

FILMCLUB Guide to Anti-Bullying

Introduction

Bullying is a sensitive and complex subject. This guide has been designed to enable teachers to use the accessible and inclusive medium of film to promote discussion not only about bullying, but also about related themes such as friendship, standing up for what is right and the power of groups, positive and negative.

According to the charity BeatBullying nearly 70 % of children have had some kind of bullying experience. FILMCLUB is supporting BeatBullying by creating this resource and inviting young people to Band Together in the fight against bullying by taking action as a school or class, or even as an individual, to make bullying unacceptable.

To order your iconic blue wristbands in time for this year's Anti-Bullying Week (18-22 November) visit beatbullying.org/shop. BeatBullying is also providing loads of lesson plans, resources and ways you can get involved during Anti-Bullying Week. Download these free packs at antibullyingweek.org

"Film is an incredibly powerful medium and, as such, is the perfect vehicle to engage young people on tough, emotional themes such as bullying. Through watching and discussing films focusing on bullying and associated issues, we can start a conversation with young people about the right way to behave, show them that, whatever they are feeling, they are not alone – and highlight the importance of banding together to make bullying unacceptable. That's why BeatBullying is delighted to be once again working with FILMCLUB on Anti-Bullying Week."

Tom McLaren Webb, Deputy Chief Executive, BeatBullying

Running a film club in your school can enrich the curriculum and enable young people to explore a wide variety of issues, experience cultures beyond their own, and stimulate their imaginations. After watching a film students can comment during a post-screening discussion before writing reviews on the FILMCLUB website (which has a real audience of other young people) where they can analyse the film and develop their literacy and critical skills. Above all, students and teachers can enjoy the shared experience of watching and discussing a film together.

FILMCLUB is FREE for all state schools and offers free access to thousands of films and education resources. To join or for information visit www.filmclub.org, email support@filmclub.org or call 0207 288 4520.

The films

Primary:

A Bugs Life (1998, U) - Exciting computer animated film that follows Flik - a brave young ant who has to find a way to protect his colony from the brutal grasshoppers.

Sammy's Great Adventure (2012, U) – Sammy and his friends are captured by poachers and try to escape.

Hairspray (2007, PG) - comedy musical about Tracy, a "pleasantly plump" teen with a strong sense of social justice.

Secondary:

The Wave (2008, 15) - In an attempt to instruct his students about the dangers of fascism and autocracy, a German high-school teacher stages a bold experiment.

The Lord of the Flies (1963, PG) - Based on William Golding's famous novel about a group of boys stranded on a desert island who create their own brutal society.

Skateboards and Spandex (2010, E) - A hilarious, anarchic comedy about a group of bullied teenagers who decide to stand up and fight back against the bullies!

FILMCLUB Guide to...Anti-Bullying

A Bug's Life (1998, U) 5+, 96mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 5-7 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are bullying and being a good leader.



Why this film?

A brave young ant named Flik has to find a way to protect his colony from the brutal grasshoppers who rule over them. He recruits a group of insects and spiders he thinks are tough warriors - but who turn out to be out-of-work circus performers. Can they work with the ants to outwit the grasshoppers? Some adults might just see similarities between this exciting computer animated film and the much-loved western *The Magnificent Seven* but whether you spot that, or not, it's still a great story.

What the critics think

"This is an awesome film. I thought my favourite character was Flik he was brave and had faith."

FILMCLUB member Feba, aged 12

"The colours are vivid, the detail incredible and the vocal performances, led by Foley, are fine. Happily, it works on both a child's and adult's level."

FILM 4

Before the film

1. What makes a good team? If you were looking for people to be in a work group with you what kind of people would you look for?
2. Can you think of some jobs that would be impossible to complete by yourself?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. Why does the Hopper want to keep the Ants in their place, how does he do this?
2. Can you name some of Flik's inventions? Which ones work and which don't, why do you think this is?
3. What skills do the bugs in the circus troop have? Apart from in their show, how do they use these skills?
4. Who do you think is a better leader Hopper or princess Atta? Why?

Next Steps

1. Get your students' voices heard by joining FILMCLUB and writing reviews at www.filmclub.org
2. Draw a picture of your ideal team of bugs, what special skills or qualities do they have? You can use characters from the film or create your own.

Teacher Notes

1. Hopper wants to teach the ants a lesson so that they continue to provide him food. He does this by intimidating them with his size and strength. However he is aware that the ants have strength in numbers, he is anxious to stop them realising that they outnumber grasshoppers '100 to 1' and could stand up to him and his gang if they worked together.
2. At the beginning of the film we see lots of inventions Flik has created to help the colony, including a telescope and a machine to speed up gathering seeds. The ants do not take these inventions seriously. One of Flik's most successful inventions is the flying bird, the whole colony work together to create this, which helps them see the value of the plan and creates a harmonious atmosphere amongst the group. The bird only fails when P.T flea disrupts the group work.
3. Ask students to list the bug's skills i.e Rosie can spin webs to create nets, Dim is strong and can fly carrying others. These skills are best used when working together; we see this in the scene in which they rescue Dot from the bird.
4. Hopper has control over his group but he does this through fear and intimidation, he fails to listen to the ideas of others and this helps contribute to his downfall. Although Atta does not initially have full control of her group, she can't control Flik, she has a council that gives her advice and she listens to others. Eventually through incorporating all the skills in the colony she is able to lead her group to victory.

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Sammy's Great Escape (2012, U) 5+, 93mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 5-7 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are working together to overcome the bullies.

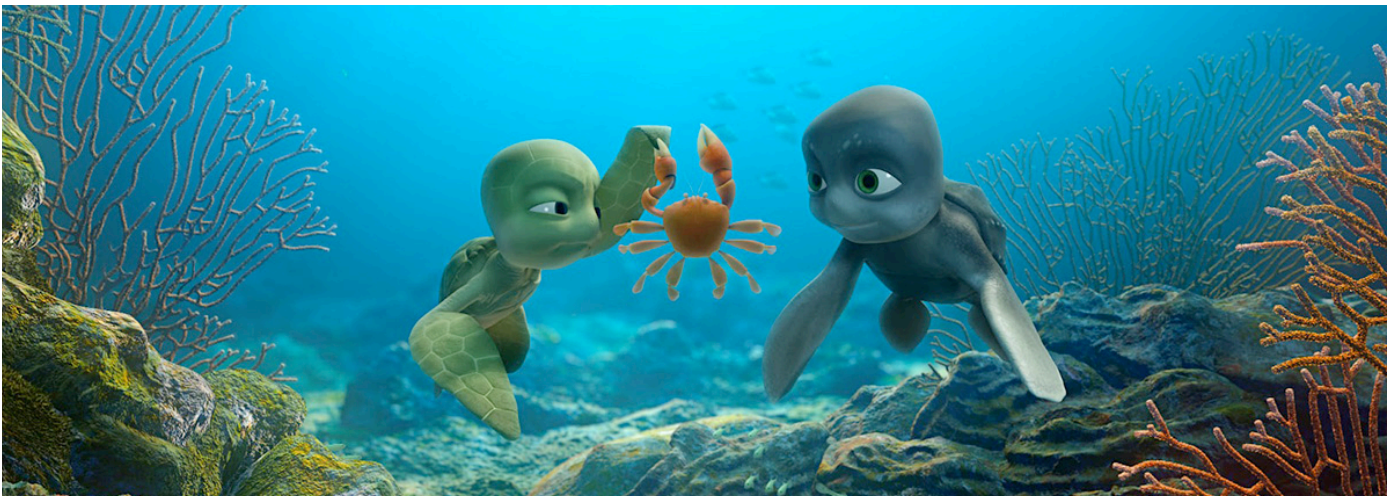


Image copyright: nWave pictures

Why this film?

In Sammy's first adventure, the effects of pollution made it difficult for the leatherback turtle to return to his birthplace. Now Sammy and his friend Ray have a new problem: poachers. While the two pals are relaxing with youngsters Ricky and Ella, they are suddenly captured and taken to an aquarium in Dubai. Though they make lots of interesting friends, of various species, Sammy and Ray are desperate to escape and be reunited with their loved ones. This exciting sequel continues Sammy's incredible story while making fun of humans and making us think about the consequences of our progress.

What the critics think

"Sammy, a green shell turtle, is born in a ditch and scrambles to get out. What lies ahead is an exciting journey, filled with highs and lows."

FILMCLUB Member Mary age 8

"Fast, fun and cutely done, it tells the tale of two turtles who wind up stuck inside a Dubai aquarium and have to pool resources with their fish-mates to escape."

Dave Aldridge, Radio Times

Before the film

1. Have you ever been to an aquarium or a zoo? What was it like? Do you think the animals were well looked after?
2. Can you think of a time when you've had to work with other people to get something done that you couldn't have done by yourself?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. Describe what happens to Sammy and Ray at the beginning of the film.
2. When Ray says "this is no paradise Sammy, it's a prison" what do you think he means?
3. Who do you think are the bullies in this film?
4. How do Sammy and his friends overcome the bullies? What lessons might we learn from this?

Teacher Notes

1. The turtles are poached from where they live on the beach and taken by boat to a huge underwater aquarium in Dubai.
2. Though all of the fish and marine life is looked after, fed and kept safe from predators, they do not have the freedom to do as they please (and to find their grandchildren). Students can discuss whether they think this is a good or a bad thing.
3. The humans behave like bullies as they like to collect animals for the aquarium by poaching them from the wild. Also within the aquarium Big D the seahorse wants everyone to do as he says and he enforces this using his two sidekicks Marco and Phillippe.
4. They hatch a plan where they all have to work together in order to overcome the bullies. The message is that if all the little guys work together they can beat the big guys.

Next Steps

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FILMCLUB Guide to...Anti-Bullying *Hairspray* (2007, PG) 7+, 107mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 7-11 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are racial integration, obesity and bullying.



Why this film?

Hairspray started as a movie comedy about a “pleasantly plump” in the 1960s who loved dancing and had a strong sense of social justice. Then it became a Broadway musical, and finally came this movie version of the musical. This film got headlines on release because John Travolta stars as the heroine's mother, that's right, her mother! In fact, he does a fine job, as do the rest of the cast in a film that has lots of good songs and makes its political points in the sweetest possible way.

What the critics think

“Scrap high school musical! This musical has all the nice catchy music but with a nice twist with comedy! This movie has something for the whole family!”

FILMCLUB member Aaron, aged 13

“Bright, campy and wonderfully light, Hairspray reminds us that fun comes in all shapes and sizes.”

Paul Clinton, CNN.com

Before the film

1. Have you ever felt something was unfair and you really wanted to change it?
2. Sometime people are bullied because of their race. What should people do if they think they're being bullied?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. What was happening in lots of American cities like Baltimore in the 1960s?
2. What makes Tracy different from some of her friends?
3. Does Tracy get bullied? How does she react? What qualities does she show?
4. Make a list of who you think the bullies are in the film.

Teacher Notes

1. Baltimore like many American cities still had a policy of segregation - where white and black citizens were kept apart. Throughout the 1960s there was a civil rights movement with black Americans demanding integration and equality.
2. Tracy stands out as being more plump than the other girls. However, she doesn't let this stop her from having a good time. She also believes that the authorities stopping the black and white kids of Baltimore from dancing together are wrong.
3. Tracy does get bullied by some of the other girls (Amber in particular) but she always remains confident in herself and her beliefs. Students can come up with a list of Tracy's qualities that make her great.
4. Amber and some of the other girls bully Tracy but it could be argued that some of the parents and other adults are bullies too.

Next Steps

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The Wave (2008, PG) 14+, 102mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 14-16 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are fascism and autocracy.

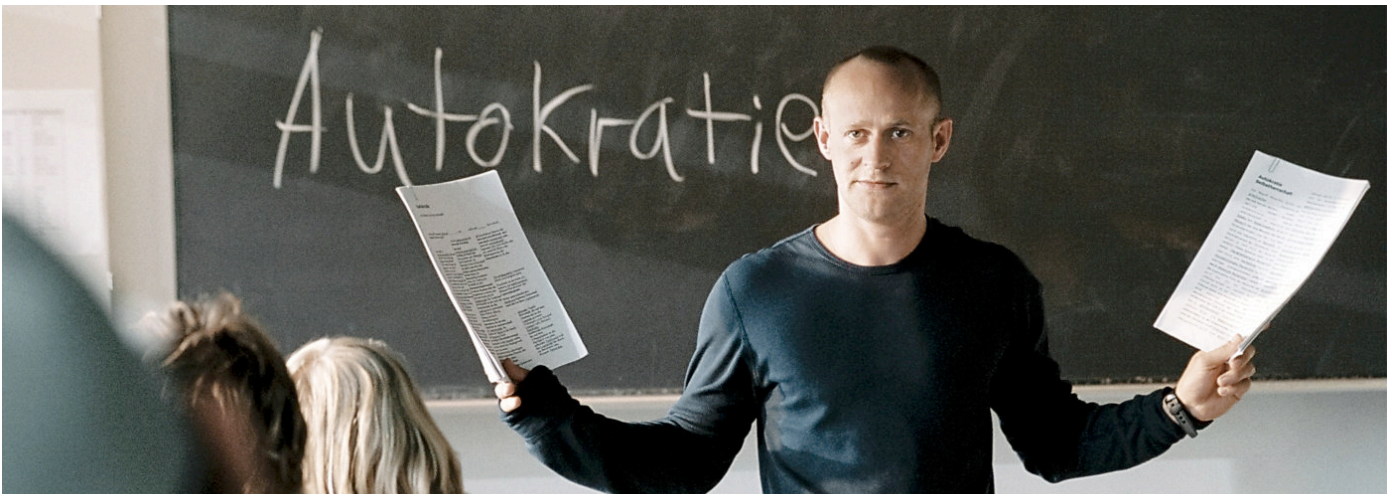


Image copyright: Rat Pack Filmproduktion

Why this film?

In an attempt to instruct his students about the dangers of fascism and autocracy, a German high-school teacher stages a bold experiment to show how easily such ideas can take root. He gets the pupils to take part in a practical project dubbed The Wave in which they will adhere to a set of strict new rules. But the students take to the project rather too eagerly and the Wave gradually infects the entire school in this compelling fable. In German with English subtitles.

What the critics think

"The Wave is such a powerful and moving film... Honestly, we are still in shock from watching the film due to the enormity of the ending."

FILMCLUB Member Cara, age 14

"Nevertheless, as a disturbing indictment of the course that could be taken by disaffected youth, The Wave makes a big splash."

Tim Evans, Sky Movies

Before the film

1. How can you identify different social groups?
2. Why do you think people enjoy being part of a group?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. What benefits do the students initially experience from the experiment? How do they describe it?
2. How does being part of The Wave alter the student's behaviour and the way they treat each other?
3. Are there discrepancies between the way students talk and write about The Wave and their actions?
4. Several characters try to stop The Wave, how do they do this? Which method do you consider most successful?

Teacher Notes

1. Most of the students initially enjoy Wenger's new structure. They particularly seem to enjoy the sense of unity that and power being in a group gives them; they describe the 'bizarre energy' that 'everyone was caught up in'.
2. The students taking part in the exercise are more supportive of each other; we see them intervene when Tim is harassed. The staff and parents also report an improvement in the many of students' behaviour and work. However they also begin to exclude those that are not part of the experiment. Karo, in particular, finds her self isolated and threatened when she questions the group's practices.
3. In their written accounts of the experiment the students state that as part of the wave they are free of social, class and economic differences, they write that they no longer feel the need to bully others. However in previous scenes we witness richer characters buy or intimidate their way into positions of authority within the group. Students also write that they now stand for ideals and are more disciplined which is contradicted by the vandalism and violence we see in earlier scenes.
4. In class Mona questions the nature and method of the wave, later she and Karo attempt to launch a campaign via email and then flyers to stop the movement. Eventually Marco asks Wenger to recognise how far the exercise has gone and call it to an end. Students can debate this and consider what methods they might use to stand up to groups both social and political.

Next Steps

1. Get your students' voices heard by joining FILMCLUB and writing reviews at www.filmclub.org
2. Write the report that Mr Wenger asks his students to produce on the last day of the project. Try writing one account from the point of view of a student that is enthusiastic about The Wave, such as Tim, and one account from a more sceptical character like Mona.

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Lord of the Flies (1963, PG) 11+, 92 mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 11-14 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are rules, leaders and bullies.



Why this film?

Thirty English schoolboys are washed up on an uninhabited island after a mid-air disaster. In the first days that follow, they seem to be sensibly co-operating in order to survive until help arrives. Soon, though, they begin to turn on each other - and the attempt at recreating civilisation collapses completely, with murderous consequences. The film was made with a non-professional cast, who lived together on a remote island during the shoot.

What the critics think

"I think this film is brilliant because it's got a good story to it. When I watched it me and my friends were all a bit frightened at the end. I'd definitely recommend this film."

FILMCLUB Member Jade, aged 10.

"Brook's adaptation is an encroaching nightmare of innocence lost, following Golding's thesis about what happens when civilization breaks down and man's true nature is revealed."

Scott Tobias, The Dissolve

Before the film

Imagine that you've been stranded on a desert island with no adults. What would be the good things? What would be the bad things?

What sort of person would it be good to have as a friend in that situation? What are their qualities? Do you think you have any of those qualities?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. What are the reasons why Piggy gets bullied? Do you think that it's fair?
2. Make a list of characteristics of the main characters (Piggy, Ralph, Jack) What are their strengths and weaknesses? Can you identify with any of them?
3. Is Ralph a good leader? Why / why not?
4. Do you think the story could have been different or was it always going to end the way it did? What would need to happen to ensure everyone got along?

Teacher Notes

1. Piggy is bullied for the way he looks (he's fatter than the other boys and he wears glasses). He's also mocked for often being an intellectual and the sensible one, who wants to do the right thing rather than just run amok.
2. Students can come up with lists of what they think Piggy, Ralph and Jack are like. They may need to think hard to give strengths for Piggy (e.g. he's very fair) or weaknesses for Ralph (e.g. he doesn't stand up for what he believes). The students may be able to see similarities between themselves and certain characters. A further question might be to ask what would've been different if it were a group of girls that had been stranded.
3. Ralph is honest, fair, kind and considerate - good qualities in a leader - but he also has the conch which symbolises power. Ultimately though his civilizing influence is lost to Jack who has a more savage instinct.
4. Like Golding's book, the film is quite pessimistic about fear, hate and violence being inherent in the human condition. Students can debate whether they think any different rules or another approach would have made any difference.

Next Steps

1. Get your students' voices heard by joining FILMCLUB and writing reviews at www.filmclub.org
2. Come up with a survival plan for if you were stranded on a desert island. What would be your most pressing issues (think food, shelter, warmth etc). How would you prevent a situation like that which happened in Lord of the Flies? Can you ensure that one person doesn't get to take over and bully the rest of the group?

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Skateboards and Spandex (2010, E) 11+, 16 mins

Enrichment Focus

This film resource is aimed at 11-14 year olds. Suggested subjects for discussion are bullying and getting revenge.



Why this film?

Ever found it hard to fit in? Bullied for being a geek with glasses, Chris has already tried switching schools but the bullies at this new school are worse. He decides it's time to stand up to them once and for all and this time he's not alone. It's Geeks Unite! As the science nerd, the fat boy and the poet join forces to hatch a plan with hilarious consequences.

What the critics think

"The film showed how a small fry managed to overcome a school bully and make some friends. The moral of the film is you don't know you have something until you use it!"

FILMCLUB member Ted, aged 14

"A film with a message that also manages to entertain, Skateboards And Spandex is a good showcase for some promising new talent."

Jennie Kermode, eyeforfilm.co.uk

Before the film

1. How can you tell if a person has a talent or skill?
2. Can you think of a time when someone has surprised you with what they were able to do?

After the film: Discussion Questions

1. How do other pupils at the school help Tucker bully others? Why do you think they join in?
2. Tucker is a nasty bully, what do you think of the way Chris and his friends take revenge on him? What was good about their actions, what could they have done differently?
3. What motivates Chris and his friends to make their voices heard and stand up to Tucker? Do you think the film is trying to convey a moral message through their words

Teacher Notes

1. Other pupils at the school do not intervene when Tucker attacks other pupils, they also laugh when he makes jokes at the expense of others. When Chris is on stage they join in with Tucker's chant of 'stutterface'. They may be motivated by fear of Tucker or the fear of becoming isolated from the group and the risk of being bullied themselves.
2. Through performing the song, Chris and his friends work together to show that they have hidden talents and show themselves as different from the way Tucker has labelled them. This is brave and clever, however, they also devise a plan that humiliates Tucker. Whilst this is funny in the film it could be seen as negative as it is another form of bullying.
3. James lists all the people, including themselves that Tucker has bullied, as a way to engender an idea of collectivism and strength in numbers, going on to say that they won't 'be pushed around anymore'. Chris also states in his rap that he 'deserves to be heard' which could be seen as the message the film is trying to convey. Chris also says that all it takes to win in the end is 'some special serum, a hot girl and the best of friends' emphasising the importance of friendship and working

Next Steps

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