Transition Unit
Moving Image

NCCA
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Area of Study

Creativity, Events

Overview

This transition unit offers a step-by-step introduction to film and moving image. Providing opportunities for active and participative engagement, it outlines a structured programme of screenings, lesson plans and ideas, supported by study guides. The unit aims to develop learners' film awareness, communicative and critical skills and visual/media literacy. It is structured around three distinct strands, Genre: Teen Film, Irish Film, Alternative Film (Wider Visions), which can be explored in a flexible manner, drawing on students' and teachers' existing film knowledge and interests. It also introduces students to Ireland's national film industry with a view to raising awareness of Irish culture and future career prospects.

Related learning

Junior Certificate English—Media Studies and critical and communicative skills
Leaving Certificate English—Media Studies and the Comparative Study.

The unit has the potential to link in with other TUs in such areas as:
Enterprise/Events: planning a Film Festival for TYs in your area, linking in with the Irish Film Institute's touring programme, local cinema, press and media;
Personal Achievement: Using digital film camera to make own short film;
Work and the Future: Meeting film industry practitioners, work experience in production companies, film organisations; learning about industry (who does what?)

Outline of the unit

This unit is developed around three distinct strands:

1. Film Genre: The Teen Film

2. Irish Film

3. Wider Visions – film in other languages/world cinema/documentary

Depending on the interests of both the teacher and students, **a teacher may choose to do one or two strands in some detail or all three.**

The strands need not be taught in a particular order though most teachers start with the Teen Film as it is the most familiar to students. A similar flexible approach is suggested within each strand. Teachers should ask students to keep a Film Diary/logbook during this Unit, recording their own film experiences out of school and making recommendations to class throughout. (See Appendix 2 Diary/logbook)

Approach:

- Start by drawing on existing knowledge and experience of film in this category.
- Include film viewing—at least one 'film' for each strand with wider exploration of the chosen theme through related clips e.g. Mean Creek plus clips from other teen films.
- Use background to the strand as outlined in the relevant study guide.
- Continue to develop film language/visual literacy skills through key scene analyses as outlined in study guides.
- Encourage use of film language in discussion, feedback.
- Develop and communicate critical responses to films viewed.
- Invite group/individual/pair responses to film from IFI study guide Student Explorations.
- Include a film industry element in each strand e.g. production/location/who did what?/marketing.
- Offer project options at start of each strand (see Appendix for ideas) to contribute to overall assessment.

Study Guides:

A detailed study guide accompanies each strand (www.irishfilm.ie/educ/) and explores different aspects relating to the film/films recommended in the guide. The general approach used in each guide can be adapted to teachers' and learners' own film preferences.

Strand One: The Teen Film

The study guide for this stand of the Transition Unit focuses on Mean Creek (study guide www.irishfilm.ie/educ/index7_07_b.asp).

1. Introduction: Establishing context for The Teen Film

Using study guide, teachers establish context e.g. What does the term 'genre' mean? What genre of films do you like? What do you know of teen films?

Have you seen any teen films? Do you know of any particular stars associated with teen films?

2. Create a wider context for Teen films by looking at a few clips.

These could be from films students bring in themselves or from trailers of current films. (See study guide for some examples).
Discuss familiar elements of teen film e.g. setting, characters, events, etc.

3.Viewing of key film

Students explore Teen Film in detail through shared viewing of selected film. Teachers can use the worked example of Mean Creek or select another teen film of their choice and use the study guide as a framework for approaching the film. Viewing can take place in a local cinema in tandem with IFI touring programme, local screening programme at festival/arts centre or in school. Ideally film is screened in entirety.
Teachers may assign a task for viewing relating to the elements of the Teen Genre already covered: e.g. Consider how this film handles e.g. setting, character, events.

4. After viewing: Report back on the above in pairs/groups.

5. Further study:

Study guide: characterisation
Key Scene Analysis: Study of film from point of view of visual literacy e.g. cinematography, mise-en-scene, costume, direction, etc.
Theme: e.g. bullying. How does this film handle the theme? Discuss the behaviour towards and of the bully. Is the topic resolved? How?
Comparative study of other films dealing with similar theme/of same genre.
Classroom discussion: Which teen film do you prefer? Why? Vox pop.

Strand Two: Irish Film (Support Material: Study Guide: (www.irishfilm.ie/educ/index7_07_s.asp)

1. Suggest project options (see appendix 1)
2. Create a context for Irish film through questions such as:
   What's the last Irish film you have seen?
   Can you think of any Irish directors? Stars?
   What kind of stories do you expect to find in Irish films?
   What are the recognisable elements of Irish film, for example, soundtrack,   themes, actors, settings, directors, stories and so on.
   What do you know of the Irish film industry?
3. Draw up a profile of Irish film from results.
4. Present brief history of Irish film using clips and the study guide for background. E.g. *The Quiet Man, My Left Foot, In the Name of the Father, Intermission, Veronica Guerin.*

5. Viewing of key film: e.g. Bloody Sunday or Inside I'm Dancing

   Assign viewing task e.g. What kind of Irish film is this? How is Ireland shown in the film?

   Are there familiar elements present as discussed above?
6. Post-viewing group discussion
7. Key scene analysis (using study guide) with group focus on element of cinema e.g. Cinematography/Mise-en-Scène/Setting, etc.
8. Group presentation of favourite Irish film

Strand Three: Wider Visions (Support Material: http://www.ifi.ie/educ/index7_07_z.asp)

This strand introduces students to films from other cultures or in other languages

1. Suggest project options (see appendix 1)
2. Introduce concept of 'wider visions' with background input using study guide as resource e.g. Do you know any examples of alternative/arthouse films?

   What are characteristics of this type of cinema?

   Where can you see these films?
3. Present some examples and discuss in groups. What do you think of this type of film?
4. Choose key film from study guide or from teacher's own preference.
5. Present context for film, e.g. Maria full of Grace or film chosen by the teacher.
6. Viewing of complete film. Assign viewing task e.g. focus on setting/type of story/central character, themes.
7. Post-viewing discussion in groups. See study guide for discussion focus points.
8. Key scene analysis or thematic discussion e.g. 'drugs' film/martial arts film
9. 9.   Using study guide, look at other examples of alternative film e.g. under heading 'Women on Film' or discuss work of a particular filmmaker

Supplementary activities

Some other areas of exploration which have proved very popular among teachers include Short Films/Film Classification.

Short films

1. View a selection of short films (record Irish Film Board shorts from TV or research short film websites).
2. Follow-up activities could include
   • create a profile for lead character e.g. backstory/props/world of character;
   • create a follow-up scene or alternative ending for film;
   • write screenplay for your own short film 'in the style of' (see IFI 32A Study guide, screenwriting)
3. Filming Ireland: what story would you tell? Write a proposal for a short Irish film. Think about the genre/cast/location/style. Present in groups and

vote on best proposal. Now write the screenplay (see IFI 32A Study guide, screenwriting). **Film classification**

1. Look at the classification of the films you have watched. Check the website of the Irish Film Classification Office www.ifco.ie. How have these films been classified?
2. Compare these films with other films you have seen which have younger classification, using the website. Would you allow a younger brother/sister see these films? Why/not?
3. Discuss the merits of classification in groups – do you agree/disagree with it?

Actors and Directors

1. Students study a film or series of films produced by a particular director or featuring a particular actor under the headings of genre, characterisation, themes, etc.

Breakdown of the unit

45 hours in 10-12 weeks

Class contact time: 27 hours (2 x double classes per week) including guest speakers from industry where possible, or liaising with local festival/arts centre/IFI touring programme

3 x out of school visits to the cinema or in-school screening at start of each strand @ 2.5 hours each = 7.5 hrs

Independent research project: 10 hours

Aims

This transition unit aims to

• offer learners an opportunity for pleasurable, active and critical engagement with a wide range of films, including Irish film

• provide teachers and learners with an opportunity to broaden their knowledge and experience of film.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

- articulate a personal and critical response to film
- 'read' and interpret key scenes from a film using visual literacy skills
- recognise different film genres and other aspects relating to film studies e.g. style
- make informed decisions regarding personal film preferences
- share opinions with others and discuss these in pairs/groups in class
- feel confident and assured in their own enjoyment of film and able to communicate preferences and knowledge
- build up a profile of own film preferences through keeping film diary/logbook
- recognise the differences between mainstream films and alternative films
- locate venues for seeing alternative films
- compare the place of film as an art form with the place of visual art, literature, music within Ireland's broader cultural context
- compare the place of film as an art form with the place of visual art, literature, music within Ireland's broader cultural context
- relate the history and workings of the Irish film industry and how films are made here
- recognise key personnel from the Irish film industry, what they do and what their contribution has been
- be familiar with the range of film courses available and employment potential within the industry
- organise a film event in conjunction with IFI, local cinema or arts centre
- research, complete and present a project.

Key skills   How evidenced

Key skills	How evidenced
information processing	Viewing and interpreting selected films and related clips; Processing information relating to films from secondary sources e.g. reviews/listings/interviews/articles/study guide text; Processing information for research project, evaluating and selecting with a view to presentation; Processing opinions expressed during discussion and forming responses.
critical and creative thinking	Students will learn to articulate critical response to selected films, using the language of film to do so. They will learn to view critically and objectively. They will be facilitated to interpret film creatively and have an understanding of the creative process involved. In their research project, they can take creative approach to planning a film event or presenting their response.
communicating	Students will engage with film, communicate their ideas, share with others and develop critical vocabulary. They will communicate through oral and written activities. They will also be enabled to interpret what the filmmaker is communicating and offer critical response beyond 'I like/I don't like'.
working with others	Students will work in pairs, small groups, and as a whole class in responding to film. Projects may be individual or group. Film events can be organised by pairs or small groups. Outings to cinema/film event will promote social skills, working together and communicating with others.
being personally effective	Students will set themselves targets in terms of film related projects. Film events being organised by students e.g. screenings, mini-festivals, organising guest speaker will rely on their developing personal effectiveness. Achieving personal goals will be evidenced in their self-directed film projects involving research, processing information and completion of project. Peer assessment and feedback will be a feature of pair/group projects or classroom presentations.

Learning approaches

Experiential learning: students draw on their existing knowledge of film and moving image.

Activity-based learning: students learn through task-related viewing e.g. focus on lighting/sound/costume, etc. and report back; or focus on key scenes and report back.

Group work: discussing ideas, articulating responses, sharing opinions, learning from others' film experiences

Self-directed learning: students take responsibility for organising cinema trips, screenings, film selections, research projects;

ICT: use of ICT skills to research, access film websites, presentation skills, etc. Students may wish to make project presentations on film, carry out vox pops using digital technology etc.

Assessment approaches

Students will be assessed on their

a) **Film Log/Diary**

Student has kept a film log/diary throughout this unit, recording their own film viewing, preferences, friends' preferences, newspaper reviews, etc.

b) **Project Presentation**

Students make a short presentation to their teacher and peers—this could be visual/oral or written on an aspect of film which they have researched e.g. A vox Pop on teen films today: what do young people think?

Evaluation methods

Learners and teachers will evaluate the unit through a questionnaire on completion of the unit. Learners might reflect on these questions.

- What did you like about the unit?
- What did you not like?
- Which strand did you prefer?
- What skills did you develop?
- Has this unit changed your opinion about Irish film? About films from other countries?
- Will it encourage you to watch different films?
- If this unit was being taught to another class how might it be made better?

Resources

Resources and study guides to help you in teaching this transition unit are available on the IFI Website at www.irishfilm.ie. Look under Education and Publications. You will find four resources that relate directly to this TU.

- Transition Year module entitled Moving Image—an introduction to Irish Film
- Transition Year module entitled Mean Creek
- Transition Year module entitled Wider Visions
- Transition Year module entitled 32A.

Each study guide contains:

- introduction to film or film genre, for example, teen genre/Irish film/ alternative cinema
- detailed analysis of films including: characterisation, key scene analysis, film language
- student explorations: series of questions on topics or project work relating to film

Additional useful resources include:

Teaching Media Studies: Jill Nelmes
The Art of Watching Films: J. Boggs, D. Petrie
Screening Ireland: Film & TV Representation: Lance Pettit
Irish Film: The Emergence of a Contemporary Cinema: Martin McLoone
Irish National Cinema: Ruth Barton
Film Education: www.filmeducation.org.uk
British Film Institute: www.bfi.org.uk

Organisations and venues involved in film education programmes and events for young people include:

Briery Gap Theatre, Macroom, Co Cork. www.brierygap.com
Cinemobile: www.cinemobile.net
Clones Film Festival: www.clonesfilmfestival.com
Comotion Film Festival, Mullingar: www.comotionfilmfestival.org
Cork Film Festival: www.corkfilmfest.org
Donegal Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny: www.donegalculture.com
SGC Dungarvan/Enniscorthy: www.sgcdungarvan.net
Fresh Film Festival: www.freshfilmfestival.net
Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford: www.garterlane.ie

Irish Film Institute: www.irishfilm.ie
Kino Cinema, Cork: www.kinocinema.net
Roscommon Arts Centre: www.roscommonarts.com
Samhlaoicht Kerry Film Festival: www.samhlaiocht.com
The Source, Thurles: www.thesourceartscentre.ie
The Model : Home of the Niland Collection: www.modelart.ie
Galway Film Centre: www.galwayfilmcentre.ie
Young Irish Filmmakers, Kilkenny: www.yifm.com