

Sprockets

Toronto International FILM
Festival for children
April 14-18, 2008

A great deal of thanks and appreciation goes out to our teacher committees who volunteer their time to assist in the development of Sprockets lesson plans.

TITLE:	Leaps & Bounds (Hoppet)
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:	<i>Sweden</i>
RELEASE YEAR:	<i>2007</i>
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE:	<i>Swedish</i>
DIRECTOR:	Peter Næss
RUNTIME:	<i>86 Minutes</i>
CURRICULUM LINKS:	Health and Physical Education - Competitive Sport, Language Arts – <i>Media Studies</i> : How effectively does the filmmaker portray the central characters Azad who faces many challenges settling into a new country? Social Studies - Issues connected to immigration
Focusing Question:	There are many examples of overcoming obstacles; competitive sports, personal triumph, what are some of these examples in the film?

Synopsis:

Recommended for Grades 5 to 8

After leaving his war-torn home and making his way to Sweden, a young Kurdish refugee must overcome new obstacles in order to reunite with his parents in the award-winning *Leaps & Bounds*. Others may prefer soccer, but twelve-year-old Azad dreams of becoming a great high jumper. With

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the political situation increasingly dangerous in Kurdistan, his parents seize an opportunity to send Azad and his mute older brother, Tigris, to safety in Germany. However, when a deception leaves the boys stranded at Stockholm's airport and fearing deportation, Azad's quick thinking allows them to stay in Sweden by pretending that they are the children of another refugee family. The belief that his parents have abandoned him and the mistreatment by members of his new family makes life difficult for Azad. However, his determination to become a high jumper leads to new friendships and may offer a way to escape with Tigris to Germany, where they can truly begin a new life.

Director Petter Næss mixes compelling drama with humorous moments to create a deeply sympathetic portrait of a young person facing the challenges of being a refugee. Excellently cast as Azad, Ali Abdulsalam gives a performance that inspires us to share his struggles, admire his courage and growing independence, and cheer his triumphs.

Teacher Endorsement:

"There are some frightening war scenes at the beginning of the film but it gives a realistic portrayal of war and is not gratuitous. What I loved about this film is the storyline that combines poignant issues such as experiences of a refugee and those of achieving one's dreams."

Pre-Screening Preparation:

Language Arts – Media Studies: What techniques are used to represent a character in a film? This might include music selection, camera shot, storyline and how a writer or director chooses to depict a character. In the period prior to the film, these methods need to be discussed with the students.

Social Studies - This film gives a realistic depiction of the hardships experienced by those living in a war-torn country. Furthermore, it addresses the hardships faced by refugees, including adapting to new homes and new cultures. Teachers may want to have a conversation with their students about some of these hardships. Students can recognize them when screening the film.

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During Screening Question/Activity:

While watching, look for examples of both social injustice (bullying, lying etc) and kindness (helping, kind words etc)

Post-Screening Activity:

Activity #1 – Media Literacy

Discuss how the film showed effective and objective ways of portraying a character and then have a discussion of the filmmaker’s techniques. Ask questions such as: Is a character presented in a well-rounded developed manner? Is the filmmaker neglecting to show a different perspective of this character? How would you change this character if you were to make this film? Use the following chart to record some of these characteristics.

Character Worksheet

STUDENT HANDOUT

Character Name	Speech	Appearance	Mannerisms	Attitude
Azad				
Tigris				

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Kajsa Bergqvist				
Azad and Tigris' Parents				
Säma				
Markus				
Hot-dog-man				

Activity #2 - Health and Physical Education

This film incorporates the competitive sport of high jumping into its central storyline. Students might want to research sport biographies where athletes have had the opportunity to travel to new places and provided opportunities because of competitive sport (previous Olympics may provide some great stories to reflect on).

Conclusion/Wrap-Up:

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This is a film about overcoming obstacles and has universal appeal. Within your own school and community can students recall their own experiences overcoming an obstacle?