

Filmmaking and the Citizenship Curriculum

Films often deal with issues that are intensely political and yet connect broader social issues to the lives of individuals. Through film there is the opportunity to explore one of the key citizenship concepts - the relationship between individuals and their communities and between the citizen and the state.

Essentially there are three approaches a teacher might adopt to use film as a medium for addressing citizenship. Each has implications for the way in which the film project maps on to the citizenship curriculum.

	Model 1 Understanding the role of the media	Model 2 Filmmaking as citizenship inquiry	Model 3 Film as citizenship education resource
Description	Focus on the process of making a film in order to give students an insight into the role of the media and how the media portrays issues, people and communities.	Focus on exploring citizenship issues in depth, using the film as medium for presenting findings, thoughts and further questions.	Focus on any area at all, citizenship or not, where the aim is to produce a resource that will subsequently be used as part of a broader citizenship project.
Curriculum links with citizenship programme of study	KS3 1h The significance of the media in society KS4 1g The media's role in society... in providing information and affecting opinion. Skills 2a,b,c and 3a,b,c.	Any area of section 1 in the citizenship programme of study selected by students, or any of the core concepts. Skills 2a,b,c and 3a,b,c.	Any area of the curriculum, for example, a video to be used as part of training on a peer led reading recovery project might refer to literacy guidance or the English programmes of study.
Advice	This would require an in depth focus on the process of filmmaking and the techniques used to affect opinions / interpretations. Exploration of values used when making a film and deciding how to portray issues, people, communities.	This model is less concerned with the process and techniques of filmmaking and more focused on gaining and using knowledge about issues that affect us as citizens.	This is about creating a resource that is fit for a specific purpose. The citizenship dimension will come into the broader project, not the filmmaking itself.

Skills

The curriculum links are most obvious when considering the skills requirements of the citizenship programmes of study at key stages 3 and 4. In relation to the skills of communication and enquiry, young people involved in filmmaking will:

- Undertake research into contemporary issues
- Think about the nature of significant issues or events
- Develop an opinion about issues being considered
- Discuss those opinions with others in the production group
- Be prepared to defend their own opinion against others
- Discuss issues around truth and objectivity

In addition the set of skills concerned with participation and responsible action will also be developed. Through such a project, young people will:

- Understand other people's opinions
- Think about why different opinions exist on the same issue
- Plan in groups to undertake a collaborative project
- Take on activities that fulfil their group role and contribute to the whole
- Reflect on the finished product and the nature of their participation.

Knowledge and understanding

Curriculum guidance makes it clear that whilst it is reasonable to use the skills as a primary planning framework for some citizenship projects, they must be developed in tandem with the knowledge components of the programmes of study. The three models outlined opposite indicate clearly that different types of filmmaking projects have differing implications for the curriculum coverage.

This booklet focuses mainly on model 2: Filmmaking as citizenship inquiry. In this approach students will gain new knowledge and deepen their understanding of the issues they are considering as they learn about filmmaking. Learning about citizenship issues is for a real purpose - to produce the film - and is therefore likely to increase both understanding and motivation.



What makes it citizenship?

Many issues that make good ideas for film projects will be controversial, heartfelt and link directly to young people's experiences. Many will therefore be readily identifiable with issues that are traditionally dealt with in schools' personal, social and health education programmes. A typical list of issues that might emerge from teenagers' concerns might include family problems, bullying, issues around sex and sexuality, peer pressure, drug taking, teenage pregnancy, exam pressure, personal identity - concerns which are rooted in individual manifestations of social issues and with social action. Any one of these could become a citizenship issue when it explores the connection with broader societal patterns and trends.

This connection with wider factors will often be political, but can also be concerned with economics or even with social factors. What should inform them all is a critical awareness of the context within which individuals confront dilemmas and undertake action. What takes a treatment of racism out of the PSHE bracket and into the citizenship bracket might be a consideration of an institutional response to an incident, or a look at other groups or organisations engaged with promoting or battling racism, or an acknowledgement of the roots of racism in the broader social context. This can be seen in *School Dogs*, where Josh relates his personal animosity to a teacher to the school

council structure, and in *Another Day Another Fight* where students are tackling the issues they have portrayed in the film through establishing a peer mentoring scheme.

A useful set of concepts has been identified by the QCA that will help to identify citizenship angles on any number of issues that might motivate young people. If an idea can be treated in such a way that it illustrates and engages with one or more of the following concepts, it might be said to be citizenship:

- Democracy
- Cooperation and conflict
- Equality and diversity
- Fairness, justice and the rule of law
- Rules, roles and rights
- Freedom and order
- Individual and community
- Power and authority
- Rights and responsibilities

Finally, effective citizenship education should develop a propensity for action. Exploring and investigating issues to make a film is a form of action in itself, but, having reflected on what they discover, pupils might also decide to undertake further action. This could impact on the latter stages of the project when pupils think about audience and dissemination. The film might be used to inform others, raise awareness of concerns, or to lobby for change.

Citizenship warm up activities

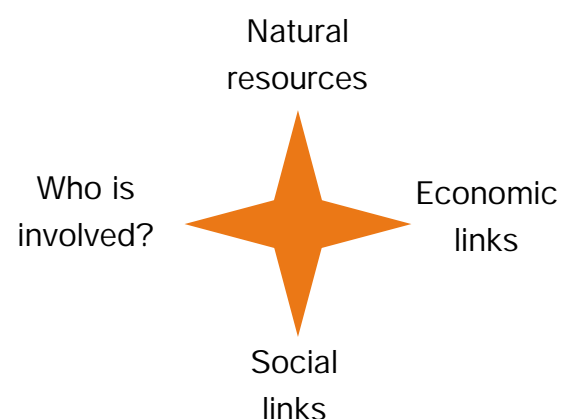
The following activities will help introduce citizenship themes and issues. They each provide ideas to warm up a group before discussing appropriate ideas to develop into a film.

Who's in the news?

Pick up a selection of newspapers or magazines and in pairs ask students to find an example of a good and a bad citizen. In larger groups ask them to feedback to other pairs about their suggestion, justifying their selections. A scribe in each group should keep a record of all the reasons behind the choices under the headings 'good citizen' and 'bad citizen'. These lists should then be displayed for the rest of the class to see. What kinds of issues are people focusing on when they think about good and bad citizens? Use these lists as a starting point for brainstorming themes and events as the basis for a film project.

What's in the news?

Starting with any newspaper story or clip from a news programme ask students to find out about the following issues in relation to the story:



Ask students to share ideas about how the story links with broader issues. Are there any issues in the school or in the local community that students could investigate with the same themes? Might any of these be suitable areas to explore as the basis of the film project?

What do we want to change?

Ask students to consult with others to determine the key issues they want to address in the school or in the local community. An easy model to adopt to encourage them to talk to other groups is to facilitate a 'snowball' activity. Model the activity with your group and ask pairs to repeat the process with their own form groups or with other groups throughout the school. The facilitator simply poses the question 'what needs to be improved in the local area' and asks each pair to come up with three things. Pairs then join together to create a group of four who repeat the exercise, pairing their initial separate ideas into a joint list of three ideas. The process is repeated from four to eight, then 16 and the whole class. The issues left over could form the basis of a brainstorming session for finding themes to explore through film.

Local issues

If the school can get hold of money for disposable cameras, ask students to take a whole film of pictures that illustrate important parts of their local environment, or that show important events or issues. Reporting back, discussing what was seen to be important and displaying or making collages from pictures will lead to discussion. Use this as a way to identifying key issues that could be tackled through film, or just good locations for scenes and shots.

Film links: Useful film related links

First Light

www.firstlightmovies.com

A website packed with ideas, activities and case studies about filmmaking for young people and teachers. Also has good links section to other filmmaking sites and a guide to funding.

BBC Education Web Guide

www.bbc.co.uk/education/webguide

If you are researching a particular subject, this website is useful in putting you in the right direction. It is also age level directed.

The British Film Institute

www.bfi.org.uk

The Education section contains activities, resources and services that are directly relevant to learning and teaching, especially in formal education.

The Greatest Films

www.filmsite.org

A major resource for educational purposes on classic US films, this award-winning, unique website has an interpretive, descriptive review, commentary and historical background for hundreds of classic Hollywood and other American films in the last century, featuring comparative 'greatest lists' and picks for 100 and 200 greatest films.

Internet Resources for the Study of Film and Television

www.pads.ahds.ac.uk

An excellent table of contents and links developed by Tony Pearson, Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, University of Glasgow.

English and Media Centre

www.englishandmedia.co.uk

The English and Media Centre serves the needs of secondary and FE teachers and students of English and Media Studies in the UK.

Film-Media-Resources

www.film-media-resources.co.uk

Produces curriculum resource packs for teachers of English, Media, and Film Studies.

MediaEd

www.mediaed.org.uk

Website for teachers, students and anyone else who's interested in media and moving image education in primary, secondary, further and informal education. Developed and managed by Media Education Wales in partnership with The Northern Ireland Media Education Association (NIMEA), The Association for Media Education Scotland (AMES) and 'In the Picture', the media education magazine.

Teachit

www.teachit.co.uk

An online library full of informative and useful free resources for English and Media teachers.

Citizenship education links:

Association for Citizenship Teaching

www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk

020 7367 0510

c/o The Citizenship Foundation (see below)

Citizenship Foundation

www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk

020 7367 0500

Ferroners House

Shaftesbury Place, off Aldersgate Street

London EC2 8AA

CSV Community Service Volunteers

www.csv.org.uk

020 7278 6601

237 Pentonville Road

London N1 9NJ

Institute for Citizenship

www.citizen.org.uk

020 7935 4777

62 Marylebone High Street

London W1U 5HZ

Global Express

www.dep.org.uk/globalexpress/

020 7278 1111

Room 2, Panos Institute

9 White Lion Street

London N1 9PD

School Councils UK

www.schoolcouncils.org

020 8349 2459

57 Etchingam Park Road

London N3 2EB

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First Light

Unit 407

The Custard Factory

Gibb Street

Birmingham B9 4AA

Tel: 0121 693 2091

Fax: 0121 693 2096

Email: info@firstlightmovies.com

Web site: www.firstlightmovies.com

Produced by CW Corporate Communications, Redditch