

DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival
for Young Audiences



Teachers' Resource Pack: **Once Upon a Time in a Forest**

Third and Fourth Level | Created by Ian Cameron

Discovery Film Festival: Sat 19 October – Sun 3 November 2024

DCA

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ONE CITY, MANY DISCOVERIES



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Introduction

Discovery Learning Resources give you exciting classroom activities to enhance Curriculum for Excellence delivery.

They are created by classroom teachers and education professionals.

Each resource aims to:

- support and extend working with film in the classroom
- help prepare teachers for a class visit to a Discovery Film Festival film and to extend the impact of that visit for delivery of CfE
- develop confidence in Moving Image Education approaches and working with 21st Century Literacy/moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from:
<http://www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk/resources>:

Once Upon a Time in a Forest

Dir: Virpi Suutari

Finland 2024 / 1h 33m

Finnish and English with English subtitles



Once Upon a Time in a Forest

Synopsis:

This film follows a group of young activists as they go head-to-head with the logging companies of Finland. Focussing on two of the leading activists, Ida (22) and Minka (28), it explores the unseen elements of activism, including the views of family and the planning that is undertaken to develop strategies for protesting.

Much of the film examines the need to plan and the behind-the-scenes discussion that the crew of young people undertake in preparation for the actions they eventually take part in. This is interspersed with footage of the protests, insights of the family life of the two main protagonists, and the coniferous forest environment they are trying to protect.

Themes: **Activism, protecting the environment, teamwork, communication.**

Advisory note:

Language – “Shit” is used on 3 separate occasions casually, in context of conversation about how bad things are for the environment. “Fuck off” is said in context of a worker angry at the protestors’ actions. “What a fucking trip!” is used in exacerbation by one of the protestors.

Content – An exposed breast can be seen for 1 sec in archive footage of a female protestor being dragged away. Reference is made, during conversation, to items of clothing bought from a “Sex Shop”. One of the protestors bathes nude in a river. The shot is an extreme long shot, and the view is side on and slightly obscured.

Teacher’s notes:

Ages 12+

This pack is aimed at Social Subjects and Literacy and English. The following Experiences and Outcomes are covered by this pack:

- *Social Studies (People, place and the environment):* **SOC 3-08a**
- *Social Studies (People, place and the environment):* **SOC 3-18a**
- *Literacy (Listening and talking):* **LIT 3-05a / LIT 4-05a, LIT 3-06a / LIT 4-06a**
- *ENG/LIT – Reading:* **LIT 3-15a/LIT 4-15a**



Before the film

Activity 1: **Research**

Resources: Access to dictionaries/online content

What is meant by the following phrases/words? Pupils should investigate the meaning of words and phrases below and consider the contexts in which they might be used. Are there clues that these words give us about the context of the film? What would you expect from a film that uses this terminology?

- Activism
- Carbon sink
- Biodiversity
- Bioeconomy
- Sámi
- Managed
- Lock-on Tactics
- Greenwashing
- Political lobbying



Activity 2: Discussion Points

Resources: Access to dictionaries/online content

Climate protesters throw soup on Van Gogh painting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BN-C5N60u_M

How to be an activist:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1yNnmHvukw>

How I turned my eco-anxiety into climate activism:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5d7auTIUyE>

Empowering today's youth by using social justice activism:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1Y1C6Z0AGs>

Greta and eight young activists reveal how the climate crisis is shaping their lives:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7dwoqJzETA>

Just Stop Oil protester thrown to ground by enraged motorist:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xEbGt8z9mc>

Malcolm X's fiery speech addressing police brutality:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_uYWDyYNUg

Trump encourages those at his rally to march to the capitol:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fiT6c0MQ58>

Large, peaceful protests roll across Manhattan, Brooklyn:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykgCfq6tWdo>

The following are questions to engage pupils with prior to the viewing. These can be used with some of the YouTube videos listed above, supporting pupils to investigate the themes that are explored by the film.

- What is activism? Is it different from protesting?
- What activism groups/individuals do you know?
- Why do people become activists?
- How do you feel about extreme activism techniques? Blocking traffic, climbing buildings, supergluing to trains/vehicles, chaining to trees etc.
- Is there a “right” way to protest? What are the Pros and Cons of the more extreme methods?
- Why do you think the UK government has changed the rules on protesting? How does this affect human rights?
- Should we care about protecting forests/the environment? Why?

After the film

Activity 3: **Tone/Symbolism**

Resources: Activity Sheet 1, pens/pencils, paper

Through this activity, pupils will investigate tone of the film by investigating how symbolism (one of the Ten Tools of Filmmaking) is used throughout the film to influence the tone and mood. Further explanation of the Ten Tools can be found here

<https://screeningshorts.org.uk/resources/teaching-activities/the-ten-tools-of-film-and-screen>

- Identify as groups the different tones/moods within the film.
- List techniques the director used to change the moods portrayed throughout the film. This might include some of the Ten Tools of Film, Camera, Colour, Character, Composition, Cutting, Sound, Sequence, Story, Setting, Symbol.
- What strategies/techniques does the director employ to persuade the audience?
- Who are the main “characters”? Why has the director decided to use them as the main characters?

Pupils should use the worksheet (**Appendix 1**) to record their thoughts. These should then be shared with the class or wider groupings.





Activity 4: **Organising Protest**

Resources: pens, pencils, paper

In the film, the audience is witness to the planning, decision making and teamwork that goes into organising a rally/protest. Pupils should discuss/ list topics that are important to them.

As a class they should vote on the most meaningful to them. Pupils should organise into like-minded groups of 3–4 to plan what they would do to highlight the issue their group is championing.

They could consider:

- What would be socially accepted ways?
- What would be inappropriate?
- What would be most impactful?
- Which strategies would gain the most publicity?
- Is bad publicity good publicity?

They should choose one of the strategies and fully plan it, taking account of resources they would need, how they would publicise it, location, timing etc.



Activity 5: “The Right to Protest is Dead”

Resources: pencils, paper

Links:

Public Order Bill: factsheet:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-order-bill-overarching-documents/public-order-bill-factsheet>

What is the new Public Order Act?

<https://news.sky.com/video/what-is-the-new-public-order-act-12878021>

Why protesters are worried about the police and crime bill?

<https://youtu.be/1jvaJQJ2oqQ>

Protest Measures – Police and Crime Bill Explained:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/6wdTpob3tj4>

PM defends laws used to detain anti-monarchy activists at King’s coronation:

<https://youtu.be/bbhNsLal5wM>

Pupils should consider the statement that was made by Otto in the film, “The right to protest is dead”. UK Law has recently been altered (Link above could be used to print out copies of the Public Order Bill Factsheet), changing what is considered to be criminal when protesting.

Pupils should divide into two groups, For and Against. In pairs, they should then prepare points for debate. They might find it useful to consider the viewpoints of Protestors/Activists, Forestry/Oil etc companies, workers, Police, Locals, Politicians, local residents affected by the protest.

Links to Websites of Activist Organisations

These links may be useful for the above activities, or for extending the learning of the pupils.

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/>

<https://seashepherd.org/>

<https://extinctionrebellion.uk/>

<https://oceanrebellion.earth/>

Films with Similar Themes

The following films also explore the views of activists and may be useful to complete a comparative study.

Sharkwater – Rob Stewart, 2006

Blackfish – Gabriela Cowperthwaite, 2013



Appendix 1

On the sheet, note down the tones at each of the stages listed. Consider the ways the director created this tone. You should consider the Tools that were used to create/symbolise this tone: Camera, Colour, Character, Composition, Cutting, Sound, Sequence, Story, Setting. Choose 1 or 2 tools for each sequence.

Sequence from Film	Tone Created	The Tools, and how they were used to create the Tone
Start of the film where the activists were in the forest.		
The planning of the protest at the Mill.		
Minka diving in the lake.		
The discussion with Ida and her Grandparents.		
Minka's discussion with her Grandmother while picking apples.		
Ida's Grandparents watching Ida's interview on television.		
Ida and Minka skiing down to approach the logging vehicle at night.		
The final discussion with the Forest Administration, discussing the process of suing the protestors.		



Evaluating this resource

We hope that you found this resource useful and appropriate.

Please do send us any film reviews, letters from your pupils, documentation of classwork and your feedback by e-mailing amaya.marco@dca.org.uk

Would you make a good Discovery Film Festival Case Study?

We are seeking a number of simple Case Studies in how teachers have used or are using Discovery films in the classroom across Curriculum for Excellence and across the Levels.

Any case studies that we develop would be intended for presentation on GLOW, the Creativity Portal and on Discovery Film Festival websites. We have a simple template to be completed and are keen to have classwork and documentation included.

If you would like to be a Discovery Case Study please e-mail amaya.marco@dca.org.uk