

Alvin and the Chipmunks

Study Notes



Directed by: Tim Hill

Certificate: U

Running time: 92 mins

Synopsis

A struggling songwriter named Dave Seville finds success when he comes across a trio of singing chipmunks: mischievous leader Alvin, brainy Simon and chubby, impressionable Theodore.

Before seeing the film

Key questions

1. Alvin and the Chipmunks was originally a cartoon series. Your mums, dads and teachers may have seen it when it was on back in the 1980s. Interview a grown-up about what they know about Alvin and the Chipmunks and report your findings back to the class.
2. Find out about chipmunks. Do we have any in the UK? What do they eat? Where do they live? What do they look like? Create a short information leaflet on the real animals that Alvin and his friends are based on.
3. The chipmunks in the film are called Alvin, Theodore and Simon. Theodore is the cute one, Simon is the clever one and Alvin is the cheeky one. Can you tell which one is which on the poster image above?
4. Alvin, Simon and Theodore are kids. When you are a baby chipmunk, your parents look after you for a week and then you are expected to make your way into the world without them. Imagine that you were in charge of your own life. What would you do and where would you go?
5. In the film, the chipmunks help Dave decorate the Christmas tree. Instead of using baubles and tinsel, they use a toothbrush, a jelly mould and a sandwich! Draw a picture of a 'chipmunked' tree, decorated with all kinds of objects from around the house.

After seeing the film

Task 1

Dave and the Chipmunks meet each other by chance at Jett Records. Dave is a songwriter and the chipmunks love to sing. Do you have a song that you like to sing? Imagine that you are going to try and make it big with your song. Your task is to put together a concept for a 'band':

1. Choose your fellow band members.
2. Decide on roles for each band member: lead singer, lead guitarist, drummer, backing singer for example.
3. Decide on a name for your band.
4. Practice the song that will propel you to stardom!
5. Record your song onto a cassette or disc.
6. Play it to the rest of the class.
7. Your teacher will decide who has won the record deal!

Task 2

Towards the end of the film, the chipmunks become famous and their new manager (Ian) spoils them with all kinds of toys and even their own house. He doesn't have their best interests at heart, he's just getting them on his side so that they'll perform for him and make money for him. He tells them that there are 'no rules'. Instead of making them happy, though, the chipmunks go out of control. Havoc ensues! By the time they are on tour, they are exhausted.

Write a news report about what happens to the chipmunks when they have 'no rules'. End your report with a paragraph that outlines why it is important for grown-ups to give children boundaries and rules.