

REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH
Professional Development Programme
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MODULE: USING FILMS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH

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Time: 90+90 minutes

Level: Classes 9th and 10th

Learning Outcome:

- Participants understand the pedagogy of using films for teaching English in the second language context.
- Participants make activities based on films

Context:

- Participants are inservice teachers teaching classes 9th and 10th in the schools of Chandigarh Administration.
- They are doing the course for their professional development and need to be given understanding of new trends in teaching of English as second language.

Warming Up

What Happens Next?

Play a short (2 minutes) clip of the movie, then press pause. Have students guess what happens next—either in teams, as a whole group or as individuals. Play the next part to find out if anyone was right. Repeat using several different clips of the movie, or continue on with consecutive clips.

{Students use their powers of deduction and observation to predict the next part of a movie.}

Variations:

1. This activity is better if they haven't seen the movie before, but it doesn't matter too much if they have, as you can use it to test their memory!
2. Either create multiple choice answers or let the student come up with their own ideas.

Introduction:

Language teachers have been using films in their classes for decades, and there are a number of reasons why film is an excellent teaching and learning tool.

Inspiring and engaging students

Films can inspire and engage students when incorporated into student-centred learning activities through:

- increased student motivation
- enhanced learning experience
- development of learner autonomy
- enhanced team working and communication skills
- a source of evidence relating to skills for interviews
- learning resources for future cohorts to use
- opportunities for staff development (CPD)

Films are motivating and enjoyable

Motivation is one of the most important factors in determining successful second-language acquisition. Films and TV shows are an integral part of students' lives so it makes perfect sense to bring them into the language classroom. Films, as motivator, also make the language learning process more entertaining and enjoyable.

Films provide authentic and varied language

Another benefit of using film is that it provides a source of **authentic and varied language**. Films provide students with examples of English used in **'real' situations outside the classroom, particularly interactive language** – the language of **real-life conversation**. They expose students to **natural expressions** and the **natural flow of speech**. If they are not living in an English-speaking environment, perhaps **only film and television videos can provide learners with this real-life language input**.

Films give a visual context

The visuality of film makes it an invaluable language teaching tool, enabling learners to understand more by interpreting the language in a full visual context. Film assists the learners' comprehension by enabling them to listen to language exchanges and see such visual supports as facial expressions and gestures simultaneously. These visual clues support the verbal message and provide a focus of attention.

Variety and flexibility

Films can bring variety and flexibility to the language classroom by extending the range of teaching techniques and resources, helping students to develop all four communicative

skills. For example, a whole film or sequence can be used to practise listening and reading, and as a model for speaking and writing. Films can also act as a springboard for follow-up tasks such as

- discussions,
- debates on social issues,
- role plays,
- reconstructing a dialogue or
- summarising.

It is also possible to bring further variety to the language learning classroom by screening different types of film: **feature-length films, short sequences of films, short films, and advertisements.**

Given the benefits of using films in the language learning classroom, it is not surprising that many teachers are keen to use film with their students, and an increasing number of them are successfully integrating film into the language-learning syllabus. Until quite recently it was difficult to find pedagogically sound film material to help students improve their language through watching film, and teachers had to spend many hours creating their own materials. However, with the advent of the internet there is now a wealth of online resources for both language teachers and their students.

How to Use Films

- Length: No matter how keen students are on the film or subject matter, they can only cope with so much at once. Avoid overwhelming them. Don't exceed 5 minutes of film.
- Run through: Try and estimate the time students will take to do each activity and how many times you will need to show the clip again. Run through the whole thing, get your timing right.
- Set context: If your clip comes from a sequence or part of a story, set the scene before starting. Briefly outline plot, characters or situation if necessary. Show the clip with sound off for a few seconds to elicit where the people are, who they might be, what they are talking about etc.
- Have an aim: Why are you using the clip ? To look at request forms and practice them ? To give students practice in giving a commentary, telling a story ? To lead to a discussion on an issue ? Give a concrete task for students to complete while viewing so they use the language you want them to use and this helps them concentrate on the clip.
- Anticipate needs: Look closely at the script and clip. How much new vocabulary might need clarification Do some words need previewing before watching ? Can some

words/expressions be guessed from context? Do facial expressions or gestures/action help you explain language? Mark these points on your script and plan to use them, pause tape, involve students' with questions. Make a vocabulary task for completion whilst viewing, if appropriate.

Activities using films

Predict language

- Getting students to predict the language being used can be useful and motivating.
- Give students the script with key items removed e.g. expressions/verbs/key words/questions.
- View with sound off and students use the visual clues to brainstorm the missing items.
- View with sound to check predictions and complete. View again if needed.

Place description

Watch a scene from a movie. Ask students to describe what the place looked like, giving as much detail as possible. This could be a room, a street, a café or the outside of a palace. Make it a team game, getting students to write down all the details they remember. The team that writes the most, wins!

{Hone your students' powers of observation and oral description with this simple activity.}

Variation: Get students to draw a picture of the scene and explain in 50-100 words/ one minute what they've **drawn**.

Alternative Ending

Students are encouraged to practice story-writing techniques, in the present tense or future time, depending on what suits your lesson. Don't worry if some students have seen the movie already—knowing how the story really unfolds will only enhance their creative prospects. **Remember to be clear that they cannot simply write the real ending of the movie!**

Play a movie clip, which can be from any point in the movie. Afterwards, put students in small groups to create a new ending. They

- write it out
- present it in a graphic novel style with pictures and words.

The presentation part of the class involves the groups

- reading their alternative ending to the group

All in all, movies are an invaluable tool for teaching a topic while engaging and holding students' interests. So don't be afraid to use them!

Make teaching activities using the following video clip in your group.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWxkV24fGWM>

Make group presentations.