

100% ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

GUIDE #REGARD27



regard
SCOLAIRE

This guide is designed to prepare students for their cultural field trip and to facilitate class discussion afterwards.

For each short film, this workbook contains:

- Basic information including the film's title, country of origin, duration, year, type and the name(s) of the filmmaker(s)
- The film's synopsis and main themes
- A simple comprehension question that can guide students in their viewing
- A space for students to rate the film on a five-star scale
- Ideas for activities or discussions in order to prepare and deepen contextual and cinematic knowledge related to the film

At the end of the guide there are complementary activities to be done after watching the films. Please feel free to send us photos of your students in action!



If you would like to see the films again in class, they will be available online **from March 27 until the end of the school year**. Teachers, watch your inbox for access info!

It's ideal for:

- Allowing students who were absent to see the films
- Including one or more films in the evaluation of a skill
- Rewatching the class's favourite films
- And more!



VOTE AS A CLASS FOR THE BEST FILM!

After the activity, we suggest you have a discussion in class to determine which of the short films that you saw was the best one, according to your students. Then, vote for that film by completing this [short form](#). The film that receives the most votes will win the audience award for the Youth Competition. One of the voting classes will receive a great prize: a recycled-fabric snack bag for each student, made by the Minuit moins cinq regional cooperative. To keep the competition fair, we only accept one vote per class.





PREPARING FOR A TRIP TO REGARD

DURING THE SCHOOL TRIP, DON'T FORGET TO...

- Greet the members of the REGARD team, including volunteers, when you meet them
- Stay seated throughout the screening
- Turn off your mobile phone
- Keep an open mind
- Save your comments and reactions for the credits

It is normal to feel all kinds of emotions during the screening, because cinema is art! Some films will make you feel a stronger response than others. You might even want to share your reaction with your friends sitting nearby. However, since the films are very short, please stay silent except during the credits so as not to disturb others.

THE ART OF READING SUBTITLES

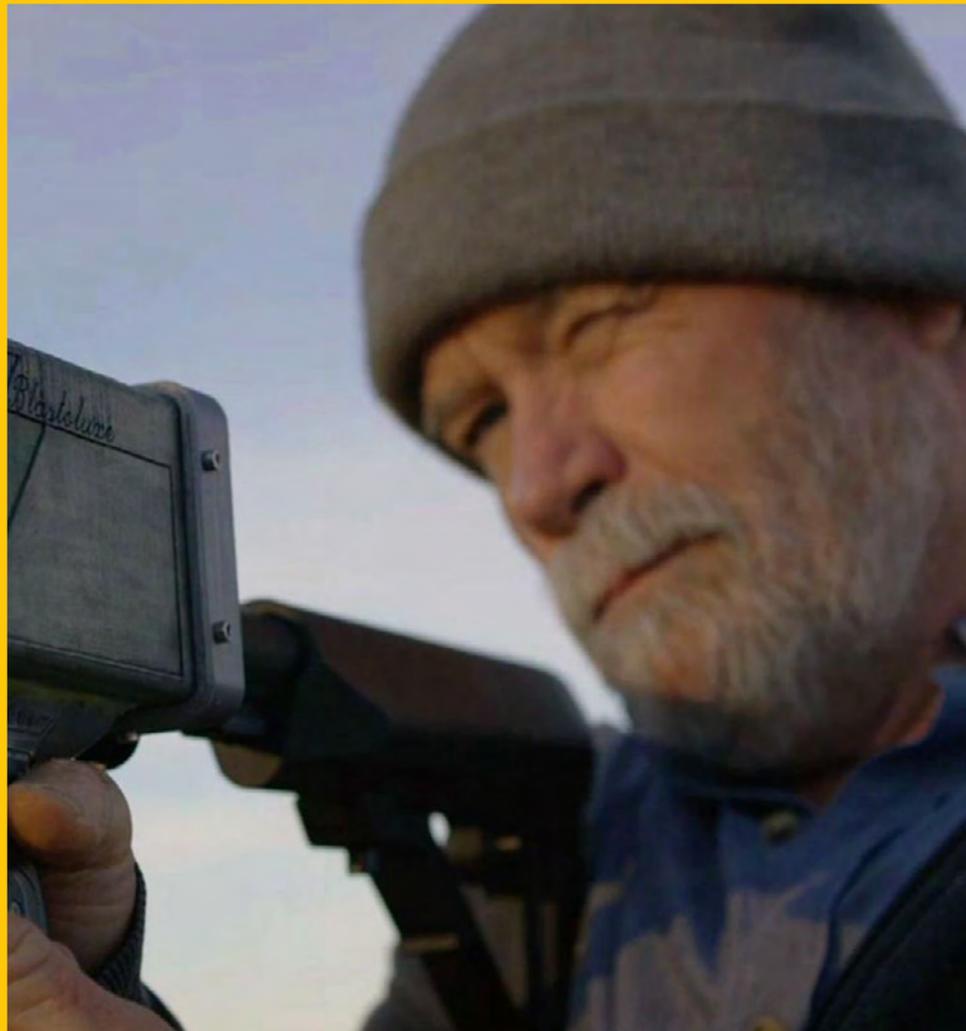
As you know, this program is 100% in English. To help you understand everything, we've arranged for English subtitles to be included. It isn't always easy to absorb all the visual information on-screen when you're reading the dialogue. Here are some tips for making the most of the screening:

- As in any somewhat stressful situation, it's best to breathe through your nose. It isn't a big deal if you don't understand every word
- The subtitles are there to help with comprehension. Let the images and characters' body language guide you. If needed, you can choose to scan only a few key words from the subtitles
- A film is a work of art, which means you aren't required to understand precisely what the filmmaker is trying to say. You're completely free to appreciate the film in your own way.

FILM DETAILS



ECO-HACK!



Directors: Josh Izenberg and Brett Marty

Country: United States

Year: 2022

Type: Documentary

Duration: 16 m 30 s

Themes: Passion, fauna, technology

Synopsis: Biologist Tim Shields has watched desert tortoise populations in the Mojave Desert plummet since the 1990s. The latest threat? Ballooning populations of ravens, thanks to increased human activity in the desert.



What technologies do biologist Tim Shields and his colleague use to make the ravens go away?

Rating

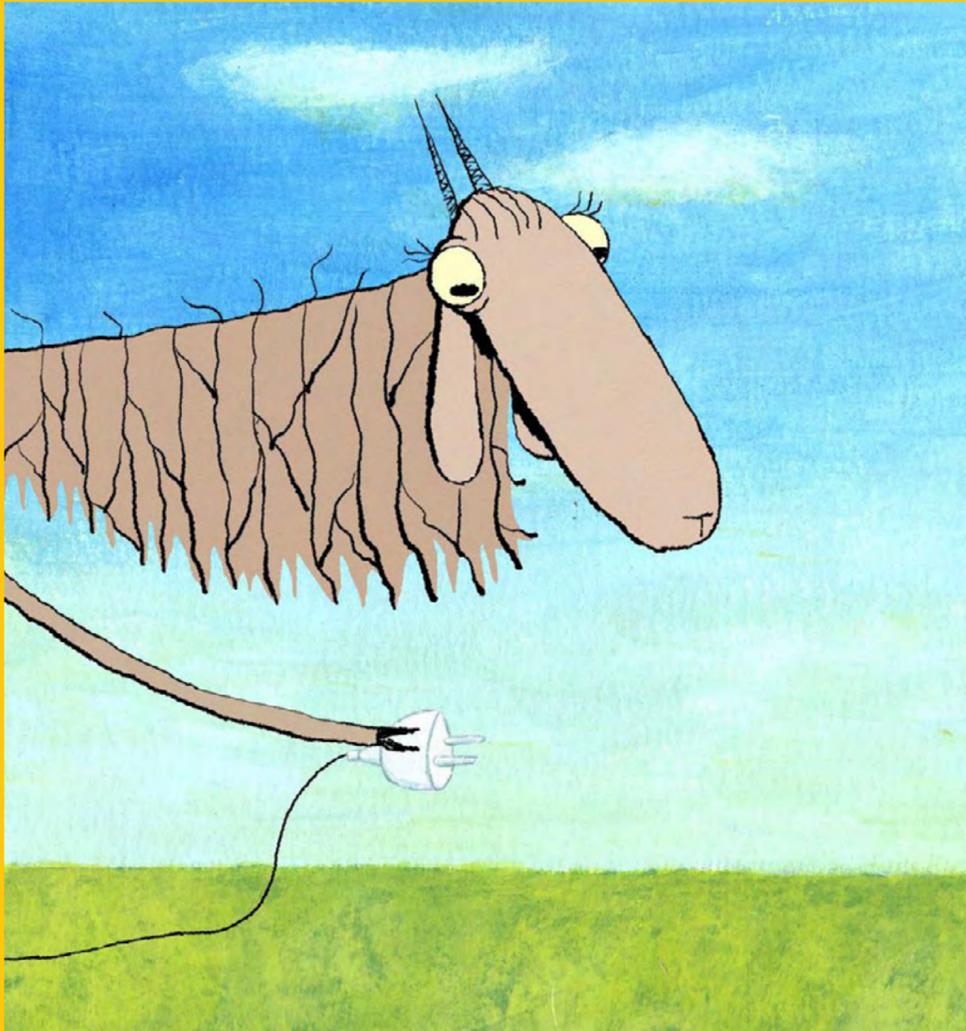
Pre-screening discussion: You probably already know that humans have a major impact on the environment and ecosystems. In general, these impacts are not positive. We exhaust resources, destroy habitats and create a lot of pollution. The result is reduced diversity in the species that inhabit our planet. Fortunately, some people are working to improve the situation. Do you know other ways in which humans modify their environment, whether positively or negatively?

Post-screening activity: Think about an issue related to flora and fauna. For example, the melting of glaciers or the status of an endangered species. Try to think of an invention or technology that would help improve the situation. Write a few paragraphs describing your creation.

WATCH THE TRAILER



VARKEN



Director: Jorn Leeuwerink
Country: Netherlands
Year: 2022
Type: Animation
Duration: 8 m 17 s
Themes: Denial, resource overextraction, overconsumption

Synopsis: A group of animals hook up a power grid to the socket-shaped snout of one big, sleeping pig. The animals use the pig's energy for simple things at first, but soon they render themselves dependent, in a city where every single thing - the useful and the useless - is automated... How long can that last?

? What animal replaces the pig at the end of the film?

Rating

Post-screening discussion: This short film is a metaphor: the pig represents non-renewable energy sources. These are resources that are destroyed through their use or that renew at a rate slower than the rate we use them. Here, the director is critiquing our society, which over-extracts and over-consumes resources. Industrial and technological progress have unquestionably facilitated and intensified the way we produce and consume. Since the population only keeps growing, so does the demand for energy! As a result, non-renewable natural resources are getting scarcer, leading to shortages, economic crises and energy crises. According to the filmmaker, a transition to renewable energy is necessary and urgent if we want to have a stable future!

Post-screening activity: For the walls of your school, make an infographic on one way of avoiding energy waste. You can paint, draw, make a collage or design it on a computer; the main thing is to communicate a clear message. Some examples: buying local products, thrifting for clothes, cutting back on car use, avoiding excessive packaging.

 WATCH THE TRAILER

MAGICAL CARESSES (MASTURBATION: A SHORT HISTORY OF A GREAT TABOO)



Director: Lori Malépart-Traversy

Province: Quebec

Year: 2022

Type: Animation and documentary

Duration: 3 m 58 s

Themes: Sexuality, feminism, history

Synopsis: History as it was never taught in school. This animated short looks back at the surprising story of our relationship with masturbation—and its repression—from prehistory to today.



According to John Harvey Kellogg and Sylvester Graham, what encourages masturbation?

Rating



Pre-screening activity: In class, listen to [the podcast of Skwigly Animation Magazine](#), which specializes in animated films. Director Lori Malépart-Traversy was a guest on the podcast in June 2022; she spoke about her creative process for *Magical Caresses*. Her previous film, *Le Clitoris*, was also mentioned.

(We recommend minutes 10 through 17)

Additional information: In the 1700s, the term “onanism,” mentioned in the film, was coined. It can be used as a synonym for “masturbation.” The word is derived from Onan, a Biblical figure in the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Hebrew Bible (known to Christians as the Old Testament).

Watch the film again [here!](#)



DENISKA UMŘELA



Director: Philippe Kastner

Country: Czech Republic

Year: 2023

Type: Animation

Duration: 8 m 17 s

Themes: Mourning, friendship, acceptance

Synopsis: The death of a beloved pet is a difficult thing to deal with, and even though we try to prepare for it, it always seems to come too soon.



Who keeps the young boy company as he goes through the stages of grief?

Rating

Pre-screening discussion: Mourning a deceased pet can be, for some people, just as hard as mourning a human being. It is not uncommon to feel distress, anger, melancholy, and even guilt after the death of an animal. These are normal emotions, and you have to give yourself time to work through them. There are tricks to make grief easier to cope with: you can talk to someone, organize a small memorial ceremony, or keep some mementos related to your pet. It's important to remember that is natural to feel sad and that it isn't your fault. If you have a pet at home, don't forget to make the most of your time with it! Have you ever had to mourn a dead pet? How did you get through it?

Post-screening discussion: This film illustrates the way the main character imagines where their dog went after it died. If you had to show your vision of where animals go after death, what would you draw?

 WATCH THE TRAILER



HISTORY



Director: James Pakootas
Country: United States
Year: 2021
Type: Experimentation
Duration: 5 m
Thèmes: History, trauma, speaking out

Synopsis: A captivating spoken word piece poetically displaying the historical traumas of Indigenous peoples through the lens of a Native American.



Where is Tony Louie, the artist who recites the text, located during the film?

Rating

Additional information: Have you ever wondered how the filmmaking process starts? Of course, it depends on many factors, but we can say that for HIStory, it all starts with Tony Louie! He is a musician, singer, songwriter and spoken-word poet. He is a proud member of the Indigenous community of Colville. Tony Louie wrote down his deepest thoughts as the basis for HIStory. At first he wanted to turn the text into a hip-hop song, but he wasn't very happy with the result. Finally, he said to himself that maybe these thoughts simply needed to be spoken. That is how the film, a "spoken-word poetry display" about Indigenous people's experience as seen through an Indigenous man's eyes, came to be.

Cinematic concept: Usually, we're accustomed to standard film forms like documentary and fiction (which has a clear narrative structure). You might have noticed in the information for this film that its genre is listed as "experimental." That means the film is not based on a typical model. It is a more poetic film, focused on the words being spoken. We are not shown a story, but told one. It is not a fictional story, obviously. The set is minimalist, allowing us to really focus on the words, because they are what matter. It's different, but just as interesting as other films. Do you know of other films that are neither fiction nor documentary?

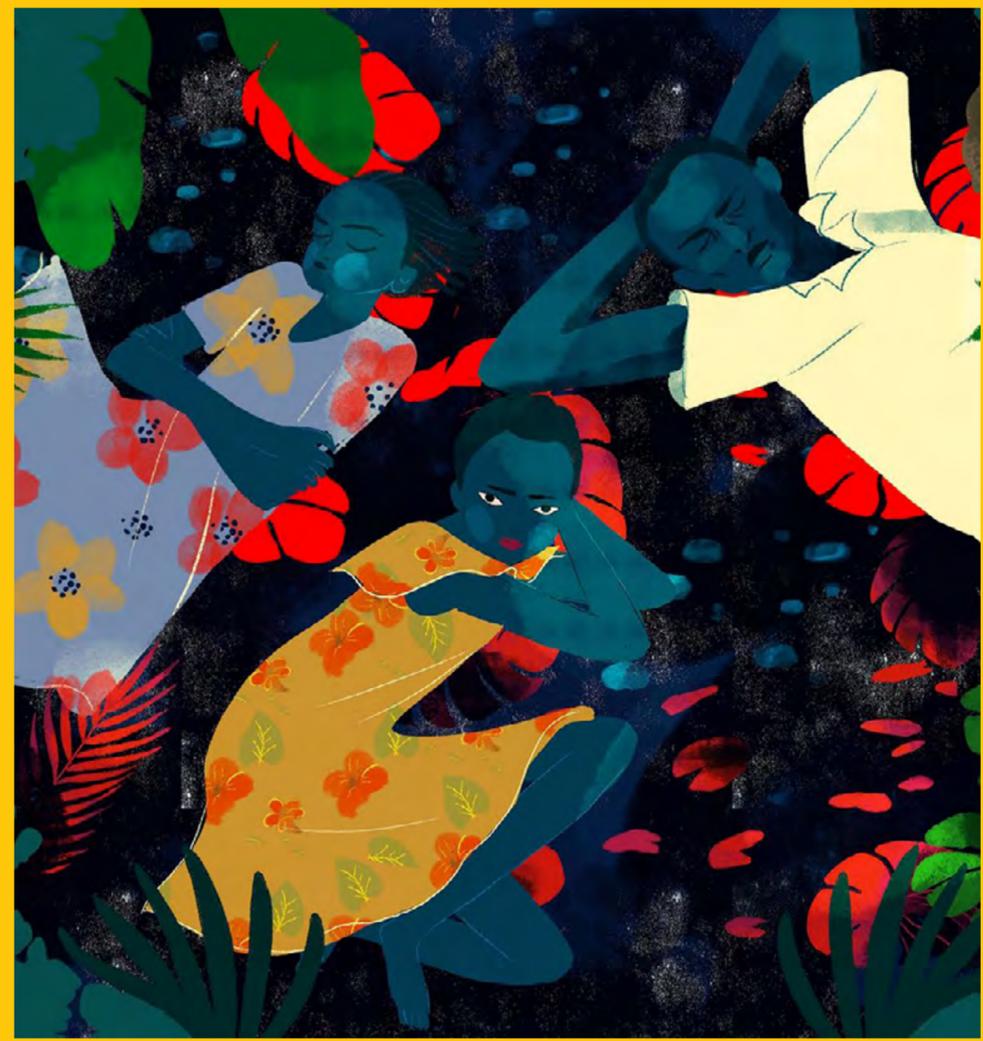
Bonus: Read an article about the making of the film [here](#).

Rewatch [the film on YouTube!](#)

 WATCH THE TRAILER



MORE THAN I WANT TO REMEMBER



Director: Amy Bench
Country: United States and Chile
Year: 2022
Type: Animation and documentary
Duration: 14 m
Themes: Courage, hope, life as a refugee

Synopsis: Mugeni's story starts in a small village in southeastern Congo called Murambya, a Banyamulenge farming community where neighbors provided for one another. One night, when she was just fourteen, she and her family awake to the sounds of bombs.

? Why does Mugeni eat eggs each day after meeting her adoptive family?

Rating

Additional information: During the colonization of Africa, European countries created arbitrary, rectilinear borders that did not account for the territories of the different peoples living there. This caused serious tensions between peoples, who could find themselves divided by borders or forcibly linked to other groups within a single territory. The Banyamulenge, Mugeni's people, have origins in Rwanda but settled in the eastern part of what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo hundreds of years ago. The Mai-Mai attacked her village because they don't consider the Banyamulenge to be "real" Congolese.

Post-screening discussion: The film crew chose to use animation to tell Mugeni's story. In your opinion, how did that choice affect the final film? The director answers that question and several others in an interview that you can find [here](#).

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N'XAXAITKW



Director: Asia Youngman

Province: British Columbia

Year: 2022

Type: Fiction

Duration: 16 m 37 s

Themes: Social pressure, integration, Indigenous legends

Synopsis: After moving to a new town, a teenager must navigate peer pressure when her next-door neighbour convinces her to explore a nearby island in search of a legendary lake monster. She quickly learns that her new friends might be harbouring some secrets and ulterior motives of their own.



What is the favourite sport of the main character?

Rating

Additional information: The “monster” in question comes from an Indigenous legend. Although it is commonly known as Ogopogo, its real name is N’xaxaitkw (pronounced Na-ha-ha-eet-kw). We hear the correct pronunciation in the film at 13 minutes, 49 seconds. N’xaxaitkw is a sacred entity for the people of the Syilx community. According to legend, it protects all living things in and around Okanagan Lake, in British Columbia. Today, the Syilx community continues its ceremonies in order to ensure the protection of the sacred waters. Non-indigenous people misunderstood the essence of the legend and transformed it into a tale about an evil monster, and renamed it Ogopogo.

Post-screening discussion: Do you know other legends, whether Indigenous or not? If you do, tell them to your classmates!

Bonus: Here is [an article](#) on the history of N’xaxaitkw and the meaning of its name.

 WATCH THE TRAILER



HAIRY POUTER



Director: Chris Carboni
Country: United States
Year: 2022
Type: Animation
Duration: 2 m 27 s
Themes: Artificial intelligence, art, reinterpretation

Synopsis: Lillian is 98. She just finished reading Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone. This is her book review as interpreted by an AI image generator.

? According to Lillian, what is Harry and Ron’s main activity when they’re together?

Rating

Pre-screening discussion: In the fall of 2022, the Lensa application, which generates the user’s portrait using artificial intelligence, suddenly became very popular. Then the Midjourney software made AI image creation accessible to everyone. Today, ChatGPT has all the buzz. Have you used these technologies? Do you think artificial intelligence can create art? In your opinion, what are the lines that should not be crossed? Do you know about the ethical issues around artificial intelligence?

Cinematic concept: The concept behind the film is the reinterpretation of a very well-known work by a person who has never heard of it. The artificial intelligence’s confusion is comparable to Lillian’s statements. Linking these two forms of confusion, by layering one reinterpretation over another, is what makes the film an interesting work of art.

Bonus: To learn more about the director’s creative process, visit his [website](#), where he explains in more detail.

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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES



CREATION WITH CONSTRAINTS

Artists working in film, such as screenwriters, cinematographers and directors, sometimes have to work within constraints. Here's your chance to try it for yourself.

Write the synopsis of a fictional film with one of the following expressions as its title. This tip might help: start by determining the film's genre (comedy, drama, thriller, science fiction, horror, etc.). Next, using a technique of your choice, create a poster for the film. Bonus points if you manage to illustrate the expression in BOTH its figurative and literal senses!

- Break a leg
- Best thing since sliced bread
- Cold turkey
- Run for your money
- Spice things up
- Cool as a cucumber
- Couch potato
- Smart cookie
- Chasing rainbows
- In deep water
- Out of the woods
- Face the music

Synopsis:

GEOLOCATION



Match the flags to the countries or provinces of origin of the films. Then, locate the countries and provinces on the map.



Netherlands



Chile



British Columbia



Czech Republic



Québec



United States