

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: **My Greatest Day Ever**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: *United Kingdom*
RELEASE YEAR: *2007*
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: *English*
DIRECTOR: *Mark Bellamy*
RUNTIME: *9 Minutes*
DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:
MY GREATEST DAY EVER (2007)
ROAD RAGE (2007)

TITLE: **Anass**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: *The Netherlands*
RELEASE YEAR: *2005*
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: *Dutch (with English subtitles)*
DIRECTOR: *Janneke de Weerd*
RUNTIME: *15 Minutes*
DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:
ANASS (2005)
3 WEKEN FEEST (2000)

TITLE: **Offside**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: *Israel*
RELEASE YEAR: *2005*
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: *Arabic* (with English subtitles)
DIRECTOR: *Daniel Sivan/Dorit Tadir*
RUNTIME: *15 Minutes*
DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:
OFFSIDE (2005)

TITLE: **Kicken**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: *The Netherlands*

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RELEASE YEAR: 2007
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: Dutch (with English subtitles)
DIRECTOR: Feiji Riemersma
RUNTIME: 8 Minutes
DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:
KICKEN (2007)

CURRICULUM LINKS:

- Physical Education and Healthy Living
- Social Studies
- Math
- Reading

FOCUSING QUESTION:

These four short soccer-related films show four very different experiences that relate to soccer. What are the themes that tie these films together?

SYNOPSIS:

Recommended for Grades 5 to 7

From humorous fiction to thought-provoking documentary, this collection of films about youth who love playing soccer explores diverse themes including the importance of trying your best, the immigrant experience and the unfair consequences of political dispute.

My Greatest Day Ever (Australia)

Scotty has always relied on luck when playing soccer, but he discovers that giving his best effort may actually be more effective in this laugh-out-loud film.

Anass (The Netherlands)

Ten-year-old Anass is a talented soccer player from a Moroccan family living in the Netherlands. Recently signed to the youth team of a professional soccer club, Anass discusses both his excitement about this

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opportunity as well as the challenges he faces in this thoughtful documentary.

Offside (Israel)

Ishaq is a thirteen-year-old Palestinian whose house has been separated from the nearby village by the Israeli security fence, making it nearly impossible for him to leave his family's property. This powerful documentary asks whether Ishaq will ever be able to play soccer with his friends again.

Kicken (The Netherlands)

Tired of always being teased and selected last for teams, twelve-year-old Lisa comes up with a plan to obtain a pair of shoes she believes will make her a better soccer player.

PRE-SCREENING PREPARATION:

These film can be used as part of an integrated unit based on the game of soccer. North America's Major League Soccer League, which Toronto FC is a part of, starts its 2008 season in April, just in time for the screening of these four shorts.

Many of Toronto FC's players are Canadian. Many others are from countries such as New Zealand, Ireland, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. When you include former players, the list of countries is even longer. You can research the homelands of these players and find out all sorts of information easily tied to Canada's links to the world (Grade 6), and a range of Grade 7 and 8 geography strands.

Sports also offer a wealth of activities related to math (data management and probability, statistics, average). Following the team's fortunes in the newspaper will offer opportunities for media studies as well.

Of course, you can play soccer with your class. And to top it off, try to organize a class trip to a Toronto FC match! Sports figures have been known to visit schools for motivational speeches.

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DURING SCREENING QUESTION/ACTIVITY:

Think about how different the films are from each other, especially how *My Greatest Day Ever* and *Kicken* compare to *Anass* and *Offside* in tone. Consider the themes the films share aside from the obvious soccer connection.

POST-SCREENING ACTIVITY:

Use the worksheet provided to create a variation of a character web. Character webs are usually used to describe the relationships between characters in the same text. In this version, you can use the character web to draw similarities between the protagonists of each film. For example, *Anass* (*Anass*) and *Iskhak* (*Offside*) live in an atmosphere characterized, to varying degrees, by racial tension. Write down a simple statement along the arrows that connect each of the four films. You can do this with the full class with an overhead or chalkboard, with small groups on chart paper or individually with the handout. Use your discretion based on the ability and comfort level of your class. Alternately, you can compare the films based on theme, tone, audience, genre, etc. For example, both *Kicken* and *My Greatest Day Ever* may appeal to a younger audience than the other films due to the comic narrative.

CONCLUSION/WRAP UP:

Soccer is considered the world's most popular sport. Because of this notion, filmmakers know that a soccer-themed film will immediately have an appeal that will transcend national, linguistic and cultural borders. Students should come out of the films with a greater appreciation for soccer as a unifying force and as a sport that serves as a backdrop for all kinds of drama both on and off the field.

Soccer Shorts Character Web

