

THE WORLD'S
BEST FILMS
FOR KIDS
ABOUT KIDS
EVEN BY KIDS
TO AMAZE &
DELIGHT KIDS.

LITTLE BIG SHOTS



SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE 

Teachers Notes
HOUSE: ED 08

SUITABILITY

Years 3 – 10

DATES

Sep 17, 18 & 19

LITTLE BIG SHOTS

Little Big Shots is a film festival for kids, by kids, about kids. Little Big Shots aims to be an inspiring and fun-filled festival of the best in Australian and international children's features, shorts, animations, documentaries and, amazingly, child-produced films for children aged 2 to 18 years.

Little Big Shots Teacher Kit

This kit is an ACMI Screen Education Teacher Kit designed for teachers of primary and lower secondary students.

The kit aims to assist teachers to explore themes and issues arising from films featured in Little Big Shots in 2008. It is also designed to support a screen education program that will encourage students to develop an appreciation for the art and the craft behind moving image in its many forms, by developing their ability to think beyond the screen.

Rationale—thinking beyond the screen

Viewing movies can be great fun! It can also be an enjoyable way to learn about our world and the people who live in it.

Whether you are viewing a film for entertainment or as a learning experience, thinking and talking about it can help everyone to understand more about the film's story and its messages. People all over the world tell stories in many different ways using oral, written and visual language. Stories can reflect particular views and values and are a powerful way to document ideas and events.

Activities in this kit are designed to assist students to develop understandings about the ways in which film stories can help us make sense of the world and our place in it. Students can be encouraged to share their experiences of story and to extend and refine their understandings by comparing films, analysing narrative structure and exploring the making of meanings using animation and live-action. Discussions and learning activities encourage students to have fun as they find out more about how and why different films are made; and become more aware of thinking behind the choices and decisions made by filmmakers.

As students discuss and respond to Little Big Shots films they will be considering real world issues and sharing personal responses. This can help students to express their own ideas, thoughts and feelings more clearly and effectively.

In this kit

- Part 1: Learning and teaching goals
- Part 2: Before your excursion to Little Big Shots
- Part 3: After your excursion to Little Big Shots
- Part 4: Exploring Little Big Shots films
- Part 5: Exploring Little Big Shots themes and issues
- Part 6: Filmmaking
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PART 1: LEARNING AND TEACHING GOALS

Aims

The aims of this teacher kit are to assist teachers to:

- Actively engage their students in worthwhile viewing experiences
- Connect viewing experiences with the everyday lives of their students
- Develop students' understanding of the structure of narrative
- Extend student understanding about how filmmakers communicate with audiences
- Encourage student appreciation for the art and craft involved in creating film
- Introduce students to some features of screen texts
- Broaden student understanding of the world in which they live
- Promote student discussion and reflection about important personal and social issues
- Develop higher order cognitive skills of reasoning, processing, inquiry and critical reflection.

Key concepts

Questions and activities can be used to develop a range of screen literacy concepts including narrative, setting, character, orientation, complication, resolution, audience, framing, shots, and camera angles.

Little Big Shots films and accompanying learning experiences can also inspire discussion of world cultures, language, cultural diversity, needs and wants, education, rights and responsibilities, family, caring, friendship, relationships, understanding, tolerance, love, generosity, honesty, conflict management, emotional intelligence, human values and death, and social action.

Understandings

Participation in activities and discussion related to Little Big Shots films offers opportunities to develop understandings that include:

- Filmmakers use a variety of techniques to represent ideas about the world.
- Film stories from around the world have many common features or elements, but there are also important cultural differences.
- Children can create engaging and worthwhile film stories.
- Similar character types occur in many different films.
- Films are constructed for particular purposes and to appeal to certain groups.
- Films are constructed to represent reality.
- Films have certain characteristics that help the viewer construct meaning.

Skills and Processes

Students reflect on and discuss strategies used to make meaning from films utilising skills and processes such as:

- **Thinking and investigation** – intellectual skills of reasoning, processing and inquiry, questioning, listening, reading, viewing, critical thinking, researching, seeking solutions, describing, analysing, considering cause and effect, seeking relationships, interpreting and evaluating data, constructing hypotheses, drawing conclusions, making informed judgments and decisions, critical reflection.
- **Creativity and communication** – seeking innovative alternatives and use of imagination to generate possibilities and make connections; use of various communication forms (eg spoken, written, graphical, statistical, visual, dramatic, electronic) involving both critical and creative thinking to gather, represent and present information for different purposes and audiences; undertaking a range of visual, audio and print media production activities to communicate ideas, feelings and experiences through making, creating, exploring, selecting, experimenting, presenting and performing; manipulation of ideas and organisation of media elements such as words, sounds and images, characters and sequences of events to create stories and present information.
- **Participation** – confidence, self-direction, autonomy, ability to work flexibly both individually and in teams to complete tasks for example:
 - Brainstorming ideas
 - Working with partners and in small groups to share ideas
 - Collaborating in order to achieve an outcome.

Values and attitudes

Students will be encouraged to:

- Appreciate that favourite films of other people may differ from their own, as may the meanings they construct
- Appreciate the value of tolerance, compassion and fairness (justice) between people
- Be sensitive to embedded religious and cultural beliefs within film stories and other narratives
- Respect the courage and determination required by some people as they overcome or face challenges or adversity.

PART 2: BEFORE YOUR EXCURSION TO LITTLE BIG SHOTS

Little Big What?!

Read publicity material about Little Big Shots. Discuss why students think this festival has been planned. Stimulate discussion and thinking by asking students:

- What do you expect from a children's film festival?
- What might be the purpose of a children's film festival?
- Why do you think people might want to organise a children's film festival?
- What type of films would you expect organisers to screen at a children's film festival?
- Discuss how students could find out more about Little Big Shots E.g. newspapers and magazine articles, television news and current affairs segments and the Little Big Shots website:
<http://www.littlebigshots.com.au/>
- The website provides details of current and past Little Big Shots programs.
- Create a class graffiti board. Encourage students to add knowledge they gain about Little Big Shots.

Allow pairs of students to access the Little Big Shots website in order to respond to the following on **worksheet 1**.

- What venues are used this year for Little Big Shots in your state or territory?
- Who is the target audience?
- Who are the festival sponsors?
- List the titles of three films that will be screened
- Record where each of these films was made and the language used in each film
- Have the films screened at other children's film festivals? Which festivals?
- Which films did children make?
- Which film would you like to view and why?

Provide groups of four students with a world map. Ask them to locate countries listed in the previous activity.

Allocate each group one country to investigate. Encourage students to be thoughtful about how they will find information, for example, asking people, using books from the school or local library, using the Internet, writing to or telephoning the consulate, inviting guest speakers. Challenge students to report ten interesting things, such as:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Languages spoken and some key words or phrases | • Climate |
| • Flag | • Foods grown and eaten |
| • Capital city | • Important celebrations |
| • Population numbers | • Religions |
| • Currency | • Visual arts, music, dance, theatre and other performing arts |
| • Name of the country's leader | • Other well-known films produced in the country. |

Provide opportunities for each group to share what they have discovered with the class.

What do you think?

Festival organisers considered many children's films before selecting the films to include in Little Big Shots. As a class discuss how organisers might decide which films to include in a children's festival program.

Have students list ten criteria that would help them to select films for a children's film festival. Use these criteria to develop a class rating scale that students can use to help them to review and critique Little Big Shots films.

Encourage further investigation of children's film festival websites.

PART 3: AFTER YOUR EXCURSION TO LITTLE BIG SHOTS

Now, what do you think?

Discuss Little Big Shots films students enjoyed most. Explore what made them enjoyable. Have students complete and discuss **worksheet 2** then ask what the films made them think about. Had they thought about these sorts of things before? When? Did the films change their thinking? If so, how?

You might also discuss:

- Who are the main characters?
- What types of characters are in the films? Did you like them? Why or why not?
- Did you care what happened to them? Why or why not?
- Why do you think some films have characters in them that you don't like?
- Do the films remind you of anything from your own life?
- How do the children or characters in the films solve their problems?
- What can children do in real life if they have problems that are difficult to solve?
- Are there things about some of the children and their lives in the films that surprised you?
- Are these films like the films you usually watch on TV or at the cinema?
- Do you think any of the films were made just for fun or viewer enjoyment?
- Is it possible to enjoy films that make you think about important issues?
- What are some possible benefits of viewing films? What are some likely disadvantages?

How did you feel?

Provide students with paint, textas or other media to create a personal response to a film they viewed.

Share responses and encourage students to explain why they responded in the way they did. Encourage discussion about how the films made them feel. Why did they feel this way?

How do filmmakers inspire thoughts and feelings?

Some Little Big Shots films use live-action to tell stories, while others use animation. As a class list the films you viewed under these two headings. Do some films fit more than one category? Explain your responses.

Select one or two Little Big Shots films and discuss techniques used by the filmmakers to create and communicate meaning. Ask questions such as those that follow.

- Did you expect the film to be live action or animation? Was the choice a good one? Why or why not? Had the other choice (or a combination of live action and animation) been made could this have enhanced the film? How?
- How did the soundtrack help to tell the story? What sounds were most effective in the films? Why were they effective? Were particular instruments used? How were they used?
- What images were most effective in the films? Why were they effective?
- How is colour used to help tell the story?
- What camera shots, angles and movements do filmmakers use? How are their choices effective in helping to tell the story?
- Did the pacing or editing of the film contribute to the story? If so, how?
- How would you describe the film's atmosphere? How did filmmakers create this atmosphere?
- Did the filmmakers try to evoke particular feelings in viewers? If so, how?
- What do you know about the filmmakers and their reasons for making the film? Have they made other films?
- What do you think this film story is all about? Why do you think this?
- If you could meet the filmmakers what would you want to find out?

What did you learn?

As a class brainstorm and record words or phrases that sum up what students learned from the film/s. Ask students to also suggest key values reflected in the films, for example, perseverance, compassion, consideration, courage, generosity, co-operation, friendliness, determination, honesty, enthusiasm, tolerance, fairness, kindness, forgiveness.

Have students work in groups to find out the meaning one of the key values and then to find a way to share that meaning with the class using art, dance, drama or another means of communicating ideas. Explain that each person in the group must be involved in some way when sharing the meaning with the class.

Exploring narrative structure

Ask students to explain what they think is meant by the word 'story'. Record and display ideas. Discuss and list ways students think print and film stories are similar and different.

During the next few days have students work with a partner to discuss one or two films they have viewed recently. Encourage them to complete **worksheet 3 or 4** and to respond to the following questions.

- What is the title of the film?
- Where and when does the film take place?
- Who is the main character?
- What problem/s does the main character have? How does the main character solve the problem?
- What is the story about?
- What happens in the end? How was the problem resolved?
- What genre or type of film is it e.g. action-adventure, mystery, science fiction?
- Do you think it is a true story? Why? Why not?

As a class identify patterns in the films viewed. Encourage students to make statements, for example,

- Most of the films start by telling us about the main character and where this character lived.
- The main character usually has a problem that needs to be solved.
- By the end of the film the main character has changed in some way.
- Many of the stories turn full circle using similar images and at the beginning and the end of the films.
- Stories are often based on traditional tales.
- In most films problems are resolved and there is a happy ending.

Introduce students to simple story structure and related terminology. For younger students teachers might use formal labels such as *orientation* along with simpler terms such as *beginning of the story*. Select one or two films viewed by students and encourage them to identify the orientation, complication and resolution of each film story. Record and display this information. **Worksheets 5 and 6** may assist with this activity.

Discuss different ways that Little Big Shots films ended. Select several films and consider how many had happy endings. In what ways are the endings of these films like real life? How are they different? Did characters in the films deserve a happy ending? Explain why or why not? Explore ideas for alternative endings for some of the films.

Storyboards

Storyboards are important for planning the shots for each scene based on the script. They are used for both animation and live action productions.

A storyboard uses rough drawings like a comic book to show what you are planning to shoot in each shot. This is where you plan the composition and framing of the shots for your production.

The storyboard also has the character's dialogue and any action is written beneath each shot.

In a storyboard, each sketch must fill the frame in exactly the same way the shot will fill the frame on the screen. Each character and prop is drawn to show the size that it will be in the finished film.

To plan a storyboard you need to think about the following.

- What do you need to show? (What can the audience assume without needing to see?)
- What shots do you want to use? Where is a long shot/close-up etc required?
- What camera angles are appropriate?
- Where will the actors be? Which direction do they come on and off or move around in the shot?
- Where will the camera be placed?
- What sort of light do you want?



Camera Shots, angles and movement

Filmmakers use a variety of shots to tell their story visually. Below are the most common shot types and camera movement descriptions used in storyboards.

Common shot types include the following:

- WIDE SHOTS – show the whole person or the whole feature object as part of the landscape. This is often the opening shot since it establishes the location and often the time and mood of the action
- MID SHOTS – show the actors from the waist up
- CLOSE-UPS – show the actor's face or a significant object and allow the audience to judge the characters' reaction to the action
- EXTREME CLOSE-UP shots – used for dramatic emphasis
- A POINT OF VIEW (POV) shot – the camera shares a character's point of view, and appears to be looking through their eyes.

Common camera angles include the following:

- HIGH ANGLE – the camera is positioned on an angle above the action looking down
- LOW ANGLE – the camera is positioned on an angle from below the action looking up
- EYE LEVEL – the camera is at the same height as the action.

Common camera movements include the following:

- ZOOM – the shot zooms in to show a detail or it zooms out to show more of the scene
- PAN – the camera moves from one side of the action to another following the action or showing the audience more of the scene
- TILT – the camera tilts up or down.

Storyboarding key events

Plot key events from a Little Big Shots film. Use a large storyboard to show key shots from the beginning of the film.

Ask students to think about what happened next and jointly construct the complication. Use the *think aloud* technique to introduce the terms close-up, medium shot and long shot. Encourage students to use these when giving you instructions about what to draw and write. Emphasise the clear representation of each shot type, (eg close-up, medium shot, long shot) through *simple*, rather than elaborate sketches.

Have pairs of students use a storyboard (**worksheet 9 or 10**) to create a new ending for one of the films. Share and display storyboards with the jointly constructed storyboard.

What makes a film story memorable?

List the film from Little Big Shots that each student *remembers* best. Have each student explain why it was memorable. What is liked or disliked about each film? What scene is remembered best? How is it important to the film's message?

Have students complete **worksheet 7** and share information about films they *enjoyed* best. Encourage questions such as:

- Why did you like this film?
- What was your favourite character?
- What part of the film did you enjoy the most?

Allow groups to share information gathered. Record information about favourite films, characters and events and encourage students to make statements such as:

- The film we liked most was . . .
- Our favourite characters were . . .
- We liked parts of the film that were scary, funny, sad . . .
- We enjoyed the way the music helped to create suspense . . .

Explain what the Academy Awards are and why, when and where they are presented. Use information gathered and discussed to present your own awards. Have students suggest categories such as:

- Most popular film
- Most heroic character
- Saddest story
- Cleverest character
- Most realistic film
- Most engaging film
- Funniest situation or character.
- Most important message.

Have pairs of students design an award certificate. Depending on age, abilities and interests, provide materials such as coloured card, feathers, glue, stars and other stick on motifs. Alternatively students might use computer software.

Conduct a ceremony where each pair announces, explains and displays the award they designed.

Writing a press release

Have each student imagine he or she is a publicist responsible for writing a press release for a Little Big Shots film. The press release might include:

- Who made this film? Why do you think they made this film?
- What is this film about?
- What is the message of the film?
- How do the filmmakers communicate the message?
- Who do you think is the intended audience of the film?
- What are some memorable moments in the film?
- What type of film is it? What genre? What style is it – live-action or animation?
- What awards did class members give this film and why were they given?

Have students read their press releases to the class and explain why they chose to write about this film.

PART 4: EXPLORING LITTLE BIG SHOTS THEMES AND ISSUES

Little Big Shots films provide extensive opportunities for students to consider the major conceptual themes of growing up around the world, human similarities and differences, relationships and feelings and making a difference.

Activities and discussions for each of these themes have been organised into sub-themes and issues.

While there is some sequence to the discussion questions and activities provided, teachers can select those activities that best relate to themes and topics in their classroom.

Key themes or issues and sub-themes explored in this kit

Theme A: Growing up around the world

- Fun and games
- Imagination, hopes, dreams, illusions, fantasy and reality
- The place I live
- Needs and wants
- Rights of children
- Moving on: childhood to seniors
- Children's Week
- Celebrations, traditions, tolerance and acceptance.

Theme B: Human similarities and differences

- Milestones, talents and interests
- Individuality and diversity
- Dealing with challenges

Theme C: Relationships and feelings

- Families, communication, conflict and friendship
- Bullying, vengeance, forgiveness and resolution
- Feelings: sadness, loss, grief, death and dying, memories

Theme D: Making a difference

- You are my hero!
- Making the world a better place

Note: Each school attending Little Big Shots will be provided with notes detailing the content of each film in the package they attend.

Theme A: Growing up around the world

Going to the movies can be great fun! It can also be an enjoyable way to learn about our world and the people who live in it with us. Little Big Shots films encourage us to think about children's lives around the world – the similarities and differences, friendships and other relationships, the difficulties, hopes and dreams.

Fun and games

- List Little Big Shots films students think were made just for fun. Who might enjoy these films? What makes them enjoyable? Why do you think they were made? Why might they have been included in Little Big Shots?
- Create another list of Little Big Shots films that show people having fun. How do people in the films have fun? Ask students to tell about times when they have had the same fun experiences. Discuss why it is important for people of all ages to have fun. Do all people have fun in the same ways?
- Take students outside and ask them to each collect four things from the natural environment, (without damaging trees or plants), such as stones, bark, twigs, and leaves. Ask them to form a group of four students and to show one another the items they have collected. Challenge each group to make up a game that can be played with some of the items they have collected. Have each group share their games with the class.
- Discuss the games played using items from the natural environment. Compare these games with games played by children in the Little Big Shots films. Make connections and discuss how for many children similar items would be their only toys.
- Ask students to list toys they have made themselves or with another family member. What type of toy was it? How was it used? What tools were needed to make the toy? How did it compare with bought toys?
- Have students work in groups to list all the different ways people can have fun. Challenge them to find ways to categorise their lists, for example, childhood fun, adult fun, fun for anyone, free fun, fun that costs money, active fun, passive fun, fun that can be work, fun that can be a hobby, safe fun, fun that is risky, fun that requires equipment or a special venue, fun that can be enjoyed anywhere.
- Ask students to use Venn diagrams or other graphic organisers to represent 'ways people can have fun'.
- Have students survey senior family members or neighbours to identify games played when they were children. What else did they do to have fun? Discuss similarities and differences between childhood games and leisure activities across generations.
- Graph favourite leisure activities, eg tennis, cards, electronic games, swimming, reading, watching movies, skipping, board games. Discuss reasons why some activities are more popular than others.
- Play 'fun and games' charades. Students take turns to act out a fun activity for others to guess.
- Discuss why people need to play games and have leisure activities. Ask students to explain what they enjoy about the games they play. Discuss how students would feel if they were unable to play games. Consider reasons why some people are unable to play games, such as disabilities, bullying and exclusion. List ways students could help to ensure all children at school can be included in recreational activities or games.
- Investigate sport and leisure activities available in your local or the wider community for intellectually or physically disabled people. Can intellectually or physically disabled people participate in big sport events such as the Commonwealth Games or the Olympics? Why or why not? What do you think about this?

- Have students list materials and equipment needed for a 'fun afternoon' for kids and teachers at school. Assist students to plan, run and video the afternoon ensuring there are no safety or wellbeing issues, and that all students are included.
- Share the video the next day and discuss the benefits for all who participated in the 'fun afternoon'. Discuss the activities people enjoyed. Do all people enjoy the same things? Why or why not? Consider reasons why it is important for people to have fun. Consider whether people throughout the world have fun in the same ways? Are all people able to have fun? How are wellbeing and fun connected?

Useful websites

A website from an American school that mainly contains information about different countries. This section has interesting traditional games from around the world. <http://www.topics-mag.com/edition11/games-section.htm>

An activity and game book investigating going to school around the world.
http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/507/WCM/Doc/UNICEF_ACTIVITY_WORKBOOK-EN.pdf

National Geographic Interactive on-line games and samples for students to help them to design their own.
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/games/>

A website showing group activities, games and initiatives. Examples come from the section : Children's Folk Games.
<http://www.wilderdom.com/games/MulticulturalExperientialActivities.html>

Imagination, hopes, dreams, goals, illusions, fantasy and reality

- As a class list clues that tell viewers whether a film is based on reality, is imaginary or is based on fantasy. Classify Little Big Shots films using a Venn diagram according to those students think are based on reality; those that take the viewer on a journey of fantasy led by the filmmaker's imagination, and those that combine fantasy and reality.
- Consider the value of engaging in activities that allow you to be creative and to use your imagination, such as drawing, painting, making models and pottery. Work with the art teacher to allow students opportunities to be creative using a variety of varied media. Hold an art show that celebrates the diversity and individuality evident.
- Discuss reasons why filmmakers might make films that are pure fantasy? Where might they get ideas? Consider ways that reality, dreams, goals, imagination and fantasy can be connected?
- How are colours, shadows and reflections used in Little Big Shots films to communicate with viewers? Are colours, shadows and reflections equally important in reality based and imaginary or fantasy films? Have students explain their ideas.
- Discuss whether any of the Little Big Shots films remind students of their own dreams. Ask students to retell some of their dreams. Are some of them pleasant? Are others scary? What makes them scary? How do students cope with scary dreams? Why do students think people have scary dreams?
- List ways that filmmakers can blur imagination and reality. How can people use imagination to create goals?
- Some people or characters in Little Big Shots films have questions running through their minds. Who am I? What will I be like when I am old? Where did we come from? What happens when we die? List questions students have about their lives and the world in which they live and ways they might find answers.
- Ask each student to create some rough storyboard frames that combine animation, fantasy and imagination to tell a short, funny story about a dream, or about questions he or she has about life in our world, or about his or her goals. Have students share storyboards in small groups and respond to one another's ideas.

The place I live

- Display a world map. Mark settings or production locations evident in Little Big Shots films.
- Some of the Little Big Shots films help you to find out about other countries. Create a class chart like the one below on which students can show what they have learned about several of the countries.

	Canada	
Climate		
Geographical features		
Vegetation		
Language/s spoken		
Lifestyles		
Traditions or celebrations		

- Create a class collage that represents 'Australia'. Discuss items included in the collage and explore reasons for choices. How do students feel about living in Australia? Why do they have these feelings?
- Compare perceptions about Australia with ideas about other places represented in Little Big Shots. Are there places from the films students would like to visit? Ask students to give reasons for their responses.
- Have each student create a concept map to show things that best represent a personal place that is special.
- Assist each student to create a slideshow showcasing his or her 'Special Place'. Encourage students to collect artefacts, photos, other images or drawings that relate to their place. Have each student select 8 – 12 key words or phrases from their concept map to write onto strips. Then ask each student to create a sequence of words, phrases, objects and images that tell a personal story of 'My Special Place'. Assist each student to use the sequence to write and polish a short narrative script (maximum one page of double-spaced 14 point text).
- Students can scan or import photos or other images, artefacts, words, phrases or sentences to support their scripts, record their scripts as voiceovers for the slideshow, add music or sound effects and share their digital stories with one another. (Younger students, or those without access to software, could instead create a storyboard, using **worksheet 9** or **worksheet 10**, with their narrative script written below each frame.)

Needs and wants

Little Big Shots films provide a great deal of information about things that are important in children's lives. Some are needs (such as sleep, food, shelter, education, play), while others are wants.

- In groups of three or four have students discuss and list the things all children need in order to grow up healthy and happy. Share ideas, record and display.
- Type and copy lists and ask each group to sort items into categories. Move amongst groups questioning students to assist them to sort items. Encourage students to think about the concepts of needs and wants.
- Create a class 'needs and wants' list.
- Encourage students to further sort items in the needs category into things that are needed for:
 - Survival, such as air, water, food, sleep
 - Safety, for example, a safe home, rules, adults to care for them
 - Love and belonging, including families, friends, clubs.
- In the same groups, have students list ten rights they think would meet the needs of all children, to enable them to survive and to keep healthy and well. Share and agree upon a class list of ten rights.
- As a class discuss and record responses to the following questions:
 - What is the difference between needs and wants?
 - Are human needs and wants the same throughout our lives?
 - Do people throughout the world have the same needs and wants?
- Did any Little Big Shots films focus on giving the audience messages about needs and wants? If so, what were they and are these important messages? Explain your response.
- Ask students for their opinions about the right to an education. List advantages and disadvantages of going to school? Create a class timetable showing activities and classes engaged in at school on each day of the week.
- In pairs have students create a cartoon showing a usual school day. Encourage students to find something humorous to include in their cartoon that highlights the value of going to school.

Useful website

Rights, wants and needs activities from UNICEF

<http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/502/WCM/EDUCATION/assets/pdf/EngRightsKit02.pdf>

Rights of children

- Provide students with the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Look for the child friendly version in the language/s needed for your students at <http://www.unicef.org/magic/briefing/uncorc.html>
- Select some of the rights to read aloud and discuss. As a class consider consequences when children do not have their needs met. (Consider sensitivity to personal situations during discussions.)
- Allocate one of the rights to pairs of students and ask them to create a cartoon that explains this right to other students their own age. Display and discuss the cartoons during the next few days.
- With a partner have students use a storyboard (**worksheet 9** or **worksheet 10**) to plan a TV ad to promote community understanding of one of the rights. Alternatively, challenge students to create a storyboard for a short, entertaining claymation story that communicates one of these important rights.
- Provide students with *The Charter for Children's Television, Australia* (1995) available from: http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/07_01_choose_princp.htm#charter

- Read the charter together and discuss whether Little Big Shots films met any of the goals. How do films screened at the cinema or on television compare? Why is it important for a range of film stories to be told?
- Refer students to right number 24 – the right to good food, housing and medical care. Discuss who is responsible for ensuring these are available for children? Where might the required money or resources come from to provide these things? What problems are there in providing basic rights when family members are ill or unemployed or live in poverty? How can governments help? Where do governments get funds to help provide these rights? What can individuals do to help ensure others understand the importance of these rights?
- Ask each student to write a paragraph or create a graphic representation explaining or showing how rights and responsibilities are linked to needs and wants?

Useful website

Cartoons for children's rights

<http://www.unicef.org/crcartoons/>

Moving on: childhood to seniors

- Brainstorm things that kids get into trouble for doing or not doing. Discuss why kids get into trouble and differences between consequences and punishments. List examples and talk about the value of learning from mistakes.
- Have students share stories about times when they have pretended they were grown up, for example using their mother or older sister's make-up, clothing or shoes; sitting in a car and pretending to drive. Discuss: Why do kids want to pretend they are grown up? What are some of the things that teenagers do to pretend they are grown up? Why do we have rules and laws about things that are appropriate or inappropriate for kids to do?
- Discuss how the worlds of children and adults are similar to and different from one another. How can films help adults to understand the worlds of kids? Can films help kids to understand the worlds of adults?
- Encourage students to write stories exploring what they think their lives will be like when they grow up, or they could write several diary entries describing their hopes, dreams and goals for the future.
- As we get older our lives change, and our memories become more important, but often become elusive. Talk with the class about the challenges that arise as people become senior citizens. Consider the effects of changes in attitudes towards older people; and of physical, emotional and cognitive changes.
- List films from Little Big Shots that encourage viewers to think about becoming an older person or to view the world from an older person's perspective. Discuss what can be learned about relationships between young people and old people from viewing the films listed. List some things that young and old people have in common.
- As a class, list any particular strategies that the filmmakers use to capture memories of the past or to bring memories to life? Is this important? If so, why? Do the filmmakers create sympathy for older people? How?

Children's Week

The United Nations Universal Children's Day is a day to promote friendship and understanding among children of the world. Its aim is to focus attention on the issues and needs of children and their families. UNICEF has been charged with the development of this concept worldwide.'

- Find out what the letters UNICEF stand for and then investigate the work of UNICEF.
- What is the date for Universal Children's day this year?

In Australia Universal Children's Day is celebrated on the 4th Wednesday in October and the week that surrounds it is Children's Week in each State and Territory. In other countries Universal Children's Day is held in November.

- Email screeneducation@acmi.net.au to find out about **free** Children's Week events for schools.
- Find out what other celebrations have been planned for Children's Week this year.
- Plan school celebrations that could promote friendship and understanding among children of the world.

Celebrations, traditions, tolerance and acceptance

- Find out how many people celebrate birthdays and name days in your class and graph the results. Discuss traditions related to celebrations amongst the families of students in this class. Are parties held to celebrate? If so, how often are parties held? Some families have special celebrations when a person reaches the age of 18 or 21. Find out if there are other ages or other events of significance amongst students in the class? Who do they invite to these celebrations? Why are these people invited? Discuss reasons why people celebrate these events.
- List examples from Little Big Shots films of family, religious or cultural celebrations from around the world.
- Categorise celebrations to show those that are connected with religion or beliefs? What are other reasons for celebrating? Create a data chart recording ideas on the board, for example,

Celebration	Who celebrates?	How?	Why?	When and where?

- Discuss how celebrations can help families to maintain ways of life or important traditions. Why is this important?
- Discuss as a class: Why are some people unwilling to find out about and understand celebrations and ways of life that are different from their own? How does this lead to problems in Australia and throughout the world?
- Investigate signs and symbols relating to religious or cultural beliefs and those that relate to peace. Create a large display of signs with a short explanation of each symbol's significance or meaning.
- Create a large message board outside your classroom with words or phrases that mean 'peace' in different languages.
- Have students work in small groups to design a symbol that might encourage people to be tolerant and accepting of one another. Include symbols and their explanations on the school newsletter each week. Encourage other students, teachers and parents to create their own symbols and explanations to add to the newsletter.
- Create your own lyrics or melody for a song that encourages peace, tolerance or acceptance.

Theme B: Human similarities and differences

Many Little Big Shots films encourage viewers to think about ways in which people's lives throughout the world are both similar and different. Teachers can draw upon the content of films to stimulate thinking and discussion about milestones, individuality, strengths and weaknesses, abilities and disabilities. While many Little Big Shots films tell happy stories, some explore problems or challenges faced by people. These may be personal challenges related to fitting in, loneliness, the attitudes or perceptions of other people, coping with disability, illness or death, achieving goals or dreams, or social challenges related to making our world a better place. Often people or characters in the films come up with innovative solutions.

Milestones and talents

- Create a class timeline showing milestones that people can achieve from birth through to adulthood, for example, smiling, sitting up, walking, losing first tooth, riding a bike, learning to swim, gaining a driving licence, leaving home, buying a car or home. Note on the timeline how various milestones are achieved, for example, physical maturation, learning from parents, teachers, friends or others, emotional maturity, or having money.
- Consider which milestones require help or support from others and which ones can be achieved independently. Are all people able to achieve the same milestones? Why or why not?
- Have each student list things he or she does during spare time, favourite foods, music, books and films. Have pairs of students compare lists.
- Make a silhouette profile for each student using an overhead projector and ask each to use it to record words or phrases that sum up their milestones, unique qualities, talents, leisure activities and other special qualities.
- If you were interviewed about your life, what would be one special thing you would like to talk about? Write a script for a TV current affairs segment or a show similar to *This is your life*. Remember to include your special thing.

Individuality and diversity

- List several Little Big Shots films then discuss the ways in which the lives of people in the are similar to and different from your own. You might consider and compare where you live; clothing; food; family relationships; games; leisure activities; transport; and employment.
- Create definitions for the labels primary student, secondary student, toddler, kid, child, youth, adolescent, adult, senior and other words that describe people. Discuss why labels are used to describe people.
- Ask students to imagine an alien has landed on Earth. In small groups have students find a way to explain to the alien that although many different labels are used for people of all ages, humans around the world are the same. Encourage creativity and variation in response to this challenge. Share and discuss responses.
- As a class list five items that explain what makes each person a human. Create a definition for the word 'human'.
- Provide a second alien challenge. The alien is now confused and thinks all humans are the same. Review your explanations and definitions to explore what makes each human unique.
- Give students magnifying glasses, inkpads and paper and ask them to write several sentences describing their fingerprints. Have them compare fingerprints and investigate how to classify fingerprints according to the basic fingerprint patterns: arch, loop and whorl. Clarify the unique quality of individual fingerprints.
- Discuss qualities that make each human unique. Have each student create a concept map to show how he or she is a unique person. Display concept maps and encourage appropriate and sensitive discussion.

Dealing with challenges

- Identify problems or challenges faced by people or characters in Little Big Shots films, for example, a disability, negative attitudes and conflict, being listened to by adults. Talk about how each one is solved, dealt with or overcome.
- Think of a problem or challenge you have faced. Did you overcome it? If so, how? If not, how might you have used the advice 'if at first you don't succeed, try, try again' to help you?
- Create a class letterbox where students can post a note describing a problem they are having. Each day read one or two problems and as a class suggest some innovative solutions. Encourage students to select the best solutions, to try them out and then report their level of success to the class.
- In some Little Big Shots films we meet people who have an illness or disability. They accept that this is a part of their life that can be managed successfully. Hold a class discussion about how it might feel to have a disability that affected one of your senses, such as your eyesight, or if you had an illness that was uncommon or life threatening. Encourage sensitivity and the idea of 'walking in the shoes of another person'. Ask students to consider:
 - How might your life be similar or different from the life you live now?
 - How could you manage the illness or disability and have a happy life?
 - How might you manage the impact upon your independence?
 - How would you like others to treat you and relate to you?
 - How could you work toward achieving your goals in everyday life?
- Trace shoe outlines and have students create a trail around the classroom or school expressing feelings and thoughts that have been discussed.
- What other challenges do young people face today? How are they similar to or different from those seen in the films and the problems or challenges you have faced? How can young people deal with the challenges they face? Who can help them if the challenges get too complicated?
- Talk about some of the characters and people in Little Big Shots films who reflect key values such as compassion, courage, generosity, friendliness, determination, honesty, enthusiasm, tolerance, consideration, fairness and kindness.
- Work in groups to plan and film interviews for a short documentary about students in your class coping with or overcoming a challenge. You will need to think about all the steps required to plan and shoot a film and the jobs each person will be required to do. Consider also how you will shoot your credits and who will be acknowledged.

Theme C: Relationships

- Many of the films selected for Little Big Shots explore relationships between people. Some show love and caring between families and friends; while some explore conflict and its effects. Little Big Shots films provide a rich source of content to enable discussions about significant issues and concepts including racism, class discrimination, bullying, exclusion, vengeance, trust and communication.

Families, communication, conflict and friendship

- As a class discuss what makes a group of people a family. Create family tree diagrams that show the people who make up different families in Little Big Shots films. If appropriate, compare these with students' own family trees.
- Discuss the different ways people can form families. Be sure to validate family types within the class. Source picture storybooks that explore family relationships and roles within families to read and share together.
- List things family members do with one another; and for one another in the films and in students' own families.
- Create a class definition for 'family'. Compare students' ideas with a dictionary meaning.
- Hold a staring competition between pairs of students. Talk about what makes it easy or difficult for students to keep staring for long periods of time. Discuss why it is usually considered rude to stare at other people? What messages does staring communicate to another person?
- Encourage students to have some fun making faces with a partner and guessing the feelings being expressed.
- List different ways family members communicate with one another in Little Big Shots films.
- Demonstrate to the class how to create a socio-gram that shows examples of how family members communicate in one of the Little Big Shots films.
- In pairs have students create a communication socio-gram for one of the films. Share these and discuss whether communication strategies were positive or negative. Discuss what we can each do to ensure we have positive interactions with other people. How can we ensure our communications with others are effective?
- Ask students to list diverse ways we can communicate with other people, for example, writing a letter, making a telephone call, SMS, chat, sending a fax or an email, using body language and facial expressions.
- With sensitivity, and as appropriate, discuss conflict that occurred between people or characters in some of the films. Consider reasons for the conflict, how it was communicated or exhibited, effects upon others and alternative ways problems, feelings or emotions could be displayed, handled, or resolved.
- Have students create personal trust circles by drawing five concentric circles and writing the name of the person they trust most in the centre. Continue by writing the name of the next most trusted person in the next circle and so on.
- As a class brainstorm qualities that make someone a good friend, for example, friendliness, consideration, fairness, kindness, generosity. List some of the ways you can show friendship, for example, hug, kiss, help, share, listen, be tolerant, write cards or letters.
- Have individuals create paper chains on which they list words or phrases that capture friendship qualities that are most important to them. Display chains and discuss variations between words and phrases.

- As a class discuss the value of tolerance and acceptance in relating to other people. Ask students to give examples from Little Big Shots films where these qualities were present or absent in relationships.
- Have students create an acrostic poem on a PowerPoint slide using the word friend or friendship. Encourage them to decorate the slide with symbols or images they think represent friendship.

Print all of the slides and place each page in an envelope. Have each student select a friendship envelope and read the poem aloud to the class. Display poems in the classroom.

Collate the PowerPoint slides into a presentation and play it for short periods during the next few days.

- As a class talk about things that make it difficult to be friends with other people, for example, when the person is not good at sharing or listening, if the person lives some distance away, if parents do not want us to be friends, if we do not understand the person's beliefs, customs and traditions, if family circumstances are different.
- Rather than causing embarrassment for students by discussing personal situations refer to situations from Little Big Shots films to help discuss friendship problems and possible resolutions. Encourage students to speak privately with you or someone from their personal trust circle (see earlier) about any issues of concern.
- Assist students to write short autobiographies about their school lives. Encourage them to explore things that make them happy, friendships, difficulties they have in relating to other children, problem solving strategies used in the playground, their hopes and their dreams. (Younger students might draw sequenced pictures using a storyboard with a sentence to accompany each drawing.)
- Work with two other students to create a picture book for a younger child with a message about friendship.
- Write a script for a soapie scene or episode that explores family relationships or friendships.
- Have students work in pairs to create a snakes and ladders board game that explores the 'ups' and 'downs' of either friendship or family life. Play the game then swap with other students and play again.

Bullying, vengeance, forgiveness and resolution

Bullying or vengeful acts can occur at school, within and between sporting teams, between neighbours and even within families. Bullying can take many forms including name-calling, making rude comments or gestures, talking about people behind their back, excluding people from activities, pulling faces or giving nasty looks, spreading rumours or stories, teasing, hurting others through physical acts such as hitting, smacking or pushing. Harassment of any type is bullying. Bullying may be based on discrimination or harassment related to ability or disability, gender, race or religion.

During activities, impress upon students that specific examples of bullying will not be discussed. However it will be helpful to highlight the availability of teachers or other adults to discuss bullying privately,

- Use print and electronic dictionaries to source definitions of the word vengeance. Discuss the meanings uncovered. Consider which Little Big Shots films provide examples of characters engaging in acts of vengeance.
- List examples from Little Big Shots films where characters exhibit or demonstrate angry feelings. Beside each example record the character's response to the angry feelings. Did some characters respond to angry feelings by engaging in acts of vengeance? Consider whether responses were appropriate. Ask students: Did the response remove or solve the problem? Did it change or affect people's feelings? Did it have a positive outcome for all people involved? Why or why not?

- Should problems be solved through acts of vengeance? Is vengeance good or bad?
- Select one of the examples from above and, as a class, create a cause and effect tree diagram showing the effects of a character's response to angry feelings. In groups have students develop tree diagrams showing alternative ways the character could handle the feelings.

As a class compare and contrast positive and negative management strategies.

- Discuss the idea that sometimes words and phrases can be hurtful, for example, "Your jumper looks weird." then debate: Should limits be placed upon the types of things people can say to one another? Why or why not?
- Ask students to suggest words or phrases that are hurtful (within reason)! Write them on scraps of paper then 'recycle' them by making your own fancy notepaper. Encourage students to find out how to make their own notepaper. Encourage them to look up 'paper making' on the Internet. A good place to start is: <http://www.infostuff.com/kids/paper.htm>
- Write the word 'bullying' on the board. Discuss its meaning. Encourage students to give general examples of bullying, without naming other students or discussing particular incidents.
- Encourage students to categorise examples of bullying according to whether it is 'verbal' (hurtful words), 'physical' (actions that hurt others), or 'emotional' (behaviours that hurt in other ways e.g. excluding or threatening). Consider broad examples, for example, those seen in films, on TV, in sport, SMS messages, notes or emails passed around, being blocked in chat spaces, in workplaces.
- As a class discuss the effects of bullying upon both those who are bullied and those who are the bullies. Consider also the roles of other people who are bystanders or who witness incidents of bullying.
- In small groups have students list reasons why people don't always seek help when bullying occurs? Share responses and discuss ways bullying can escalate if it is allowed to continue unchecked. Encourage students to think about how this is harmful to all involved, the bully, the bullied person and to any bystanders,
- Discuss reasons why bullying may occur. Emphasise that it is never acceptable to bully others.
- Develop a class action plan that will help students to be 'bully proof'. Begin by brainstorming suggestions, for example, tell a teacher, parent or other trusted adult, ignore the bully, develop assertive responses that negate the impact of the bully's words or actions (See list below), Be sensitive to student difficulties with suggestions involving telling or 'dobbing'. Steer discussions toward the idea that asking for adult help in dealing with a difficult situation is different from dobbing or telling as an act of vengeance aiming to cause trouble. The aim is to solve the problems for all involved.

Be Bully proof

Put on a brave face

- Appearing to be brave (not by being physical) will often be enough to stop a bully.

Ignore the bully

- Ignoring the bully and his or her behaviour, and walking away, preferably to a safe place with other people will often put an end to bullying behaviour.

Be assertive

- Name the behaviour and ask for it to stop, for example, “It seems like you want to bully me by calling me names. Please don’t do that any more.”

Enlist support

- Tell a friend or an adult who can help you to use some bully proofing strategies. Ask for the adult to help the bully to stop the bullying behaviours.

Be a good friend

- Help other kids who are being bullied by making sure they are not left alone with a bully. Ask them to help you out too.

Don't be a bully

- Fighting, hitting or responding to bullies gives a bully satisfaction that he or she has affected you. Do not give this satisfaction. Use the other bully proofing strategies, and ask an adult for help.
- Read the school policy or code of conduct and discuss why a school might need to have such documents.
- Often a bully has problems in his or her life. This does not give them an excuse to be a bully. Encourage students to think about how an adult can help kids to find ways to resolve problems and to forgive bullying behaviour. As a class discuss strategies to encourage a bully to give up bullying behaviours in a positive way, for example, by being friendly, sharing activities, helping with homework, inviting them to join in activities or parties.
- Use the recycled paper created earlier to write letters to classroom friends or pen friends; to pin up with messages asking bullies (no names) to consider the feelings of other people.

Feelings: sadness, loss and grief, death and dying, memories

Some Little Big Shots films explore feelings of sadness, loss, grief and bewilderment related to changes in family circumstances, or to death and dying. Sometimes the cause of sadness or grief cannot be changed; but often ways can be found to help cope with such feelings or with a sad or troubling situation. Strategies may include sharing feelings, crying or taking some form of personal or social action.

- Many people think that films about war, sadness and death are unsuitable for children. What do you think? Discuss as a class. Be sensitive to any children experiencing difficult circumstances or a recent bereavement.
- Encourage students to talk about times when they have felt sad or unhappy. Ask how they found ways to cope with the situation? Discuss how different people in our lives can help us when things are not going so well. Encourage students to talk about people they can talk to when feeling unhappy, who can help you to solve the problem or to cope with difficult feelings. Refer again to trust circles.
- As a class consider the advantages and disadvantages of having an imaginary friend or a pet to help you cope with difficult times. What do these strategies offer – perhaps a way of unloading thoughts and feelings? Talk to students about the need for trusted people to help cope with difficult times.
- Have each child trace around their hand and then write the name of a person they can trust to help them when they feeling sad or unhappy on each finger and thumb. Aim to empower each student by identifying people to whom they can turn so they do not need to deal with difficult issues on their own.

- Discuss ways people cope with sadness and grief when someone dies, for example, having a funeral or service to celebrate the person's life, placing notices in newspapers, hugging one another, placing a headstone on a grave. Encourage sharing of traditions, rituals and coping strategies from various family or cultural backgrounds.
- As a class discuss the power of memories. Consider how memories can help us to cope when someone or something we love or care about may no longer be part of our everyday lives. List some of the different ways people can remember the life of someone they can no longer see through death or even if they have moved away.
- Read *Sadako and the Thousand Cranes* by Elizabeth Coerr. Discuss how Sadako's classmates managed their feelings? What are some other things you could do in a situation like this to manage your feelings? What feelings did you experience while reading or listening to the story? How did you handle your feelings? Why do people cry? What sorts of things make people cry? Why do people cry in response to different things? How does crying help people to manage a variety of situations?
- Discuss the type of relationship Sadako shared with her classmates? Why do you think they continued making paper cranes after she died?
- Teach students to make paper cranes using paper on which they have written some feelings experienced while viewing Little Big Shots films. Alternatively students could record special or important memories. Share and display the cranes in the room.

Theme D: Making a difference

Many Little Big Shots films show that everyone, no matter how young, can make a difference to the lives of people around them. Teachers may also choose to follow up activities from this section with activities from Part 5 of this kit.

You are my hero!

- Have students work in small groups to identify characters or people from Little Big Shots films they consider to be heroes. Share and discuss as a class.
- Create a data chart like the one below to show characters or people from Little Big Shots films who try to make a difference to:
 - Their own lives
 - The lives of other people
 - The natural environment.
- Discuss: In each case what motivates them? Are they successful? Why or why not? What assists or blocks them as they attempt to make a difference? Would you have done the same things? Why or why not?

Little Big Shots character or person	What do they do to make a difference in their own life?	What do they do to make a difference to the lives of other people?	What do they do to make a difference to the natural environment?

- In small groups have students discuss whether people who attempt to make a difference in the world can be considered heroes? Why or why not? Have the students use the data chart to help them consider examples of people or characters from the Little Big Shots films. Share and discuss ideas as a class.
- Discuss what students think makes someone a hero. You might relate discussions to films and events reported in TV news or current affairs programs. List and display words or phrases students believe define hero.
- As a class consider the idea of everyday heroes; people in our lives who care for us and who ensure our wellbeing. Encourage students to share how the everyday heroes in their lives make them feel.
- Use a dictionary to establish the meaning of the word hero. Do you agree with the definition? Why or why not?
- Make a star shaped hero badge for a real person in your life who you consider to be an everyday hero. On each spike of the star write a characteristic that makes them your hero.
- Use a storyboard to draw your everyday hero doing various things. Use what you know about shot types and camera angles to present your hero effectively. Use another storyboard to create a short story about your everyday hero.
- Design and build characters and a setting for an animation about your hero. If you have access to a camera, create a storyboard and experiment with one of the animation techniques you have viewed in the Little Big Shots program.

Making the world a better place

- Ask students to describe their life in Australia and to compare it with the lives of children seen in Little Big Shots films. Encourage them to consider the variation in lifestyles in both countries and to recognise that poverty, conflict and sadness can be a problem for people wherever they live.
- Investigate the work of organizations such as UNICEF, Red Cross, Care and The Salvation Army. What is the role of these groups? List other groups that help people with difficulties in their lives? How do these organizations provide help?
- Investigate why people volunteer. Invite volunteers from local organisations, such as an opportunity shop, life saving club, Rotary or Lions. Have the guest explain their work and why they choose to do it. Encourage children to plan questions before the guests arrive.
- Find out if your school is involved in social service activities. Identify things you can do to support existing projects to make a difference to the lives of other people.
- Discuss how we can all make a difference in today's world through our actions at home, at school, or in our local or wider community? As a class list as many ideas as possible, whether crazy or practical, to help make the world a better place. Encourage diverse responses, for example, speak kindly to one another, help with household tasks, donate unwanted toys or clothing to organisations to distribute to those in need, walk instead of driving, recycle.
- Discuss the slogan, *Think globally, act locally*. Ask five or six people what they think it means. What do you think?
- Assist individual students to write an article for the school newsletter, or write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or to an Australian or world leader, explaining an idea he or she think will help to make the world a better place.
- Work with a friend to storyboard a 30 second TV advertisement encouraging people to "Think globally, act locally".

PART 5: ACTION: YOUR TURN TO CREATE AND COMMUNICATE

Writing film reviews

Everyone has an opinion on a film.

Read some excellent examples of film reviews by children on the following website:

<http://www.education.theage.com.au/pagedetail.asp?intpageid=1673&intsectionid=1>

- Select one of the films from Little Big Shots and enter The Little Big Shots film review competition. The best ten reviews of one of the Little Big Shots films will win a big shot at fabulousness: a spot on next year's Little Big Shots children's jury, a 2009 festival pass and their winning work published on the official Little Big Shots website.

Use the tips on worksheet 8 or email screeneducation@acmi.net.au for a step-by-step plan to help you write a film review.

Kids under 18 attending Little Big Shots in Melbourne can submit their film reviews complete with name, age and contact details by Monday June 23 to:

info@littlebigshots.com.au or to
 Little Big Shots Film Reviewing Competition
 PO Box 2016
 South Melbourne, 3205

What's your pitch?

- Your task is to come up with a corker of an idea for a film and to present the idea verbally to your class. Convince your class this is the best idea they have heard for a new film in ages.
 - What is your aim or goal? What is your film trying to say?
 - Will your film have a message? Try to sum this up in a couple of sentences.
 - What makes your idea so special or good?
 - Think carefully about your audience.
 - How long will your film be?
 - What type of film will it be?
 - Where will it screen – in classrooms, cinemas, homes?
 - Who will be the main characters? What are the key events in the film?
 - What is its working title?
- Use the storyboard worksheet (**worksheet 9** or **worksheet 10**) to plan your own film with an important message. Encourage students to create a film about one of the important values they listed earlier.
- Ask students to think hard about how the visual images and soundtrack can convey ideas, without needing dialogue, a narrator or subtitles.

SCREEN IT! CHILDREN'S FILMMAKING AND GAMES COMPETITION

Australia's moving image competition for primary school students and secondary school students.

In 2008 students are asked to create a live action film, animation or computer game that responds to the theme of Australian identity.

Creating simple animations, live action productions and games are a fun, engaging, and highly educational learning projects to undertake with students. Moving image making projects allow students to develop many and varied skills and understandings and may involve students in:

- Developing an original idea and researching information
- Writing a storyline and a script
- Creating a basic storyboard
- Planning a production
- Designing and creating animation characters and sets
- Casting actors, selecting locations and dressing sets
- Learning practical production skills including camera, sound recording, acting and directing
- Developing team work, time management and planning skills
- Learning post production skills including editing, sound effects, music, titles and credits.
- Testing compiled games and analysing the responses of different people

Screen It! is a fun way of engaging students with the moving image whilst they learn about the creative and technical processes that lie behind their favourite forms of entertainment – cartoons, films and computer games.

A panel of industry experts judge each work according to criteria such as creative merit, technical difficulty, ability to address the theme and stylistic elements.

- Find out what the Screen It! competition is all about.
 - Who were the winners from 2004 - 2008?
 - What types of films did they make and how did they make them?

Visit the ACMI website to watch the winning films and animations, and play the winning games

http://www.acmi.net.au/screen_it_2007_winners_gallery.htm

Creating a film story

Once students have decided on the type of moving image piece and the genre, it is time to start working on the story.

Have the students work in groups to write a brief one-paragraph overview of a story they would like to make into a film.

Is it a narrative?

Break it up into the main components – orientation, complication and resolution.

- Who are the main characters? Who?
- What is the setting? Where, when?
- What is the problem/ situation/event? What?
- How is it solved? How?

Or is it a Documentary/TV News Report?

Use the following questions as a guide:

- Orientation: what is the topic? Who is it about? Why?
- What are the events? What happens? What information are we presenting? What is interesting about this? What is the “news”?

Have each group present their plan to the class for constructive feedback. Remind students to keep the story simple and short. Support any teams having difficulty in achieving this.

Note: Extensive support is provided for teachers in the ACMI Screen It! Teacher Kit

PART 6: FILMMAKING

Filmmaking is the process of making a film. It is all about telling a story or creating meaning. There are many ways to tell a story using film. Films are made all over the world across a variety of live-action and animated genres using different technologies. They are produced for all sorts of reasons by all sorts of people, from large profit-oriented studios to primary age kids. Little Big Shots highlights films that have been made for kids, by kids and about kids. The nature of the film determines the size and type of crew required during filmmaking.

Live-action

This involves actors – real people playing roles and is shot live on set or location.

- What do you think may have been some of the challenges in making the live-action Little Big Shots films?
- Find out the meaning of the word cinematography. Encourage students to explain how carefully planned cinematography in one of the Little Big Shots films helps to create and communicate strong messages.
- Discuss the careful composition of shots in one of the live action films from Little Big Shots. How does the film make clever use of the camera through selection of shot types, camera angles or camera movement to effectively tell its story?
- Have students work in small groups to select one of the Little Big Shots films and consider how the use of colour helps to create and communicate messages? What feelings do you experience as you watch the film? Give examples from the film to show what you mean. Consider:
 - o What colours do you remember from the film?
 - o Did the filmmakers emphasise some colours more than others? Why might they have done this?
 - o Do the colours change at different times during the film? If so, why do you think they changed?
 - o How do different colours evoke particular feelings or emotions as viewers watch the film?
 - o Think also about what the film tells you about the place or setting in the story. Consider the light, other aspects of weather or climate, the landscape, the vegetation and the colours.
- As a class discuss what else, apart from the cinematography and the use of colour, contributes to the creation of mood and atmosphere in Little Big Shots films? Encourage students to give examples to explain their ideas.

Animation

Making an animated film takes a great deal of time and patience. Making a great animation requires talent.

Animation is the process of bringing something to life, of making still pictures appear to *move*. Capturing individual pictures and projecting them at the rate of 24 pictures, or frames, per second create this illusion of movement in the films we watch. Our vision is slow and our brains hold onto an image for just a fraction of a second after the image has gone. In this way, when the eye sees a series of pictures screened in quick succession the images will appear to move - our eyes have in effect been tricked into thinking they have seen movement. This is called **Persistence of Vision**.

Many Hollywood adventure films and animated features use computer generated imagery (CGI), created by dozens of 3D modellers, animators, rotoscopers and compositors.

- Discuss the careful composition of shots in one of the animated films from Little Big Shots. How does the film make clever use of the camera through selection of shot types, camera angles or camera movement to effectively tell its story?

- Some films use colour very cleverly, contrasting stormy grey scenes with bright, cheerful colours. Why do the colours change? How do colours help to communicate ideas to the audience? How do animators use lines, shadows and reflections to communicate with audiences?
- Some animated films are so clever, you forget the characters do not have feelings. Give an example of a film where the filmmakers are successful in creating sympathy for an animated character, that audiences suspend disbelief. The film *Pinata* is an online example that is worth discussing. Visit: www.atomfilms.com/film/pinata.jsp
- Compare and contrast the animated films featured in Little Big Shots in relation to the stories, the techniques used and the messages they communicate.

There are many different types of animation, for example:

Drawn or Cel Animation – is created by drawing a series of images, each one slightly different from the one before. Animated films are made up of thousands of drawings, which are projected onto a screen at 24 pictures per second. The animation character is drawn on clear plastic and placed over the top of a background for filming. For the character to animate, a new drawing is required for each move, gradually building movement up over a sequence of drawings.

Stop Motion or Model Animation – involves the filming of puppets or any form of 3 dimensional models. The models can be made from plasticine, clay or wire or anything that can be bent into another shape. Like the drawings in drawn animation, the 3D models are positioned and filmed, then their position is changed slightly and filmed again. The shots are sequenced to give the impression of movement.

Cut Out Animation – involves cut-out shapes being moved about or replaced with other cut-outs. Flat objects like buttons, matchsticks and string can also be used in this form of animation. Cut-outs can also be laid on top of drawings.

Computer Animation or Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) – involves three dimensional models on a computer. These models are created from images which have either been scanned into the computer or made within the computer.

Thinking about animation

- As a class select an animated film from the Little Big Shots program. Compare it with another animated film. In what ways is it similar or different? How might you describe the style? How do you think it was created?
- Watch animated films and work out the animation techniques they use, for example, *Fantasia*, *Charlotte's Web*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Toy Story*, *Jane and the Dragon*, *Angela Anaconda*.
- What does animation allow a filmmaker to do that live action (a film with live actors and real sets) does not? Discuss differences between live action and animation and record a simple definition of each film type. Discuss and list the advantages and disadvantages of each in conveying the action and ideas in a story.
- Why do you think some filmmakers decide to tell their stories using animation rather than live action? How does animation enable a story to be told in ways that could not have been achieved using live action?

- Ask students to name a film that combines live-action and animation. Discuss why the filmmakers may have decided to combine the two forms. Consider the effectiveness of this choice.

Giving animation the 'flick'

Simple animations can be created using paper and pencils. A flip-book can help students to understand basic animation. A flip-book can be created using the edges of pages in an exercise book, a small note pad, post-it notes or pieces of card stapled together. To begin, create a series of sequenced drawings showing some movement such as a train going through a tunnel or a ball bouncing across a page. You could check out a commercially available flipbook such as the one sold at the ACMI Shop.

- Provide students with a small pad of paper and pencils or fine tip marking pens. Explain how to create sequenced drawings of a person or object on each page, but with each page showing one aspect of the character or object in a slightly different position. To make the pad easier to flip, bevel the pages opposite the stapled end, by folding over the pages width wise and cutting 0.5cm off the pages. The top pages should be shorter than the bottom pages.

Staple the pages of the flip-book and holding one edge, simply flick them with your thumb and see the pictures move! Have students share their animations.

Experiment with the flip-book idea and your imagination to create some simple and exciting animations.

- Make a simple object from plasticine, such as a worm. Use a digital camera to take a photo of your worm. Move the worm along a little bit, then take another photo, move it along again and take another photo. Continue until you have about 25 photos. This is the number of images you would need to make one second of animated film using a video camera (24 frames with celluloid film). Imagine how long a feature film would take you! If you print out the photos as thumbnails on light card and staple them together you could make a flip-book.

PART 7: WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEET 1

Name:

Date:

What is the name of Melbourne’s International Film festival for Kids?		
List the venues used for Little Big Shots in your state or territory.		
Who is the target audience for Little Big Shots?		
Who are the festival sponsors?		
Write the titles of three films that will be screened at Little Big Shots.	Where was each film made?	What language is used in each film?
Which films have screened at other children’s film festivals?	Which festivals?	
Which films did children make?		
Which film would you like to view and why?		


WORKSHEET 2

Name:


Date:

Select one of the Little Big Shots films and write its title:

What did the film make you think about?

	
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How did the film make you feel?

	
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How did the filmmakers make you feel this way?

	
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WORKSHEET 3

Name:

Date:

Title of the film	
Where does the film take place?	
When does the story take place?	
Who is the main character?	
What problem/s does the main character have?	
How does the main character solve the problem?	
What happens in the end?	
What genre (or type) of film is it? e.g. mystery, action-adventure, science-fiction.	
Is it a true story?	

WORKSHEET 4

Name:

Date:

Draw or write

Orientation

What happened at the start of the film?

Complication

What is one of the problems the main character had in the film?

Resolution

How did the film end?

Draw or describe your favourite part of the film on the back of this sheet.

WORKSHEET 5

Name:

Date:

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

Most stories, whether print or film, are a complete unit with a beginning (orientation), middle (compilation) and an end (resolution).

A narrative usually begins by telling the reader or audience when and where things are taking place, and creates an expectation about something that has or will take place. This beginning is called the orientation.

The story then moves through a series of events, one of which causes some change or disruption to the world that has been introduced. Usually this disruption involves a problem, a conflict or an issue to be resolved. This change is known as the complication.

The remainder of the story usually sets about resolving the problem. A good story only includes details relevant to the expectations set up in the beginning of the story. The story ends when the events are restored to some sort of order.

It is the quality of the story, which maintains our interest when reading or viewing a film story. Stories may be presented in many ways but they generally have a structure similar to the following:

Orientation (beginning)

Introduces when and where the story takes place and often introduces the main character or characters.

Complication (middle)

Something happens, usually a problem that has to be solved in some way.

The story continues as the hero or heroine tries to resolve the problem.

There can be more than one complication in a story.

Resolution (end)

The problem is solved and the story ends. (A moral, message or lesson may be evident.)

Read the information above to help you to identify elements of narrative structure from one of the Little Big Shots films. Complete worksheet 6 to record your responses

WORKSHEET 6

Name:

Date:

Main character	Other characters	Setting
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Draw or write about a problem the main character experiences.

Draw or write how the problem is resolved.

WORKSHEET 7 My Favourite Film

Name:

Date:

Write or draw

The film I liked best	The best part of the film
The film made me think about...	A new ending could be

FIVE TIPS TO A TOP NOTCH FILM REVIEW

Marcella Bidinost

1. Lights, action, camera ... and a long line of credits

Plenty of people and decisions influence the film you eventually see on screen. Script, sound, storyline, directors, actors, lighting, sets, editing – all the people in that long line of credits at the end of a film play a role. Pick out some of the elements of the film you respond to most and explain why they do or don't work.

2. Don't give away the plot

This is a key rule of reviewing. Feel free to explain a little about the plot but don't reveal any of the surprises or major twists. Even if Sam does fall in love with Mary at the end.

3. Hook us in!

Starting your review with "This film is about ..." doesn't exactly scream "Read me!" Make your reader sit up and pay attention to what you're about to say. Write creatively and sharply and ask yourself, is this good enough for the rest of the world to read? Can you imagine your review published on *The Age* website? Hook us in and keep us there!

4. How good were the stars?

Think about the performances of the lead actors. Did they do a good job? Were they believable? Did they "get under the skin" of their role or did you feel like you were always watching "the actor"? Did you like the characters and did you care about what happened to them in the film? Tell us!

5. How did the film make you feel?

Filmmakers want audiences to respond to their film. Pay attention to how you're feeling while you're watching a film. Are you happy, sad, bored, excited, inspired? Maybe your responses change at different points of the film. What's making you feel that way? And what's your overall feeling by the time it's all over?

WORKSHEET 9 SIMPLE STORYBOARD


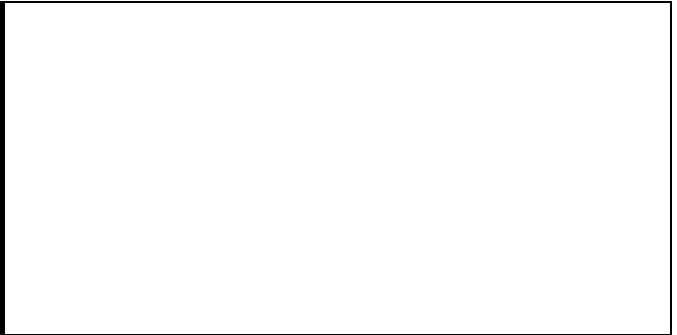
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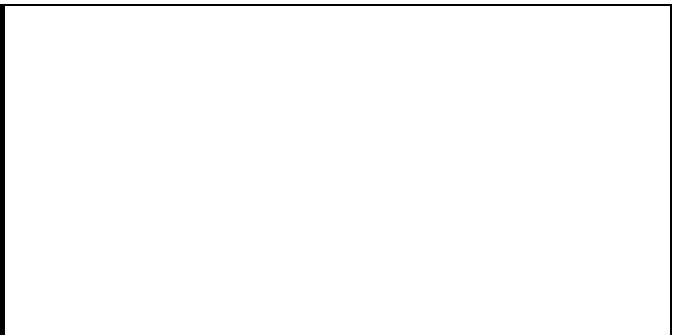
Date:


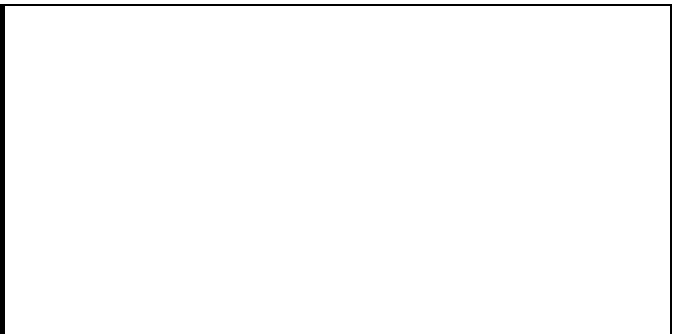
WORKSHEET 10 STORYBOARD



Name:

Date:

	
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PART 8: *THINKING ABOUT FILMS*, A RESOURCE FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Screen literacy: thinking beyond the screen

Going to the movies can be great fun! It can also be an enjoyable way to learn about our world and the people who live in it. Whether you are viewing a film for entertainment or as a learning experience, thinking and talking about it with others can help everyone to understand more about the story and its messages and find out more about how films are made. Focused discussions can help us to become more aware of thinking behind the choices and decisions made by filmmakers. In turn this can help us to express our own ideas, thoughts and feelings more clearly and effectively.

Pre-screening questions

- What do you like about going to the cinema? How is it different from viewing television?
- What do you already know about the film or films you are about to view?
- How did you find out the film or films?
- Why do you think this film, or these films, may have been made?
- What can you find out about a film and about filmmaking by reading film credits?
- Questions to think about while viewing films
- What did the film make you think about?
- How did the film make you feel?
- How did the filmmaker make you feel this way? You might think about how the filmmaker used the camera, lighting, types of actors used (live or animated), costumes, props, sound or other interesting aspects of creating a story for you to view on screen.

Post-screening questions

- Did you enjoy the film? Why or why not?
- Did the film remind you of any other films? In what ways?
- What types of characters were in the film?
- Did you like the characters? Why or why not?
- Did you care what happened to the characters? Why or why not?
- Why do you think some films include characters that many people will not like?
- Did the film remind you of anything from your own life?
- How do the children or characters in the film solve their problems?
- What can children or adults do in real life if they have problems that are difficult to solve?
- Are there things about some of the film characters and their lives that surprised you?
- Did the film end in the way you expected? Were you satisfied with the ending? In what other ways could it have concluded?
- Was this film, or these films, like shows or films you usually watch on TV or at the cinema? What are some similarities and differences?

Thinking more about the film

- Do you think the filmmakers selected appropriate setting/s for the film/s? Why do you think these choices were made?
- Were particular colours featured in set design, costuming or props? How can this help to create mood or atmosphere? How does the 'look' of the film contribute to the story or to the message of the film?
- How was the camera used to tell the story? Were particular shots, camera angles or camera movements used to create memorable scenes? Why do these scenes stay in your mind?
- How does the editing of the film contribute to the story or message of the film? Have shots been sequenced effectively? Do transitions between shots enhance the story?
- How does the soundtrack (music, sound effects, silence) contribute to the film's story or message?
- How did the filmmaker make you feel this way? Think about how the filmmaker used the camera, lighting, types of actors used (live or animated), costumes, props, sound or other interesting aspects of creating a story for you to view on screen.
- If you were the filmmaker:
 - What scene would you definitely keep in the film? Why?
 - What scene would you change? Why?
 - Would you have made changes to the casting or to the look of animated characters? Why?
 - What other changes would you consider? Why?

PART 9: 2008 PROGRAM FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Little Big Shots follow-up questions and activities: Program 1

Title: The Flying Girl

Style: Drawn animation

Country: Germany, 2005

Directed by: Daniel Hofmann, Nina Pfeifenberger, Felicitas Heydenreich

Produced by: Felicitas Heydenreich

Synopsis

After observing a bird flying in the sky, a young girl steps out of her room, looks cautiously down a set of stairs and after concentrating very hard, flies down to the bottom. She then flies over the countryside and comes back to share her excitement with a disinterested parent reading the paper. She relives the adventure as she recounts the story and her parent responds with disbelief. After returning frustrated to her room, she is disheartened but then regains her strength as she discovers other special powers.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Child creativity, adult realism
- Self belief

Focus questions

- How does the music make you feel? How does it contribute to the film's message?
- Flying is often a symbol of freedom. What is the little girl freeing herself from?
- What are the positive and negative aspects of a film without dialogue? Do you think the film would have been better with voices or a narration? What would they have said?
- Different camera angles make a film more interesting and can help immerse the audience. Watch closely for the different angles used in the film, for example, aerial views. Whose perspective do they show?
- The power of invisibility is often portrayed in film. If you were invisible, what would you do?

Title: My Favourite Thing

Style: Live action documentary

Country: Australia, 2008

Directed by: Ali Russell

Produced by: Claire Pettigrew, Jessica Lopez and Ali Russell

Synopsis

Two young sisters talk to the camera about how they much they love living near the bush. The film cuts between images of the girls talking to the camera while walking through the bush, introducing, experiencing and indicating various parts of the bush they appreciate.

Key Concepts

- Natural environment
- Imagination and play
- Place and space
- Toys

Focus questions

- This film is a documentary about the girls' home. What would a documentary about your home or special place be like? What would you focus on?
- Whenever they are sad or have worries, the girls tell the rocks. What do you do when you are sad or worried?
- Listen to the soundtrack and describe or write down the sounds that you hear. How does the soundtrack make you feel?
- Would you choose the same or different music for a film about your special place? What would you choose? Why?

Title: Dooby Dooby Moo

Style: Drawn animation

Country: USA, 2007

Directed by: MaGiK Studios, (based on the book by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin)

Produced by: Weston Woods Studios

Synopsis

When Duck finds out about a talent show at the county fair, he and the animals on the farm get acts together and start rehearsing. First prize is a trampoline and the animals would really like to win. Distrustful Farmer Brown tries to figure out what the animals are up to but Duck is determined they will enter the contest and win. The animals give it their best at the talent show, leaving Farmer Brown none the wiser to the end.

Key Concepts

- Self belief
- Performance
- Participation
- Problem solving

Focus questions

- Consider the use of watercolours in the animation. What do they tell you about the style of the film?
- Compare the different music for each of the acts in the film. Why do you think different music was selected for each act? How does each make you feel?
- How does Duck's *Born to be Wild* performance make you feel? Why do you think the judges liked his act best?
- What does *Born to be Wild* say about the lives of the farm animals?
- Why didn't the animals want Farmer Brown to know what they were up to?
- If you were asked to perform in a talent show, what sort of act would you perform? Why?

Title: Ruby Who?

Style: Live action short

Country: Australia, 2006

Directed by: Hailey Bartholomew and Natala Stuetz

Produced by: Natala Stuetz

Synopsis

Ruby is full of wonder about the world. She's also confused about the kind of little girl she wants to be. When she heads off to the park she sees many things along the way that she wishes she could have. Every time Ruby sees something she wants, she wishes so hard that she gets it. After a while, she has so many things that she can't move. She can't play properly because she is weighed down by all the things that she's wished for. Ruby discards all her new possessions until she is just Ruby again. And discovers, that perhaps this isn't so bad.

Key Concepts

- Identity

- Creativity
- Imagination and play
- Needs/wants

Focus questions

- Why did the film makers have Ruby play 'Guess who' at the beginning of the film? What does it say about what the film might be about?
- A kaleidoscope is a symbol of choice and difference. Why did the film makers choose to include images from a kaleidoscope?
- Do your clothes and the way you look really tell people who you are? What do they tell people?
- Listen closely to the music and lyrics. Do they suit the atmosphere of the film? Why? What are they about?
- What things do you need to be happy? What things do you wish for (want)?

Title: Schhhh!/ Hush

Style: CGI animation

Country: Denmark, 2007

Directed by: Peter Hausner; Snobar Azedien

Produced by: Fredrik Vogel

Synopsis

It's early morning and Louis' Mum and Dad want to sleep in. Louis and his best friend Blanket are wide awake and decide to go on an imaginary adventure. They start off with a wild flight over the ocean, then drive a car, ride on a rollercoaster and noisily set the breakfast table. As they do so, they make a mess in the apartment and break a dish. When Louis' mum and dad hear this commotion, they come out to see what's going on. Suddenly, the apartment seems a cold and scary place to Louis, who grabs Blanket and runs back to bed. When his parents go into his room, he is snug and asleep under Blanket. The two friends have managed to conquer the unfriendly atmosphere, and the joy of morning returns. When Louis gets up, he shares a warm moment with his tired but happy parents.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Child creativity, adult realism
- Toys
- Place and space

Focus questions

- In the film, Louis' blanket becomes a ship, a car and a plane. Imagine you were going on an imaginary journey with a red blanket. Where would you go and what would it be.
- How do the colours change when Louis gets scared?
- Compare the style of animation in this film with that of *The Flying Girl*. Which do you prefer? Why?
- Simple objects often make the best toys. Can you think of some basic objects you have used as toys? How did you play with them and what did they become?

Title: Building Imagination

Style: Live action short

Country: USA, 2007

Directed by: Mark Potts and Cole Selix

Produced by: Mark Potts and Cole Selix

Synopsis

A simple cardboard box inspires a world of wonder for a little boy in this inspiring and inventive film. The box sparks an idea and he goes in search of as many as he can find, collecting them from rubbish bins in the city. He looks up at the skyscrapers and is inspired by the buildings around him. Back home, he tapes together all the boxes to create his own elaborate but imaginary playground.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Creativity
- Toys
- Place and space

Focus questions

- Why is the boy all by himself?
- Who is doing the filming?
- What impact does interacting with the city landmarks have on the boy?
- Do the city sculptures act as inspiration for you?
- How does the soundtrack change when the boy enters his cubby?
- What happens when the boy goes into the cubby?
- How does the external 'real' world compare to the world of the imagination?

Title: Aston's Stones

Style: Drawn animation

Country: Sweden, 2007

Directed by: Lotta and Uzi Geffenblad

Produced by: Uzi Geffenblad, Zigzag Animation with support from The Swedish Film Institute

Synopsis

When Aston the pup finds stones on his way home, he feels sorry for them. They are lonely, bored and frozen, so he picks them up and decides to take them home to look after them, like pets. It soon gets crowded at Aston's house and his parents feel they need to do something about it. . They drive to the beach and Aston plays with his stones in the soft and warm sand. His father suggests that the stones will be happy living at the beach and after careful consideration, Aston agrees. As they leave, his parents notice that Aston's bag isn't quite empty. Aston tells them that he picked up a twig because it was lonely; there were only stones on the beach.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Responsibility
- Caring for others
- Toys
- Place and space

Focus questions

- Why does Aston collect the stones?
- What words can be used to describe Aston?
- Do you think Aston's parents manage the situation well?
- What is implied when Aston takes home a stick?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Create a storyboard showing a possible scene to extend the story.

Title: Hana's Helpline: Cyril the Squirrel

Style: Stop motion animation

Country: England

Directed by: Tom Edgar

Produced by: Hannah Ferguson; Robin Lyons; Calon Ltd

Synopsis

Cyril the squirrel has trouble remembering where he leaves things. This often means that he misses out on activities because he's forgotten the equipment. Cyril has a school concert coming up in which he's supposed to sing, but he's very worried that if he doesn't remember where his clothes are, he won't be allowed to perform. He asks Hana – a duck agony aunt who has her own helpline – if she can help him come up with a way to remember things. Hana comes up with the perfect way for Cyril to remember things. She reckons that because Cyril loves singing so much, if he comes up with a list of things to remember and puts them in a song, he'll have no trouble jogging his memory. Fortunately for Cyril, this trick works and he even gets to perform his 'remembering' song in the school play.

Key Concepts

- problem solving
- working cooperatively
- responsibility
- creativity
- memory

Focus questions

- We often use music to help us remember things. What songs do you sing at school to help you remember things? (alphabet song, packing up song, letter sounds song, times tables songs)
- What other strategies do people use for remembering things?
- What do you need to remember to take to school each day? (eg. lunch, reading book)
- Who helps you to remember things at home and at school?
- How do grown-ups remember things? (eg. calender, diary, to do list, post it notes, alarm clock, blackberry)

Little Big Shots follow-up questions and activities: Program 2

Title: Girl Stars: Anita the Beekeeper

Style: Live action documentary

Country: India 2007

Directed by: Vikash Nowlakha

Produced by: UNICEF and the Going to School Fund, India

Synopsis

Anita Khushwaha is a beekeeper in a small village in Bihar. When Anita was young her parents did not want her to go to school, they asked Anita to look after the goats instead. One day, Anita sneaked into school and spent the day there unnoticed – she loved school so much that she convinced her parents to let her stay. Anita's father agreed to let her study until Grade five. Anita wanted to study further, so she began to teach other children what she knew and earned enough money to pay for her school books and fees. Soon Anita knew she had to do something more. She wanted to go to college but she needed to find a way to fund her education. Men in Anita's village had always kept bees and made honey. Anita was the first young woman to give bee keeping a try. She saved enough money from teaching other children to buy two queen bees and begin her bee-keeping business. Today, Anita has over 100 boxes of bees; she makes her own honey, goes to college on her bicycle and is still only 17 years old.

Key Concepts

- Rights and responsibilities

- Education
- Problem solving
- Beliefs, culture and tradition
- Parental expectations

Focus questions

- Why is it important to go to school?
- How are girls and boys treated differently in India?
- Why did Anita want to go to school?
- Why did Anita's parents want her to look after the goats?
- How did education help Anita?
- How did Anita's parent's attitude towards education change in the film?
- How did peoples perceptions of Anita change as she grew?
- How did Anita show resourcefulness?

Title: The Goat That Ate Time

Style: Drawn Animation

Country: Australia, 2007

Directed by: Lucinda Schreiber

Produced by: Lucinda Schreiber, Ponymikado Films

Synopsis

Henry the goat has an insatiable appetite. He eats everything in sight: flowers, flies, birds, even bears! Henry's mother tries to tell him that there are better things to do with one's time than eat, but Henry doesn't listen, and continues to eat from dawn to dusk. One day, Henry eats a wrist watch and discovers that it's one of the most delicious and interesting flavours he's ever experienced. It tastes old and new all at once. Henry decides he must eat even more time and sets off on a global tour, eating all the time pieces he can find, from Times Square in New York to Big Ben in London. Eventually, Henry eats all the time pieces in the world and finds himself alone on a desolate hill. He comes across a dandelion and remembers that if you blow on one of these they're meant to tell you the time. Henry realises that this must be the last time piece left and thinks it's the most beautiful thing in the world because it's so rare. Now Henry realises how precious time really is.

Key Concepts

- Time
- Needs and Wants
- Greed
- Environment

Focus questions

- What do you think the filmmaker is trying to say in this film?
- Consider the clichés we have of goats. Greedy goats, goats eat anything... Why do you think a goat is used as the central character?
- There are lots of references to sayings about time in this film. What do the sayings mean to you? (all the time in the world, out of time, in time)
- Make a list of familiar sayings about time and add your own.
- What is unusual about the style of this film? Comment on the choices of colour, shape, music etc.
- What are some ways you waste time? How do you like to spend your time?
- Write a short piece explaining why time is precious.

Title: The Prestidigitator

Style: Live action

Country: Spain, 2006

Directed by: Hugo Sanz

Produced by: Hugo Sanz, 29 Letras, Madrid

Synopsis

Christian is lying on his bed listening to music. His mother turns it off and tells him that she spends nine hours a day at work, and another three travelling. She doesn't like her job. She says that it's too late for her but that she doesn't want the same thing to happen to him. She warns him that if he fails at school she will be very disappointed in him. So Christian studies hard for his history test. He studies ancient Egypt and ancient Greece, but when it comes to the exam, there is a question on ancient Rome. While the teacher isn't looking, Christian pulls his notes from his pocket and hides them under his exam paper. The teacher moves quickly toward another student he catches cheating. The girl is made to put her paper in the bin, then stand in it facing the blackboard. Christian stares at the clock as the minutes tick by. The teacher notices the girl drawing on the blackboard. He rubs out the drawing and tells the girl to leave. As she walks out she stops by Christian, noticing his cheat notes. She looks at the teacher, then back at Christian, then leaves. The teacher approaches Christian and tries to find his notes. Christian waves his hands in the air, feigning innocence. Giving up, the teacher walks away. Christian is hiding his cheat notes between the back of his fingers. Back home, Christian's mum walks in and proudly pins Christian's exam results to his pinboard. She is happy. When she leaves, Christian stays to contemplate what he has done. He, rips his results from the board and tosses them in the bin. With a sigh, he moves to his desk, opens his books and starts to study. He feels bad about what he has done and wants to try and prove himself next time.

Key Concepts

- Responsibility
- Education
- Parental expectations
- Cheating
- Repentance

Focus questions

- Why does Christian's mother want him to do well at school?
- How does Christian's school differ from yours?
- Does Christian make good decisions?
- How would Christian's mother feel if she knew he cheated?
- How could the teacher have handled the situation better?
- Is promising to study atonement enough for cheating? Should Christian tell his mother, the teacher or both of them the truth? Why or why not?
- What does Christian learn in the film?
- Have you ever had an experience like this?

Title: Lavatory Lovestory

Style: Drawn animation

Country: Russia, 2007

Directed by: Konstantin Bronzit

Produced by: Alexander Boyarsky, Sergey Selyana

Synopsis

A lonely lavatory attendant tries to cheer herself up with a sandwich, a cuppa and a copy of "Happy Woman" as men pass through the turnstile in front of her counter. While cleaning the toilet she becomes lost in a romantic world of imagination and on returning to the turnstile, is surprised to find a man has left her a bright bunch of flowers. She

becomes frustrated after failing to identify the giver, throwing the flowers in the bin. Another bunch mysteriously appears and then another. She is driven crazy with frustration as she tries to identify her secret admirer. She finally tracks him down to a cubicle by following a petal trail, they fall in love and he joins her in working behind the counter. The final scene reveals he is in fact the attendant of the women's toilets.

Key Concepts

- Needs and wants
- Love
- Hopes and dreams

Focus questions

- How effective are the simple black and white animations and the piano soundtrack?
- What are the dreams of the central character?
- What comment is the film maker making about women's magazines?
- Why was the woman so frustrated by not knowing the identity of the flower giver?
- What is the implication of the help wanted sign?
- What do you think the film maker's central message is?

Title: The Wrong Trainers

Style: Animated documentary

Country: UK, 2006

Directed by: Kez Margrie

Produced by: Kez Margrie, BBC UK

Synopsis

In each of these five tales, a distinctive animation style and first-person narrative spoken by children relay poignant experiences of growing up in poverty in the UK.

Dillon's mum was unable to look after the family properly and he and his siblings didn't receive proper food, bedding or clothes. Dillon developed a habit of stealing money to get food and lollies. This led to an obsession with confectionery. Other family members took him and his siblings in and life is better although he still steals money and isn't quite sure why.

After her house burned down, Danielle and her family have been forced to live in a smaller place in the country. She has a pair of second-hand shoes that she loves even though they're a bit too big for her. Her area is quite run-down with locals throwing rubbish into the river and kids with nothing to do getting bored.

Chris's mum has a problem with drugs. She sleeps all day, looks unwell and is unable to afford the basics for her kids. The family lives in a rehabilitation centre. He understands she takes drugs to hide from her problems but Chris would like to tell her to have the strength not to walk away.

Samara has one leg shorter than the other and has to wear a big shoe to even them up. Her brother and sister both have cerebral palsy. The family is in debt and can't afford the right shoes. Kids at school make fun of her foot but she has learned to handle it and talks to her mum for support.

Keona and Chantell are from a large family who live in an overcrowded flat, sharing beds. After playing on a bed, Chantell once fell five floors out the window. They hope for less crowded housing and to find ten pounds to help their mum out with bills.

Each story includes a statistic about children in poverty and a positive message from the child. The film ends with Tony Blair's 1999 speech about ending child poverty.

Key Concepts

- Needs and wants
- Poverty
- Hopes and dreams

Focus questions

- What are the most important needs of children living in poverty?
- What are their hopes and dreams? How do these compare with yours?
- How and where do the children find hope and happiness?
- How does this film change the way you think about your worries?
- Why is the film called *The Wrong Trainers*? Do you think it is a good title? Why?

Title: Western Spaghetti

Style: Live action (child produced)

Country: Canada, 2007

Directed by: Joseph Procopio

Produced by: Joseph and Frank Procopio, TMJ Productions

Synopsis

The soundtrack of a cowboy movie encourages Joseph to think about the soundtrack to his own life. When he sees his Mexican friend, for example, he hears Mexican music; when he sees his friend Kushan, he hears sitar. His neighbour is an actor. He thinks he's an epic film, in Dolby THX. But when he sees himself, he doesn't hear music. So he goes back to last summer, when he visited his Italian grandfather. Looking around the house, Joseph came across glass jars of preserved produce and some old 16mm film. He sat in a darkened room with a projector and watched the old footage, reflecting on his heritage. Suddenly he realises that, potentially, because he's Italian, he might end up marrying a woman named Filippa who dishes up mountains of spaghetti. All this happens in the same week as the soccer World Cup, when Italy beat France. People ran on to the streets. In two hours, 450,000 people showed up. For once, Joseph felt like he belonged to something. A week later all the flags were gone and he didn't feel it anymore. That's when it hits Joseph, it's not about being one or the other, it's being all of it. We see Joseph walking with his nonno through his backyard, learning about recipes and music. He says, 'my name is Joseph, I'm Italian, I'm Canadian, and it's all me. I've found my song.

Key Concepts

- Identity
- Self awareness
- Beliefs, culture and tradition
- Parental expectations

Focus questions

- What are the first clues the audience is given that Joseph is watching a Western movie?
- How important is music in your life? What sort of music do you like and what does it say about you?
- Why are public gatherings important for developing peoples sense of identity?

Little Big Shots follow-up questions and activities: Program 3

Title: Bruno

Style: stop motion animation

Country: Germany, 2007

Directed by: Jurgen Haas

Produced by: Benjamin Manns, SWR, Germany

Synopsis

A spider descends before the screen in its green habitat. In front of it drops a messy bunch of web, which the spider adeptly weaves into a comfortable hammock. Lying back, the spider reaches out for a set of five vertical strings, which

form its own suspended harp. The spider begins plucking away when it realises one of the strings is making a dead sound. Looking up, the spider notices a fly is attached to it. The spider plucks at the string and the fly shifts, buzzing its wings against the string expressing that it's a little grumpy at being disturbed. The spider pulls the string down so the fly is now close. The pair look at each other for a moment, the fly buzzes again, and the spider notices that it makes a nice noise on the string. The spider begins plucking away again, creating a delicate tune, while the fly's buzzing provides the richer cello sounds. Together, they've made beautiful music.

Key Concepts

- Cooperation
- Music
- Creativity
- Problem solving

Focus questions

- What sort of relationship do spiders and flies have in the real world?
- What would have happened in the film if the spider and the fly hadn't worked together?
- How important is the soundtrack in this film? What instruments can you hear? What background noises can you hear?

Title: My Happy End

Style: cut out animation

Country: Germany, 2007

Directed by: Milen Vitanov

Produced by: Milen Vitanov, HFF – University for Film and TV, Potsdam, Germany

Synopsis

While some dogs like to chase their tails, this mutt succeeds in catching his own. This animation breathes life into the story of a dog who chases, catches and then befriends his tail.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Creativity
- Problem solving

Focus questions

- How does the filmmaker make this a playful film?
- How does the soundtrack add to the style of the film?
- How does the filmmaker's choice of colours contribute to the feel of the film?
- How does finding his tail change this dog's life?

Title: Kemo Sabe

Style: Live-action

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: Rana Kazkaz

Produced by: Julio Caro & Cary Jones (RCaro Productions)

Synopsis

Based on a true story, Kemo Sabe tells the story of Yussef, a six-year-old Arab-American boy who dreams of being a Cowboy instead of an Indian in the playground. Daring to challenge the role his race has determined, Yussef learns the playground rules of becoming a Cowboy: he needs blue jeans and a belt. Despite his family's meager means, Yussef

acquires the necessary goods. Amid his mother's protests, Yussef sneaks away in his older brother's jeans, while his sympathetic father takes the last coins from his pocket to buy the coveted belt. Filled with anticipation, Yussef returns to the playground the next day dressed in his Cowboy gear. Having followed the rules, Yussef readies himself to face his nemesis, Randy, the Cowboy leader, and assert his right to be a cowboy. Aided by Raoul, the Indian Chief, reluctant Randy is held to his word and Yussef attains his dream. Faced with his new playground status, Yussef bids a silent goodbye to the Indians before joining the Cowboys.

Key Concepts

- Racial discrimination
- Problem solving
- Beliefs, culture and tradition

Focus questions

- What clues are we given about the genre of this film?
- How does the music help to tell the story?
- What is the film's central message?
- Do you agree with the message the filmmaker is making?
- Does this film make you feel uncomfortable? Why?

Title: Cracks

Style: Live-action

Country: USA, 2007

Directed by: Micah Baskir

Produced by: Jesse S Yang

Synopsis

Setting off on a familiar walk, a girl sets a challenge for herself: to step only on the cracks until she reaches her destination. Her first hurdle is a large concrete paver which she successfully jumps, then she needs to cross some grass, so she lays out books and magazines in her bag to create steps. However, when she reaches an intersection, there is no way to cross and stick to the rules of her challenge. Or is there? While waiting, she meets a skateboarder and convinces him to take her across the road on his back. Once safely on the other side, she continues her adventure, stepping only on the cracks.

Key Concepts

- Problem solving
- Imagination and play
- Place and space

Focus questions

- How does the soundtrack contribute to the style of the film?
- What games do you remember playing with yourself on long walks? (No cracks, dragging a stick, kicking a stone)
- How did the filmmakers show us what was happening without using language?
- Create a storyboard that extends the film by showing us a different game that the girl played on her way home.

Title: The Red Balloon

Style: Live-action

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: Michael Olesen

Produced by: Seth Bialick

Synopsis

One day in a park, there is a young boy who is sad and lonely. He meets up with a gentleman selling red balloons. Enlisting the sympathy of the balloon seller, he buys a balloon, writes a message and attaches it to the balloon before sending it up into the sky as a birthday wish for his mother.

Key Concepts

- Love
- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Beliefs, culture and tradition
- Mortality

Focus questions

- How do the filmmakers depict loneliness in this film?
- How do we know that the boy's mother has died?
- What other things do we do to remember people who have died?

Title: Who Saved the Moon?

Style: CGI animation

Country: Australia, 2006

Directed by: Luke Feldman

Produced by: Luke Feldman, SKAFFS

Synopsis

The animation opens with the moon at the bottom of a deep, dark well. A little boy comes along and sees the moon trapped inside. He wonders how it got in there. He speculates that maybe a cloud bumped it out of the sky. The boy decides he must save the moon, and returns with a fishing rod to fish it out. But no matter how hard he tries, he can't save the moon. Exhausted, he collapses onto the grass. As he lies there, he looks up and sees that the moon is, in fact, up in the sky where it should be. It hasn't fallen in the well after all – it's just a reflection in the water.

Key Concepts

- Illusions
- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Imagination and play

Focus questions

- How does the choice of colour impact on the mood and feel of the film?
- How does this film compare to the Oliver Jeffers book *How to catch a star?*
- How is the mystique of the night portrayed in the film?

Title: Imagination: Whale

Style: live action

Country: Japan, 2001

Directed by: Masahiro Takata

Produced by: Hidehiko Kawasaki

Synopsis

A teacher asks her class of young students to draw whatever comes into their mind. The students create crayon pictures of animals and insects; however one boy fills an entire page with black. His teacher becomes concerned and discusses the drawing with others. Meanwhile this student diligently continues to fill pages and pages with black crayon. He draws

at home and continues while inside the mental institution he has been sent to. This is where a nurse notices two pages with white sections and begins to piece all the paper together. The film ends with the drawn pages fit together to create a large scale whale.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Creativity
- Problem solving
- Adult expectations

Focus questions

- What sort of pictures are children expected to draw?
- How did the camera angles and lighting effects used help portray the boy's feelings?
- Why were the adults concerned for the boy?
- Has there ever been a time when you've been misunderstood? What happened?

Title: Chinese Whisper

Style: Live-action

Country: Germany, 2007

Directed by: Oliver Rauch

Produced by: Susann Schimk; Jorg Trentmann; credofilm

Synopsis

A teacher asks her students if they'd like to play a game at the end of the day. Miriam suggests playing 'Chinese whispers' and all her classmates enthusiastically agree. The pupils all sit around in a big circle and Miriam starts the game. Miriam turns to Luise, who sits to her right and whispers, "Paul never washes". Paul is a black boy (the only black boy in the class) who sits to Miriam's left. As the whisper gets passed around the circle, all the pupils laugh. Paul sits nervously, waiting to find out what the joke is. He is the last in the circle. When the whisper finally gets around to the boy before Paul, all the pupils wait with eager anticipation. What will Paul's reaction be? Will he be sad or angry? The boy charged with the task of passing the whisper on to Paul hesitates. He doesn't want to hurt Paul's feelings and thinks the whisper is mean. So instead he whispers, "Miriam loves Paul." And with that Paul gives Miriam a kiss on the cheek. Everyone laughs, including Miriam.

Key Concepts

- Problem solving
- Independent thought
- Racial discrimination
- Friendship

Focus questions

- What characteristics are shown by the boy who changed the message?
- When someone has unkind things said about them, what can we do and say to protect them?

Title: A Sunny Day

Style: animation

Country: Germany, 2007

Directed by: Gil Alkabetz

Produced by: Gil Alkabetz, Sweet Home Studio

Synopsis

The sun rises, just as it does every morning, but it soon notices that everyone is wearing hats, sunscreen and sunglasses. Everyone seems to be avoiding the sun these days, which makes it feel a little lonely. But the sun soon discovers there are plenty of reasons why

Key Concepts

- Sun protection
- Humour
- Music
- Creativity

Focus questions

- What is the central message of this film?
- How does the soundtrack add emphasis to the film's central message?
- How does the film make you think about music differently?
- How does the use of colour contribute to the style of the film?
- Have you ever experienced a time when you've felt left out and unloved, only to find out the reason later?

Title: Canary Beat

Style: stop motion animation

Country: Germany, 2006

Directed by: Jurgen Haas

Produced by: Jurgen Haas, SWR

Synopsis

After being awoken by an old grandfather clock, a canary in a cage catches a glimpse of itself in the mirror. After admiring his reflection, it begins to take on a persona of its own. The tick of the clock creates a beat and the canary and its reflection beatbox and whistle over the top of it.

Key Concepts

- Music
- Imagination and play
- Creativity
- Loneliness
- Illusions

Focus questions

- How do you create fun for yourself when you are alone?
- In what ways does music contribute to finding happiness?
- How do we use music to alter the way we feel?
- How does this film make you feel about birds in captivity? What would this bird be doing if it was free?

Title: A Horse Tale

Style: drawn animation

Country: Canada, 2006

Directed by: Rick Hazell

Produced by: Vancouver Film School

Synopsis

The owner of a horse jumps on its back, ready to start riding, but his frustration grows as the horse fails to respond. He tries pulling its tail and the horse sits on him. When the horse gives its owner a kiss, he thinks he's in luck, but then the horse only swallows his head. His last ingenious idea is to pull the horse along with a tractor and ride him that way.

Key Concepts

- Expectations
- Problem solving
- Determination
- Creativity

Focus questions

- What sort of music is used for the soundtrack?
- How does the music contribute to the style and feel of the film?
- When is the film set? How can we tell?
- Can you think of another solution to the boy's problem?
- Use a storyboard to create a different ending for the film.

Title: My Greatest Day Ever

Style: Live-action

Country: Australia, 2006

Directed by: Mark Bellamy

Produced by: Mark Bellamy and Jan Stradling, The Glorious Picture Company

Synopsis

On the morning of the football grand final Scotty wakes to be told his lucky sock is nowhere to be found. He pledges to stay on the substitute's bench as long as possible to avoid bringing bad luck to his team. But bad luck strikes anyway. The team's regular goalkeeper is unavailable and the Coach has decided Scotty must take his place. Scotty must battle his nerves and superstition to try and save the game for his team.

Key Concepts

- Superstition
- Hopes and dreams
- Participation
- Performance

Focus questions

- What clues are we given about where this film is set?
- What makes this film funny?
- Does this film make you think differently about superstitions and luck?
- Write about a time when you've surprised yourself!

Little Big Shots follow-up questions and activities: Program 4

Title: Oli's Chance

Style: CGI animation

Country: Germany, 2005

Directed by: Saschka Unseld and Johannes Weiland

Produced by: Carsten Bunte

Synopsis

On a late summer afternoon, Oli, plays dangerously with his toy train carriage on the railway tracks. A railway worker cautions Oli, but the little boy doesn't care. A train comes by and squashes his toy. Oli runs away from the man, crossing the tracks and narrowly missing being hit by another passing train.

He wakes up and spots a young girl, Nicole, by the tracks. He follows her to an abandoned carriage where two other boys also reside. Philip and Peter tell Oli their stories of playing on the train tracks: one boy played too close to the electrical wire; another rode his bike across the tracks just as a train came; and Nicole was spraying graffiti by a train when another rushed past and took her with it. It becomes apparent that these kids are ghosts; each killed when they were playing at the railway yard. It occurs to Oli that he might have met a similar fate. He asks Nicole if he, too, is dead, but she smiles and shakes her head. Relieved, Oli heads home.

Next, Oli wakes up in the railway yard again and we know that he has been very lucky not to have been hit by the train. Standing over him is the railway worker who cautioned him earlier. Instead of yelling, he hints at how his daughter Nicole was killed playing around the tracks. Oli knows that this is the same girl he met in his dream. He tells the railway worker that he knew Nicole once and says that she was nice. We get the feeling now that Oli has learnt his lesson.

Key Concepts

- safety
- mortality
- danger
- second chances

Focus questions

- Why have the film makers chosen such a naïve style of animation for a film with a grave theme?
- How does this animation make you feel? Does it trigger memories of times when you have been cautioned by adults?
- Is animation a successful method of conveying such an important safety message to children?
- Before watching this film, were you aware of the danger train tracks pose to children around the world? Would you like to find out more?

Title: Bread

Style: Live action

Country: Australia, 2007

Directed by: Paola Morabito

Produced by: Rachel Fiddes, AFTRS

Synopsis

A young Vietnamese girl is working in her family's bakery after school. She is sad because this means she's missed an important soccer game. When one of the girl's team mates comes in with her mother to buy some bread, the little girl feels even worse. She's embarrassed because she's let the team down and maybe also jealous because she wishes she could be like the other little girl and be free to play. When the other girl's mum says hello to the Vietnamese girl and points out that she was missed during the game, the Vietnamese girl's own mother becomes slightly hostile. She feels like she's being unfairly judged by the other mother, who perhaps doesn't understand the importance of work and family in the Vietnamese culture. Similarly, the Vietnamese girl's mum perhaps doesn't understand the importance of community involvement and sport in the Australian culture.

This film highlights the misunderstandings that can arise between cultures within a multicultural society, and the very subtle ways in which those misunderstandings are played out.

Key Concepts

- Cross-cultural understanding
- Beliefs, culture and tradition

- Parental expectations
- Rights and responsibilities

Focus questions

- There is very little dialogue in this film. How do we understand what is going on?
- Imagine yourself in the role of one of the characters. How are you feeling? Why?
- If you were the Vietnamese girl, what would you want to say to your friend and to her mother?
- Role-play a conversation between the two mothers.
- Why do you think misunderstandings occur between these two families?
- Has there been a time when you have been unable to participate in something because of family commitments? How did you feel?

Title: No Bikini

Style: Live-action

Country: Canada, 2007

Directed by: Claudia Morgado Escanilla

Produced by: : Judy Robertson, Claudia Morgado Escanilla, Unbound Films

Synopsis

The film opens with Robin backstroking serenely across a pool. She says, "I had a sex change once, when I was seven years old". Next, we see the pre-pubescent little girl trying on a bikini top, but it doesn't fit. She sighs. In the next scene, played out to light comedic music, the little girl emerges from the pool showers wearing just shorts. She says, "It was that simple." The swim teacher lines up the boys and girls in her new swim class and walks along in front of them, proffering a comment to each: "Nice", "Very nice", "Good hair", "Good smile". When she reaches Robin, she pauses, and comically and army-captain like, says to the little girl, "You! ... Straighten up!", then softens and says, "Nice". The teacher holds up a medal and announces that only one child will win this over the course of the lessons. All the children dive into the pool and play. While the girls stick together, we notice Robin plays with the boys - they accept her with ease. "I wasn't pretending; I just was. It was six weeks of boyhood; six weeks of bliss ... The water running over my back was simple, natural. It was, perfect." Robin wins the big swimming race. Afterwards, on the way out of the boys' change-room, Robin's main male swim competitor taps her on the shoulder and gives her a congratulatory thumbs-up. She happily slings the medal over her shoulder and heads towards her mum's car.

In the car, her mother reads out her swim report: "It has been a pleasure to have Robin in our program. Your *son* has successfully passed his beginners' badge and is ready for the next level. He shows great promise. We suggest you enrol him in our competitive swim program ..." The mother stops and turns to look at her daughter: "Robin? Have you been parading around half naked for six weeks? I can't believe this. You can't be trusted with a two-piece!"

The narrator continues: "How could I explain that it wasn't what I'd done, but what I didn't do. I hadn't lied because no one had asked. And that I had never, not once, felt naked."

Key Concepts

- Problem solving
- Determination
- Imagination and play
- Parental expectations
- Gender

Focus questions

- When do you think children start recognising and conforming to gender stereotypes?
- How was Robin treated differently as a boy?
- How did Robin feel about what happened? How did Robin's mother feel?
- Do boys and girls get treated differently in Australian society? Should they be treated differently? Why or why not?

Title: The Earlybird

Style: Cut out animation

Country: Australia, 2007

Directed by: Trace Balla

Produced by: Trace Balla

Synopsis

The lead character in this animation has got a new job at a café in town. The only problem is the traffic – it takes her ages to get to work because it's so heavy during morning peak hour.

One day she decides to ride her bike in to work instead, to see if it's any quicker than driving. Sure enough, the bike ride is a lot quicker because she doesn't get caught in all the traffic – in fact, she's early! Better still, the bike ride is a lot more enjoyable as it takes her away from all the angst out on the road, and along pretty bike paths.

Key Concepts

- Environment
- Sustainability
- Community
- Bicycling

Focus questions

- How effectively does this film convey its environmental message?
- How does the music emphasise contrasts in this film?
- How are transitions between the scenes made? Is this effective? Can you think of other examples of using this technique?
- What symbols are used to represent the alternate worlds of the car and the bicycle?
- What are the benefits of cycling for this character? What other benefits are there when people choose to cycle rather than drive to work?
- What do you think are the main messages conveyed by this film?

Title: AnaTommy

Style: documentary

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: Logan Cascia, aged 16

Produced by: Jeff Mondlock; Kelsey Dimond

Synopsis

This short documentary tells the story of Tommy, a young boy who went blind at the age of two. Despite his disability, Tommy lives life to the full, skateboarding, competing in athletics and achieving things that many full-sighted kids his age could only dream about. As Tommy talks about his life, we learn how he has adapted to his disability by developing his other senses and learning new skills. His friends and family also talk about how proud they are of Tommy and how people shouldn't pity him because he is a very determined and capable boy. In the end, we come to see that Tommy's so-called disability isn't a disability at all. In fact, Tommy is glad to be blind because this condition has forced him to become a more determined and motivated person.

Key Concepts

- Determination
- Problem solving
- Ability and disability
- Strengths and weaknesses

- Hopes and dreams

Focus questions

- Why might having a visual impairment motivate you to attempt challenging goals?
- Why don't Tommy's parents want people to 'help' him?
- Consider the music chosen for the film? Why have the film makers selected upbeat, well known songs?
- What are Tommy's strengths?
- What are your strengths?
- Why do you think Tommy is so determined to achieve his hopes and dreams or goals?
- In what ways is Tommy similar to and different from you?

Title: Herzog and the Monsters

Style: Animation

Country: Scotland, 2006

Directed by: Lesley Barnes

Produced by: Avril McAlister, Glasgow School of Art

Synopsis

Little Herzog almost gets lost in a forest full of stories, books and letters. An award-winning film about the wealth of language and the world we can create in it.

Key Concepts

- Creativity
- Language
- Literature
- Story-telling

Focus questions

What is your favourite story?

Why do you like this story?

If you could have a story published as a book, what would it be about?

Title: Glósóli – Sigur Ros

Style: live action music video

Country: Iceland, 2005

Directed by: Stefan Arni and Siggi Kinski

Produced by: Truenorth Productions and Arni & Kinski

Synopsis

A drummer boy sitting by the water considers his course of action, his heavy shoes tapping to the subtle beat. He walks up through the Icelandic fields and hills, gathering child followers – dressed in folklore and fairytale-style costumes - in ones and twos. First is a young woman wearing a bear mask with her friend. Next a solitary boy sitting by hot springs, a young blonde girl, a boy and a girl who kiss in the grass, a child skipping under the watchful eye of another. Two boys, about to torch an abandoned car, pick up the call to follow. The pilgrim band crosses a road, attracting two people making a cairn. They come across a sleeping child and lie down next to him in the rocks for the night. As the day breaks the band of children walk again, coming to within sight of a huge natural ramp. They wait as the drummer beats his drum. At last they charge up the hill. It becomes evident that the hill leads to a cliff overlooking the ocean. The children tumble into the air, flying in 'Peter Pan' style over the rocks below. However one boy, the youngest and last to join the group, has lagged behind. He hesitates at the edge of the cliff before jumping over the edge. We see his face close up and he is certainly thrilled by his experience. The leader looks back and he too is thrilled. The camera swings to the

horizon ahead. The film doesn't show whether the boy recovers his flight. The directors of the clip say he does, because he believes. Visually, the film is left "in the air".

Key Concepts

- Friendship
- Love
- Beauty
- Freedom
- Imagination and play
- Creativity

Focus questions

- What impact does the build up of rhythm and beat have?
- What emotions does the music evoke?
- Why are the children dressed in fairytale and period costume?
- What elements of the film have been taken from the traditional tale, 'The Little Drummer Boy'?
- How is unity and strength of purpose depicted?
- How is the film's climax represented visually?
- What do you expect to happen as the children leap? Why?
- Why does the last boy hesitate? What happens to him?
- Reviewers have read many different meanings into the film. (together we can fly, a leap of faith, spiritual release) What do you think is the film's central message?

Title: Snakebite

Style: Live-action

Country: Scotland, 2006

Directed by: Matt Pinder

Produced by: Stuart Dobbs; G-MAC

Synopsis

Sammy and his friend David are playing by the river when Sammy feels something in the water bite his finger. David tells Sammy it must be a snake bite and proceeds to describe the grizzly and agonizing death that's in store for poor Sammy. Resigned to his sad fate, Sammy says goodbye to David and gives him his pocket knife as a symbol of their friendship. He then walks home to tell his mum the bad news. Along the way, he imagines his own funeral and how he will be remembered by his classmates. He also stops by the cemetery and points out to the vicar where he would like to be buried. When Sammy gets home he is very morose. He dresses in a black suit in preparation for his burial and lies down on the kitchen table waiting for death to come. Sammy's mum and dad think he is being silly and tell him to get down and eat his meal. But when Sammy sadly points out that he won't be around for his baby sister's first birthday, they realise that Sammy genuinely thinks he is going to die. That's when Sammy's dad comes up with a novel solution. He tells Sammy he might be able to save him if he can suck the poison out of the bite. What Sammy doesn't know is that his dad has chewed up some salad leaves in his mouth to trick him into believing that he really has sucked out some noxious green gloop. Of course, we know that Sammy hasn't really been bitten by a snake – it's just his vivid imagination getting the better of him.

Next, David comes over to see if his best friend is still alive. When Sammy comes out fit as a fiddle, describing his dad's heroic actions, both boys run off to play, happy once again.

Key Concepts

- Imagination and play
- Mortality
- War
- Misunderstandings
- Love

Focus questions

- Of what relevance is Sammy and Tommy's initial war game?
- What references to war are made throughout the film?
- In what ways are the boy's understandings of death influenced by their knowledge of war?
- How do the boys demonstrate affection towards each other?
- Once Sammy thinks he is going to die, what things are of most importance in his life?
- How did you feel watching Sammy's families reaction to his impending death?
- If you were to write your own obituary, what would it say?
- Did Sammy's father handle the situation well? Why and why not?
- Sometimes when we're playing, someone gets hurt. What is the plan of action at your school and in your family?

Little Big Shots follow-up activities: Program 5

Title: Rita

Style: Live-action

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: Alison Teal

Produced by: Alison Teal Blehert-Koehn, Mehran Khan, Ruby Stahle, University of Southern California

Synopsis

A story based on a story by the director, Alison Teal Blehert-Koehn, who was raised around the world by her outdoor photographer/yoga teaching/travel guide parents. Alison's life was a chaotic whirlwind of adventure, however, it was not until her family set out on an expedition to Mt Everest base camp that she was able to experience what she had dreamed of her entire life. During one of the family's expeditions high in the Himalayas she befriended a seven year old Sherpa girl named Rita. Although they could not speak each other's language, Alison sneaked out to join Rita on a hiking and tobogganing adventure. The journey takes the girls right to Alison's dream world: a school. Suddenly she realizes - with her new friend and an interesting world right before her - nothing is missing.

Key Concepts

- Family
- Place and space
- Self awareness
- Beliefs, culture and tradition

Focus questions

- What did Alison learn through her friendship with Rita?
- In what ways was Alison's life different from yours? What is good about her life? What is good about yours?
- In what ways was the friendship a 'coming of age' experience for Alison?

Title: When I Grow Up

Style: Documentary animation (range of styles)

Country: USA, 2007

Directed by: Michelle Meeker

Produced by: Michelle Meeker, Talking Stranger Films

Synopsis

Interviews asking children about what they want to do when they grow up are juxtaposed with older people explaining what they wanted to do when they were young. Many of the dreams are unfulfilled. It ends with an older person describing happiness with her family life and a younger person deciding she is happy not to grow up for a while.

Key Concepts

- Needs and wants.
- Hopes and dreams
- Storytelling
- Ageing

Focus questions

- This film showcases a range of animation styles. Which did you find most effective? Which did you enjoy most?
- What were some reasons older people gave for not being able to follow their dreams?
- What do you think makes a life fulfilling?
- How would you like your life story to read?

Title: Amran's Film

Style: Live-action

Country: Ethiopia, 2005

Directed by: Aida Ashenafi

Produced by: Annie Gibbs, Ragdoll Foundation, UK

Synopsis

Amran walks out into a field with a man. She pulls a donkey loaded with baggage while the man pulls a well-stacked camel. Along the way they greet a group of women. A little further along, the camel stops and refuses to keep walking. Amran tries to pull the camel and even gives it a drink of water but it refuses to get up. They end up taking some of the load off the camel and it walks again. The pair bumps into another group of travellers and shares some of the load with them. Amran sees a group of boys playing and calls one to help her carry things. She arrives at her destination, delivering the donkey.

She tells an important man that the camel is sick. A group gathers around it as it lies on the ground looking sad. Amran tends to it, cooling it with a wet towel. The man Amran spoke to appears to be a healer and after laying his hands on the camel, sends the children out to collect herbs. When the camel starts to show signs of life, the huge crowd around it sings and claps to encourage it. The camel then stands up.

Key Concepts

- Beliefs, culture and tradition
- Place and space
- Caring for animals
- Needs and wants

Focus questions

- What impression are we given of the landscape of Ethiopia?
- What effect does the colour yellow have on the film?
- What is wrong with the camel? How does Amran know?
- What impact does watching this film without subtitles have?

Title: The Planning Lady

Style: Live-action
Country: USA, 2007
Directed by: Marty Shea
Produced by: Ian Bonner

Synopsis

An accomplished young girl sits before a careers counsellor who probes her about her future. The girl can't think of what she wants to be and when she comes up with ideas like garbage collector and Barbie maker, the woman tells her those are not proper jobs. After looking at posters on the wall, she comes up with ideas like astronaut and president. She is told "you can only be one thing" and goes away to consider her options.

When she returns, the girl tells the woman she wants to do *her* job. The guidance counsellor responds that it's not a good job and she's only doing it because she couldn't do what she really wanted. The girl enquires what that dream was and she says "a TV news anchor", then shares all the reasons her career went down a different path. The girl then takes the seat as counsellor and encourages all the other children with their particular dreams. She successfully inspires all the other children and also the counsellor, who practices reading the news inside a pretend television.

Key Concepts

- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Hopes and dreams

Focus questions

- What is the central message of this film?
- Why is it ridiculous for children to decide upon a career so early?
- How did the children in the film go about pursuing their careers?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future?

Title: The 3G of Us

Style: Documentary cut out animation/ mobile phone live action
Country: Australia, 2006
Directed by: Akhim Dev and Tim Richter
Produced by: Beth Frey

Synopsis

A six-year-old girl's parents split up after fighting all the time. She spends half her time at her dad's house and the other half at her mum's. When something exciting happens, like losing a tooth or going to the beach, she calls the other parent to share the experience with the help of a video phone. At the end, she asks her dad why they broke up. He replies that they were fighting a lot and asks whether she wants them to get back together. She replies that she doesn't as she's happier they don't fight anymore. It is an uplifting tale of how families can work in unusual circumstances.

Key Concepts

- Family
- Technology
- Communication
- Love
- Self awareness

Focus questions

- How does technology help you communicate?
- How do the girl's parents use technology to maintain a commitment to raising her together despite being separated?
- How does this effect the girl's day to day life?
- Why is she happy for her parents to be separated?

Title: Young Sloppy Brush

Style: Child-produced animation

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: : Grade 5 students at Dryden Elementary School, USA, and teacher Tricia Fuglestad

Produced by: As above

Synopsis

Young Sloppy Brush wasn't always a sloppy paintbrush. At the start of this film we're told how Young Sloppy Brush was born a magnificent, handsome brush who always painted in the lines. As such, he was very popular with female brushes and artists. All that changed one day when a careless young artist used YSP the wrong way. This artist ground YSP's bristles into the paper and didn't rinse him out after using him. As a result, YSP became what he is today: a dry, frayed messy brush who smudges young artists' paintings. Now no one wants to use YSP and he sits alone in the jar.

Key Concepts

- Rights and responsibilities
- Imagination and play
- Creativity

Focus questions

- Why and by whom was this film made?
- What is the film's central message?
- How does turning the brushes into people (anthropomorphism) create a better, more compelling story?
- Create your own story to illustrate a school rule. Work in groups to animate the best stories.

Title: Smile, My Friend!

Style: stop motion animation

Country: Latvia, 2007

Directed by: Dace Riduze

Produced by: Film Studio "AB"

Synopsis

Boy Piglet wants to impress Girl Piglet, but he's missing his two front teeth, and she thinks he looks silly. In an attempt to solve the problem, Boy Piglet steals Mr Beaver's big, orange false teeth. Mr Beaver uses his teeth to carve wooden items for sale, and they are essential to his livelihood. A distraught Mr and Mrs Beaver summon the animals of the forest to help them find Mr Beaver's teeth. Leading the investigation is Detective Owl. Boy Piglet also joins the search and attempts to throw Owl off the scent by planting false evidence and accusing other animals. Eventually, Owl figures out that Boy Piglet is the real thief, but by now he has taken off into the forest. When the animals finally find Boy Piglet, he is under a tree, trying to woo Girl Piglet with a bunch of flowers. Flattered, Girl Piglet giggles. When Boy Piglet smiles back, we see he is wearing Mr Beaver's teeth. At last the animals see that he is the real culprit. In the end, Boy Piglet's crime doesn't pay. When Girl Piglet sees his big, orange teeth she shrieks and runs away.

Key Concepts

- Self acceptance
- Love
- Honesty
- Needs and wants
- Community

Focus questions

- What is the central message of this film?
- What other things could Boy Piglet have done to impress Girl Piglet?
- What are the consequences of Boy Piglet stealing the teeth?
- How does it affect Mr Beaver, the community, Boy Piglet and Girl Piglet?
- Write an apology from Boy Piglet to Mr Beaver.

Little Big Shots follow up questions and activities: Program 6

Title: Snow ...What?

Style: Child-produced animation

Country: Australia, 2008

Directed by: Marisa Lai, aged 14

Produced by: : Marisa Lai, aged 14

Synopsis

Snow...What? is a humorous retelling of the familiar story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. Illustrated with clay figures and white-board drawings, this film follows a retelling by one young narrator to another when some elements of the story don't quite add up. Asking the mirror "who's the fairest of them all" is reinterpreted as an internet poll and the heart in a box is now bought back in an Esky. The claymation footage is interrupted with a "pause" sign in the corner as they stop mid-story to clarify unclear or unrealistic parts of the story.

Key Concepts

- Creativity
- Language
- Literature
- Story-telling

Focus questions

- What is your favourite fairytale? Why?
- Investigate some other 'fractured' fairytales, such as *Wait! No Paint!* by Bruce Whatley. What do these stories have in common?
- Write your own 'fractured' fairytale.

Title: Lost Without You

Style: Documentary

Country: Australia, 2006

Directed by: Fiona McGee

Produced by: : Beth Frey, Circe Films

Synopsis

Becky, Brittany and Laura (all in their early teens) live in Sydney's sprawling western suburbs. In this documentary they talk about the important role mobile phones play in their daily lives. They talk candidly about the way so many of their social processes are played out via this burgeoning technology; whether they're flirting, gossiping, teasing, bullying or even sharing their innermost fears and desires, it's all done via SMS. This documentary juxtaposes the girl's lively anecdotes with the apparent cultural 'deadness' of their suburban environment. They text faster than most people can type. They customise their mobiles the way their mothers customise their gardens, and when they go to sleep at night, their phones are tucked safely under their pillows. Becky, Brittany and Laura are barely in their teens but already mobile

phones are a natural part of their lives. They'd be lost without them. Each day millions of girls just like them freely flirt, gossip, hate and share their most personal dreams and fears over SMS, even though they may lack the courage to make an actual phone call or say it face-to-face. Set amidst teen talent factories and the blissfully quiet streets of Sydney's western suburbs, *Lost Without You* explores this social phenomenon and asks whether mobile phones are connecting girls to the real world or removing them from it.

Key Concepts

- Communication
- Relationships
- Technology
- Peer pressure

Focus questions

- What forms of technology do you use to communicate?
- How does electronic communication differ from face to face communication?
- What are some of the concerns and issues related to emerging communications technology? Consider bullying, privacy, safety and the concepts of home and rest.
- Are advances in communication technology advancing us as a society?

Title: Yasin

Style: Live-action

Country: USA, 2006

Directed by: Betty Lee Kim

Produced by: Charles Uy, Diedre Coucy, University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts

Synopsis

Yasin is set in the time after 9/11 and depicts an experience of loss as a man is accused of terrorism and taken away from his family. A boy wakes up early to find his father praying. They play fight and the father tells him he is the Arab Ali. They get along well. The FBI knock on their door and storm into the home. As they grab the father and wrestle the mother, Yasin hides in the cupboard. Later he heads off to school and is teased by other kids. They ask "what are you gonna do, have your dad bomb me?" and call him a towel head. He goes home and his mother is arguing on the phone about getting his father proper medical attention in jail. Yasin is driven past anti-war protesters and the busload of bullies. When he gets to school he has a physical fight. His mother is called in to school. Yasin is taken to visit his father in prison. His father tries to explain to his son that it's not good to fight and that boxing (like Ali) is different as it's a sport. Yasin tells him everyone thinks that he is a terrorist. His dad asks him if he thinks he could do such a thing and the son replies that he hates him. The father tells Yasin he must be strong in his heart and his mind and when the guards take him away, Yasin tries to run after him. The film closes with footage from a happier time.

Key Concepts

- Rights and responsibilities
- Conflict
- Parental expectations
- Racial discrimination

Focus questions

- What are the first indications for the audience that this is a film about Muslims living in America after 9/11?
- What techniques do the film makers use to make Yasin appear small when the FBI are arresting his father?
- How does the viewer know how Yasin is feeling?
- What comfort and advice does Yasin's father give him?
- What are some of the issues minority groups face in Australian society?

- Does this film change the way you think about Muslims living in Australia?

Title: We Don't Want No War

Style: documentary

Country: Sierra Leone, West Africa, 2005

Directed by: Edwin Daniel, Schwarbu Emile Kamara, and Jane and Rashid Peters, aged 12 to 19

Produced by: Listen Up! Youth Media Network, New York

Synopsis

Ten year old Sidibay introduces his beautiful home country to viewers, then explains that life in Sierra Leone hasn't always been so beautiful. "The country was not well organized. And the politicians in Sierra Leone ... everyone that sits in parliament, when he or she got money, used it on their own affairs. So the youths organized themselves and formed the RUF to fight against the government. But the RUF didn't end up fighting the government, but mostly against the people... In 1999, the RUF descended on the capital, Freetown, causing death and destruction." (we see an image of a man staring at the camera with a gun to his head and a woman being carried by three men). I was forced to go with them. I was a child soldier." Sidibay explains how he was recruited to the RUF when he was seen on the street crying. He explains how he had to obey their commands or face injury or death. In 2001, a year before the war ended, Sidibay escaped to Freetown with the help of an Italian priest. His life changed for the better. He joined an education program called iEarn, a worldwide community of youth who use the internet to communicate. Now he is receiving an education. One day, Sidibay would like to be a doctor and an evangelist, and help others to realise that in this world, they are not alone.

Key Concepts

- Child soldiers
- War
- Rights and responsibilities
- Second chances
- Education

Focus questions

- How did the film makers convey the happy times before the war?
- Why did Sidibay become a child soldier?
- What problems would the children who have been through war have faced once the war was over?
- What is being done to help the children who were soldiers?

Title: Voice of Children – Ngaweeyan Thookayngat

Style: Child-produced documentary

Country: Australia, 2007

Directed by: Richard Frankland and 1- to 16-year-old Aboriginal kids

Produced by: Anne Wood, Ragdoll Worldwide

Synopsis

Richard Frankland, activist and filmmaker, set out to make a film highlighting positive portrayals of indigenous youth. The film recognises the importance of listening to the voices of children and young people and gives examples of the many positive role models in the Aboriginal community and how these leaders influence the aspirations of Aboriginal children. The film features Aboriginal children interviewing a number of leaders in their community and taking pride in their community and culture. *Ngaweeyan Thookayngat* reminds us of the strength and power of Aboriginal culture and shows how connection with culture and community is something that builds strength, pride and resilience. It also reminds us of how Aboriginal culture has survived in the face of years of colonisation and disadvantage.

Key Concepts

- Cross-cultural understanding
- Beliefs, culture and tradition
- Music
- Reconciliation

Focus questions

- Why was this film made?
- What are the central messages of the film?
- Did the film teach you anything about Aboriginal beliefs, culture and tradition?
- Role models are very important to the children in this film. Who are some of your role models? Why are they important to you?
- Why is it important to belong to a community?
- This film is in many ways a celebration of community. In what other ways do we celebrate communities?

Little Big Shots follow up questions and activities: Feature film

Title: Darius Goes West

Style: Feature-length documentary

Country: USA, 2007

Directed by: Logan Smalley

Produced by: Margo Barbakow, Mike Duemmel, Julia Eisenman, Theo Gund, Eric Perlmutter, Jeff Scheftel, Greg Schenz, Grace Voorhis, Steve Voorhis, Nash Wicka

Synopsis

Darius Weems, a 15-year-old with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, has never left his hometown of Athens, Georgia. In the summer of 2005, he and a group of young college students travel across the country in a wheelchair-accessible van to test accessibility in America. Their ultimate goal is to reach Los Angeles and convince MTV's hit show *Pimp My Ride* to customise Darius's wheelchair. Along the way, they find joy, brotherhood, and the knowledge that life, even when imperfect, is always worth the ride. This film has won 25 film festival awards.

Key Concepts

- Friendship
- Independence and interdependence
- Ability and disability
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Quests
- Hopes and dreams
- Adventure

Focus questions

- Why did Darius and his friends decide to go on a road trip?
- How is this film similar to other 'road trip' films you have seen? How is it different?
- How did this film change or reconfirm your perception of America?
- Does this film change your attitude towards people who need wheelchairs to get around?

- What did Darius and his friends learn about life during their journey west?
- The official 'goal' of the journey was to get MTV to customise Darius' wheelchair on their show 'Pimp my ride'. What other, perhaps more important goals were achieved during the journey?
- In the film we are confronted with just how un-wheelchair accessible much of America is. Consider the places you have visited in your life. How accessible are they? Investigate the accessibility of some of Australia's best known tourist attractions.
- 'What we do and see; who we meet along the way make us who we are. It's the journey, not the destination'. How does the journey change who Darius is? How does it change the lives of his friends?
- How do you think Darius felt when he swam in the ocean for the first time? Write about a new experience or goal that challenged you? How did it feel to confront your fear? How did it feel to achieve something new?
- How do you think Darius and this film might inspire other people? Does it inspire you?
- What would you like to achieve in your life journey?

Additional material

The official website of the film <http://www.dariusgoeswest.com/film.html>

Education based program of the film <http://www.dgwknowaboutit.com/>

Further information on DMD and US charity <http://www.charleysfund.org/>

Muscular Dystrophy Australia <http://www.mda.org.au/disorders/dystrophies/dmd-bmd.asp>

Ryan's Blog (Ryan is a Melbournian affected by DMD) <http://www.ryans-cafe.com/>