in a while a movie will come and break you off your seat. In this case, it’s The Notebook.

The Notebook is your basic romance movie filled with tear-jerking scenes and your usual sentimental aspect. What makes it a cut above the rest is that even though the plot is predictable, it never fails to engage the audience.

The film begins with Duke, played superbly by James Garner, telling his dying companion (Rowland) a story from his notebook. The story is about two young people, Noah and Allie, (who fall in love in the 1940s). The film explores the details of Noah and Allie’s relationship and the trials they endure as well as their successful triumphs. As the film moves between the present day and the 1940s, every scene is filled with emotion and sincerity.

The stellar cast gives The Notebook an extra layer of depth. Gosling is amazing as the shy but quiet Noah, bringing a sense of innocence to his character. Rachel McAdams shines as the feisty but lovable Allie. Hamilton’s chemistry light up the entire film and not once do they break character. You truly believe that they are Noah and Allie.

Gosling and Rowland’s play their characters with such care and confidence that you are sucked into their story. Even the supporting characters were played with such detail. Such as Allie’s mother, played by Joan Allen. Allen delivers a convincing performance as a conflicted mother wanting nothing more than to best for her daughter.
Along with the spectacular scenery of South Carolina, the camera work of Robert Kraines is just magnificent. He manages to capture the richness of every scene, providing a striking appearance.

Even though the film follows the traditional formula of boy meets girl, they fall in love and have a few problems, it always manages to captivate the audience. By sticking to the basics and making the Notebook a pure romance movie with no exaggerations, Nick Cassavette succeeds in making a movie worthwhile twice and more.

The only nitpick of the movie is that it runs for over a long two hours and the pace of the movie is a bit slow, but they are easily overlooked by the film's heartwarming story.

The Notebook is a honest, sincere story that will pull at your heartstrings and make you laugh, smile and cry. It will make you leave the cinema with a new understanding of true love. The Notebook has definitely earned its place among great romance films such as Titanic and A Walk to Remember. It is filled with classic humour, picturesque settings, a wonderful array of actors, and most importantly, a tale of true love. It is everything a romantic movie should be.

Rating: ★★★★☆ (4 out of 5 stars)

Grade Commentary

Riley has produced an engaging review which demonstrates a sophisticated awareness of the film’s issues. A number of aspects, such as acting, plot and camera work have been discussed. The film review is quite sophisticated in style and generally well expressed with only a few errors, using appropriate language for the audience and purpose.

Riley’s response demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at grade B standard at the end of Stage 5.