

Despicable Me Study Notes



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Directed by: Pierre Coffin, Chris Renaud

Certificate: U (contains very mild scary scenes, slapstick violence and language)

Running time: 95 mins

Release date: 15 October 2011

Synopsis:

In a happy suburban neighbourhood surrounded by white picket fences with flowering rose bushes, sits a black house with a dead lawn. Unbeknownst to the neighbours, hidden beneath this home is a vast secret hideout. Surrounded by a small army of minions, we discover Gru, planning the biggest heist in the history of the world. He is going to steal the moon. (Yes, the moon!) Gru delights in all things wicked. Armed with his arsenal of shrink rays, freeze rays, and battle-ready vehicles for land and air, he vanquishes all who stand in his way. Until the day he encounters the immense will of three little orphaned girls who look at him and see something that no one else has ever seen: a potential Dad. The world's greatest villain has just met his greatest challenge: three little girls named Margo, Edith and Agnes.

The activities in these Study Notes address aspects of the curriculum for Art & Design, Literacy and Science for pupils aged 5-11.

Before seeing the film

1. Like all super-villains, Gru has his own underground lair where he keeps his weapons and tools to develop his evil plans. Design your own underground lair. It must be located underneath your house and you need to include a lab, a storeroom for your weapons and a living area for your minions! You also need to include a secret entrance to your lair.
2. Despicable Gru has his own army of minions – little green beings who have been created purely to serve their master. What tasks would you have your minions perform? Write a list of activities that you would have them do.
3. In the film's original trailer, Gru was shown to be triumphant in stealing the pyramids of Egypt. Which famous landmark would you steal if you could, and why?!
4. Create an opposite of Gru – a super-goody. We all know that stealing, playing with weapons and bossing people around is very wrong. Create a super-good character, based on yourself that could show Gru the RIGHT way to behave!

After seeing the film

1. Create a 'character development graph' that shows how Gru's personality changes during the course of the film. Your x axis should be the amount of time (perhaps in ten minute 'chunks') and the y axis should show key moments in the film when Gru's character changes, with a cross to mark the spot and a label or key outlining how and why he has changed.
2. Gru and his onscreen enemy, Vector, have many despicable gadgets to hand to help them conquer the world. Shrink rays, freeze rays and armoured vehicles to name but a few. Invent your own despicable gadget – draw a picture of it and label it to show what it can do.
3. If Gru had achieved his ambition to shrink and lasso the moon, how would this affect the day-to-day lives of people on earth? How would we measure our days, months and years? What would happen to our seas and oceans? Design a system to protect the moon from Gru's clutches!

Written by Julie Green