

The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep



Suitable for:

KS2 Literacy, Geography, History, P.S.H.E and Citizenship

Film details:

PG - Contains mild language and fantasy danger, Running time 112 mins

A young boy named Angus MacMorrow takes home a mysterious object he finds on the beach. He soon realizes that it is a magical egg, and finds himself raising an amazing creature: a mythical 'water horse'. Angus then begins his adventure, protecting a secret that gives birth to a legend.

Official website: www.sonypictures.co.uk/movies/thewaterhorse



From Page To Screen

Literacy – Novels by significant children’s authors / Film Narrative

The Water Horse is based on a book by Dick King-Smith, which you could read as a class novel. What are the key differences in the way a story is told on the page and on screen? This is a good opportunity to develop children’s film language. Writers rely on descriptive and figurative language to create settings and characters whilst filmmakers use set design, costume and actors etc. Mood and pace in film is created by the use of the camera, light and colour, sound and music. A writer chooses language carefully and varies sentence structure. The passing of time in a book is established by time connectives and paragraphs whilst in a film this is achieved through editing and the sequencing of shots and scenes.

As a class, choose a passage of the book that doesn’t appear in the film. Ask pupils to storyboard the scene, considering shot types and camera angles etc. The children can then adapt the passage into a script just as the filmmakers had to. Groups could perform their scripts playing close attention to the stage directions. They could even film and edit the scene.

Legend Of The Deep

Literacy – Myths and Legends

The story of The Water Horse is rooted in one of Britain’s most intriguing legends. Ask pupils to research the mythology of the Loch Ness monster and create a guide to the creature’s origins and recorded ‘sightings’. Pupils can write a newspaper article about a sighting of the creature.

Loch Ness

Geography - A contrasting UK locality

As a class, contrast the beautiful setting of Loch Ness in the film with your schools locality. Ask the children to locate Loch Ness on a map and research into what Loch Ness is like and why. What would you find there? What would it feel like to be there?

However, much of the film was actually shot in New Zealand, with Lake Wakatipu in Queenstown doubling for the Scottish setting. How did the filmmakers make the setting believable when they filmed so far away? Ask pupils to use the internet to research Lake Wakatipu and Loch Ness. How are the locations similar? How would life in each location be different in reality? Ask pupils to choose one of these locations and make a tourist leaflet or brochure.

World War II

History - What was it like for children in the Second World War?

The Water Horse is set during an important period in British history, World War II. The war has a dramatic impact on the setting and characters. Angus' father is away at war and during the film the British army takes over the manor house where Angus lives, setting up an outpost to defend Scottish shores from a possible German U-Boat attack.

Alongside the study of evacuation and The Blitz in class, The Water Horse provides another opportunity for children to consider how the lives of families in Britain were affected by the war and to empathise with children's experiences.

Empathy

SEAL / PSHE and Citizenship

Angus is a lonely boy who has a phobia of the water and misses his father. His father is away at war but has been reported missing after his ship sunk. Angus clings to the hope that he is still alive and coming home.

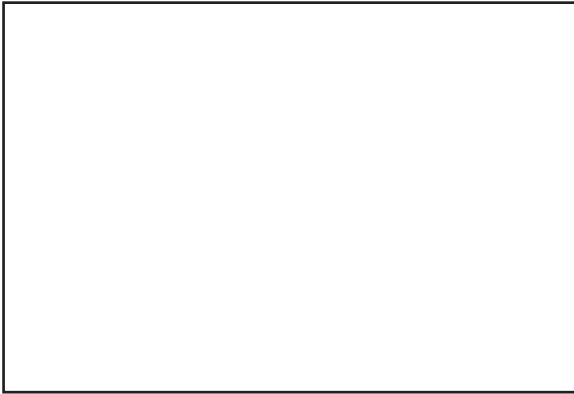
Use drama and hot seating to explore Angus' character and empathise with his point of view. Collect emotional vocabulary as a class and sequence them according to how pupils think Angus feels at different points of the story. Ask pupils to make comparisons with their own experiences. When have they felt lonely or missed someone? Is there anything they are afraid of?

Taking the role of Angus, ask the children to write a letter to his father. Alternatively, pupils could write from the father's point of view, writing his last letter to Angus before the ship sunk.

Storyboard

STORYBOARD TEMPLATE

DIALOGUE / SFX



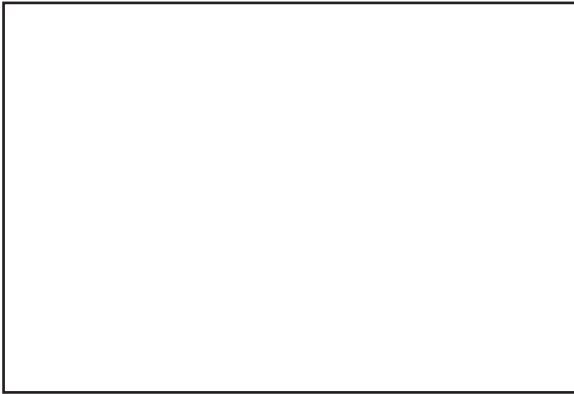
.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



Dear

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing a letter.