

Puss in Boots



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DIRECTED BY: Chris Miller

CERTIFICATE: U

COUNTRY: USA

RUNNING TIME: 90 mins

YEAR: 2011

SUITABLE FOR: PSHE, English, music, MFL, art, animation

SYNOPSIS

Puss in Boots is a fast and funny action packed film that tells the story of what happened to our favourite feline character leading up to his appearance in *Shrek 2* in 2004. It's a spin off film and you don't have to have seen any of the *Shrek* movies to enjoy it.

You will have no doubt heard of some of the characters before, but they probably won't be like you know them. Humpty Dumpty is Puss in Boots' sidekick, along with unknown cat Kitty Softpaws. These three comrades battle against Jack and Jill, the baddies in the film, as they all go in search of the legendary magical beans, that promise to bring great fortune.

Puss soon realises that Humpty Dumpty isn't as nice as he first thought and Jack and Jill aren't the only baddies he's fighting against.

TEACHERS' NOTES

This study guide suggests cross-curricular activities based on the film *Puss in Boots*. The activities seek to complement and extend the enjoyment of watching the film, while at the same time meeting some of the requirements of the National Curriculum.

BEFORE SEEING THE FILM

Here are some questions to answer before seeing the film:

- What do you know about the character *Puss in Boots*?
- Have you read the story?
- What kind of character is *Puss in Boots* in the book?
- Do you expect the film to be the same as the fairy tale? In what ways might it be different?



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CHARACTERS

Director Chris Miller created a film for the *Puss in Boots* character after working on *Shrek the Third*. He wanted to give Puss an adventure of his own and tell the story of what happened to the cat before he meets Shrek.

The original *Puss in Boots* character was actually created by French writer Charles Perrault way back in 1697. So this crafty, feline character that is more than 300 years old, is still having adventures.

The director has created a past for Puss. The film tells the story of how Puss ends up at an orphanage in a small Spanish village and is brought up by Imelda, who Puss calls 'Mama'. We see Puss in Boots grow from a small shy kitten to a feisty and hilarious cat.

In an interview, Chris Miller admitted the character inspired him while working on the *Shrek* film: 'I have always been fascinated by him. Where did he get those boots? That accent?' he said.

- What does 'inspired' mean? Can you find out where this word comes from?
- Why do you think director Chris Miller liked Puss in Boots so much?

AFTER SEEING THE FILM

ACTIVITY

- The director has invented a whole life for Puss in Boots. Think back to what happened in the film, what did you learn about Puss in Boots?
- If you could ask the film's director five questions about the film, what would they be?
- Write a short email addressed to Chris Miller describing your reaction to seeing *Puss in Boots*, using descriptive language to convey your thoughts and feelings.



WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT PUSS?

See if you can remember the following details from the film:

- What does Puss like to drink?
- How did he get his boots?
- Why did he fall out with Humpty Dumpty?

The director has also chosen to include popular nursery rhyme characters and turn them into legendary figures. Everyone has heard of Humpty Dumpty and Jack and Jill but no one really knows much about them. The film portrays them with different characteristics than what most people might have thought.

- Did you expect Jack and Jill to be the kinds of characters that they were in the film?
- Did you feel sorry for the Humpty Dumpty in the fairy tale?
- Do you feel sorry for Humpty in the film?

ACTIVITY

There are also new characters in the film that we know nothing about. Use the table below to fill in what you know about these two female characters.

Kitty:	
Imelda:	

Now, using the information you've gathered on the characters write a short story using two characters from the film and one more character, chosen either from another story, another film or another fairy tale.

See if you can find ways to include at least two of these sentences from the film:

First rule of bean club, you do not talk about bean club. Second rule of bean club, you don't talk about bean club.

Bottle of leche, please.

You made the cat angry. You do not want to make the cat angry!

You hit me in the head with a guitar!

Just think of all the trouble we can get into. The two of us together, we can steal a lot of golden eggs. Hmm?

SETTING

Puss grew up in a small fictitious village called San Ricardo in Spain. The film has many Spanish elements running through it.

Puss explains that although he is Spanish, he speaks French because "...that is the only language in which you can purr."

- Has anyone in the class been to Spain?
- Did you notice anything that made you recognise Spain?

ACTIVITY

Here are some Spanish words from the film; do you know what they mean? Work as a class to find out the meanings of these words. Then, in groups, work out short role-plays where you use as many of the words as possible.

addios	hola	gracias	leche
Senora	Senorita	gato	

Puss and Kitty have a 'dance fight' at the beginning of the film that sees them doing the flamenco (a type of dance) and lots of heel stomping, whilst also fighting with swords.

These types of scenes were also popular with other film icons such as *Zorro*, and *The Three Musketeers*. All these characters also wore big hats, heeled boots and carried swords.

Some film reviewers have called Puss in Boots a Spanish Robin Hood. Do you agree?

ACTIVITY

Draw a picture of Puss in Boots wearing these items.

- Can you find out what the Spanish words are for hat, boots and sword?
- Label your picture with these Spanish words.

MUSIC

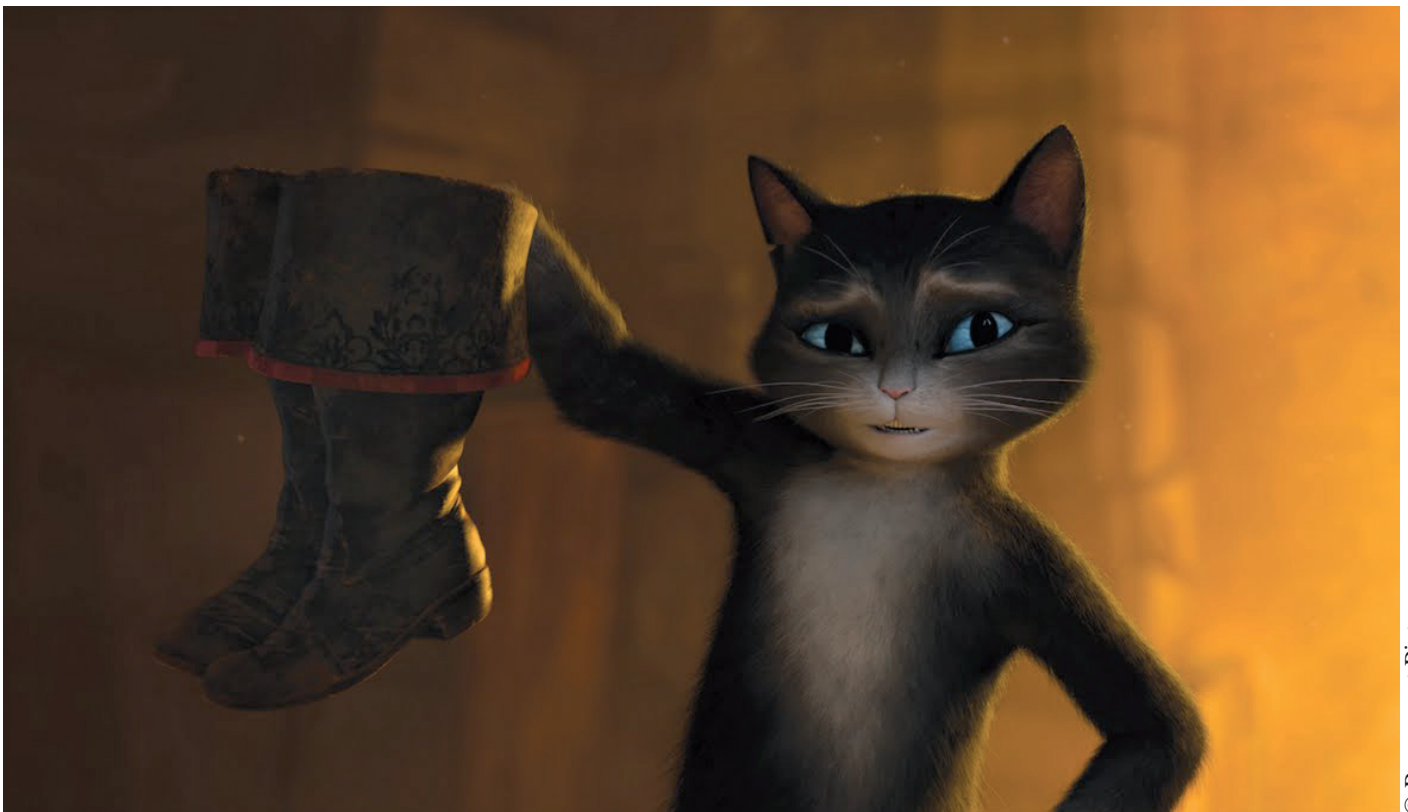
The music for the film was written by composer Henry Jackson. It brings in elements of Latin percussion and Spanish guitars mixed with orchestral sounds, providing the perfect backdrop for Puss' adventures.

Music in film is used to create a mood and add depth to a scene, whether it is to create a feeling of happiness, sadness or fear etc.

ACTIVITY

Using the Internet and the library to find out about each of the three different types of music used in the *Puss in Boots* film and fill in the box below.

type of music	instruments used	sounds	what mood does it create?
Spanish			
Orchestral			
Latin			



ANIMATION

Released in 2011, and directed by Chris Miller, *Puss In Boots* film opened to very positive reviews and became a success at the box office, making more than three hundred and fifty million pounds.

There are a whole variety of different types of films, which are called genres. This is a French word meaning a sort or kind of film.

ACTIVITY

What do you know about these different types of films? Make a list of the films your class has seen that fits into these genres:

- romance
- western
- action
- adventure

Can you think of anything that happens in the film that fits into the four genres, below? The first one has been started for you.

family: Puss' foster mother Imelda is a big part in the film. Puss and Humpty describe themselves as being brothers.

animation:

adventure:

comedy:

If you were directing a film, what genre of film would you make and why? Which characters would you put it in? What would it be called?

Using images from the Internet, magazines and pictures you've drawn create a poster for your new movie. Make sure the poster shows what type of film it is and the rating. A film rating gives the audience a guidance of who the film is suitable for.

Written by Helen Dugdale