

The film, Billy Elliot, is fictionalized account of the 1984 Miners’ Strike, in England. The protests were desperate and violent. Under the rule of Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, approximately 20 mines or 'pits' were slated to be closed because they were deemed inefficient and unprofitable. About 20, 000 jobs were on the line and would have decimated the economies of many cities and towns in counties Durham and Northumberland in the north-eastern part of the country. The strikes turned violent on occasion and riot and mounted police were brought in by the government.

As you watch the DVD, Billy Elliot, take jot notes about the following. The information you write down will be used during the discussion evaluation.

Consider the following:

1. How do Billy’s father and brother define masculinity?
2. How is Billy socialized to conform the gender norms?
3. Billy’s family is working class and Mrs. Wilkinson is middle class. What impact might this have on their idea of gender roles?
4. Compare how men and women react differently as Billy challenges conventional gender stereotypes. What might have been different if:

a) Billy’s mom was alive?

b) the miners were not on strike

1. What is the connection between gender roles and homophobia as demonstrated in the film?