



***Stella and the Star of the Orient* 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: *Stella and the Star of the Orient*

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Germany

RELEASE YEAR: 2007

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: German

DIRECTOR: Erna Schmidt

RUNTIME: 87 Minutes

CURRICULUM LINKS:

- History
- Science (progress of technology)
- Language (evolution of language)
- Character Education (family values, the role of a woman 100 years ago compared to today in Germany)

FOCUSING QUESTION: How have advancements in science and technology changed our society?

SYNOPSIS:

Rummaging in the attic one New Year's Eve, ten-year-old Stella steps out of a wardrobe and discovers she has travelled one hundred years back in time! She finds herself face to face with her great-grandmother Clementine, who in 1905 is the same age as Stella. The girls become fast friends, and when they and Clementine's happy-go-lucky younger brother Gustav learn that their long-standing home may have to be sold, the trio sets off on an exciting adventure in search of a secret treasure to save the family from financial ruin. As they hunt for the fortune, the heroes encounter many challenges, from braving a wintry forest to evading a pair of swindling thieves on their trail. The three friends must race against



time to find the treasure and get Stella back to the present day – otherwise, she might never exist in the first place!

Stella and the Star of the Orient is a delightful voyage through time and a snowy landscape that cleverly explores the various changes that have occurred within the past century, especially in the fields of language, technology and women’s rights. A strong message about empowering girls is teamed with action-packed scenes of adventure and laughter, making this a film that is certain to engage and entertain.

Recommended for grades 2 through 5

AN EDUCATOR’S COMMENTS AFTER SCREENING THE FILM:

“There are no concerns about offensive language or cultural stereotypes. However, there is reference to the notion that parents stay together forever – especially if they kiss under the Lover’s Tree. If this issue needs to be addressed in your class, perhaps the easiest way to deal with it would be to simply identify it as one of the things that has changed in the last one hundred years.”

PRE-SCREENING PREPARATION:

In the last 100 years, what science and technology changes have occurred in North America?

The following are examples of general changes that have taken place in the last century that might help to initiate discussion:

- Telephones have progressed from rotary dial to push-button to cellular.
- The Eiffel Tower was once the tallest structure in the world.
- New vocabulary has been introduced (such as the word “megabyte”).
- New meanings are associated with words. “Cool,” for example, was once used exclusively as a reference to temperature (the term “cool” is highlighted in the film).
- The zipper was invented.
- The first African-American president was elected to the United States.
- On January 28th 1916, the women of Manitoba became the first in Canada to win the right to vote in provincial election and to hold elective office.



POST-SCREENING ACTIVITY:

Break the class into groups and pose this question:

In your view, what invention has had the most impact on the world over the past 100 years? How do you think Clementine, Gustav and Stella would react to your choice?

CONCLUSION/WRAP-UP:

This film can be a great way to introduce the advancement of women's rights as one of the changes that has taken place over the last 100 years.

For older students, this film may also provide a degree of appreciation for those who struggled with, and changed societal perspectives.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. Digital History, www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/
2. Historica Minutes: Innovators, <http://www.histori.ca/minutes/theme.do?id=10008&className=ca.histori.minutes.entity.ClassicMinute>
3. 20th Century Timeline, http://inventors.about.com/od/timelines/a/twentieth_3.htm