

## WORLD BOOK DAY THURSDAY MARCH 7<sup>th</sup> 2013

### INTRODUCTION

World Book Day ([www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)) is a huge, national celebration of books and reading. Celebrated on March 7th 2013, the event brings together readers from across the country to share ideas about favourite books, characters and authors.

Stories, whether told through printed text, moving images or the spoken word, help us to make sense of our world. With increased access to moving images through advances in technology, many young people's first encounter with characters and events originally conceived in the pages of a book is through the medium of film.

A strong focus of learning about and through film is to develop young people's skills of critical analysis. Comparing and contrasting representations of characters, events and ideas in books and films is an accessible and engaging starting place.

This resource provides some ideas for the secondary classroom of ways to integrate film into your celebrations of World Book Day by exploring the similarities and differences between these formats as well as sharing the pleasures of both.



From: *Sherlock Holmes* – All rights reserved Warner Bros. Pictures

## BOOK TO FILM

A film of a book is much more than a straight copy of the original - it represents a shift from one set of conventions for representing the world to another. The reasons for how the changes have been made - what is added and what is left out as well as how mood and atmosphere are recreated - are key questions to explore when introducing a film interpretation of a book.

Developing young people's understanding of film language is central to this approach. When students are equipped with basic vocabulary about shot types and camera angles - as well as an awareness of how directors might use lighting, costume, set design and editing - they are better able to discuss and analyse these film representations with confidence.

For a fuller, more comprehensive approach to teaching and learning about film representations of books, see *Thinking Film, Thinking English*.

([www.filmeducation.org/thinkingfilm/english/supplementary-materials.html](http://www.filmeducation.org/thinkingfilm/english/supplementary-materials.html))

## ACTIVITIES:

The aim of World Book Day is to make everyone feel excited about books and reading. There are lots of suggestions on the official World Book Day site:

([www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Secondary\\_Pack\\_2013\\_web.pdf](http://www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Secondary_Pack_2013_web.pdf)) of how you might like to do this and here we suggest some approaches using film as a stimulus too.

### 1. FILM OF THE BOOK

The purpose of this starter activity is to encourage students to reflect on the number of novels that they can identify that have been re-versioned as film texts.

Start by showing the trailers for *Private Peaceful* and *War Horse*.

For discussion:

- How might an author of a book tell a story differently from a director of a film?
- What can a film version of a book add to your experience of a story?
- Sometimes film versions can be disappointing – why do you think this is?
- Make a list of all the films you can think of that were originally books. From those you have seen, which did you like and which (if any) disappointed? Make sure to give reasons for your answers.

## 2. SWAP THE GENRE

'Genre' is central to understanding both books and films. The most popular film genres are comedy, action and adventure. Other film genres include:

- drama
- thriller
- crime
- horror
- romantic comedy
- documentary
- science fiction
- western
- musical
- fantasy

For discussion:

- What is your favourite genre of book and film? Is it the same genre or do you prefer for example crime novels and comedy films? Or romantic novels and fantasy films? Explain why you particularly like certain genres.
- Choose a character from one of your best novels – it might be a book that has already been adapted into a film but it doesn't have to be. What genre of book does this character appear in? Talk to your partner or your group about this character and explain how you have identified the genre of the book? What conventions help create this specific genre?
- Now imagine your favourite character is transported into a narrative that is of a different genre. For example, Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights* is a character set in a gothic, romance. How might he fair in an action adventure tale? Or a science fiction extravaganza? Decide which genre you want your favourite character to appear in and make a list of the sort of things you would expect to happen in that sort of a genre of story. Then discuss and make notes about how your character would react and develop in that context. If you have time, make a mock-up film poster portraying your character in their new genre. Share your ideas with others – you'll probably find there are some amusing transformations.



From: *Wuthering Heights* – All rights reserved Artificial Eye

### 3. ADAPT YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK

Although many books have already been adapted into films, there are loads that haven't. Think of a book you have really enjoyed which has not yet been made into a film.

- Which book would you like to see made into a film and why?
- What genre is the book? How is this genre usually represented in film – what are the main conventions? For example, action adventures usually contain car chases and shoot outs; horror films are often set in dark locations and directors play with light and shadow for effect. What details will you include in your film version to ensure the genre is clear for audiences? Think particularly about choice of location, setting and music.
- Make a list of what you would definitely keep the same as in the book and what you would change. What are the most important aspects of the book for you? The characters? The themes? The mood and atmosphere?
- Which actors do you want to play the main characters? Explain why you chose them and why you think they are the best people for the parts.
- When you have collected all your ideas together, present them to the rest of the class and if you have time, you could write your ideas in the form of a letter or email and send them to the author of the book you have chosen. You will find contact details via their publishers.



From: *Great Expectations* – All rights reserved Lionsgate

**USEFUL LINKS**

Many of Film Education's resources are based on film texts that have been adapted from novels. The links below provide teachers with a range of such resources (suitable for students ages 11-18) offering innovative ways to explore these transformations that are suitable both for World Book Day and beyond.

**Arriety (The Borrowers)**

[www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Arrietty.pdf](http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Arrietty.pdf)

**The Adventures of TinTin**

[www.filmeducation.org/tintin/](http://www.filmeducation.org/tintin/)

**Beowulf**

[www.filmeducation.org/beowulf/](http://www.filmeducation.org/beowulf/)

**The Boy in Striped Pyjamas**

[www.filmeducation.org/theboyinthestripedpyjamas/](http://www.filmeducation.org/theboyinthestripedpyjamas/)

**The Chronicles of Narnia – the Voyage of the Dawn Treader -**

[www.filmeducation.org/thevoyageofthedawntreader/](http://www.filmeducation.org/thevoyageofthedawntreader/)

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid**

[www.filmeducation.org/diaryofawimpykid/](http://www.filmeducation.org/diaryofawimpykid/)

**Eleanor's Secret**

[www. filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Eleanor%27s Secret Resource.pdf](http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Eleanor%27s%20Secret%20Resource.pdf)

**Great Expectations**

[www.filmeducation.org/greatexpectations/](http://www.filmeducation.org/greatexpectations/)

**How to Train Your Dragon**

[www.filmeducation.org/howtotrainyourdragon/](http://www.filmeducation.org/howtotrainyourdragon/)

**The Kite Runner**

[www.filmeducation.org/kiterunner/](http://www.filmeducation.org/kiterunner/)

**Le Petit Nicolas**

[www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Filmweek2012\\_PetitNicolas.pdf](http://www.filmeducation.org/pdf/resources/primary/Filmweek2012_PetitNicolas.pdf)

**The Life of Pi**

[www.filmeducation.org/lifeofpi/](http://www.filmeducation.org/lifeofpi/)

**The Lovely Bones**

[www.filmeducation.org/thelovelybones/](http://www.filmeducation.org/thelovelybones/)

**Oliver Twist**

[www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/](http://www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/)

**Persepolis**

[www.filmeducation.org/persepolis/](http://www.filmeducation.org/persepolis/)

**Private Peaceful**

[www.filmeducation.org/privatepeaceful/](http://www.filmeducation.org/privatepeaceful/)

**Sherlock Holmes**

[www.filmeducation.org/sherlockholmes/](http://www.filmeducation.org/sherlockholmes/)

**Trishna**

[www.filmeducation.org/trishna/](http://www.filmeducation.org/trishna/)

**War Horse**

[www.filmeducation.org/warhorse/](http://www.filmeducation.org/warhorse/)

**Wuthering Heights**

[www.filmeducation.org/wutheringheights/](http://www.filmeducation.org/wutheringheights/)



From: *How To Train Your Dragon* – All rights reserved Paramount Pictures