



***King Siri* Teacher Resource**

A great deal of thanks and appreciation goes out to the members of our Teacher Advisory Committee, who volunteer their time to assist in the development of Sprockets teacher resources.

TITLE: *King Siri*

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Sri Lanka

RELEASE YEAR: 2008

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: Sinhalese

DIRECTOR: Somaratne Dissanayake

RUNTIME: 88 minutes

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:

1. *King Siri* (2008)
2. *Samanala Thatu* (2005)
3. *Sooriya Arana* (2004)
4. *Punchi Suranganavi* (2002)
5. *Saroja* (2000)

CURRICULUM LINKS:

- Social Studies
 - features of communities around the world, urban and rural communities, patterns in human geography, economic systems
- Language Arts: Media Literacy
 - identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning
- Character Education



- o friendship, perseverance, kindness, co-operation, respect

FOCUSING QUESTION: Compare the two socio-economic systems presented in this film. What is the connection between poverty and education?

SYNOPSIS:

Sirimal is a gifted eleven-year-old boy from a small Sri Lankan village who enjoys his rural life and appreciates the traditions and cultural values instilled in him by his parents. But his talents and intelligence have won him a scholarship to attend a prestigious school in the capital city of Colombo. Trading in bare feet for shoes and blisters, Sirimal reluctantly sets off for his new surroundings.

Coming from a poor rural family, he has difficulty at first adjusting to an urban world among the school's well-to-do boys. Though he is taunted by bullies and misses village life, Sirimal's strong work ethic and self-esteem help him to cope. Landing the lead role of the king in an important school play brings him newfound respect from his peers, but also delivers a seemingly insurmountable challenge: getting the money to pay for the elaborate costume.

A wonderfully moving tale that audiences will relate to, *King Siri* addresses the prejudice and power dynamics stemming from socio-economic class difference, and looks at the importance of having a connection to your land and culture. Pairing engaging performances with breathtaking cinematography of Sri Lankan landscapes, *King Siri* is also a film about seeing beauty in the smallest things, and how finding strength in yourself can help guide you through the toughest challenges.

Recommended for grades 4 through 8

AN EDUCATOR'S COMMENTS ON THE FILM:

"*King Siri* is a great story that will introduce students to a new culture. There is opportunity for teachers to compare and contrast being a student in Sri Lanka and being a student in Canada. Many students will relate to what it's like going to a new school and understand what it's like to want to fit in with a new group of friends."



PRE-SCREENING PREPARATION:

To introduce students in your class to the culture of Sri Lanka, have students compare and contrast the two countries using the following chart.

	Canada	Sri Lanka
Population		
Climate		
Religion		
Number of Provinces		
Traditional Food		

POST-SCREENING ACTIVITY:

Objective: To introduce the concept of perspective into the classroom.

Duration: 35 minutes

Activity:

1. Have a small group of students (or the teacher) prepare to act out a scene from a play or story. The short drama can be part of a well-known fable or a brief excerpt from a play. The scene should only be a few minutes in length.
2. Before presenting, divide the classroom into "perspective" groups.
 - a. Put blindfolds on one group.
 - b. Stand one group far away from the action.



- c. Stand a group in clear view of the action.
 - d. Have one group cover their ears.
 - e. Have one group stand behind the action, so they can only see the performers' backs.
 - f. Have one group stand outside for the first half of the skit.
 - g. Have one group stand outside for the second half of the skit.
3. Present the story or scene while each group watches from its unique perspective.
 4. Have students return to their seats and discuss the following questions:
 - What does perspective mean?
 - What perspective did each group have of the scene?
 - What makes people have different perspectives?
 - Why do we celebrate different perspectives?
 - How can different perspectives sometimes cause tension and frustration between people?
 - How does one's environment influence his or her perspective?
 - What were some of the different perspectives among the students in *King Siri*?

CONCLUSION/WRAP-UP:

Write a review of the film. For a movie review template, visit reellearning.ca and click on Media Literacy Curriculum.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. Free the Children, www.freethechildren.com/
2. Sri Lanka's official government website, www.priu.gov.lk