**GENRE ACTIVITY SHEET 1**

**What do we mean by genre?**

Film is a form of storytelling with its own set of methods and rules which can be followed, or broken, to make the latest feature. The history of cinema goes back more than a century, and in that time countless stories have been told on the screen – from the first silent films to the modern-day blockbuster.

This mixture of the predictable and the unexpected is a very useful way of starting to

understand film genres. Part of the reason film genres survive is because they are able to offer audiences a mix of the pleasantly familiar and the unusual. When a film is marketed, for example through trailers, websites or poster campaigns, the film’s genre will be suggested in the marketing so that audiences have a sense of what they can expect from the film. This works particularly strongly when a film is part of a *series* or *franchise*.

* There are a number of fantasy films that fit into the ‘series’ or ‘franchise’ model: can you think of any examples?

Every frame of a film contains clues that help identify what kind of genre it may be. But genres are not just a collection of ingredients, they are also whole recipes - whole stories in which every bit has a part to play. There are also many ways in which genres can work together, or overlap.

**VIEWING ACTIVITY**

* For example, watch the two clips from the film *Thor*: **Opening sequence** and **Coronation ceremony**.
* What genre ‘conventions’ can you spot in each clip? Are they the same or different?
* Based on these two clips, what genre of film would you expect *Thor* to be?

So what is a film genre, and what different genres might you come across? Working in pairs or small groups, fill in in the following table. What are the key ‘conventions’ that you would expect in films of that type? And what films that you know are an example of each genre?

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| **Genre** | **Genre *conventions* (characters; plot; setting and location; music; costumes and props etc)** | **Example films** |
| Action |  |  |
| Adventure |  |  |
| Comedy |  |  |
| Crime |  |  |
| Documentary |  |  |
| Fantasy |  |  |
| Horror |  |  |
| Romance |  |  |
| Science fiction |  |  |
| Thriller |  |  |
| Western |  |  |