

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Film Literacy Activities

Activity Sections



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Drawing and Making

slides 3-13

Filmmaking

slides 14-33

Investigating

slides 34-43

Talking

slides 44-47

Thinking

slides 48-59

Writing

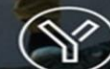
slides 60-65

Credits

slide 66

IT IS ALWAYS BEST TO
CHOOSE A TASK THAT IS
SLIGHTLY ABOVE YOU,
ONE THAT MIGHT BE
CONSIDERED AMBITIOUS
ON YOUR PART.

Robert Greene



YOUAREYOURREALITY

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Drawing and Making

Box Set



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose any film character.

Think about important elements of their personality and background that would need to be conveyed to an audience.

Design a model bedroom set for them that conveys this.

Think about: furniture, props, colours, even the music they like or books they might read!



Character Profile



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose a character from any film.

Create a character profile full of details that reveal something about them.

Look for: clothing, hair, make-up, tattoos, scars, accessories, props, colour, settings, actions, dialogue, relationships...

CHARACTER PROFILE

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER DO TO SHOW HIS PERSONALITY?

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER LOOK LIKE ON THE OUTSIDE?

NAME

CHARACTER TRAITS

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER SAY TO SHOW HIS PERSONALITY?

HOW DOES YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE, OR WHAT LESSON DOES YOUR CHARACTER LEARN?

A worksheet template for creating a character profile. It features a central stick figure character with a large head, small body, and a wide smile. The character is wearing a t-shirt and shorts. The worksheet is enclosed in a dashed-line border. There are four question boxes: one at the top left, one at the top right, one at the bottom left, and one at the bottom right. Each question box is connected to the character by a line. The top left question is 'WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER DO TO SHOW HIS PERSONALITY?'. The top right question is 'WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER LOOK LIKE ON THE OUTSIDE?'. The bottom left question is 'WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER SAY TO SHOW HIS PERSONALITY?'. The bottom right question is 'HOW DOES YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE, OR WHAT LESSON DOES YOUR CHARACTER LEARN?'. The character's head has a line pointing to a box labeled 'NAME'. The character's t-shirt has the text 'CHARACTER TRAITS' written on it.

Coming Attractions



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose any film poster and glue it to a larger piece of paper.

Label it with examples of how the poster convinces people to watch the film.

Look at pictures, words, layout, colours...



Comic Strip



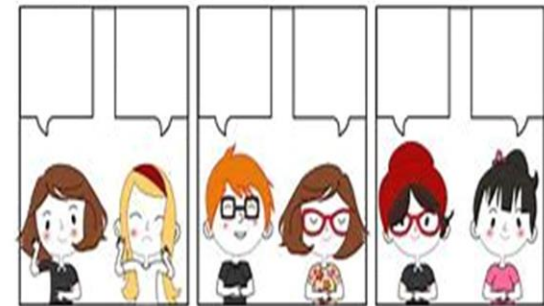
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Write a sequel to the film, or the continued adventures of your favourite character, as a comic strip.

You could draw this by hand, make a photo story compiled with still photographs, or use a free software package:

[5 Best Free Comic Strip Creator Software For Windows](#)



Dressing Up



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Dress up like characters from the film and recreate a scene or create a new scene for the film.

You could perform it as a play, or film it.



In and Out



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Draw or print out a picture of an interesting character.

On the **outside** of the picture, write things other people might say about that character.

On the **inside**, write down how they might be feeling or what they might really be thinking.

It's interesting to do this for a **bad guy**!



Mood Board



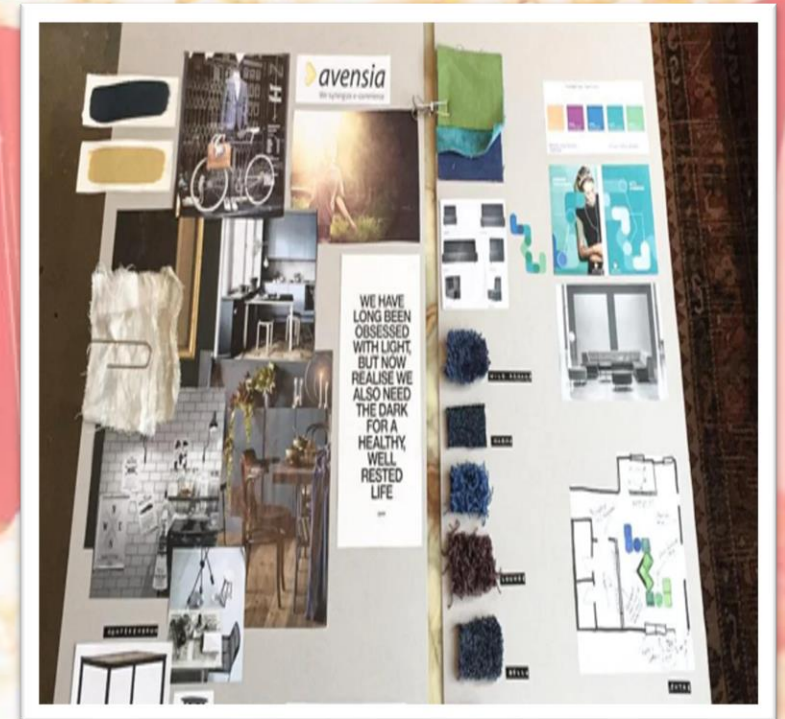
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Create a mood board of pictures/colours/words that represent the film you've watched in some way.

Here are some tips: [How to make a moodboard.](#)

And if you're not confident in your artistic skills, here's a link to a [Free Online Mood Board Maker.](#)



Multiple Choice



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Make a multiple choice quiz for friends about a film.

Host a quiz on Zoom after they've all had a chance to watch it.

Take turns and make it a weekly event!



Poster Child

Can you design a better poster for a film you love – or a film you’ve made?!

Remember to think about; colours; fonts; pictures; whose names you’ll include...

Don’t forget a dramatic tagline (e.g. “In space, no one can hear you scream.”)



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



Warm and Cold



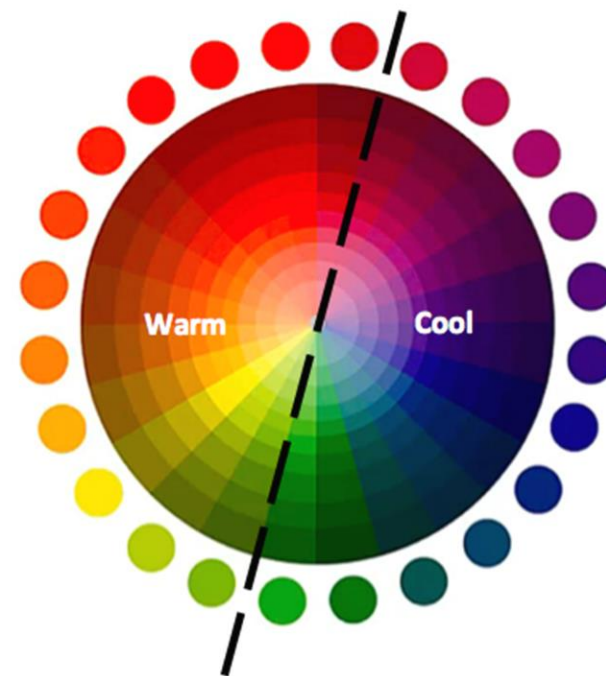
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Think about warm and cold colours.

Draw or make a costume or set design for a film.

Aim to make the character/atmosphere seem warm or cold.



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Filmmaking

Camera Operator



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Imagine that you are a camera operator and have been given excerpts from a screenplay by the director.

Your job is to choose the best camera shots for each excerpt.

Choose one of the boxes from the following slide. Take a photograph of each one to demonstrate the best shot for the moment.



ONE

- 1) Junior looks up at Britches McGee, the biggest bully in school, in terror.
- 2) She runs away as fast and far as she can.
- 3) We can see that all of the others have gone, and only one bag remains.
- 4) As Carlos tells his story, he becomes more and more excited and animated.

TWO

- 1) Sheila is in the middle of an argument with Bruce.
- 2) Bobby stares at his daughter, clearly angry, and in the middle of telling her off.
- 3) Louis looks around and sees that he is all alone.
- 4) The banging sound comes again and Franklyn stares around wildly, terrified.



THREE

- 1) Joanie stares straight at him. It is an uncomfortable moment.
- 2) Donnie is smartly dressed in shirt and tie and polished shoes.
- 3) We can see in the distance two people having a chat.
- 4) Ruthie's eyes narrow evilly.



FOUR

- 1) We suddenly realise we are seeing the scene through Shuggle McSnort's drunken eyes.
- 2) Regina and Florence laugh together. It is a moment of pure connection.
- 3) Dazzled, all Bruno can see right now is her smile.
- 4) Beanie and Boris circle each other warily as the others look on in thinly-disguised horror.

Film Critic



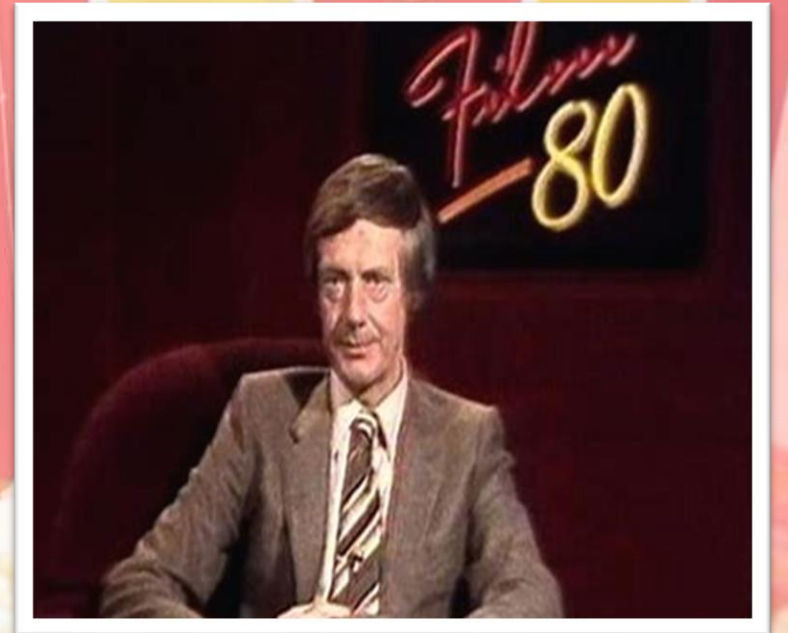
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Film a series of reviews for different films:
[Writing About Film \(screeningshorts.org.uk\)](http://screeningshorts.org.uk).
Edit them together to make a whole show.

If you're feeling ambitious, add music, effects,
clips from the films reviewed...

Can you think of a way for your show to stand
out?



Foley-ing Around



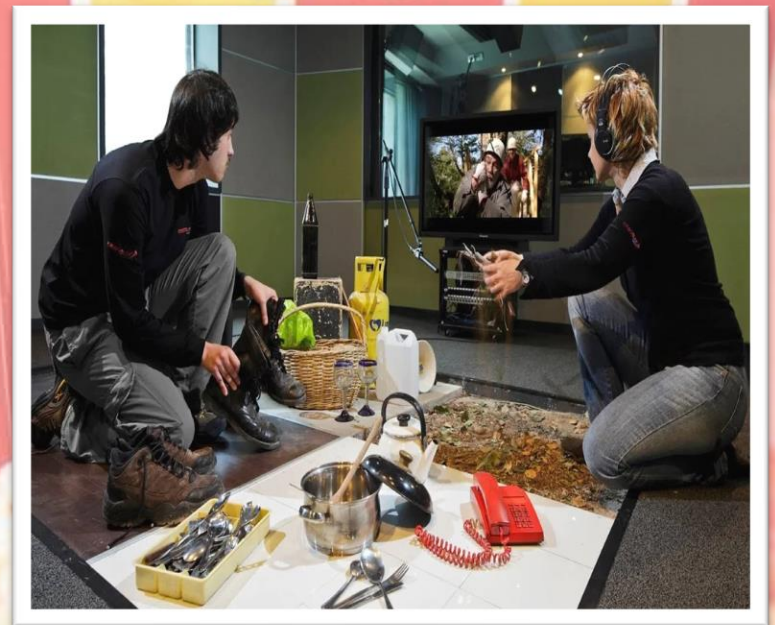
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

A foley artist is in charge of adding sound effects to a film.

They often have to be very creative (e.g. using cellophane to create crackling fire effects, or cracking walnuts for bones breaking!)

Make a short silent film. Record - or perform live - sound effects to go along with it.



Found Footage



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Use found footage to create a new film about an issue explored in a film you've watched, or an issue you think is important.

You can find archive footage in:

[Scotland on Screen](#)

[BFI National Archive](#)

[BBC Archive](#)

[British Pathé](#)



Lumière Minutes



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

This is a one-minute long film. Choose the location and subject of your shot, and exactly the right moment to start recording from one position (without panning). 60 seconds later stop the shot.

You're looking for beauty or interest in the everyday and "mundane".

You'll find more help here: [Lumière Minutes \(cinematheque.fr\)](http://Lumière Minutes (cinematheque.fr))



Mother Tongue!



Make a film in a language other than standard English – French, Arabic, Polish, Spanish, Mandarin – even Scots!

Can you add subtitles to it?

If you can't think of your own film idea, recreate a scene from an existing film. (Imagine the Scots version of 'Star Wars'!)



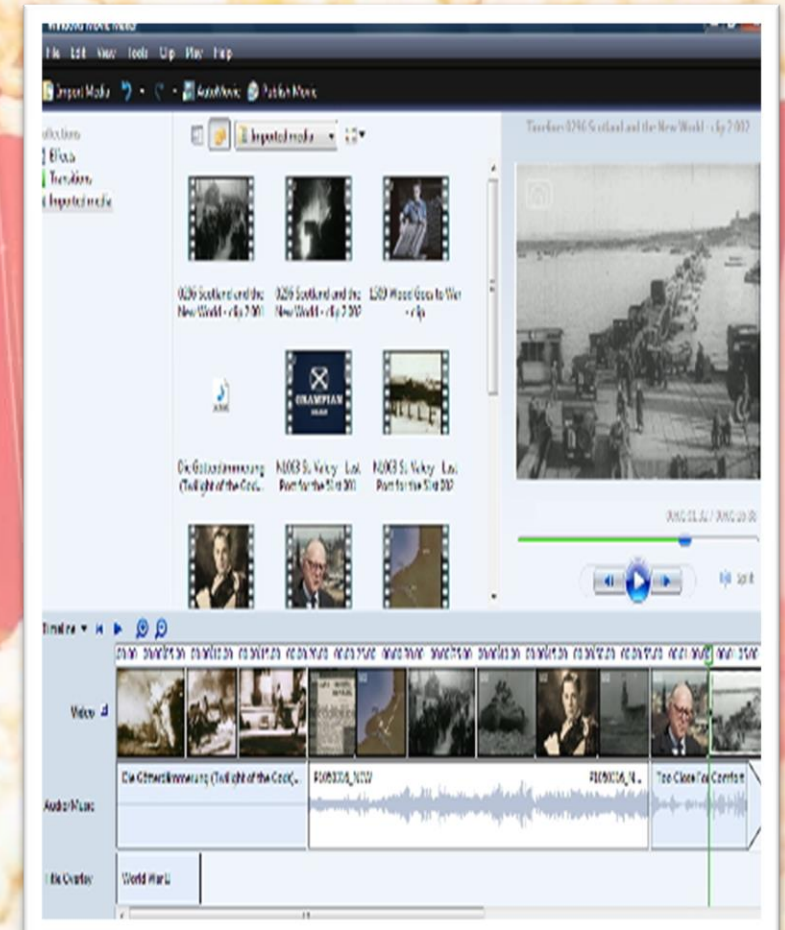
Moving Image Essay



Make a moving image essay. These are pieces of research that use audio visuals instead of words. Add a soundtrack and narration so the essay comes out as a film.

[A guide to creating moving image essays | Screening Shorts](#)

You can find downloadable footage on the Screen Scotland websites: [Screening Shorts](#) and [Languages on Screen](#).



Playlist Predictions

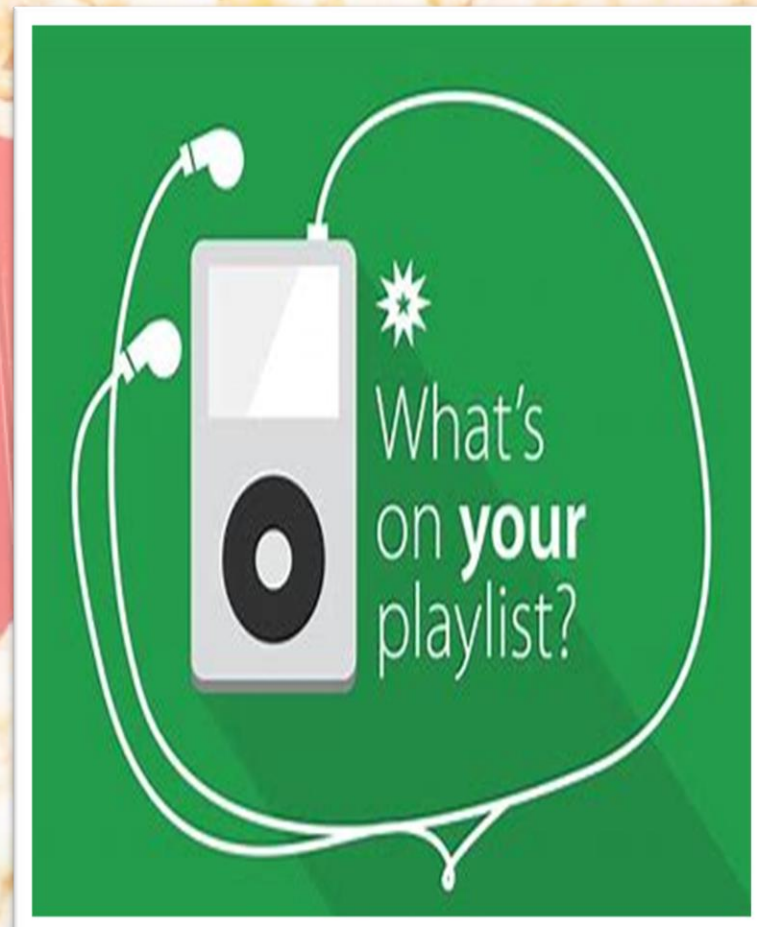


SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

What songs do you think a film character might have on their Spotify playlist?
Or what songs might they be listening to at certain times in the film?

Make a poster/list/film with your choices and give your reasons for choosing them.



Produce a Podcast



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Produce a podcast discussing the film or issues explored in the film. You could even interview characters or experts!

If the film plot fits, how about a true crime podcast?



Puppet Show



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Make puppets and film a puppet show related to a film you've watched.

It could be a sequel, new adventures of a character, or the remake of a scene (if it's a dramatic scene this is very funny with puppets!)



Respect the Rules!



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose a sport you love.

Write down everything you know about the rules and research the parts you're not sure of.

Film a beginner's guide to the sport with everything they'd need to know.



Running Commentary



Film a section of a sports event.

Add a commentary that shows your knowledge of the sport.

Or film and add the commentary to an alternative “sport” – like your dog chasing its ball!



Scary Mary!



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Use footage from a film to make a new a trailer.

Try to make the new version very different – like this horror version of ‘Mary Poppins’:
[Scary 'Mary Poppins' Recut Trailer](#)

You can find downloadable short films on
[Screening Shorts](#).



Six Shooter



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Create a six-shot film that ties into one of the following titles:

The Discovery

The Animal

The Rebel

The Box

Use at least three interesting camera shots.

TIP: for ease, you could just pause the video between shots, rather than have to edit footage as well.



Stop Right Now!

Try making a stop-motion film.

Use your own artwork, or toys, puppets, household objects...or all of the above!

This is a brilliant app: [Stop Motion Studio](#)



Them-Tube



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Imagine that a character from the film has a YouTube channel: what might they talk about?

Film their vlog.

TIP: A supporting character can be particularly useful in getting a different perspective on the film's events.



Visual Textbook



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Some of us learn much more easily watching and listening to something than reading it in a book.

Make a film explaining a complicated concept from Science, Maths, Geography...

Watch the Science Guy to see how he does it:
[Bill Nye Explains Climate Change](#)



Warm and Cold



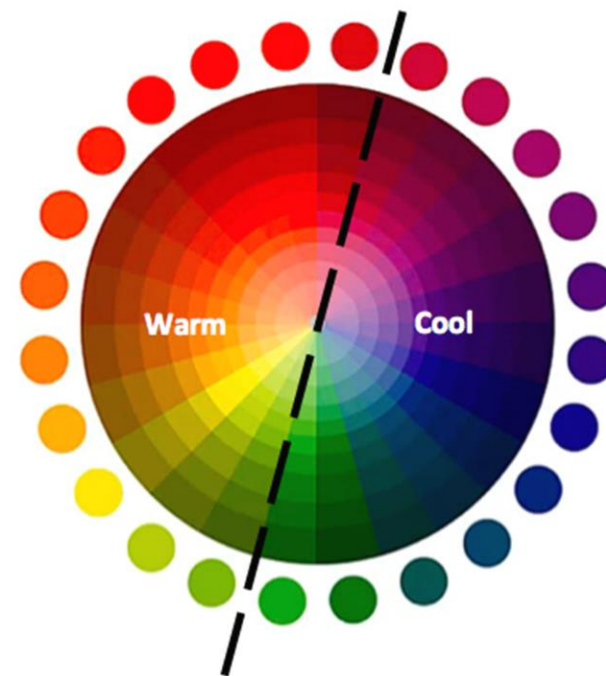
SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Think about warm and cold colours.

Make a film. Edit the colour filters to make the images warmer or colder.

How does it change the mood of the film?



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Investigating

Certification



Choose any film you know well.

Research its BBFC rating.

Create a poster that explains why you think the film received this rating. Give at least five examples from the film.



Certification Plus!



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose any film you know well.

Research its BBFC rating then research the film.

Were there changes that had to be made to ensure this rating?

Why do you think the director might have wanted that particular certification for this film?



Copyright



Research copyright laws. (This will get you started: [What the law says - The Copyright Hub](#))

What copyright laws do filmmakers have to follow?

Make a poster of **five** clear and simple rules that explain what a filmmaker would have to do if they wanted to use copyrighted material in their work.



Genre Conventions



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose a film genre. What **conventions** does that genre have? (*Conventions: similar types of character, characteristics, plot situations, settings, colours, fonts, actors, directors, etc. found in a genre.*)

Find three film posters from that genre. Label each poster with the genre conventions found in each poster. Do any of them do something different for that genre?



action



adventure



comedy



crime/gangster



drama



epic/historical



horror



musical/dance



science fiction



war



western



Film genres

Film Fact File



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Make a 10-15 page booklet filled with research and facts about a film you love.

You could include sections on: plot, actors, the director, special effects, costumes, settings, music, themes, trivia, favourite quotes, controversies about the film...

This is a good place to start: [IMDb](#) | [The Internet Movie Database](#)



The Internet Movie Database

Job Search



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Take the [BAFTA Guru Career Quiz](#).

Do some research into whichever job you end up with.

Find five key skills or tasks that the job needs.

What skills do you already have that connect to the job?

Present your findings as a PowerPoint, poster or pamphlet.

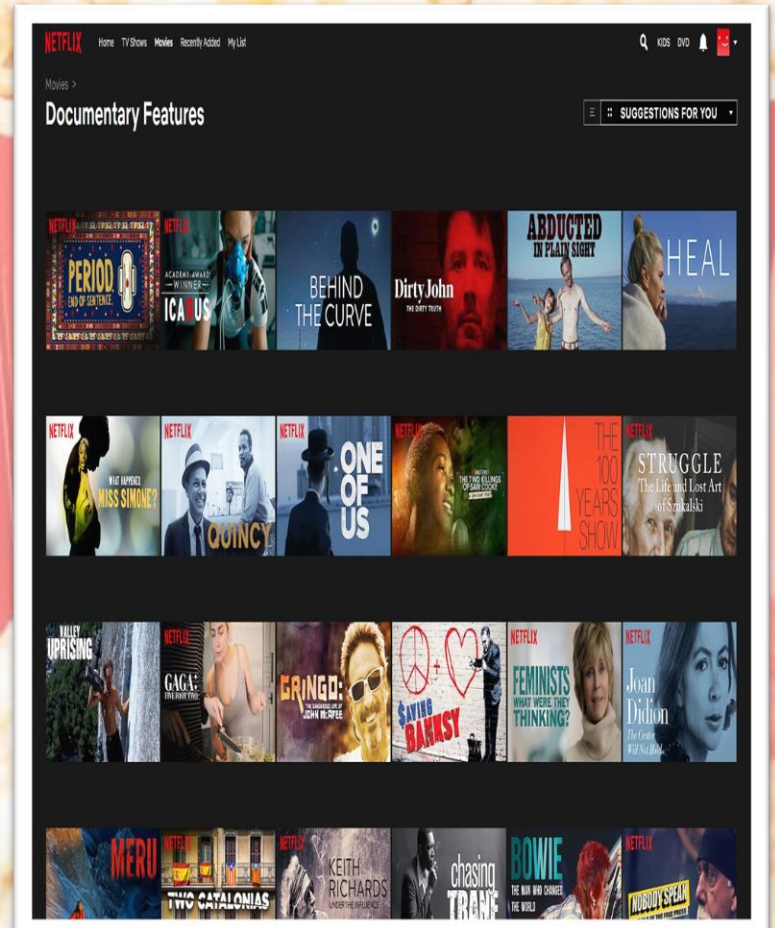


Real Life

Research an issue or real-life event explored in a film you've watched.

A documentary would be a really good choice. Netflix has some great ones!

Make a PowerPoint presentation or film and teach your family or friends about the issue.



What are your influences?



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Watch a film closely.

Could it be intentionally or unintentionally influencing the public to think or act in a certain way?

It could be positive or negative (e.g. promoting sexism/racism or encouraging people to take action, etc.)

Present your findings as a PowerPoint, poster or pamphlet.



The Year That Was



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose any decade from the 1920s onwards.

Research what the big issues in society were at that time (e.g. the Great Depression, World War II, apartheid, the civil rights movement, 9/11, #metoo...)

Look for films from that time period that reflect these societal issues.

Explain what the issue was and how the film reflected this.



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Talking

Moral Dilemma

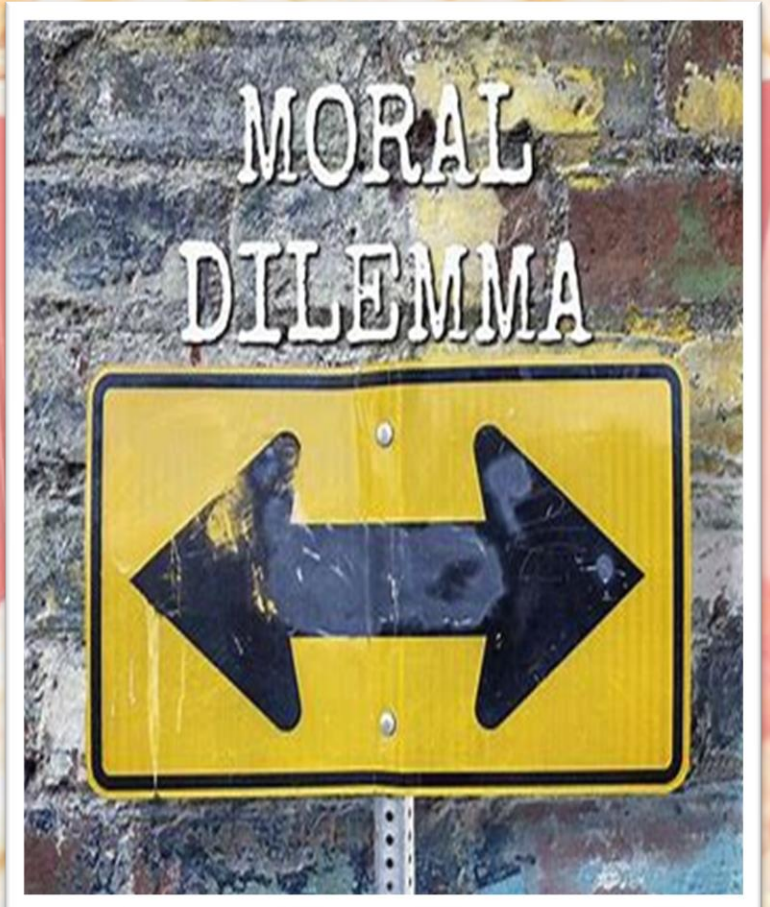


SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

With a group of friends or family, watch a film with a moral dilemma.

Assign sides to people and have a debate about the dilemma, using evidence from the film.



Speech! Speech!



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Is there a character in the film you've watched that you think could have something interesting to say?

Write a speech for that character.

Perform it for an audience. Remember to build yourself a podium!



You, the Jury



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose a film based around a trial.

Watch carefully and take notes of evidence,
like a jury member would have to.

**Before the verdict is given in the film, stop
watching!**

Deliberate the evidence and decide if the
characters are guilty or not guilty.



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Thinking

Me as the Audience



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Examining your opinions on films can teach you a lot about yourself.

What are your favourite films/film genres? Can you pinpoint what you like about them?

Can you think of a film you hated? Why do you think you felt this way? What do you find off-putting in films?

How do you expect men/women to behave in films? Why do you think that is?

What settings do you find most interesting/appealing? Why?

Do you have certain expectations of a film? What are they and why do you expect these things?



Representations



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Filmmakers make decisions about how they will create characters that represent a whole group (e.g. showing women as strong, or elderly people as full of life, or teachers as mean).

Choose a character that you think represents a group in society and ask yourself:

Who is being represented? What in their costume, actions, speech, etc. creates the representation?

Is it a positive or negative representation of that group?
What judgements do we make because of the representation?

How does this representation change our views?



Rolling the Dice



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

There are six main elements that make a film work and can be used to explore it in detail - the 3Cs and 3Ss:

Character **Colour** **Camera** **Story** **Setting**
Sound

Get a pair of dice.

Each of the 3Cs and 3Ss has a number. Roll one die to find out which C or S you'll be working on. Roll the other die to find out which task number(s) to complete on the next three slides.



1: Character

1. Pause the film when a character first appears. What do you expect them to be like? Watch the rest of the film: Do they change, and in what ways? Does your opinion of them change? Why?
2. What do the main characters look like? What do they wear? What about their hair, make-up, accessories, scars, tattoos...? What do these things reveal about the character?
3. Choose a character you find interesting. How do they speak and what do they say? How do they behave? How do they behave towards other characters? What does this teach you about them?
4. Who would you say is the main character? Why? Is the story really about this character or about someone else?
5. How would the story be different with another character added or a character taken away?
6. Which character do you find most interesting/relatable/sympathetic/(un)believable? Give reasons.

2: Colour

1. Pause the film for a particular scene. What colours do you see? When do the colours change and why?
2. What are the main colours used in the film? Are some more important than others? Why do you think certain colours are used?
3. Look at a character, and their costume/setting. Are there any colours associated with particular characters? Why have those been chosen?
4. How important do you think the colours are in the film? What would the film have been like in black and white, or in just one colour? What would change if you changed the colours of a moment or character?
5. Are unusual colours are used in the film? Why? Does it add to the atmosphere or make a certain element stand out?
6. Look up colour psychology. Can any of the suggestions there be applied to any parts of the film?

3: Camera

1. Choose a particular scene. What camera shots can you identify? What are the different shots used for?
2. Pick a moment and draw a storyboard of six shots from the film. Say what we learn from each shot.
3. Choose an interesting scene. When does the camera move and when does it stay still? When does it get close and when does it stay far away?
4. Watch the first couple of minutes of a film. What do the first few shots tell us about the story, the setting, the characters, etc?
5. Choose your favourite camera shot in the film. What do you like about it?
6. Find a short sequence from the film and imagine the effect of changing certain uses of camera framing, movement and angles.

4: Story

1. What happens in the story at the beginning, middle and end?
2. What are the most important things that happen (events) in the story?
3. How would the story change if events happened in a different order? Why would that be better/worse?
4. What do you think happened before the story began?
5. What might happen next, after the end of the story? How would you like the story to end or continue?
6. Does this story remind you of other stories? In what ways?

5: Setting

1. Where does the action take place? Why is the story set in this particular place?
2. When and how does the setting change? How does the setting affect the characters and the way they might behave?
3. When the story began, where did you think we were? How could you tell where the story was taking place?
4. Could the same story have happened in a different place? How do you think the story would have changed if it happened in a different place or setting?
5. Is there a particularly interesting setting? What is so interesting about it?
6. What impression do you get of a city/country from the film? Is it positive or negative – would you want to go there? Why (not)?

6: Sound

1. What type of film do you expect from the music and opening titles?
2. Choose two minutes of the film. How many different sounds do you hear? What are they?
3. What music is in the scene/film? When? How does the music make you feel? What atmosphere/mood does it create?
4. Are there any moments of silence in the film? When do they happen? Why do you think they've been silent there?
5. What music would you add to the film? Where and why?
6. Could you add your own voiceover to the film? Who would speak? What would they say?

Same But Different



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

When we watch a film and expose ourselves to other cultures (gender, age, family, education, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, political/religious beliefs...) we can examine our shared and different experiences - and find what we have in common!

What did you see in the film that is similar and/or different to your life in some way?

Can you find any similarities with something in the film that seems very different to your life/experiences?

Is there a character/setting/event in the film that you can really relate to? Why?

Did anything in the film change your opinion on a previously-held belief?



Same but **different**

Song Scene



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose any song.

Listen to the music carefully and study the lyrics.

Explain in detail what would be a good film scene for that song (either an existing film scene or one you've made up).



Sound and Vision



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Choose a scene in a film that features a song as an important part.

Listen carefully to the music and lyrics.

Explain in detail why that particular song works for that particular moment in the film.



Themes



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

What theme (message) do you think the filmmaker wanted the audience to take away from their film?

Try to identify the theme.

Give examples from the film of how the theme is shown.

Common Themes in Literature

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| acceptance | jealousy |
| anger | justice |
| being yourself | kindness |
| bravery | loneliness |
| bullying | love versus hate |
| compassion | loyalty |
| culture/tradition | money |
| death | overcoming challenges |
| dreams | past versus present |
| equality | peace |
| fairness | perseverance |
| family | pride |
| family struggles | regret |
| fate | reputation |
| fears | respect |
| forgiveness | responsibility |
| freedom | revenge |
| friendship | religion |
| good versus evil | sacrifice |
| gossip | sharing |
| gratefulness | sibling rivalry |
| greed | survival |
| growing up | teamwork |
| hard work | the American dream |
| honesty | time |
| hope | trying new things |

5 Ws



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Build your understanding skills by finding answers to these questions on the film you've watched:

WHAT happens in the film? WHAT is the most important moment?

WHO is the main character? WHO appears in the film? WHO is the film about?

WHERE do the events in the film take place?

WHEN do the events in the film take place?

WHY does: this thing happen/this character do this thing/this thing happen in this place?



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Writing

Crossing Over



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Imagine the worlds from two different films collided: like if Moana met Lilo and Stitch, or the Avengers faced off with the Justice League.

Write a story or script about what might happen.



Dear Diary

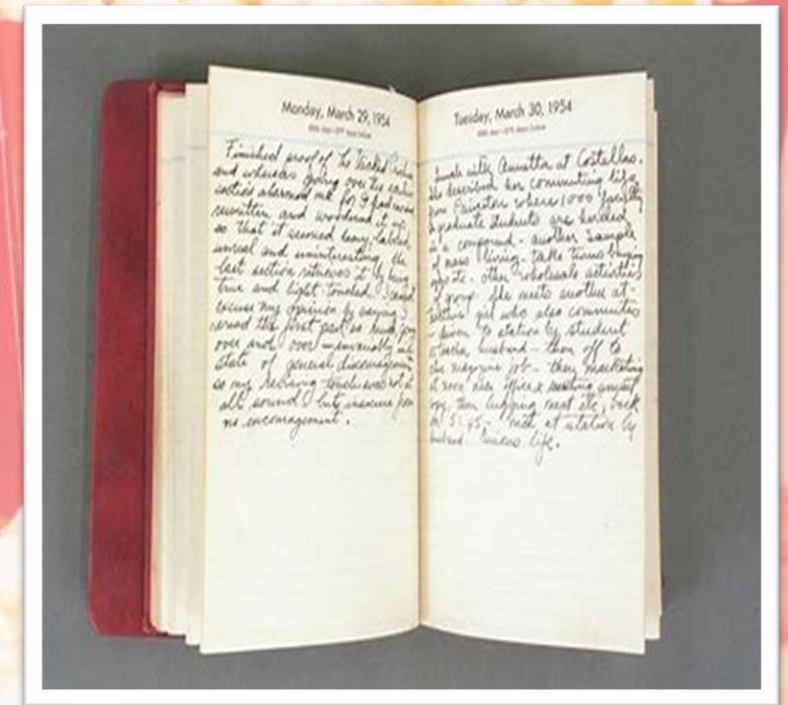


SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Write a personal account of the events from a character's point of view in the first person.

You could write it like a diary entry. Aim to include lots of description, thoughts and feelings.



Devil's Advocate

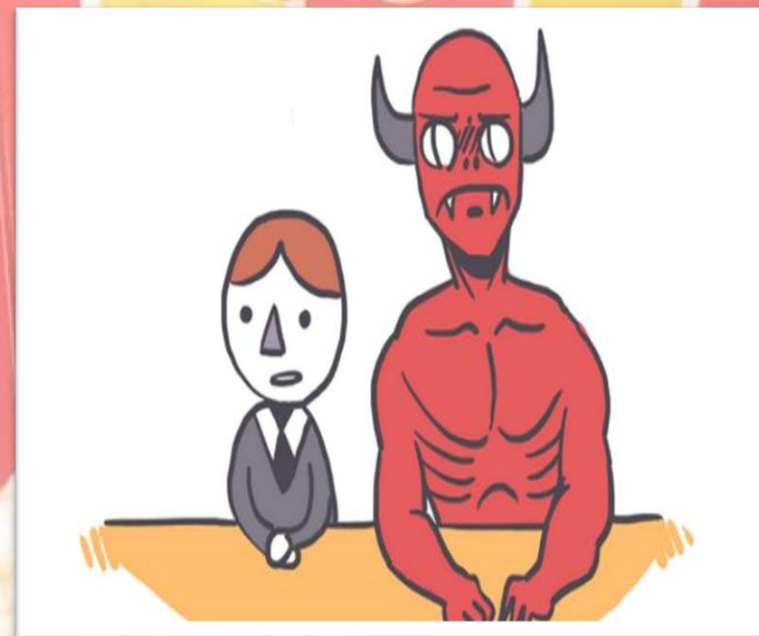


SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

A Devil's advocate is someone who argues against the popular opinion – like someone who defends the Devil!

Write or perform a speech defending the worst character in a film – like Scar from 'The Lion King' or the shark from 'Jaws'!



Hitting the Headlines



Imagine that you are a reporter and need to write an article for a dramatic event in a film.

Create a whole front page for the event – or film a news report, with interviews if possible!



Silent Movie



SCREENING
SHORTS

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Find a short film with no dialogue. You will find several on [Screening Shorts](#) and [Languages on Screen](#).

Write a script for a scene of the film – or the whole thing. What should characters be saying.

Try writing the dialogue in another language!



Credits

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA



SCREENING
SHORTS

Resource developed by Gail Robertson on behalf of Screen Scotland.

Some material adapted from Screening Shorts and Languages on Screen.

For more information on Film Education resources and opportunities, go to Home | Screen Scotland.