



# ELLA ENCHANTED

## CONTENTS

1. Teachers' Notes/Synopsis  
Learning Intentions/Subject Links
2. Heroes and Villains
3. Medieval Magic
4. Traditional Tales
5. Fantasy Characters and Costumes
6. Modern Medieval Inventions

## LEARNING INTENTIONS/ SUBJECT LINKS

### HEROES AND VILLAINS

- to understand how morals and dilemmas affects characters' points of view and actions (Literacy)
- to understand characters' points of view (Literacy)
- to understand target setting and personal goals (PSHE/Citizenship)

### MEDIEVAL MAGIC

- compare and describe mythical and fantasy settings (Literacy)
- to create and develop own settings (Literacy)

### TRADITIONAL TALES

- to explore alternatives to traditional tales and story themes (Literacy)
- to compare traditional tales to modern film versions (Literacy)
- to explore the appeal of a classic tale (Literacy)

### FANTASY CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

- to research and design fantasy characters (Design and Technology)
- to design and create costumes for performances and films (Art and Design)

### MODERN MEDIEVAL INVENTIONS

- to research and investigate inventions from the past (History)
- to design an invention (Design and Technology)

## TEACHERS' NOTES

The activities in this study guide are intended as starting points for a cross-curricular topic based on the film *Ella Enchanted*. The activities are aimed at Key Stage 2 children (Years 3 to 6). The learning activities seek to complement and extend the pleasure the children have derived from a visit to the cinema whilst at the same time meeting requirements from the National Curriculum and the National Primary Strategy (Literacy). The areas of the curriculum covered are Literacy, History, Design and Technology, Art and Design, Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship. A curriculum grid can be found on the back of the covering letter enclosed with this study guide for planning and record keeping.

## FILM SYNOPSIS

When Ella of Frell was born she was given the gift of obedience by her fairy godmother, Lucinda. Instead of bringing happiness to Ella's life, the spell causes Ella much heart-ache as she is forced to obey every command; no matter how silly or dangerous. As she grows older Ella feels that she has no control of her own actions. Her life gets worse when her father remarries and her stepmother, Dame Olga and stepsisters Hattie and Olive move into their house. Hattie makes Ella do awful tasks including stealing from the 'Frell Galleria'. When Ella vows to break the spell and gain her independence, she and her magic book 'Benny' start their journey across the Kingdom to find Lucinda, who can remove the curse.

Along the way Ella finds unusual friends in Slannen, the 'wannabe lawyer' Elf and Prince Char, the idolised future King of Lamia. Together they journey through the Ogre's forest and Giantville where Prince Char realises his future kingdom is not being ruled as he had hoped by his uncle, Sir Edgar. Ella helps Char to believe in himself and realise all the good that he can do as King. Char helps Ella in her quest to find Lucinda, saving Ella's life many times along the way.

However, Sir Edgar has other plans for the young couple. When Hattie and Olive inform him of Ella's curse, Edgar orders Ella to kill Prince Char and tell no-one of the plan.

Can Prince Char make a difference to the Kingdom or will evil Edgar be successful in his plan to be King? Will Ella be able to break the curse before it's too late?

UK release date: December 17 2004

Running time: 96 minutes

Certificate: PG

# ELLA ENCHANTED

## HEROES AND VILLAINS



### ELLA

When Ella of Frell's mother explains why she is different from other girls her age, Ella is distraught about her 'gift' of obedience. In fact she vows to break the spell. Luckily Ella is a head strong, determined young lady who will stop at nothing to achieve her goal. She fights ogres, negotiates with giants and travels through deep dark forests to get what she wants. But unfortunately for her there are people who are willing to use her gift against her to get what they want! Here are some of the good, and not so good, characters that Ella encounters:

### PRINCE CHARMONT

A gallant young knight soon to be King of Lamia. Char is determined to prove to Ella that he is more than just a pretty face, even though he has his own fan club, the Charmaniac, and his face is on nearly every page of 'Medieval Teen'.



### LUCINDA

The self-proclaimed 'fairy par excellence' who gives Ella the gift of obedience. Lucinda believes that her spells are special gifts that should be cherished and that Ella should be grateful for her gift.

### SIR EDGAR

Prince Char's uncle and guardian. Sir Edgar is the present King until Char's coronation and the power has gone to his head. Edgar has fiendish plans for the people and creatures of the Kingdom of Lamia and is always looking out for himself.



### SLANNEN

A rebellious elf that wants to be a lawyer. Slannen is feisty but serious and is determined to prove that elves can do more than sing, juggle or create tomfoolery.

### OLIVE

A clueless kleptomaniac who will steal anything she can get her hands on. Olive does everything that her sister and mother tell her to do without thinking about it.



### HATTIE

The head of the Prince Char's fan club, the Charmaniacs. Hattie is cruel to Ella and takes advantage of her obedience spell when trying to win Prince Char for herself.

## ACTIVITY

Ella longs to break her spell of obedience. How do you think she will manage to do it? What do you think will happen to her on her journey? Using the information on the characters she meets, write a story of Ella's adventure.

### AFTER YOU HAVE SEEN THE FILM

When Ella is given a command she has no choice whether she wants to do it or not. Some of the suggestions are simple and funny, such as the instruction 'dig in' which causes Ella to eat her birthday cake with her hands. However, other commands are illegal, such as 'take that' when pointing to an item in a shop. Imagine that you are Ella and choose an incident from the film where a command caused a dilemma for Ella. Write a passage from Ella's diary to explain how she felt at the time.

# ELLA ENCHANTED

## MEDIEVAL MAGIC

*Ella Enchanted* is set in a fairy tale world made up of many different lands and home to various fairy tale characters. When designing the sets for the film the production designer conducted extensive research into authentic medieval design, from timber-framed houses to Gothic castles.



### FRELL

Frell is the town where Ella lives with her father, her stepmother Dame Olga and her two stepsisters Hattie and Olive. Frell is medieval-style suburbia with its own shopping centre, the Frell Galleria. The Galleria is a two-story wooden structure complete with stores like 'Wands R Us' and medieval architecture such as charming walkways, arched bridges and hand-cranked wooden escalators.

### LAMIA

The great city of Lamia consists of Edgar's castle and other huge medieval stone buildings. It was designed after one of the most famous cities in the world, New York. The designers used a classic photo of 1940s Downtown Manhattan and sketched a façade of soaring castles over the skyscrapers. Edgar's castle reflects his cunning and self-obsessed personality with grand elevators and a Great Hall decorated with snakes, which are carved into the stone walls.



### GIANTVILLE

The buildings in Giantville are inspired by ancient Scandinavian and Celtic designs. The wedding hall that Ella visits while searching for Lucinda is filled with open-pit fires, kilns and majestic carved timbers.

### ELF VILLAGE

The elf village consists of timber buildings connected by walkways which the elves use when performing their song and dance routines. Models of the buildings were used instead of creating a life-size set. The actors in the village performed their parts against a blue screen background. The model set was filmed from different angles then the actors were digitally added to the set.



## ACTIVITY

Develop your own fantasy setting. Who and what might you find when you visit there? Write a description of your fantasy land and draw a diagram. Use your setting as a starting point for a fairy tale story.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Use a photo of your town's skyline to transform it into a setting from the medieval era.

### AFTER YOU HAVE SEEN THE FILM

Choose two of the mythical settings from *Ella Enchanted* and compare the features.



# ELLA ENCHANTED

## TRADITIONAL TALES

*Ella Enchanted* is a medieval story with themes and character types found in many classic fairy tales. It also has a distinctly twenty-first century feel as the personalities of the main characters, Ella and Prince Char, are based on the behaviour and attitudes of young people today.

The story of *Ella Enchanted* can be compared to the traditional tale of 'Cinderella' as both stories have a female central character who is unhappy living with her horrid stepfamily and is desperate to change her life.

The film can be described as a fairy tale as it has many features which are classic to the fairy tale genre. Fairy tales often contain the following narrative structure:



- The hero or heroine goes on a quest or journey to right something which has gone wrong
- The hero struggles to complete the quest because of the villain's actions and other obstacles
- The hero defeats the villain and successfully completes the quest
- The hero celebrates the triumph and lives happily ever after

## ACTIVITY

Watch the trailer for *Ella Enchanted* at [www.miramax.com/ellaenchanted](http://www.miramax.com/ellaenchanted). Use the narrative structure above to write a story plan that predicts what might happen in the film

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Choose a classic fairy tale. Produce a story plan for an alternative version or sequel using the fairy tale narrative structure. Write your new fairy tale using your story plan.

### AFTER YOU HAVE SEEN THE FILM

Compare the events which occur in *Ella Enchanted* to the events in 'Cinderella'. What do the two stories have in common? Fairy tales have specific themes that help to create the appeal of the traditional stories. Are these themes present in *Ella Enchanted*? Complete the table below to find out. Choose another fairy tale and repeat the task.

| Themes of fairy tale stories  | How themes are present in:<br><i>Ella Enchanted</i> | How themes are present in: |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| Contains specific characters: the hero, the villain, the helper, the sought-for-person, strange creatures |   |                            |
| Special people or objects with magic powers   |   |                            |
| One character is jealous of another character's beauty or goodness  |   |                            |
| Hero is put to the test   |   |                            |
| Hero receives help from a magical creature  |   |                            |
| Kindness is rewarded and evil is punished   |   |                            |
| Good characters live happily ever after   |   |                            |

# ELLA ENCHANTED

## FANTASY CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

Talking books, dancing elves, enormous giants, ugly ogres and evil snakes. These are some of the amazing fantasy creatures found in *Ella Enchanted*. As these characters are not found in real life, the film designers had to create elaborate costumes for the actors to make them look the part.

When it came to filming scenes with elves, ogres, giants and Benny the Talking Book the actors were filmed against blue screens and the footage was digitally altered using computers. The elves were adjusted to make them smaller than humans and the giants were enlarged to make them look massive. Heston the snake was created entirely on computers and added to the completed film, as a real snake could not be used.

The costumes for the human characters in the film were designed to be extravagant and fantastical to make the fairy tale come to life. The costume designers researched traditional medieval dress, looking at ornate, flowing gowns for women and tunics and high boots for men. These designs were mixed with 1960s and 70s fashions to give them a modern look. To help bring out the characters' personalities and define their identities, each character was given their own colour scheme and style of clothes:



Ella wears pretty and delicate clothes with blue tones.



Char wears smart royal clothes with blue tones that match Ella's outfits.



Edgar wears dark outfits in red and black.



Hattie and Olive wear dresses that are so extreme that they look like pantomime dresses. Hattie dresses in bright orange and Olive wears purple and lilac.



The elves wear leafy green outfits that resemble their natural surroundings.



The giants have clothes that are influenced by their environment. The giants wear outfits with dark tones.



The ogres wear clothes that have darker shades resembling the colours of rocks and stones.



The fairies wear magical and sparkling outfits that are glittery and pink.

## ACTIVITY

Design a fantasy character that Ella might meet on her quest to break her obedience spell.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Design a range of outfits for one of the characters from *Ella Enchanted* using their colour scheme. Find materials and textiles that a costume designer would need to create the outfits.

### AFTER YOU HAVE SEEN THE FILM

How are the characters' personalities shown through their clothing in *Ella Enchanted*?

## MODERN MEDIEVAL INVENTIONS

*Ella Enchanted* creates a magical mixture of the medieval and the modern day. Some of the medieval locations, scenery and props have a modern day twist...

### HAND-CRANKED ESCALATORS

Frell Galleria is a two-story building where shoppers can move to a different level on an escalator. Unlike modern escalators that use electricity, this escalator uses human power with two men turning a handle to make it work.



### MEDIEVAL TAXIS

These traditional carriages are pulled by horses but have a distinctly modern feel, as they are painted ochre yellow with a chequered stripe just like New York taxicabs.

### HAND-PULLED LIFTS

Edgar's castle is very tall so a lift has been built on the side of the building. The lift hangs by a rope from the top of the castle and is pulled up and down.

## ACTIVITY

Choose a modern-day object and redesign it by changing the features to give it a medieval feel.

### MEDIEVAL INVENTIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Description of object                  |  |
| What modern-day object is it based on? |  |
| How does it work?                      |  |
| What is it made from?                  |  |
| Who would use this invention?          |  |

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Use the Internet to research medieval inventions. Have any of these inspired modern-day inventions? Can you find any similarities?

### AFTER YOU HAVE SEEN THE FILM

Are there any other modern medieval inventions in *Ella Enchanted*? Make a list of the ones that you noticed.