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FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE:

LEARNING ABOUT MOVIES, LEARNING THROUGH MOVIES

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A final year project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor in Communication Studies (Honours)

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Nanyang Technological University

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Abstract

Films form an important component of media consumption and culture today, particularly among youths in developed nations like Singapore. Yet despite high levels of film and media consumption, there remains a lack of formal instruction within the Singapore education system to equip students with the ability to critically navigate an increasingly visual-saturated world. Kindled by this lack of an educational infrastructure, this paper explores the possibilities of introducing a film literacy programme at the lower secondary level in Singapore schools. With the lack of any research and discourse on film education in Singapore, this study takes on an exploratory and qualitative approach in examining the necessity, benefits and feasibility of a film literacy programme in the local context. The potential of using film to teach values and sociocultural insights in Singapore, as well as the effectiveness of an ahistorical filmic and constructivist pedagogical approach in teaching film literacy will also be examined. In-depth interviews with 15 experts and professionals from the film and education industries were carried out. Trial classes were conducted in three secondary schools, after which focus groups were conducted with the students. The findings demonstrate much support for the need to increase and cultivate film literacy for Singapore youths, and considerable promise for the use of film in values education. The findings are further discussed in relation to the programme’s feasibility in the Singapore education system, along with implications on a proposed film literacy programme and at the institutional level.
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Introduction

Since its birth at the turn of the 20th century, films have continued to maintain a stronghold over public consciousness and culture worldwide. Singapore is no exception, as the highly-developed city-state ranks among the top ten in the world in terms of cinema attendance per capita (Kok, 2012). Similar to consumption trends worldwide, demand for films in Singapore is largely driven by youths (Bleed, 2005; Cucco, 2009). Students form one-third of weekly cinema-goers (Nielsen Media Index, 2009), while young adults aged 15 to 29 make up 64.6 per cent of total cinema audiences (Nielsen Media Index, 2012). Yet, there lies a distinct incongruity between the high consumption of films by youths, and the lack of any formal instruction in schools to equip students with the skills and knowledge to critically examine what they so regularly consume. The absence of such an educational infrastructure, despite the ubiquity of films and other visual media, reveals a gap in the Singapore education system in developing the skillsets necessary for students to navigate through an increasingly visual world (Bleed, 2005).

This paper explores the possibilities of introducing a film literacy programme in Singapore schools, to provide the local educational system with a means of preparing students to become active and critical consumers of film, and by extension, other related media. Studies have pointed out that despite being “the most visual of all learning cohorts” (Coates, 2007, p. 12), and having a voracious appetite for media content (Today, 2011), youths today lack the skills to critically interpret the visual communication they interact with daily (Megee, 1997; Muller, 2006; Lim & Theng, 2011). As textual information gives way to increasingly visual forms of communication (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009), the Singapore education system needs to be updated accordingly to equip students with the necessary visual literacy skills.
While there exists multiple forms of visual media, including television, videos and mobile apps, films provide an excellent platform to educate youths about media literacy and visual literacy. Films occupy a unique position amongst other visual media, and are at once a form of popular entertainment, an art form, and an educational tool (Baumann, 2001). Yet, with a lack of film literacy and education, film consumption by Singapore’s youth takes on a predominantly consumerist approach, where cinema-going shares a cultural metonomy with the shopping mall and fast food outlet (Ravenscroft, Chua & Wee, 2001). Films’ artistic, cultural (Baumann, 2001) and educational merits, including the opportunity to vividly portray sociocultural issues, clarify values and build character (Shefrin, 2003; Boske & McCormack, 2011), are incognizant to youths who see films merely as a commodity for leisure purposes. By developing film literacy skills among a generation of youths, such a consumerist approach can be developed into a more perceptive and progressive one, to enable them to appreciate and learn from films as cultural artifacts, educational tools and an aesthetic mode of expression beyond just a form of entertainment.

Kindled by these aims, and propelled by a lack of educational infrastructure, research and discourse on the topic in Singapore, this study attempts to fill these gaps by taking on an exploratory and qualitative approach in examining the issues surrounding the introduction of a film literacy programme into the Singapore education system. As this study works towards the practical implementation of such a programme, groundwork was necessary to collect information directly from the local education system. Over the past eight months, in-depth interviews were conducted with local film and education experts, followed by trial classes and focus groups with students in Singapore schools, to gather information from the field regarding film literacy and education.

Specifically, the aims of this study are fourfold. Firstly, this study aims to fill the research gap on the necessity of film education in Singapore, as well as the benefits it can
bring to students. Secondly, this study aims to find out the practical considerations that surround the actual implementation of such a programme, and to determine its feasibility in the Singapore education system. Thirdly, key pedagogical approaches will be studied for their suitability in teaching such a film literacy programme. Finally, based on the findings, a sample programme template that schools can consider adapting for a pioneer film literacy programme will be designed to stimulate practical implementations and/or further research of film literacy education in Singapore.

**Literature Review**

**Film Literacy in the 21st Century**

*Visual literacy.* The 21st century brings new challenges as the world enters a new age characterized by the prevalence of digital multimedia. People are “conditioned by new technologies to being very visual in our day-to-day living and learning” (Bleed, 2005, p. 3), as more people obtain information from multimedia sources, and consume movies, television programmes and videos online. Yet, this increase in visual communication is unaccompanied by visual literacy, especially among the young (Coates, 2007). Despite being ‘digital natives’, a term coined by Prensky (2001) to refer to the generation born in the technological age, youths are not adept in interpreting the visual communication they interact with daily (Brumberger, 2011). Meanwhile, Muller (2006) argued that youths might be able to “navigate a high-tech world, [but] they do not know how to read it” (p. 32). Megee (1997) also showed how today’s youth are exposed to influences from various media without benefiting from a deeper understanding of their content or purpose.

It is thus important to build new forms of literacies for youths as they inhabit a world inundated by visual aesthetics and media (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). With heightened visual literacy and a critical understanding of the media they consume, youths can be better positioned to navigate through a digital and media-saturated world (Muller, 2006).
Expanding the concept of literacy. According to Kellner & Share (2005), literacy can be defined as being equipped with the skills “to read, interpret, and produce certain types of texts and artifacts and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one’s culture and society” (p. 369). However as moving images increasingly dominate the lifestyles of youths in the 21st century (Coates, 2007), an expansion of the traditional notion of literacy is necessary (Bleed, 2005). Rapid technological advancements have resulted in a multiplicity of text forms and cultural artifacts, such that films, television and other forms of visual media are fast changing the way we perceive and interpret texts (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In this context, Bleed (2005) argued that “we must expand our concept of literacy to match the reality of today” (p. 3).

Film literacy within a ‘multiliteracy’ framework. This paper posits that film literacy can be defined within the ‘multiliteracy’ framework of teaching and learning literacy. Introduced by the New London Group in 1996, ‘multiliteracy’ expands the concept of literacy to consider cultural and global shifts together with the increasingly diverse yet collapsed modes of communication, or ‘multimodality’ (New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Tan & McWilliam, 2009). The vast array of media products available for consumption are said to be key propellers of this ‘multimodality’ (Sripathy, 2007). Within the ‘multiliteracy’ framework, film literacy can be seen as not only encompassing the learning of visual and filmic language, but also the reading of literacy as a “multi-faceted, multi-layered construct through which learners have to negotiate, and to which they bring their own social and cultural knowledge” (Sripathy, 2007, p. 74).

As with the New London Group’s philosophy, films are inherently intertextual and multimodal (New London Group, 1996), and in studying film literacy, students are expected to bring their own social and cultural knowledge to critically negotiate new understandings (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). A study by Ajayi (2011), for instance, found that when taught
comprehension skills using Disney’s *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), students used their own gender, knowledge, experience and other cultural modalities to construct new meanings from the film. This definition of film literacy within the ‘multiliteracy’ framework holds great promise, as it takes into account the way a generation of ‘digital natives’ perceive and assimilate information within a increasingly visual world (Bleed, 2005).

Apart from visual and filmic literacy, teaching film literacy has also been found to possess several other benefits. The next section focuses on these benefits and outlines some of the fears associated with using film in the classroom.

**Film Literacy in the Classroom**

**Benefits of film literacy.** While the formal teaching of film literacy in the classroom is a relatively new phenomenon (Wonderly, 2009), many studies have put forth multiple benefits of using film in the classroom for other subjects. Driscoll (2000) wrote that learners “are not empty vessels to be filled” (p. 376), and that students seek to make sense of what they are learning. In this regard, films, with their strong narratives, can enhance learning experiences in the classroom (Driscoll, 2000). Turner (1988) saw narratives as “a means of ‘making-sense’ of our social world, and sharing that ‘sense’ with others” (p. 79). In addition, Giroux (2002) described how the elements that make up a film such as “images, sounds, gestures, talk, and spectacles” can create opportunities for people to be educated on “how to act, speak, think, feel, desire, and behave” (p. 3). In other words, film as an educational tool can help youths to actively construct and reflect on the social and cultural phenomena around them.

Motion pictures can also communicate ideas on many levels, convey the ambiguity of modern cultures and help youths to recognize alternative perspectives (Mallinger & Rossy, 2003). This ambiguity and intertextuality inherent in film provides students with the opportunity to critically negotiate meanings from multiple perspectives (Chia, 2013).
Films can also strengthen ethical responses of the young through the clarification of values, personal assessment and self knowledge (Berger & Pratt, 1998). Furthermore, films provide opportunities for educators to sharpen youths’ awareness of racial discrimination and other cultural myths, and how these are propagated by motion pictures (Boske & McCormack, 2011). According to Mee and Dowling (2003), movies are cultural products that “contain representations…[and] visions of how the world is or should be” (p. 185). Finally, films are powerful tools in developing students’ moral reasoning processes (Collier, 1993), and fostering changes in their attitudes (Gladstein & Feldstein, 1983; Walters, 1994). All these point to how the use of film can be both thought and felt at the same time. Shefrin (2003) summed it up succinctly:

“As informational tools, films can be effective and thought-provoking texts for students to obtain insights into the characteristics, behaviors, and values of other cultures. As experiential tools, films can be emotional and thought-changing texts for enabling students to feel as if they have personally experienced the depicted events” (p. 58).

The benefits of film literacy on youths are far-reaching. However, it must be noted that there had been some resistance to using film in the classroom over the past decades.

**The fears of using film in the classroom.** Film has often been seen by educators as a distraction from classroom learning and devoid of educational value because of its allusion to mass entertainment. According to Kennedy, Şenses and Ayan (2011), films are often regarded as “agents of depolitisation, providing only pleasure” (p. 10). Similarly, Wonderly (2009) wrote that educators are able to acknowledge the value of children’s literature, but “film is often seen as the enemy” (p. 6). Educators’ misuse of film in the classroom has also contributed to these fears. In a study by Hobbs (1999), it was found that teachers sometimes use videos to ‘sedate’ students to keep them under control, thus creating a lifeless classroom.
As a result, students had no opportunity to discuss or review film material. In other cases, teachers showed films in the classroom to cover up their lack of lesson planning, or to make use of the ‘screening’ time to mark students’ assignments.

Although these studies have delineated some benefits and fears of using film in the classroom, there remains a gap in the understanding of these issues in the Singapore context. The studies have also focused on the use of film in the general curriculum, instead of film literacy as a specific programme. This paper attempts to explore and fill both of these gaps.

**Teaching values through films.** While ‘Learning About Films’ forms the first aspect of this study’s proposed film literacy programme which encompasses the learning of film concepts and theories, the second component of the programme involves ‘Learning Through Films’. Motivated by literature on the benefits of using films to teach values apart from visual and media literacy (Ward, 1996; Shefrin, 2003; Wonderly, 2009), this component focuses on the messages and themes presented in films, and how they might provide educational benefits to students.

Wonderly (2009) argued that films, by painting a visual, moving picture of people, situations and life, engage students cognitively and emotionally, and are helpful tools for moral education. Ward (1996) proposed that films have the potential to fulfill the role of literature in a visuals-dominated information age, and that parents who lack time to work through a novel can spend time discussing ethical considerations presented in a film with their children. Shefrin (2003) argued that films are both informational and experiential tools, and that students give personal meaning to a film based on their own sites of engagement. Penna and Brauchitsch (1976) found that attitudes towards values can be changed with a single viewing of a film, and that the effect was even more powerful when a film was shown with other similar films.
Despite these benefits, our search revealed a lack of literature on the effectiveness of using film to teach values in Singapore. One of this paper’s aims is to fill in this gap, by illustrating the role films can play in values education in Singapore.

**Film and Media Literacy: Some International Models**

Apart from knowledge on the benefits of teaching film literacy, an overview of some models that Singapore can consider in implementing film literacy in schools will be useful for a pioneering programme. However, it is not within the scope of this study to provide a comprehensive look at all the film and media literacy examples executed internationally. The models mentioned should not be regarded as exhaustive, but a broad overview of some useful international practices and motivations in film and media education that can be considered for Singapore. Also, while film literacy is the main focus of this paper, media literacy programmes should not be discounted so that a broader picture can be obtained.

Canada is one of the world’s leaders in incorporating media literacy into the school curriculum. According to Wilson and Duncan (2009), the Ontario Ministry of Education “mandate[d] media literacy from grades 1-12” (p. 128). Media literacy also became ‘compulsory’ for students in Hong Kong when education restructuring in the last decade saw its components integrated into core subjects such as Liberal Studies, English and Chinese (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2004, as cited in Cheung, 2009). Similarly, the New Zealand Ministry of Education and Qualifications Authority mandated media literacy in the curriculum, but as a standalone subject called ‘Media Studies’ aimed specifically at upper secondary school students (Lealand, 2009).

However, Hong Kong and New Zealand provide interesting case studies as media literacy rose into prominence in different ways. Media literacy in New Zealand was sparked when a few school teachers passionate about film and television formed the Association of Film and Television Teachers (now known as the National Association of Media Educators)
in 1983, which remains relevant till today as “the major driver of media teaching in New Zealand schools” (Lealand, 2009, p. 52). Meanwhile, media literacy in Hong Kong came to prominence because of the difficulties of teaching civics (Cheung & Leung, 1998) and was first proposed as a solution to improve civics education (Cheung, 2004). Like New Zealand, media literacy in Hong Kong also started from a grassroots level (Lee, 2012).

An alternative model to implementing film literacy programmes in schools relies on the collective initiative of organizations closely related to the film industry and/or with a vested interest in film education. This occurs in the United Kingdom (UK), where the British Film Institute, UK Film Council, and Film Education have developed film literacy programmes for youths in schools under a blueprint called ‘Film: 21st Century Literacy – A strategy for film education across the UK’. One programme spearheaded by Film Education (n.d) provides schools with “curriculum-relevant film-based learning experiences”, runs training sessions for teachers, and has also implemented the ‘National Schools Film Week’ where more than 500,000 students visit theaters across the UK as part of learning every year. In Canada, the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) organizes workshops for educators and students. Like in the UK, study guides for more than two thousand online film titles have also been made available to help educators “choose the right film for their curriculum” (NFB/education, n.d.).

Media literacy in Hong Kong has also benefited tremendously from the efforts of the non-profit Hong Kong Association of Media Education (HKAME), which has provided media education workshops, teacher training courses, and advice to schools on their media education projects. In fact, one of its long-term goals is to “advocate for including media education in the formal school curriculum” (HKAME, n.d.).

In summary, various countries have had certain ideological motivations to pursue film and media literacy in their schools, either across the nation (e.g. New Zealand) or
specific to major states (e.g. Ontario in Canada). For the UK, there was a need for media literacy to move beyond protectionism, where youths are encouraged to participate and critically negotiate with media instead of focusing on avoiding its harmful effects (Buckingham, 1998). Hong Kong initially saw media literacy as socially and politically motivated, employing it to teach civics education (Cheung & Leung, 1998). Other countries such as Brazil regard media literacy as integral to strengthening their young democracy (de Siqueira, 2011), whereas Australia sees media education as a basic entitlement for youths, thus mandating it into the national curriculum (Dezuanni, 2011). These countries’ recognition of film and media literacy as an important component of education demonstrate that a similar programme for Singapore has the potential to function effectively and benefit her education system.

**Approaches to Teaching Film Literacy**

Working towards the practical implementation of a film literacy programme, this paper aims to find out if two broad approaches – an ahistorical approach with contemporary popular films as a starting point, and a constructivist approach from an educational pedagogical perspective, can be used suitably and effectively in Singapore. Both approaches are not theoretically related, but they should also not be seen as mutually exclusive.

**Taking an ahistorical filmic approach.** In most tertiary film schools, cinema studies is traditionally taught from a historical perspective where the study of the history of cinema is emphasized (University of Toronto, 2009; Savannah College of Art and Design, 2012; Penn Arts and Sciences, 2013). However, starting with old films or silent cinema might not appeal to a younger generation accustomed to a diet of popular blockbusters (Ravenscroft, Chua & Wee, 2001). Thus, it is important to ensure that the teaching of film literacy starts on the right note by making lessons accessible and engaging for students. According to Vetrine (2004), choosing films that engage students create “an environment to think and a desire to
communicate” (p. 41). Similarly, King (2002) remarked that “entertaining films… [are] relevant to learners’ appreciation of popular culture” (p. 514). A film’s ability to engage can increase interest in a particular topic, and consequently increase the motivation to learn (Silvia, 2008; Kennedy, Şenses & Ayan, 2011).

The contemporary Hollywood blockbuster, instantly familiar to youths because of its ubiquitous nature, can shape up to be a powerful and effective starting point to engage them. Popular cinema is able to reflect universal issues, thus allowing educators to draw connections between students’ lived experiences and different aspects of contemporary culture that they are familiar with. Giroux (2002) wrote:

“Popular culture, including film, now plays pedagogically…in shaping the identities, values, and broader social practices that characterize an increasingly post-modern culture in which electronic media and visual forms constitute the most powerful educational tools of the new millennium” (p. 10).

The above studies have shown the importance of engaging students by using appealing films and its positive effect on learners’ motivation and interest. This paper’s proposed ahistorical approach to teaching film literacy will be explored further for its applicability in the Singapore context.

**Taking a constructivist pedagogical approach.** In the context of education, constructivism can be described as a psychological theory of learning. It suggests that people construct and transform their version of reality as they “have no access to an objective reality” (Fosnot & Perry, 1996, p. 27). In other words, constructivism looks at how people construct knowledge and their own understanding of the world through experience and reflecting on those experiences. The constructivist view revolves around two important principles: First, it posits that learners construct new understandings by using what they already know. Second, it requires learners to be active rather than passive in the classroom (von Glasersfeld, 1987).
This cognizance of the role of prior knowledge and student agency in learning are similar to some of the elements of the ‘multiliteracy’ framework described earlier (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In this paper, these two principles will act as theoretical pillars for designing the proposed film literacy programme. Constructivism as a pedagogical approach will also be studied in this paper in terms of its effectiveness in teaching film literacy in Singapore.

**The Singapore Education System**

The following section provides a background to the Singapore education system. Its broad education outcomes, recent discourses and agendas, and a brief background of the values education curriculum will be discussed to examine how a film literacy programme can fit into the existing education system.

**An ability-driven education.** Singapore’s education system is one of the best-performing school systems in the world (Barber & Mourshed, 2009), coming in 3rd in the Global Competitiveness Report: Quality of the Educational System 2012-13 (Schwab, 2013), and 5th in the Pearson Learning Curve Report 2012 (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012; Ministry of Education Singapore, 2012). Managed by the Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore’s education policy is closely related to its economic policy (Tan & Chew, 2004; Goh & Gopinathan, 2008). In 1997, the Singapore government recognized a new economic paradigm of a knowledge-based economy focused on innovation and creativity, and a shift towards the tertiary industries. In response, the MOE moved from ‘efficiency-driven education’ to ‘ability-driven education’, and introduced reforms including the increased use of information and communications technology in the classroom, collaborative learning, and greater autonomy in schools (Goh & Gopinathan, 2006).

**21CC framework.** In 2010, the 21st Century Competencies (21CC) framework was introduced to develop the skillsets necessary for a rapidly changing and globalized world. These include ‘Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-Cultural Skills’, ‘Critical and
Inventive Thinking’ and ‘Information and Communication Skills’ (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2010). All three sets of competencies were developed together with the MOE’s Desired Outcomes of Education, Social and Emotional Competencies and Core Values (see Appendix A). Collectively, these learning outcomes drive the policies and programmes established by the MOE and schools (Ministry of Education 2010; 2012) through at least ten years of formal education, of which the first six are compulsory (Goh & Gopinathan, 2008). Major examinations are conducted at designated milestones, at the end of the primary, secondary and junior college years. Appendix B details the possible education pathways obtainable in Singapore.

**Lower secondary education.** For this project, the Secondary One and Two cohorts were deemed most suitable for the practical implementation of a new film literacy programme as they are at least two years away from a major examination. According to government statistics (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2012), there are 369 educational institutions in Singapore, of which 154 are secondary schools. Another 15 schools offer mixed educational levels, most of which offer the Integrated Programmes (IP), which has been offered to top-performing students from each cohort since 2004. Through the IP, academically strong secondary school pupils can directly move on to junior college to sit for the GCE ‘A’ Level examinations without taking the ‘O’ Levels. This frees up time for schools to stretch students and expose them to broader academic and non-academic programmes (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2013). Of the 94,569 lower secondary students enrolled in 2011, 57,958 or 61 per cent belong to the higher aptitude Express Stream or the IP. The rest of the students who belong to the Normal Stream will not be considered in this study for a more focused approach.

**Autonomy in schools to implement programmes.** In line with ‘ability-driven education’ and the 21CC Framework, and departing from a traditionally top-down approach
from the MOE in the past decades (Goh & Gopinathan, 2006), schools are increasingly being encouraged to customize and take ownership of school-based programmes according to the their students’ aptitudes (Ng, 2007; Ministry of Education Singapore, 2010). Schools are given the authority and autonomy to pioneer and implement programmes like Research Studies (Dunman High School, 2010) or a Computer Elective Programme (Raffles Institution, 2010). Similarly, a film literacy programme can be introduced by schools as they deem fit. Such programmes can also be shared with other schools within its school ‘cluster’ for a more collaborative approach (INCA, 2005; Gopinathan, 2012). Still, because of the need to maintain education quality, this decentralization ought to be seen as part of a “centralized decentralization” strategy (Watkins, 1993, as cited in Mok, 2003, p. 360), where the government maintains high education standards while at the same time empowering schools to diversify and innovate by “thinking out of the box” (Ng, 2007, p. 243).

**The English Literature debate.** The recent debate in The Straits Times on the decline in popularity of English Literature as a subject centered on the loss of opportunities to teach lessons on values and human behaviour across different cultures and beliefs (Chia, 2013; Ng, 2013). In addition, the subject’s abilities to develop critical thinking, communication skills and the capacity to appreciate and interpret multiple perspectives are regarded as integral for students’ holistic development (Channel NewsAsia, 2013; The Straits Times, 2013). The lack of interest in literature was also linked to the larger problem of Singaporeans’ inability to appreciate aesthetic modes of expression, and the rigidity of a social and education system accustomed to the study of hard sciences as the impetus for competitive economic growth (Ng, 2013).

**Film as an alternative to building the 21CC.** Notably, the benefits of studying English Literature are germane to the 21CC Framework expounded by the MOE, especially in the areas of critical thinking, global awareness and communication. With the importance of
these learning objectives in mind, and in keeping up with the demands of the 21st century, education systems worldwide are starting to, or have already implemented programmes targeted at a new level of digital consciousness. As mentioned, New Zealand and Canada (see page 8) are some of the global leaders in education that have recognized the use of film as a useful tool to develop visual literacy, analytical thinking and a broad worldview (Lealand, 2009; Wilson & Duncan, 2009).

Despite the similarities between the learning outcomes of literature and the 21CC to the teaching of film literacy, there is no formal programme or initiative to bring film literacy into Singapore classrooms. As a different mode of communication from text and literature, the use of film in the Singapore educational context can be seen as complementary to the directions of the 21CC Framework.

**Values education in Singapore.** Apart from visual literacy, media literacy and global awareness, studies have also shown the merits of using films to teach values (Ward, 1996; Shefrin, 2003; Wonderly, 2009). Understanding the history and development of values education in Singapore is pertinent in examining how using film to teach values represents a step forward in the local curriculum and pedagogy. An integral part of the holistic development of students (Heng, 2011), values education aims to develop moral values and emotional competencies, and enhance the pro-social development of students (Schuitema, Dam & Veugelers, 2007). For the purpose of exploring how values education can be incorporated into a film literacy programme, values education is here defined as “…the deliberate teaching of particular values, attitudes, and dispositions to stimulate the prosocial and moral development of students” (Schuitema et al., 2007, p. 2).

Since its first introduction as an Ethics class in 1959, its objectives and scope have undergone multiple changes (Chew, 1998). Ethics class was changed to Civics class in 1963 to reflect an added emphasis on nation building. A decade later, Education for Living (EFL),
which combined Civics with Geography and History was introduced (Chew, 1998; Chia, 2010). The combination, however, proved unpopular and confusing, and was replaced by the Good Citizen Project in 1980. Confucian Ethics and Religious Studies commenced in 1984, but was abruptly replaced by the Civics and Moral Education (CME) syllabus in 1995 (Chew, 1998). Updated in 2000 and 2007, the CME syllabus was recently replaced by Character and Citizenship Education (CCE).

**Criticisms of values education in Singapore.** Despite being a largely non-academic and non-examinable subject, values education has nevertheless remained in academic discourse particularly for its weaknesses (Gopinathan, 1980; Chew, 1998; Chia, 2010). Tan and Chew (2004) argued that values education in Singapore is merely the means to the end result of citizenship training. CME is also awarded little attention by both educators and students in an education system that emphasizes academic excellence, and often sidelined by teachers to spend more time on examinable subjects (Chia, 2010). Teachers have also been criticized for considering CME periods as sessions that would make up their lesson quotas, and for being highly uncritical and apathetic about the syllabus and its effectiveness (Chew, 1998).

As argued by Chia (2010), the emphasis on examinable subjects over civics and moral education reflects displaced priorities within the education system, as the single-minded pursuit of academic achievement belies the aim of developing well-rounded individuals.

**Character and citizenship education.** To deal with the criticisms mentioned above, the Ministry of Education (MOE) updates and improves on the values education curriculum periodically to place increased emphasis on holistic education and character building. The most recent update occurred with the introduction of CCE (Heng, 2011).
Announced in 2011, CCE will be introduced in stages at the primary and secondary levels by 2014.

The CCE syllabus also features the ‘5Ps’: ‘Purpose’, or a whole school approach; ‘Pupil’, where students’ daily experiences provide a meaningful context to the lessons learnt; ‘ExPerience’, where character development is integrated in various subjects in the form of ‘teachable moments’; ‘Professional Development’, where teachers are trained in the subject; and ‘Partnership’, which stresses the reinforcement of values taught in school and at home (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2012a). ‘Pupil’ and ‘ExPerience’ are of particular interest to a film literacy programme. The former is related to the idea of ‘multiliteracies’ where students can relate directly to the lessons learnt, while the latter provides opportunities for values education to be integrated into a film literacy programme.

**Teaching values education.** A curriculum toolkit produced by the MOE is made available to schools, which have the autonomy to implement CCE in ways best suited for their students, through CCE periods, academic subjects and non-classroom activities (Heng, 2011). Workbooks include activity sheets and reflection worksheets, for students to record their thoughts and feelings on the topic at hand (Tan & Chew, 2004). Pupils are also required to make a moral choice for various situations and reflect on the reasons and consequences for their choices (Tan & Chew, 2004; CPDD, 2007). The MOE also emphasizes student-centered and process-based learning over a teacher-centered and content-based method. Students are encouraged to internalize values by focusing on ‘why’ and ‘how’ instead of ‘what’. (Curriculum Planning & Development Division, 2007).

With the history and development of values education in Singapore as a background, and motivated by the benefits of teaching values through films, one of this paper’s aims is to determine the effectiveness of using films to teach values in Singapore, as well as how it can be placed within a film literacy programme.
A Singapore Look at Film and Media Literacy

This section gives a brief look at film and media literacy in Singapore. In 2011, cinema attendance in Singapore exceeded 22 million, a rapid increase from 13 million just a decade ago (Singapore Film Commission, 2012). With 4.5 visits per person per year, Singapore has one of the highest cinema attendance per capita statistics in the world. (Media Development Authority, 2012; Kok, 2012). Although our research revealed a lack of relevant studies on the topic of film literacy among youths in Singapore, possibly because of its specificity, a few studies located film literacy within media literacy (Burn & Durran, 2007; Lim & Theng, 2011). According to Lim and Theng (2011), Singapore youths 13 to 16 years of age were established as heavy consumers of media, but lacked the skills to critically examine the media consumed. Singapore youths also fared poorly when it came to questioning skills in evaluating media values (Lim & Theng, 2011).

Efforts at engaging youths in film have been carried out by organisations such as the National Arts Council Singapore (2010) and Asian Film Archive (n.d.), with screening sessions and film literacy seminars targeted at students 13 to 19 years of age. The Asian Film Archive also organizes workshops for educators to train them to read and use film critically (Singapore Art Gallery Guide, 2013). However, these programmes lack consistent outreach to youths and educators. Interestingly, the Ministry of Education has appointed the National Library Board Academy to conduct media literacy programmes for students aged 10 to 14 in schools (National Library Board Singapore, 2013), but the topics center on the use of the Internet and new communication technologies rather than film. Lastly, the Media Literacy Council was formed in 2012 to “spearhead public education on media literacy and cyber wellness” (Channel NewsAsia, 2012, para. 1), with a similar focus on new media and the web.

Singapore also appears to be expending more effort and resources towards film production rather than film literacy, a direction pursued in a bid to generate growth in the
local filmmaking industry (Media Development Authority, 2007). In 2005, the Puttnam School of Film, set up at Laselle College of the Arts, pioneered Singapore’s first Bachelor’s degree in film. Since 2007, New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts has been offering a Masters in film production (Tan, 2008), while the Chapman University Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, in collaboration with Ngee Ann Polytechnic, offers a degree course in creative producing. In recent years, the Ministry of Education introduced Media Studies as a possible subject to be taken at the GCE ‘O’ Level (Ministry of Education, 2009). However, the course has a lopsided focus on film production rather than film appreciation, which comprises only two weeks of lessons out of a syllabus that stretches two years.

Evidently, despite the necessity of increased film literacy among youths, and despite the educational benefits it can bring, film education in Singapore is extensively more focused on film production, and there is no formal programme in the school curriculum that focuses on film literacy.

**Introduction of a Film Literacy Programme**

The literature review and background information on Singapore’s education system has identified a research gap on film literacy and education in Singapore, and a corresponding gap in the education system to teach film literacy, despite its benefits.

As the introduction of a film literacy programme in the Singapore education system is a fairly new endeavour, that it even has place in the curriculum has not been established. The rigidity of an education and social system systematically and habitually focused on academic excellence also necessitates a study of its feasibility. A review of scholarly literature has also revealed a paucity of research on whether the merits of teaching film literacy, including media literacy, critical thinking and the opportunity to teach values, can be applied to the Singapore system. In introducing a film literacy programme to schools in Singapore, what then are some of the issues that need to be considered specific to the local
context? Despite the benefits of teaching film literacy outlined by multiple studies, there is a striking lack of research or discourse on film education in Singapore. This paper aims to fill in the gaps, by answering the following research questions:

*RQ1*: Is there a need for a film literacy programme in secondary schools in Singapore? What educational benefits can a film literacy programme bring?

*RQ2*: How effective are films as a pedagogical tool to teach values and sociocultural insights? How does this relate to the formal teaching of Character and Citizenship Education?

*RQ3*: What are the practical considerations surrounding the implementation of such a film literacy programme? In light of these practical considerations, in what capacity is such a programme feasible?

*RQ4*: Is a constructivist approach suitable for teaching film literacy? Is an ahistorical approach better suited than a historical approach to teach film literacy to youths? What are the issues surrounding both methods for the programme?

**Methodology**

**Research Design: A Two-Pronged Qualitative Approach**

This study took on an exploratory and qualitative approach as there is a lack of research done in this area of film literacy and education in Singapore. Therefore a chief aim is to gather and synthesize as much information from the ground as possible. A two-pronged qualitative approach was used in this study’s research design. First, in-depth interviews with film/media or education experts and professionals in Singapore were conducted. Second, focus group sessions were conducted with students who participated in the trial classes that were designed for testing with them.

Besides providing relevant answers to this study’s research questions, the data collected from the study may also put forth points for consideration in the development of a
programme template that could be modified for implementation at the lower secondary level in schools. This study’s methodology, including the questionnaires that were used in the research, have been approved by the Nanyang Technological University’s Institutional Review Board (see Appendix C)

**In-depth Interviews with Experts and Professionals**

Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted from October 2012 to January 2013. In order to collect data from various broad sectors, interviewees who could adequately represent the following three groups (see Table 1) were shortlisted via contacts found on the websites of related government departments, non-government stakeholders, and education conferences. Recommended referrals from some of the interviewees were also shortlisted. Appendix D lists the brief profiles of the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Group</th>
<th>No. of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Related to the film/media/arts industry (e.g. film and arts programmers, Media Development Authority)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Related to the teaching of curricula in schools (e.g. school teachers)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Related to the planning and advising of curricula in schools (e.g. curricula advisors, Ministry of Education)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

Each interview was conducted separately with informed consent at a comfortable place and time for the interviewee, with each session lasting an average of 45 minutes. Interviewees were assured of confidentiality of their identity and the information provided. The interviews were audio recorded with permission for the accuracy of data transcription, analysis and reporting. Transcribers were hired to assist in the transcription of the data. The Interview Consent Form that was used is attached under Appendix E.
The questionnaire used consisted of 12 questions derived from the four research questions. In addition, further questions that were specifically relevant to each interviewee’s role and experience in his or her field were asked. The Interview Questionnaire that was used is attached under Appendix F.

**Data analysis.** To ensure consistency, each interview transcript was analyzed by all members in the team. Analyses of transcripts belonging to the respective interview groups were also done to identify common threads specific to each group. Finally, a cross-group analysis was performed to identify recurring themes across the three groups. Key findings that emerged after the analysis were organized into different frameworks, according to the research questions.

**Trial Classes and Focus Groups in Schools**

**Trial classes.** The second phase of data collection involved conducting trial classes and following up with focus group sessions with lower secondary school students in Singapore. A number of secondary schools were identified for this purpose. Three schools that showed the strongest interest in the study, and could flexibly accommodate the trial classes into their curriculum were eventually picked. They are Catholic High School (CHS), Dunman High School (DHS) and Tanjong Katong Girls’ School (TKGS). These are schools that are attended by higher aptitude students who are either undergoing the Integrated Programmes or the ‘O’ Level Express stream.

The trial lessons were designed in December 2012 and January 2013 based on specific themes, with valuable pedagogical input from teacher representatives from each school. The sessions were conducted in January and February 2013 in the classrooms of the respective schools. Each class underwent a total of two lessons conducted separately over the course of one or two weeks. To ensure consistency and to simulate as realistically as possible a teacher-student classroom setting, the two lessons for each class were conducted by one
member of the team. All lessons were also observed by a Ministry of Education-certified school teacher. In total, 194 students from three schools participated in the trial classes. The Thematic Lesson Package containing lesson plans and worksheets that were designed and used for each school are attached as follows: CHS – Self-Identity (see Appendix G); DHS – Care and Responsibility (see Appendix H); and TKGS - Determination (see Appendix I). In addition, the Consent Form for Participating in Research for participants in the trial classes and focus group is attached under Appendix J. Table 2 provides an overview of the trial classes conducted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Level / Type of Class</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Duration (mins) / Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHS (Boys)</td>
<td>Secondary 1 / Integrated Programme</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>90+90 / Self-Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary 1 / ‘O’ Level Express</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>90+90 / Self-Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS (Co-ed)</td>
<td>Secondary 2 / Integrated Programme</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60+60 / Care &amp; Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary 2 / Integrated Programme</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60+60 / Care &amp; Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKGS (Girls)</td>
<td>Secondary 2 / ‘O’ Level Express</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100+100 / Determination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

The main aim of the trial classes was to pilot test the feasibility of implementing a film literacy programme in secondary schools. This is crucial in obtaining students’ feedback on the lessons, and their reception and perception of such a programme if it were to be implemented in their school in the near future.

**Focus group sessions.** To gather students’ feedback upon their completion of the trial classes, focus group sessions were conducted as a follow-up. For practical reasons, the focus group session for both classes in CHS was combined. This was similar in DHS’ case
too. TKGS had only one class that took part in the study. In addition, because the sessions were conducted after standard curriculum hours, sampling was determined by school teachers in CHS, while students who were free volunteered in both DHS and TKGS. The three focus group sessions were conducted in a classroom of each school respectively, with each session lasting about 45 minutes. Informed consent was sought from students who participated in the sessions. Table 3 gives a brief overview of the focus groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>Sampling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHS</td>
<td>8 (all boys)</td>
<td>Students hand-picked by school teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>8 (5 girls, 3 boys)</td>
<td>Students volunteered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKGS</td>
<td>6 (all girls)</td>
<td>Students volunteered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

The focus group sessions were not audio recorded because of NTU-IRB requirements. Two research assistants were hired for on-the-spot transcription of data using a laptop. In addition, each student was randomly assigned a participant number from 1 to 22 so that they could remain anonymous and were free to voice out their opinions without any constraints. At the end of the session, a token of appreciation was given to each student.

The questionnaire that was used consisted of eleven questions. The first part of the questionnaire focused on students’ feedback and perceptions of the trial classes, while the second part dealt with their opinions towards the use of films in the classroom in relation to both film literacy and values education. The Focus Group Questionnaire is attached under Appendix K.

**Data analysis.** Transcriptions of the focus group sessions were collated and ordered according to the participant number and the school that each participant was from. This allowed for an institution-by-institution analysis of the data that was crucial for organizing the views of students in relation to the trial classes that were designed for them. The coding
of responses to look for similarities and variances was also done, after which a cross analysis of the three schools was performed.

Findings

In-Depth Interviews

The findings from interviews were organized into frameworks according to the research questions, such that frameworks one to four answer research questions one to four respectively. Each framework is further divided into sub-topics according to what the research question entails. This section presents the main findings, while a list of insightful interview excerpts can be found in Appendix L.

Framework one: Need and benefits of film literacy programme.

Necessity. All fifteen interviewees agreed that while secondary school students are avid consumers of films, their level of film literacy is low. The reason given by seven interviewees was that youths generally approach films from a passive consumer standpoint, and view films only as mode of entertainment, thus missing out on the educational and artistic aspects of film viewing. Interestingly, four interviewees stated that students do have a level of film literacy, but this is still in its infancy. A Head of Department for English, who uses films in his lessons, said “I think most of the kids today have an awareness of [film literacy]. You just have to get it out from the background into the foreground and you have to sharpen it”. They pointed out that without a deeper understanding of films, students might be able to recognise filmic structure and conventions, but are unable to identify and relate to them in any meaningful way. Another reason offered by a film programmer was that students are generally not aware of the range of films out there, with popular cinema being the most accessible to them. All 15 interviewees felt that these reasons warrant the creation of a film literacy programme to allow students to develop skills to become active and critical consumers of film.
In summary, all interviewees either felt that youths today have no or little film literacy, largely due to their perception of films as entertainment, and all agreed that a film literacy programme will be able to improve their level of film literacy.

**Benefits.** The interviewees noted numerous benefits of teaching film literacy. Firstly, four interviewees said that skills learnt from film literacy can be extrapolated to visual and media literacy, which is essential in the 21st century. Four interviewees also felt that students can benefit more from lessons driven by multimodal and imagery-based formats as these could cater to their short attention spans.

Secondly, nine of the 15 interviewees mentioned film literacy’s potential to enhance students’ critical thinking skills. Through learning points from film literacy such as character and plot analysis and the understanding of contextual information, students can build skills like analytical understanding, an increase in contextual awareness and argumentative writing skills. These skills can then be applied to other subjects, such as Literature and Social Studies.

Thirdly, five interviewees believed that films allow students to see the relevance of what they learn in school. The realism that is presented in films enables the situations and characters to become relatable to students. Students can understand societal contexts that relate to not just the films presented but also their personal lives. Four interviewees also mentioned that films open up opportunities for students to sharpen their awareness of what happens around them and in the world.

Lastly, three interviewees from the film industry mentioned that like literature, films can be an effective entry point for students to explore and appreciate the arts.

The main benefits brought up by the interviewees therefore include the teaching of visual and media literacy, an increase in critical thinking, an increased and sharpened awareness of local and global issues and the creation of an entry point to explore the arts.
Framework two: Teaching values with films.

Aims of education. The interviewees unanimously spoke of the need for students to go beyond academic and personal success, and that the aim of education is to nurture people into becoming better human beings. A Head of Department for English who was interviewed emphasized that “knowledge is not as important as skills; skills are not as important as attitude, and attitude is not as important as character”. Eight interviewees added that the aim of education encompasses the nurturing of critical thinkers with a passion for lifelong learning.

Youths and values. When asked how youths today fare in terms of the values they uphold, the responses were varied. Five interviewees noted that self-centeredness is particularly evident, attributing this to youths growing up in a culture inundated with quick-changing visual information, which cultivates a need for instant gratification and leads to a decrease in patience and resilience. A film programmer cited the lack of awareness of the value of context and the inability to look at issues from others’ perspectives as other possible reasons. Six interviewees pointed to the lack of opportunities for critical thinking and personal reflections in class.

Four interviewees agreed that a number of youths today have decreased social skills. An arts director commented that despite being more wired, youths appear to be less proficient in dealing with various social situations. However, despite one interviewee labelling today’s youths as having a “regressing emotional quotient”, two others acknowledged that the social skills are perhaps different instead of deficient, with their own set of values and norms.

The main findings revealed that youths today are perceived as self-centred and lacking in social skills, with a common attribution to the high usage of technology and individual devices. This finding will be discussed on page 41 in relation to film consumption and consumerism, as well as the criticisms of values education.
Teaching values with films. According to a senior curriculum planner, it is precisely these new social and cultural norms salient in the lives of today’s students that guide the periodical update of moral education by the Ministry of Education. A CME teacher said that students are significantly more interested in civics topics when films are used to engage them as compared to using a textbook, citing the example of his use of Pixar shorts as teaching tools in the classroom.

However, the use of films to teach values outside of civics and moral education seems to be dependent on the subject teacher. A Head of Department for English who screens Dead Poets’ Society (1989) to students yearly balances teaching narrative and filmic elements equally with the values propounded by the film. In contrast, another English teacher selects films based on the lesson’s learning objectives, only choosing to spend some time discussing values if the message of the film is overt. However, five teachers said that their departments are increasingly employing the use of films and other multimedia to accomplish learning objectives. Two of them have even won teaching awards in their schools for their efforts in employing film as language teaching tools.

Eight interviewees noted that the discussion of messages in a film ought to be framed as the teaching of culture and societal insights instead of ‘values’, because there are multiple aspects of the human condition that can be taught using films beyond values. These include the illustration of history and cultures unfamiliar to students, and more complicated ideas like global warming or the impact of technology, that cannot be subsumed under the values education curriculum.

To sum up, the use of films in CME and other subjects in schools is an increasing trend, but the usage depends on the teacher. Films can also teach more than values, including sociocultural insights. The following are three key advantages raised by the interviewees on using films to teach values.
**Film as an engaging tool.** The most commonly cited advantage was that films provide high levels of engagement in the classroom, and that students take easily to films. One reason highlighted was that the combination of a film’s well-told story and its visuals and sound can provide a multi-sensory and immersive experience. A film writer believed that films provide a more dynamic learning opportunity, where students can vicariously experience film characters’ struggles and successes. However, two interviewees pointed out that teachers must emphasize the learning objectives, because films might be potentially distracting, and students might only remember the tool but not the lesson.

**Film as a contextual medium.** According to the interviewees, the stories inherently present in films are the means through which values are naturally and realistically portrayed. A teaching fellow at a tertiary institution elaborated on how films can present moral dilemmas in the form of scenes, which are situated in a larger story or context, as opposed to using isolated examples in civics and moral education classes. Other interviewees made similar points on how films provide context or background, which they felt is the most effective way to convey messages and themes in the classroom. In addition, 10 interviewees mentioned that context is even more critical when teachers are illustrating a value or concept that could be unfamiliar to students. A senior media officer described how in illustrating the value of integrity, a film such as *Capricorn One* (1986) could expose students to the world of investigative journalism, while at the same time educating them on the notion that the media does not always seek to tell the truth – an important and highly relevant concept that secondary school students might not be able to grasp from a worded preamble in a textbook.

**Film as indirect method.** Four interviewees asserted that the way current civics and moral education classes are taught is highly misguided, as the imparting of values is too overt and preachy to resonate with students. Instead, they saw films as a covert way to teach values. A senior media officer said that films are “subliminal” ways of imparting values. However, a
film programmer argued that using films can still be overt, especially if their themes are too obvious or explicit. She suggested that films that present moral dilemmas would be most effective in values education.

**Film literacy and values education.** On whether and how the teaching of values can be integrated into the proposed film literacy programme, the common consensus among all seven educators interviewed was a preference for the teaching of values to be subsumed under the film literacy class or framework, and carried out in a covert and subtle manner. A Senior Officer in Education in particular, emphasized that if the focus is on values education, all learning objectives related to film literacy in a structural sense will be rendered irrelevant. On the other hand, five interviewees who have used film to teach said that when discussing the story and messages of a film, infusing ‘teachable moments’ that expound sociocultural insights will fall naturally within the classroom discussion.

In summary, against a backdrop of increasing self-centredness and decreasing social skills as pointed out by the interviewees, the methods of values education in Singapore can be further enhanced. The use of films can provide an engaging, contextual and indirect manner of illustrating and teaching about the human condition. Finally the use of film to teach values should be a component of the film literacy programme, and not a subset of the formal values education curriculum.

**Framework three: Feasibility and capacity of programme.**

**Feasibility.** When asked about issues that might crop up if a film literacy programme is implemented in the curriculum, time constraint was most commonly pointed out. With the current secondary school curriculum already running on such a tight schedule, eight interviewees felt that time would be the most likely obstacle to implementing the programme. A film programmer felt that because film literacy is unrelated to the ‘O’ Level syllabus, it might be difficult to convince schools to take it up, let alone incorporate it into the curriculum.
Seven interviews, particularly members of the film fraternity, also felt that it would be difficult convincing parents and authorities on the merits of such a programme, which might hold a diminished position in an exam-oriented system.

Eight interviewees also pointed to the lack of teacher training as a short-term problem. A school principal who was interviewed added that older teachers are likely to discount the idea of using film in the classroom, which points to the need to possibly change mindsets. Educators were especially particular about the classification of films. Three interviewees advised that those in charge of film selection should be trained to pay close attention to films with inappropriate themes, messages, or visuals that could adversely affect students and avoid them.

In essence, the main obstacles outlined include the limitations of time, the difficulty convincing stakeholders like educators and parents on the programme’s merits, teacher training and the appropriateness of a film’s messages. Nevertheless, all interviewees noted that it is worth proposing such a programme, in schools that are able to overcome these obstacles.

*Capacity of programme.* On whether a film literacy programme should be part of the main curriculum, the responses were varied. Eight interviewees remarked that because of time constraints, how a film literacy programme is positioned in schools can affect its reception and effectiveness. Of the 15 interviewees, one interviewee had no comment regarding the issue while nine felt that the programme should be fitted into the curriculum, positing that the benefits it can bring warrant its place as a compulsory academic subject. However, three interviews, particularly those not related to the film industry, thought it could work better as an optional elective. On the other hand, two interviewees felt film literacy should be positioned as an after-class co-curricular activity (CCA) that can eventually develop to become part of the curriculum. The responses to this question were mixed.
possibly because of the uncertainty of such a new programme. More research can be done in this regard.

**Framework four: Approaches to teaching film literacy.**

*An ahistorical approach.* The interviewees were asked if an ahistorical approach, which deviates from a traditional historical approach by using popular films to teach film literacy, will be suitable for a film literacy programme. Two-thirds (10) of the interviewees supported it, reasoning that the use of popular contemporary films should automatically interest students. Four of them pointed out that the barrier to entry to ‘studying’ films would be lowered if students started out with popular films. In particular, a film programmer mentioned that using popular films as a starting point would allow students to work through the layers to understand that a film seemingly created for entertainment purposes can also be rich in meaning. A Head of Department for English also agreed that popular films can be as equally rich in their devices, intents and messages as other less mainstream films.

However, the use of popular films must be handled with care, as argued by eight interviewees. An arts director opined that a popular film like *The Dark Knight* (2008) would provide far greater learning potential than *Transformers* (2007). In addition, two teachers specifically noted that ideologies implicit in Hollywood blockbusters that conflict with local values should be well-handled by an experienced instructor. Lastly, another common point referred to is the problem of students being distracted by popular films and thus not being able to fulfill lesson objectives.

The other five interviewees who did not indicate their support for popular films decided to choose the middle ground. A senior officer in education believed that the popularity of a film is unimportant if there is a well-told story and a meaningful message that students can resonate with. A teaching fellow at a tertiary institution also felt that the framing of the material matters more than its popularity. On another note, a film programmer
provided a fresh opinion by supporting the use of less mainstream films in the classroom, to
achieve a revelatory “shock of the new” effect on students to jolt them out of their comfort
zone and thus provoke thinking and discussion.

Meanwhile, almost two-thirds (9) of the interviewees also championed a progressive
approach, to challenge students by introducing them to older, less mainstream, or more
difficult films after they have been equipped with basic film literacy skills. An English
teacher suggested that instructors choose more complicated topics for later classes, because
by then students should be able to see the importance of studying older films. Interviewees
from film and media backgrounds also emphasized that for greater scope in the film literacy
programme, it is very crucial to show a spectrum of films rather than just popular films alone.

Overall the research produced mixed results on the appropriateness of an ahistorical
approach in teaching film literacy. While 10 interviewees supported its use, they mentioned
important drawbacks to be considered. A more important insight that emerged was the need
for a progressively challenging curriculum.

**Constructivism as pedagogy.** Interviewees from the education sector were asked if
constructivism, where active learners construct new knowledge using prior knowledge, is a
useful pedagogical approach to teach film literacy. One of the interviewees made a distinct
observation from the previous question, stating that using popular films as a starting point is
“inherently constructivist” because they are familiar. Findings from the interviews generally
indicated a positive view of constructivism. Six interviewees felt that constructivism allows
the teacher to bring out what students already know about the topic, thus tying their present
understandings with what they will eventually learn in the classroom.

However, four other interviewees believed that constructivism cannot work alone,
that the teacher must also give his or her input. One teacher suggested having a framework
for both instructors and students to guide them in their facilitating and learning respectively.
A senior officer in education also said that there must be a balance between constructivism and more traditional forms of teaching so that classes are in between “free play and indoctrination”, because while a purely constructivist approach to teaching values might be problematic in Singapore. If films are used to teach values, teachers are expected to guide students towards a conclusion that is pro-social and congruent with the school and nation’s idea of a good person, as envisioned in the Character & Citizenship Education curriculum. A recommended pedagogy, especially when discussing a film’s values and messages, would lie between pure constructivism and a more traditional approach. In essence, constructivism should not be viewed as the right or only approach to teaching film literacy, but when appropriated to the Singapore context, it can be a very useful pedagogy to encourage students to think critically and analytically about films.

According to four interviewees, film literacy is itself closely related to constructivism. Two film experts shared the similar viewpoint that film is appreciated not by individual opinion but rather upon constructing views with one another. A teacher also saw constructivism as “very critical” for a film literacy programme because through negotiation and sharing of views and experiences with one another, students would not only be trained in understanding the language of film, but also “how to think through the language of film”. However, three interviewees felt that a more structured programme with constructivist elements might be better served for students who are new to film.

In summary, constructivism was found to be appropriate for the teaching of film literacy, and to a lesser extent, values. For a more balanced approach, background knowledge should be provided by the teacher apart from relying only on constructivist methods like student discussions.
Focus Group

Findings from the focus group sessions conducted with students who participated in the study’s trial classes provided insights to how they perceived film literacy, values education, the use of film in the classroom, and the practical aspects of designing and implementing a film literacy programme in schools.

General findings. Out of the 22 participants, 21 participants found that the lessons were largely entertaining, engaging and provided them with an enriching experience. One felt it was average. Four also felt that the knowledge learnt from the lessons were different from those learnt from conventional academic subjects and that these cannot be learnt anywhere else.

Learning about films. However, six participants conceded that learning about films may not be something that is relevant to everyone. Participant 16 expressed this most clearly when she said, “it’s not for me but important to students who want to make movies in the future.” Three other students felt that learning about films was not exactly crucial as it is not a subject in school, thus it does not warrant the same importance as core curriculum subjects. Nine students were able to point out some areas of relevance in learning about films, including the applicability of what they learn to the movies they watch, as well as the cross-application of skills learnt to subjects like Literature.

Learning through films. When it came to learning through films, 18 out of 22 students from the three schools indicated that watching films was an effective method to learn about values, social context and circumstances. Participant 10 explained, “We can see how characters experience things in the movie”. While the 8 students from CHS do not have CCE lessons within their curriculum, among the remaining 14 students, 13 students felt that learning through films is a better way of learning values than the current Civics and Moral Education (CME) lessons, which they found to be boring, distant and uninteresting, while one
student thought it was a comparable method. Two students went as far as to say that the learning through film segments should replace current CME lessons. Two students from DHS added that watching a character on screen experience certain moral dilemmas serves as a better example than those textbooks can provide. Three students from TKGS explained that students would be naturally interested in learning about values when watching a film as the medium itself commands a high level of student interest.

**Fitting classes into schools.** When it came to positioning of the programme, students were as conflicted as the interviewees in the in-depth interview process. All eight students of CHS were confident in wanting to have the programme as part of the curriculum. While seven students of DHS also wanted to have the programme as part of the curriculum, three students also mentioned that they did not want it to be graded through tests and exams but through research assignments and projects. Five students from TKGS deemed the programme fit for an enrichment programme or CCA.

**Practical considerations.** Students were quick to point out certain practical considerations in the conduct of the film literacy classes. All 14 of the students from CHS and TKGS found the duration of the lessons, 90 to 100 minutes, to be ideal. In contrast all eight students of DHS expressed a need for classes of longer duration and slower paced lessons, which can be attributed to the trial classes conducted for DHS that ran for only 60 minutes per lesson.

Furthermore, two participants mentioned that they felt that the balance between the two segments of the class: Learning About Films and Learning Through Films was at an optimal level and should be kept that way. Participant 13 commented that “the balance of film theory versus moral values is good for the current lessons.”

However, certain dislikes were expressed consistently across all three focus groups. The major dislike was the worksheets that were handed out to students in order for them to
keep track of the lesson. While two students did see the need to have worksheets to guide their learning, 11 students believed that notes would be a better alternative. Two students from DHS noted that there was too much writing to be done because of such worksheets. This could be due to the act of filling worksheets disrupting the flow of an otherwise interactive and fun class.

Students also reflected that segmental watching of films during the trial classes was disruptive to the viewing experience. The students from all three schools generally requested for longer segments of films to be shown. In addition, Students from DHS, in particular, felt that the learning and assessment objectives of lessons need to be communicated more clearly to them. Across all three focus groups, there was a call for the lessons to include more student led discussions. 12 students felt this to be a better mode of learning when compared to teacher oriented learning. Variations in discussion methods such as group discussions and open discussions were also suggested by three students from Catholic High School (CHS). Moreover, four students reflected a greater need to construct their own learning through greater involvement in not just discussions but also interactive activities during lessons.

In essence, the focus groups revealed a liking for the use of films in class, especially for the teaching of values. One major finding is the need to clearly set out the learning objectives of a film literacy class. More student-led discussion and hands-on activities, and less worksheets and writing will also be preferred for a more interactive learning environment.

Discussion & Implications

Discussion

Framework one: Need and benefits of film literacy programme.

Necessity. All interviewees agreed that despite the large amount of films youths consume, their level of film literacy can be improved. The finding that Singapore’s youth are passive consumers of film is consistent with Muller (2006) and Brumberger (2011)’s studies
showing how youths from the digital generation lack a deeper understanding of the media they consume regularly. This lack of a critical examination of films was chiefly attributed to Singaporeans viewing films as merely entertainment, a fallacy which leads them to view films superficially. The lack of knowledge of the range of films beyond mainstream ones, as mentioned by an interviewee, adds to this appraisal of films as entertainment. Such a narrow perception of films results in students not viewing films as possessing educational merits. As evident in the focus groups, six out of 22 students regard learning about films as relevant only to those who would like to work in the movie industry in the future.

Unfortunately, by not recognizing that films provide opportunities for learning, the lessons that can potentially be gained are lost, and youths remain uncritical in their consumption of films. Even if students recognize films as more than entertainment, they lack the vocabulary and training to articulate their thoughts or have deeper analyses of films, as mentioned by four interviewees.

The findings have therefore revealed the need for a film literacy programme in Singapore, to equip youths with the understanding that films, as with other forms of popular media, can possess educational and artistic merits. Such a programme can also provide them with the necessary skills to obtain as much learning as possible from the films they consume, that are ideally transferable to other forms of media consumption to also heighten their level of media literacy (Burn & Durran, 2007).

**Benefits.** The necessity of a film literacy programme in schools is bolstered by additional benefits the programme can bring. Apart from cultivating a critical approach to consuming film, and by extension other media, the teaching of film literacy also builds visual literacy, as four interviewees pointed out. Based on the ‘multiliteracies’ framework (Cope & Kalantzis, 2007), both media and visual literacy are especially important in addressing and understanding 21st century literacy (Bleed, 2005). Films are multimodal, creating new ways
of conveying messages by combining visual, audio, gestural and other dimensions of communication (New London Group, 1996). Building visual literacy skills is therefore a key benefit a film literacy programme can bring, as it will equip students with the ability to navigate around an increasingly visual world (Muller, 2006).

A second key benefit agreed upon by nine out of 15 interviewees is the excellent potential of a film literacy class to build critical thinking skills, by looking beyond the surface entertainment value of films, negotiating ambiguous messages depicted in them and making personal evaluations of moral dilemmas presented in films. Such a programme can also teach students to view films for their artistic merits, as a point of entry to a deeper appreciation for the arts. Meanwhile, four interviewees pointed out that films can provide a vivid picture of historical or cultural situations and stories unfamiliar to student’s lives, thus enabling them to broaden their horizons and sharpen their awareness of global issues.

Interestingly, taken together, the benefits mentioned above are congruent with the Ministry of Education’s 21st Century Competencies (21CC) framework (Ministry of Education, 2010), particularly critical thinking from multiple perspectives, an awareness of global issues, and information skills in terms of media and visual literacy. This provides a direct link of the benefits of a film literacy programme to the educational aims put forth by the MOE.

The benefits outlined also bear close similarities to the studying of literature (Chia, 2013; The Straits Times, 2013). This is unsurprising, as three interviewees likened films to a visual form of literature, as stories are told visually. Four of our interviewees, who are English teachers, have already been using films to complement literature texts. Film literacy can perhaps be seen as a modern, 21st century form of literature study in a media age. However, it must be noted that literature and films are inherently different forms of text, and
the importance of the worded text and classic literature have awarded literature depth and
importance educationally and culturally. The film literacy programme studied here does not
aim to supersede the study of literature, but serve as a value-added complement to a student’s
development of literacy skills.

In answering Research Question 1, on the necessity of a film literacy programme in
Singapore and the benefits it can bring, our results have identified a strong need for a
programme due to youths’ uncritical viewing of films, and multiple educational benefits
including increased media literacy, visual literacy, critical thinking and global awareness.
These benefits found within the Singapore system are similar to that of international findings
(Mallinger & Rossy, 2003; Boske & McCormack, 2011), and their importance in the local
education system is supported by their similarities with the 21CC framework (Ministry of
Education, 2010).

**Framework two: Teaching values with films.**

*Film literacy and values education.* Another key benefit of introducing a film
literacy programme in Singapore is that films lend themselves very well to the teaching of
values and sociocultural insights. Half (8) of the interviewees pointed out that films go
beyond civics or moral education by also allowing audiences to gain perspectives on the
human condition. In mirroring reality, films open up questions about the human condition,
morals, values and other ideology relevant to real life.

Three main advantages of using films instead of a textbook or other material for
values teaching emerged in the findings – films provide an engaging, contextual and indirect
method of teaching values and sociocultural insights. Films can expose students to other
cultures and time periods in an almost vicarious viewing experience, provide moral dilemmas
and multiple perspectives to situations, and illustrate values that can be preachy in a dynamic
and engaging manner. The contextual nature of film narratives also gives students a realistic
preamble and background to situations in a film that teach values, particularly if films that students can relate to are used. This exemplifies the ‘ExPerience’ component of the CCE framework. Compared to traditional methods of teaching values, films as a pedagogical method can yield better and more critical outcomes for students.

This discussion of the use of film to teach values comes at a time when, according to the interviewees, younger generations are growing up with increasing self-centeredness and poorer social skills. The interviewees’ attribution of these trends to the pervasiveness of gadget usage instead of more social forms of play, the pursuit of academic excellence, and the lack of opportunities for critical thinking in class underlines possible links between an increase in selfishness with consumerism as well as a narrow education. With a social, cultural and education system that emphasizes personal excellence and academic achievement, where examinable subjects may take over time allocated for moral education lessons (Chia, 2010), opportunities to broaden the hearts and minds of the younger generation are decreasing. The study of films and their messages in the classroom may prove beneficial, by opening up their minds to worlds and ideologies portrayed in films, and by exposing them to the idea of viewing films as art or as cultural artifacts instead of merely a commodity for entertainment (Ravenscroft, Chua & Wee, 2001).

**Film literacy and CCE.** On the practical implementation of using films to teach values in Singapore schools, the approach was very well-received by 18 out of 22 students from the focus groups, with 13 students saying that using films will fare better than their existing civics and moral education classes. However all seven educators interviewed agreed that replacing traditional methods of civics and moral education with film will not be a long term solution, as a variety of methods should be employed. A few (4) students concurred after the initial excitement of using films to teach values, conceding that such a method is likely to become stale and predictable. Furthermore, since a main strength of this approach
lies in the indirect teaching of values, the interviewees recommended subsuming the values education component within the film literacy programme in a covert manner, because students tend to lose interest when explicitly told to learn about values.

In answering Research Question 2 the findings lend great support to existing research on the use of films to teach values and other aspects of the human condition, providing three main advantages of this approach – it is engaging, contextual and indirect. However the findings also indicated that this teaching should not be directly related to the Character and Citizenship Education curriculum, because such a direct approach might not engage students, and also because films have the capacity to illustrate sociocultural insights beyond CCE’s scope of teaching values. Instead, values can be indirectly taught through the examination of a film’s messages, to complement the values and ideology formally taught in a CCE class.

**Framework three: Feasibility and capacity of programme.**

*Practical considerations.* Practical considerations to note when introducing a film literacy programme include the limitations of time, the appropriateness of films and teacher training. Revealingly, the issue of time was only brought up by eight interviewees, and appears to be contingent on the level of importance they place on teaching film literacy. Interviewees with no affiliation to film education, for instance a CCE expert and an MOE director, were quicker to point out that the programme should not compete for time with core, examinable subjects. A related example was when the researchers approached schools to conduct pilot classes. Upon correspondence, it appeared that department heads who believe in the importance of film literacy were willing to find time within the school curriculum to conduct the pilot classes, whereas the lack of time was cited by the schools that rejected our request.
These examples point to the possibility that the lack of importance placed on the programme could be the root of the problem, instead of time constraint. Such a resistance to a new subject and method of teaching is unsurprising, with the strong emphasis on academic excellence in the Singapore education system (Chia, 2010). Nevertheless, as the MOE leads the way towards a less competitive and more student-centric education (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2012b), and as young teachers like four of our interviewees take the lead in using films in class, a well-developed and educational film literacy programme should gradually be accepted by educators.

A similar problem of resistance was brought up when two interviewees mentioned that older teachers accustomed to traditional teaching methods and linguistic literacy might not be open to the programme. Even if younger teachers more open to new pedagogical tools still have to be appropriately trained, as stated by eight of the interviewees. Teacher training will also address the concern brought up by three interviewees that films shown in class must have appropriate messages and ideologies. Trained and experienced film teachers should know what films to select, and how to navigate around the discussion of values present in a film. This will be further discussed within the Implications section.

**Capacity of the programme in schools.** Of the practical considerations brought up, time seemed to be the strongest determinant of whether to include the programme in the curriculum. In fact, the more strongly an interviewee feels about the merits of film literacy, the less likely he is to emphasize the limitations of time, and the more likely he encourages it to be included in the curriculum instead of an elective or co-curricular activity (CCA). This trait was particularly observed amongst the film practitioners, and teachers who have employed films to teach in class.
It can thus be inferred that one important factor guiding this decision is whether the stakeholders, including the school, teachers, parents and students, can be convinced of the programme’s necessity. Although this study has revealed multiple benefits to teaching film literacy, like the demonstration of values, these are not intuitively known or conscious to most people, including educators. The stakeholders mentioned have to be cognizant of these benefits, to be convinced that the programme has a place in the curriculum. For students, in particular, the focus group has shown that learning objectives in such a new programme need to be spelt out at the start of the programme, especially if they enter the programme with the preconception that films are just entertainment. Only with a sense of purpose in learning can students and teachers be convinced that what is being taught is important and deserves to be in the curriculum.

Therefore, in answering Research Question 3 on feasibility of a film literacy programme, three main considerations emerged – teacher training, the appropriateness of films chosen, and the issue of time. The issue of time, in particular, has been found to be associated with the level of importance placed on film literacy, which also appears to determine if an interviewee feels if the programme can be part of the curriculum. Hence for film literacy to bear weight as part of the curriculum, educators and students must be convinced of its educational merits. Finally, as opinions to the question of curriculum placement are mixed, more research needs to be done to determine the capacity in which a film literacy programme is feasible in Singapore schools.

**Framework four: Approaches to teaching film literacy.**

*An ahistorical approach.* Our findings revealed a moderate preference by the interviewees towards an ahistorical approach to teaching film literacy, with the main reason that popular contemporary films are likely to engage young students. Another important benefit brought up was that the critical dissection of a popular film is useful in demonstrating
to students that even popular films they consumer for entertainment can have education and artistic merits. This media literacy can even be applied to less-acclaimed blockbusters, because differentiating between a good and bad film is part of an analytical discernment of the quality of a film, and by extension, a media form or text. As such, the ahistorical approach has been found to provide an extra dimension to the benefits of a film literacy programme discussed earlier, as students have the opportunity to apply critical and analytical skills learnt in class to their regular film consumption. A progressive curriculum within an ahistorical approach was also emphasized so that students can be exposed to films other than popular contemporary blockbusters.

However eight interviewees cautioned that in employing an ahistorical approach the tool should not distract students from the message, learning objectives must be clearly defined, students must be guided to watch film segments critically, and the lessons learnt at the end of each class should be properly synthesized. The emergence of all these limitations warrants a closer look at it appropriateness of an ahistorical approach, and more research needs to be done to determine its suitability and effectiveness in teaching film literacy in Singapore.

A constructivist approach. The findings showed that constructivism lends itself well to a film literacy programme. Unlike more straightforward, content-focused subjects like Mathematics and Science, or even formal grammar rules in English, film literacy focuses on the process, not the product. Similar to the study of Literature, there is no one answer to the interpretation and negotiation of meanings from a text. A constructivist approach, where students bring in their own frames of reference and knowledge to build new understandings, thus becomes critical in teaching students how, and not what to think through the language of film. A particular narrative, for instance, can be differently interpreted, and the lesson to be
learnt is to critically evaluate its meaning and effectiveness, and be able to justify these thoughts.

The results also revealed that constructivism cannot work alone, particularly at the start of the programme. Since the concept and importance of film literacy are relatively new to students, basic film literacy tools and frameworks must be first given. A balance should also be struck between constructivism and traditional approaches to teaching, especially in the teaching of values.

Interestingly, the findings uncovered a link between the ahistorical and constructivist approaches, which the researchers initially addressed as separate constructs. The use of popular films is can be constructivist, because the frames of reference students possess about films come largely from their consumption repertoire of popular blockbusters. The tying of present understanding with new lessons also falls within the ‘multiliteracy’ framework (Cope & Kalantzis 2009; Sripathy, 2007), and the 3rd ‘P’ principle in the Character and Citizenship framework – ‘exPerience’, which states that students learn values best when these are linked to their daily experiences (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2012a).

In answering Research Question 4, on the appropriateness of the constructivist as well as ahistorical approaches to teaching film literacy, our findings have revealed that while constructivism was found to be highly suitable, a third of the interviewees still had reservations about the ahistorical method, particularly as it has not been established as tried and tested. Therefore more research can be done on its suitability for teaching film literacy to youths.

Implications of Findings

Programme implications. Based on the findings and insights gained from the interviews, trial classes and focus groups, a semester-long template for a film literacy
programme was created (see Appendix M). The creation of this template serves to synthesize the findings into a practical form that can be implemented, and to stimulate further research or practice of such a film literacy programme.

Four main implications from the findings guided the creation of the semester-long programme template. First, findings from the focus groups have pointed to the need to emphasize on the learning objects and more structural aspects of film literacy, indicating that students had some difficulty grasping the importance and applicability of what they are learning as they associate films with entertainment.

Second, assessment guidelines have to be provided to students. Assessment is not only important as a means of checking whether students are on track with their learning, but is also critical in Singapore’s context as it gives the programme legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of teachers and parents.

Third, as an ahistorical and progressive approach was highly encouraged, the programme can be designed and structured in a progressive manner with an emphasis on accessible blockbusters in the first few weeks, while slowly exposing students to older or less familiar works in subsequent weeks.

Lastly, using a constructivist pedagogical approach allows the programme and its classes to be taught in a different way from other core subject lessons, where focus is placed on student interaction and their negotiation of experiences and existing knowledge with one another.

**Institutional implications.** The findings from this study point to three main implications for the Singapore education system. Firstly with the introduction of a film literacy class, the importance of visual and media literacy in Singapore education is heightened. This spotlight will be timely, as despite the youth’s heavy consumption of visual media, there is little emphasis on building visual and media literacy in Singapore schools. A
film literacy programme will be a step in this direction, and can hopefully stimulate further programmes that shape similar outcomes for the younger generation.

Secondly, despite the multiple benefits of a film literacy programme outlined, such a new programme competes with the practicalities of time within a tight curriculum filled with examinable subjects. As schools have the autonomy to implement enrichment programmes, the educational advantages of teaching film literacy should be weighed against their respective practical considerations. Notably, schools that decide to implement the programme should ensure that its merits and objectives are carefully communicated to its teachers, parents and students for better learning outcomes.

Thirdly, since film literacy is a relatively new subject in Singapore, it is unreasonable to expect that a pool of teachers with the relevant skills and knowledge is available. Assistance can be obtained from polytechnic or university lecturers in film schools like Ngee Ann Polytechnic or Chapman University, to offer advice in curriculum planning or to train teachers. However since most tertiary film institutions in Singapore focus on film production, care must be taken to select the right experts with grounding in film theory and education, besides film production.

**Limitations**

A few factors limit the scope and generalizability of this study. Firstly, the results of the sample lessons and focus groups are reflective of students belonging to the Express and IP streams. Findings of the focus groups should therefore not be generalised to the student population at a national level, which will include students in the Normal stream. Furthermore, as the fieldwork in schools dealt with students of 13-14 years of age, opinions expressed during the focus groups might not be as clearly elaborated as that of adult participants. Nevertheless, salient points were raised during the focus group session, and further research through other methods can be done to study these findings.
Another point of limitation arises from the sample lessons that were conducted in three different institutions. The institutions were also unable to provide us with a sample that is of the same age. One institution was only able to provide a sample of secondary one students, while the other two institutions provided secondary two students. However, through the conduct of the sample classes, only a negligible difference was found in their academic and intellectual capabilities.

An additional limitation came in the form of the stimulus given to each institution. Although the structure and flow of the sample lessons were kept constant, the students of each institution were shown different films which explore different life education values. While this was an inevitable result of the need to work within the confines of different institutions’ needs, it was also a great opportunity to catch a broader range of reactions from the students, a factor that serves the qualitative and exploratory approach set in this study.

**Future Directions**

The topic of film literacy and education in the context of Singapore is still very new, thus it could be further explored through more qualitative research and augmented by quantitative studies. First, the positioning of a film literacy and education programme in secondary schools can be further studied. More research on its feasibility as an in-curriculum, after-class enrichment, or as a CCA will be useful for evaluating the most effective mode of implementation of the programme in secondary schools. Second, although lower secondary students who took part in this study were generally welcoming toward the use of film in the classroom, more research needs to be done to assess attitudes and perceptions of educators and parents in this area.

Third, as the debate on the decline and value of Literature as a secondary school subject continues to be a hot topic, it will be useful to look at the viability of a film literacy programme as a complement to Literature in the teaching of critical thinking skills and values
education. Fourth, the effectiveness of using the ahistorical approach to teaching film literacy to youths need to be further explored. Finally, the roles that government bodies such as the Ministry of Education and the Media Development Authority can play in the design and implementation of a film literacy programme in the Singapore education system can be further determined.

**Conclusion**

Film literacy takes on a far larger significance in the 21st century as increasing numbers of youths consume films and visual media in theaters and through their personal electronic mobile devices. It becomes imperative that Singapore youths be educated in new forms of literacy in addition to textual literacy that they are currently learning in schools. A film literacy programme provides an excellent starting point to equip youths with the necessary skills related to visual and media literacy. It also presents a beneficial platform to engage youths in an education for life. John Dewey, the great philosopher of education once said, “Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life; education is life itself”. In this regard, implementing a film literacy programme in Singapore has great potential to fulfill the aims of education as espoused by the interviewees who participated in this research study – to allow students to open their hearts and minds, to equip them with skills to navigate through life, and ultimately, to nurture them into becoming better human beings.
References


Appendix A

Diagram of 21st Century Competencies Framework, Ministry of Education Singapore, 2010
Appendix B

Flowchart of Singapore Secondary Education Structure
Appendix C

WEE KIM WEE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

NTU – IRB Proposal

Final-Year Project: Film Literacy & Education (Applied Research)

TAN YUAN SHENG
SIVANESSAN S/O KITNASAMY
OU XIN YING

9/21/2012
1. Brief Description of Project

The primary aim of this project is to introduce a new and innovative semester-long film programme (through a social constructivist and ahistorical approach) to the lower secondary Integrated Programme curriculum as a way to increase and cultivate film literacy and appreciation in young Singaporeans.

The film programme will also be used to teach moral values, build character, and provide socio-cultural insights to people, society, and life in Singapore. The programme will also highlight pertinent global issues which has become more relevant as our nation faces increased diversity and multiculturalism.

It is with hope that our film programme can be a value-added alternative to the teaching of Civics & Moral Education, and insights and knowledge gained can be cross-applied in subjects like English, History, Literature, and Social Studies. At the same time, we aim to open the eyes of students to the world of films, and help them to see films as more than just entertainment.

The aim is to create a new generation of film-literate Singaporeans, who are not only discerning consumers of motion pictures, but also have a firm understanding of themselves as unique individuals, each with a valuable role to play in sustaining a harmonious society engaged in positive, proactive communication.

2. Research Design / Method

Our research consists of three main components:

a) In-Depth Interviews

Fifteen in-depth interviews will be conducted from mid-October 2012 to mid-November 2012 on the participant's views on our research topic of film literacy and education in Singapore.

The participants selected will all be above the age of 21, and will belong to either one of the following four categories:

- Related to the film industry (e.g. film programmers, film bloggers, filmmakers)
- Related to the teaching of film studies or film education in film-related schools (e.g. professors, lecturers, freelance speakers)
- Related to the teaching or implementing of curricula in mainstream schools (e.g. Integrated Programme teachers, general school teachers, principals)
- Related to the planning and advising of curricula in mainstream schools (e.g. curriculum planners at Ministry of Education, education policy makers)

Each 1-hour long interview will be conducted in a comfortable environment (e.g. a quiet café) over a meal or drink at the researcher’s expense. He or she will be asked to sign the Interview Consent Form (see Annex A) prior to the interview, and is given the choice to stop the interview at any moment if he or she feels uncomfortable for any reason.
Permission will be sought for the interview to be voice-recorded for transcription purposes. All transcribed data will solely be used for the research only.

He or she will also be granted confidentiality, hence any personal data will be destroyed after the end of our research. In addition, their real names will not be disclosed in the final research report.

b) Sample Class Sessions

Up to four sample class sessions will be conducted in January 2013 in a selected mainstream school that is running the Integrated Programme. Our plan is to put to use parts of our designed film programme in a trial run with 40 students in a classroom setting.

The sessions will be held after school on a weekday afternoon for 2-3 weeks. Each session will not last more than 90 minutes. All sessions will be observed by a Ministry of Education-certified teacher from the same school.

The detailed lesson plan for each session will be made known to the principal or a relevant head of department or teacher, and approved for use prior to the actual sample class sessions.

As we are dealing with students around the ages of 14 – 15, we will take extra measures to comply with rules and regulations set forth by the school, or laws pertaining to the screening of age-appropriate content (strictly only G, PG, and / or PG-13 rated films will be screened in part or in its entirety, or recommended to students).

Students will be asked to bring back the Sample Class Sessions consent form for their parent or legal guardian to sign prior to the sessions. Please see Annex B for more details.

Students who successfully complete all sessions will be rewarded with a small gift.

c) Focus Groups

Up to two focus group sessions will be conducted in January 2013 after the sample class sessions are completed. Each focus group will consist of 6-8 students who have successfully completed the sample class sessions. Each session will last no more than 60 minutes.

The focus group will be conducted in a classroom setting with a school teacher in-charge serving as an observer. Questions that will be asked are strictly based on their experiences with our sample class sessions.

The focus groups will only be recorded by pen and paper, or by typing. All data recorded will be used only for this research.

The Focus Group consent form (see Annex C) must be signed by the student’s parent or legal guardian before he or she is allowed to participate in the focus group.
All personal data will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after the research is complete. Names of participants will not be disclosed in the final report.

Students who successfully complete the focus group sessions will be rewarded with a small gift.

3. Potential Benefits

**In-depth interviews:** We foresee minimal benefits for the participants in our interviews other than being valued for their contributions to our research.

**Sample class sessions:** We foresee the following benefits for the students participating in our sample class sessions:
- Learning more about films; increased film literacy
- Learning more about themselves (e.g. character-building, moral values)
- Learning more about Singapore and the world that they live in.
- Practicing interacting and sharing with their peers via a myriad of constructivist classroom activities.

**Focus groups:** We foresee some benefits for the students participating in our focus groups such as being valued for their contributions and feedback to our research, and also learning and experiencing focus groups as a research process, and have insights into the planning of curriculum.

4. Potential Risks

Our research project does not require the use of any forms of deception, or procedures that may lead to any kinds of direct or indirect physical, psychological, and/or emotional harm.

In addition, all personal data gathered are strictly confidential and will be destroyed after the research is completed. No names or any forms of identification will be used in the final report.

**In-depth interviews:** We foresee no major risks to participants in our interviews.

**Sample class sessions:** We foresee no major risks to students participating in our sample class sessions. The risks are no higher than what the average student may feel when he or she is learning in a classroom setting on a daily basis.

However, additional measures will be taken to ensure that we comply to rules and regulations as set forth by the school, as well as laws pertaining to the screening of age-appropriated content:
- The use of parental consent form
- Submitting of lesson plan(s) for approval by school
- Ministry of Education-certified teacher to observe the sessions while they are conducted by us.
- Only G, PG, PG-13 rated films are used or recommended during the sessions.
Focus groups: We foresee no major risks to students participating in our focus groups, which are conducted in a classroom setting with a school teacher-in-charge to observe the session.

5. Costs

The subjects of our research will not in any way incur any costs as a result of their participation.
Appendix D

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

In order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of interviews, no real names or specific job positions are specified.

Category A: Related to the film/media/arts industry (e.g. film and arts programmers, Media Development Authority)

1) TK – A senior media officer
2) LD – A film expert from local film organisation
3) IS – A film programmer at local arts institution
4) PW – An arts director at local arts institution
5) LJ – A prolific film writer

Category B: Related to the teaching of curricula in schools (e.g. school teachers)

1) TLW - A General Paper tutor, who uses film in class regularly
2) TM - A Head of Department for Pupil Development
3) KE - An award-winning teaching fellow at a tertiary institution
4) NOC – An English teacher, who uses film in class regularly
5) HE - Head of Department for English
6) SGP - A CME teacher, who uses film in class regularly
7) MAH – An award-winning English teacher

Category C: Related to the planning and advising of curricula in schools (e.g. curricula advisors, Ministry of Education)

1) AP - A senior curriculum planner
2) LKK – A school principal
3) MAL – A senior officer in education
Appendix E

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

LETTER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Dear Sir / Madam,

Thank you very much for showing interest in participating in our research project on film literacy and education. As the interview that we are conducting may require you to respond to our questions as a teaching professional, we would like to assure you and your school that all information obtained will be kept strictly confidential, and will be used solely for the purpose of this research.

The interview will be audio-recorded using a voice recorder for the purpose of transcription. The transcribed interview will be analyzed and used in the final report. The name of the interviewee and other types of data that may identify the school or other persons will not be used in the final report. Instead, a general pseudonym will be used. All recordings and transcriptions will be kept for a maximum of two years in the researcher's computer hard drive, and will be deleted thereafter. These files will not contain the interviewee's real name.

If you have any questions pertaining to the confidentiality and the storage of the data, please do not hesitate to contact our research project's supervisors Dr Liew Kai Khiun at kkliew@ntu.edu.sg, or Dr Stephen Teo at steo@ntu.edu.sg.

Thank you.

_________________
Mr Eternality Tan
Principle Investigator
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

Approved by:

_________________
Asst Prof Liew Kai Khiun
Division of Broadcast & Cinema Studies
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

_________________
Assoc Prof Stephen Teo Kian Teck
Division Head
Division of Broadcast & Cinema Studies
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information
Appendix F

Interview Questionnaire

1. What comes to your mind when you think of films or movies?

2. Do you feel that the youths (i.e. secondary or post-secondary school students) in Singapore are avid consumers of movies? How would you rate the film literacies of the young in Singapore?

3. Have you had any experience of watching a film in class as part of learning back when you were a secondary school or JC student?
   a. If yes, how was the experience like?
   b. What was the learning point or objective?

4. Do you see a future where film literacy programmes are part of the school curriculum? Or do you see it as something that belongs to a CCA (e.g. the school’s film society) or an after-class enrichment programme?

5. What do you think are the benefits of having a film literacy programme for youths in Singapore as part of the school curriculum?

6. What do you think are the potential problems or issues that may crop up if a film literacy programme is implemented as part of the school curriculum?

7. What are your views on constructivist learning as a pedagogical technique? (Note: Constructivism sees the teacher acting as a facilitator rather than a teacher in the traditional sense. Students learn by constructing their own knowledge through sharing with their peers, with the facilitator providing scaffolds that help to point students in the right direction during their learning).

8. We are looking at using constructivism as an innovative way for youths to learn about films? What do you think?

9. What do you think of using popular films (i.e. Hollywood blockbusters) as a starting point to develop a film literacy programme in schools, as opposed to the traditional way of teaching films via its components (e.g. cinematography, editing, acting) or genres (i.e. Western, drama, comedy), or from a historical perspective (e.g. from silent film to the modern blockbuster)?

10. Do you think that youths today, despite being digitally literate and/or academically focused, are lacking in certain life skills or a general education in life?

11. How do you think films from popular culture can be used to as pedagogical tool to teach life education (i.e. personal development, building character, moral education, socio-cultural education, global issues)?

12. In your opinion, what is the ultimate aim of education, or the general aims of education?
Additional Questions to Curriculum Planners and Advisors

1. In your previous appointments in the education sector, have you used or encouraged your colleagues to use videos and films to teach in class? Why?

2. The CME syllabus was revamped to create the current CCE syllabus, which focuses more on using a student's life experiences or context to teach values. Do you think a using film to teach values is complementary to this direction that MOE is heading?

3. Would our curriculum that teaches film literacy and at the same time uses ‘teachable moments’ in film to teach character development value-add to the CCE syllabus? Are there any issues you think we should consider in coming up with this curriculum?

4. Several schools are keen to work with us to pilot test a couple of lessons that we have designed. What is MOE’s view on a film literacy and education programme implemented in schools?

5. One of the challenges of implementation is time constraint. How can MOE help to gradually adjust schools’ timetable and curriculum demands to fit such a literacy cum CCE programme in line with the new strategy to afford more time for students to experience less academic endeavors?

6. MDA has shown strong interest in our project. Do you think that MOE and MDA can collaborate via our project to design and deliver a programme on a larger scale in the future? Not only in relation to students, but training selected teachers as well?

Additional Questions to Teachers

1. Could you please tell us briefly about your background and experience in the education sector?

2. How interested are your students in CME lessons? What are some of the challenges you face in teaching the subject, and how do you overcome them?

3. What motivated you to start using films to teach in class? Could you please give us some examples of films used to teach various topics? How effective is using films to teach in class?
## Learning Objectives:
By the end of the TWO lessons, students will be able to:
1. Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
2. Identify at least 3 main film genres.
3. Recognize that people have similarities and differences with each other.
4. Explain the concept of self-identity in their own words.

### LESSON #1

Date: 23 January, 11:20AM – 12:55PM; 25 January, 8:15 – 9:50AM  
Class: 30-40 Secondary 1 students  
Duration: 95 minutes  
Topic: Basic Film Literacy and Self-Identity  
Prerequisite Knowledge: None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Notes</th>
<th>Student Notes</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10 min   | INTRODUCTION - Ice-breaking              | -To introduce him/herself  
-To randomly pick 6-8 students for ice-breaker | -Ice-breaker: To name their favourite movie and one reason why they like it! | -To get acquainted with the students.  
-To get to know the movie tastes of students. | -PowerPoint  
-Worksheet |
|          | (Individual)                            |                                                                                |                                                   |                                                                                                |                            |
| 20 min   | BASIC FILM LITERACY                     | -To show 3 trailers to facilitate basic understanding of elements of films and genres.  
E.g. The Avengers; Bridge to Terabithia; Up | -To brainstorm the different parts that make up a film.  
-To identify film genres. | -To understand that films that they see are made up of many parts and can be classified into different genres with audience expectations. | -PowerPoint  
-YouTube  
-Worksheet |
|          | (Group)                                 |                                                                                |                                                   |                                                                                                |                            |
| 5 min    | Break                                   |                                                                                |                                                   |                                                                                                |                            |
| 35 min   | SCREENING + Discussion                  | -To screen segments of the film.  
-To think of what they are | -To watch segments  
-To look at an actual film in segments and perform a |                                                                                                | -DVD: X-Men: First Class  
-Worksheet |
**LESSON #2**

Date: 30 January, 11:20AM – 12:55PM; 1 February, 8:15 – 9:50AM
Class: 30-40 Secondary 1 students
Duration: 95 minutes
Topic: Basic Film Literacy and Self-Identity
Prerequisite Knowledge: Elements of a film; classifying by genre; have seen required segments of *X-Men: First Class* in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5min</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min (Group)</td>
<td>REFLECTION OF FILM CONTENT</td>
<td>-To facilitate discussion on the learning points from the film’s content</td>
<td>-To discuss with peers and teacher on the topic of self-identity at the individual level, and the strengths and weaknesses of oneself.</td>
<td>-To allow students to reflect on their own self-identity and understand themselves as having strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>-PowerPoint -Worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>BRIEF RECAP</td>
<td>To briefly recap key points of last lesson.</td>
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</table>
| 55 min | SCREENING + Discussion | - Film: *The School of Rock* (Richard Linklater, 2003)  
- Self-Identity & how self contributes to teamwork  
  - To screen segments of the film.  
    - Segment 1: Forming the band (19:20 – 38:20)  
      19min+5min  
    - Segment 2: Audition (55:00 – 1:02:55)  
      8min+3min  
    - Segment 3: Getting prepared (1:12:20 – 1:16:50)  
      5min+3min  
    - Segment 4: Performance (1:30:40 – 1:39:10)  
      9min+3min  
  - Screen time: 41min  
  - Discussion time: 14min  
  - *To set context with a guiding question before screening of each segment.  
  - To watch segments  
    - To think of what they are watching guided by worksheet  
    - Proposed guiding questions:  
      - What are the different students' similarities and differences, and how does this contribute to their eventual success?  
      - Which character do they identify with and why?  
      - While a rock band involves teamwork, there are many other instances where students will also encounter teamwork. What are these?  
      - How do your strengths and weaknesses come into the picture when you encounter such situations?  
      - Look around the classroom at your friends. What are your similarities and differences?  
  - To look at an actual film in segments and perform a deeper analysis of the film.  
| 5 min | Break | |
| 15 min | REFLECTION OF FILM CONTENT | - To facilitate discussion on peers and  
- To allow students to go  
- PowerPoint |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Worksheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>SUMMARY (Individual)</td>
<td>-Film Structure: Elements and genres</td>
<td>Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Film Content: Self-Identity (oneself, and self in relation to others)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-To recap key points and learning objectives.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
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</table>
Worksheet 1 for CHS

FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION
Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies

Lesson #1

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:
✓ Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
✓ Identify at least 3 main film genres.
✓ Recognize that people have similarities and differences with each other.
✓ Explain the concept of self-identity in your own words.

Introduction:
1. Name your favourite movie.

2. Why do you like this movie?

3. Movies versus Films: Is there a difference?

4. Seeing versus Watching: Is there a difference?

Film Components
5. What do you notice when you are watching a film? Brainstorm with your peers 3-5 components that make up a film. (E.g. Acting)
Film Genres

6. Write down 3 film genres. Discuss with your peers keywords that could describe each of these 3 genres.

“SCREENING TIME!”
We are going to watch 4 segments from X-MEN: FIRST CLASS.

Segment #1: Finding Mutants (4 mins)
Charles Xavier is trying to recruit mutants with special powers. Why doesn’t he carry out his task alone?

Segment #2: What’s Your Power? (3 mins)
The mutants showcase some of their powers. What makes them unique?

Segment #3: Training (9 mins)
The mutants undergo training in preparation to fight their common enemy. What makes this sequence entertaining?

Segment #4: Climactic Battle (6 mins)
The mutants work as a team in the final climactic battle. What makes the climax exciting?
In what genre is the climactic battle most common? Does X-MEN: FIRST CLASS belong to this genre?

**Personal Reflection**

7. The mutants in X-MEN: FIRST CLASS have their similarities and differences. How are you similar and different from your peers?

8. What is unique about yourself? What are your strengths and weaknesses

**Worksheet 2 for CHS**

**FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION**

*Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies*

**Lesson #2**

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:

- Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
- Identify at least 3 main film genres.
- Recognize that people have similarities and differences with each other.
- Explain the concept of self-identity in your own words.

**Recap**

- Films are made up of different components.
- Films can be categorized into different genres.
- An individual is unique with his or her own set of talents and skills.
- People have similarities and differences with each other.

**“SCREENING TIME!”**

We are going to watch 4 segments from THE SCHOOL OF ROCK.

**Segment #1: Forming the Band**

Actor Jack Black attempts to form his own music band comprising of his students, who take up different roles. List 5 of these roles, with at least 2 non-musical roles.
If you were in the band, which role would you choose? Why?

Based on the role that you have chosen, how are you similar or different from the film character with the same role?

Segment #2: Auditioning

Some of the students in the film face challenges after joining the band. List at least 2 of these challenges faced by different members of the band.

Think about yourself. What is one challenge you often face? What do you think is the best way to overcome this challenge?

Segment #3: Getting Prepared

Everyone is fitting into their roles nicely, and working as a team towards a common goal. Think about your class. What is your role in your class? What is your class’ common goal?

Segment #4: Performance

The students perform on stage with Jack Black. What makes this performance entertaining? What do you like most about this sequence?
Discussion Questions

1. What comes to your mind when you think of the word ‘Self-Identity’?

2. The students in *SCHOOL OF ROCK* come together successfully to form a rock band. As a student of Catholic High, you will have many opportunities to work as a team. Describe at least 2 such opportunities where you will work in a team to accomplish a certain goal.

3. How is *X-MEN: FIRST CLASS* similar to *THE SCHOOL OF ROCK*? You may use what you have learnt about film components and genres discussed last week in your answer.

4. How is *X-MEN: FIRST CLASS* different from *THE SCHOOL OF ROCK*? You may use what you have learnt about film components and genres discussed last week in your answer.
# Appendix H

## NTU-WKWSCI’s Film Literacy & Education Final Year Project

### Lesson Plan for Dunman High School

**Learning Objectives:**
By the end of the TWO lessons, students will be able to:
1. Identify any 3 elements that make up a film.
2. Identify at least 2 main film genres.
3. Identify how we can care for and help others, including our peers at school.
4. Explain why it is important to care for others.
5. Recognize and understand a film’s structure and messages.

### LESSON #1

- **Date:** 4 February 2013, Monday, 12:15p.m. – 1:15p.m.
- **Class:** 30-40 Secondary 2 IP students
- **Duration:** 60 minutes
- **Topic:** Basic Film Literacy + Care and responsibility
- **Prerequisite Knowledge:** None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Worksheet</th>
<th>AV Material</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 min</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>Question 1 Question 2</td>
<td>Slide 1 Slide 2</td>
<td>Teacher to hand out worksheet 1.1 and introduce him/herself (1min) -Write down their favourite movie and one reason why they like it (1min) -Teacher to pick 3 students to share with the class (2min) -Teacher to explain the difference between 'movies' and 'films' (2min)</td>
<td>-To write down their favourite movie and one reason why they like it. -To get acquainted with the students. -To get to know the movie tastes of students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>BASIC FILM LITERACY</td>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>KFP Trailer THG Trailer Slide 4</td>
<td>-Teacher to show two trailers: <em>Kung Fu Panda</em> (1.5min) <em>The Hunger Games</em> (1.5min) -Teacher to guide students to discuss and share on film components (3min) [Some possible]</td>
<td>-To brainstorm the different parts that make up a film, and the different kinds of film genres. -To understand that films that they see are made up of many parts, and can be classified into different genres.</td>
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</table>
Teacher to elaborate on a few components, e.g. types of sound include sound effects, dialogue and voiceovers (bonus: talk about foley effects), types of stories include those adapted from books and series like Harry Potter and The Hunger Games, and original stories, types of actors include A-list celebrities, supporting actors, award-winning actors, voice actors.

- Teacher to guide students to discuss and share on film genres **(2min)**

[Guiding question: Which component in the previous question gives you the biggest clue to the film's genre? Answer: Storyline.

Possible genres: action, adventure, romance, comedy, horror, sci-fi, animation, drama.

Possible traits of genres: for example, action movies have special effects, sound effects, a hero and often a climactic battle, while comedies usually have a funny character in funny situations or who tells jokes.]

---

| 26 min | SCREENING! - Film: MONSTERS, INC. | Slide 6 | **INTRODUCE MONSTERS INC.**
Segment 1 | **MONSTERS, INC. DVD**
Segment #1 “A 2319 Situation!” **(3min)** The aliens discover Boo and panic ensues. |
Question 1 | **- To watch segments**
**- To think of what they are watching guided by**
**- To look at an actual film in segments and perform a deeper**

- To watch segments
- To think of what they are watching guided by
- To look at an actual film in segments and perform a deeper
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment 2</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Slide 7</th>
<th>Meanwhile, Sulley and Mike bring Boo home to figure out their next step.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>44:45-48:00</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discussion (4min)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Question: What genre do you think this film belongs to?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Guiding questions: Is animation the genre? Is it a comedy? Can both be its genre, depending on what you are comparing it to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>Slide 8</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Question: List 2 other films by Pixar. Why do you think Pixar’s films are critically acclaimed and successful at the box office?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Some Pixar films: Toy Story, Cars, Wall-E, Up, Finding Nemo, Brave&lt;br&gt;Guiding questions: What is similar between all these movies? What makes them entertaining to watch? Why do adults like these animation films too? Possible answers: Pixar films appeal to the young and old, their stories are meaningful and the characters are well-developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 3</td>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>Slide 9</td>
<td><strong>Segment #2 “Sulley Takes Charge of Boo” (3min)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sulley loses sight of Boo in the factory and assumes that Boo has been tossed into the nearby trash system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| DVD      | 57:15-1:02:40 |        | **Discussion (4min)**<br>**Question: What gives Sulley the ability to care for Boo?**<br>Guiding questions: Why is Sulley the
primary person who takes care of Boo, and not Mike? What do you think Sulley is thinking as he interacts with Boo? What puts Sulley in an advantaged situation? Possible answers: Sulley is a big and respected monster who is able to give protection to Boo. Sulley has a good heart and wants to look after Boo, whom he thinks is vulnerable.

**Question:** Think about yourself. What gives you the ability to help others?

Guiding questions: Think about your friends, family and school. What are the things that are going well, and that you are thankful for? Do you possess skills that enable you to help others? Do you have extra time that you can use to help others?

Possible answers: I am healthy and able to help others. I have free time to help others. I am good in Maths, so I can help my friends who are weaker in Maths.

**Segment #3**

"Banished" (6min)

Sulley and Mike are banished to Nepal, but return to save Boo.

Discussion (6min)

**Question:** Why do you think Sulley chose to leave Mike and venture out on his own?

Guiding questions: Isn't it better to have
someone with you when you are banished in a foreign land? What is motivating Sulley to do so? Why does Sulley not try to persuade Mike to go with him? Possible answers: Sulley wants to look for Boo as he feels responsible for her. He prioritises his responsibility over his friendship, but does not want to get Mike into trouble.

**Question:** Think about Sulley's dilemma. From your own experiences, have you ever been in his shoes? Describe an instance where you were caught between your sense of responsibility and friendship. Guiding questions: Think about situations in class, in your CCA or even at home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 min</th>
<th>REFLECTION OF FILM CONTENT</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Slide 10</th>
<th>Give out Worksheet 1.2 – Personal Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>Slide 11</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Question: What is your definition of a friend?</strong> Guiding questions: What is the difference between a friend and an acquaintance? Who is school are your friends and who are your acquaintances? How do friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide 12</td>
<td>Question 3: What is the most caring thing that you have done for a friend? Guiding questions: Do you have any friends who ran into trouble recently, and whom you helped? How did caring for your friend make you feel?</td>
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<td>Slide 13</td>
<td>Question: As Secondary 2 seniors, what are some ways that I can help my juniors? Guiding questions: Think of when you interact with your juniors the most, e.g. CCA. Do you remember when you were in Secondary 1 and in a new environment? What were you unsure or even afraid of? As a senior, what are some ways you can help your juniors feel at home at Dunman High? Possible answers: Take the initiative to speak to juniors at CCA, help juniors who are lost to get around school, help juniors with school work, etc.</td>
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</table>
| Slide 14 | Summary: Briefly recap the
### LESSON #2

Date: 6 January 2013, Wednesday, 10:45a.m. – 11:45a.m.
Class: 30-40 Secondary 2 IP students
Duration: 60 minutes
Topic: Care and Responsibility
Prerequisite Knowledge: Watched segments of MONSTERS, INC shown in previous class

#### Learning Objectives:

By the end of the TWO lessons, students will be able to:

1. Identify any 3 elements that make up a film.
2. Identify at least 2 main film genres.
3. Identify how we can care for and help others, including our peers at school.
4. Explain why it is important to care for others.
5. Recognize and understand a film's structure and messages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>AV Material</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>BRIEF RECAP</td>
<td>Slide 1 Slide 2</td>
<td>-To briefly recap key points of last lesson. <strong>(5min)</strong> Films are made of different components. Films belong to various genres. From Monsters, Inc., we discussed care and responsibility towards our friends and juniors.</td>
<td>-To get students to have a similar frame of reference to proceed to the content of the next lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>SCREENING! -Film: THE BLIND SIDE</td>
<td>Slide 3 TBS DVD 06:16-09:12 Segment 1 TBS DVD 06:20-08:30 Question 1</td>
<td>Introduce <em>The Blind Side</em> Segment #1 “Big Mike” <strong>(3min)</strong> A football coach tries to enroll Michael in a school, but the teachers are hesitant due to his</td>
<td>-To watch segments -To think of what they are watching guided by worksheet -To look at an actual film in segments and perform a deeper analysis of</td>
<td></td>
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### Segment 2

**Question 1**
- **TBS**
- **DVD**
- 20:01-23:50

Discussion (3 min)

**Question:** Despite Michael's poor academic track record, the coach is adamant on helping him enroll in his school. Think about yourself. What are some ways you can help your peers who might be struggling with certain subjects in school?

Guiding questions:
- What is your best subject? Do you think you will be able to help your peers or juniors with their schoolwork in that subject? What ways might you go about doing that? Your friends or yourself might be good at certain subjects but struggle with other subjects. What would be a good way to help each other out?
- Possible answers: Give them tuition if they ask for it, suggest studying together for a less direct approach, organize study groups, be patient as people are good at certain subjects but weak at others.

### Segment 3

**Question 1**
- **TBS**
- **DVD**
- 50:01-51:00

Discussion (4 min)

**Question:** By bringing Michael home and giving him a place to sleep, the compassionate Leigh Anne goes beyond what most people would do to help the film.
Question 2

Michael.
How far would you go to help a stranger in need? For instance, what would you do if a stranger asks you for directions to the Performing Arts Centre from the school foyer?

Guiding questions: What would be the most basic help that you can offer? Can you afford to help more? Would you bring the stranger to the PAC, if it is convenient? What do you think you get out of helping others?

Possible answers: Tell him the direction, or go further by bringing him to the PAC.

Question: Last week, we talked about helping our friends and juniors. How about strangers who need help, or are less fortunate? Name 3 groups of people who might need assistance, and how a volunteer like you can help.

Guiding questions: How many of you volunteer? Who do you volunteer with? What is the experience like?

Possible answers: Elderly, mentally disabled, physically disabled. Volunteers can help through doing CIP, perhaps at old folks’ homes or other homes, can entertain the residents with music, or help to clean up or paint the homes.

Segment #3 “At the Library” (1min)

Collins, Leigh Anne’s daughter, defies peer pressure from her friends and studies with Michael at the school library.
Discussion (3min)

Question: Despite protests from her friends, Collins studies with Michael at the library. What do you think motivates her to do so?
Guiding questions: Why do you think her friends are not keen on being associated with Michael? What do you think of their behavior? What do you think Collins thinks about Michael?
Possible answers: Collins trusts Michael just as her mother trusts him. Collins is compassionate and feels that Michael should be given a chance, and not quickly judged based on his looks, status or grades.

Question: Think about yourself. What are some factors that prevent us from helping those in need through volunteering?
Guiding questions: If you were to start volunteering tomorrow, what will be your concerns? Time? Anxious about interacting with new people?
Possible answers: Time, new environment

Question: How can we overcome them?
Guiding questions: (Time) What do you spend your free time doing? Do you think some of this time can be allocated to helping others in need? (New environment) How can you be more prepared for a new environment?
Possible answers: Better
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 min (Group)</th>
<th>REFLECTION OF FILM CONTENT</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Slide 9</th>
<th>Split the students up into groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>Slide 9</td>
<td><strong>Question: How is MONSTERS, INC. similar to THE BLIND</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Segment #4 “98% Protective Instincts” (7min)**
Michael disregards his own safety and saves SJ (Leigh Anne’s son) from getting injured in a car accident. During football training, Leigh Anne gets Michael to defend well by telling him to protect the players as if they were his family.

**Discussion (5min)**
*Question: Michael is fiercely protective of his ‘family’, both at home and on the field. What do you think motivates Michael to behave this way?*
Guiding questions: What did Michael do to save SJ? What do you think motivated him to do that? Why do you think Michael is protective of a family that isn’t his real family?
Possible answers:
Michael is grateful to the Tuohy family and treats them like his own. Michael felt responsible for SJ. If Leigh Anne can treat Michael so well, Michael feels that he should give back to the family by protecting them.

Total screening time = 15min
Total discussion time = 15min
Total = 30min
| Question 2 | Slide 10 | **SIDE? You may use the elements and genres discussed in the previous lesson in your answer.**  
Guiding questions: What messages are they trying to portray?  
Possible answer:  
Storylines are similar, a character is placed in a foreign environment and gets by with the help of a compassionate character. Both are Hollywood productions. Both are successful at the box office. Both won awards. |
|---|---|---|
| Question 3 | Slide 11 | **Question: How is MONSTERS, INC. different from THE BLIND SIDE? You may use the elements and genres discussed in the previous lesson in your answer.**  
Guiding question: How are the films different in genre? Are the target audiences different? The stories are a similarity, but can the stories be different too?  
Possible answer:  
Monsters Inc is an animation and comedy, while The Blind Side is a drama. One is targeted at children and some adults, while the other is targeted at adults.  
Monsters Inc is an original Pixar animation, while The Blind Side is based on a true story, etc.  
**Question: Which film do you think brings out a stronger message?**  
**Why?**  
Guiding questions: The drama seems to bring out a stronger message as Monsters Inc seems to aim to entertain more than tell a story. |
However, this can be a pity as audiences who watch *Monsters Inc* for entertainment fail to recognize its messages. The important thing to learn is that we think about the messages behind a film, instead of merely seeing it for fun.

| 5 min (Individual) | SUMMARY Survey | Slide 12 Slide 13 | Summary – to recap key points and learning objectives (5min)  
1. Film structure and components: How does a film work?  
2. Film content: How does a film make you feel? How does a film make you think? What messages is the film trying to convey?  
To distribute survey | -To provide students with meaningful takeaways from the two lessons.

5 min  Buffer
Worksheet 1 for DHS

FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION
Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies

Lesson #1

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:
✓ Identify any 3 elements that make up a film.
✓ Identify at least 2 main film genres.
✓ Identify how we can care for and help others, including our peers at school.
✓ Explain why it is important to care for others.

Introduction:
1. Name your favourite movie.

2. Why do you like this movie?

3. Movies versus Films: How are they different?

Film Components
4. What do you notice when you are watching a film? Brainstorm with your peers at least 3 components that make up a film. (E.g. Acting)

Film Genres
5. Write down 2 film genres. Discuss with your peers keywords that could describe each of these 2 genres.
SCREENING TIME
We are going to watch 3 segments from MONSTERS, INC.

The monsters from Monsters Incorporated scare children at night to collect their screams, which they use as an energy source. When one child accidentally enters Monstropolis, top scarer Sulley and his friend Mike find their lives turned upside down.

Segment #1: “A 2319 Situation”

1. What genre do you think this movie belongs to?

2. List 2 other films by Pixar. Why do you think Pixar’s films are critically acclaimed and successful at the box office?

Segment #2: “Sulley takes charge of Boo”

1. What gives Sulley the ability to care for Boo?

2. Think about yourself. What gives you the ability to help others?

Segment #3: “Banished”

1. Why do you think Sulley chose to leave Mike and venture out on his own?
2. Think about Sulley’s dilemma. From your own experiences, have you ever been in his shoes? Describe an instance where you were caught between your sense of responsibility and friendship.

**FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION**

*Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies*

**Lesson #1.2**

**Personal Reflection**

6. What is your definition of a friend?

7. What is the most caring thing that you have done for a friend?

8. As Secondary 2 seniors, what are some ways that I can help my juniors?

---

**Worksheet 2 for DHS**

**FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION**

*Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies*

**Lesson #2**

**Learning Objectives:**

*By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:*

6. Identify any 3 elements that make up a film.
7. Identify at least 2 main film genres.
8. Identify how we can care for and help others, including our peers at school.
9. Explain why it is important to care for others.

Recap
- The difference between ‘movies’ and ‘films’.
- Films are made up of different components.
- Films can be categorized into different genres.

SCREENING TIME

THE BLIND SIDE is a semi-biographical film that tells the story of Michael Oher, a homeless teen who becomes a National Football League player with the help of well-to-do Leigh Anne Tuohy and her family.

Segment #1: “Big Mike”

1. Despite Michael’s poor academic track record, the coach is adamant on helping him enroll in his school. Think about yourself. What are some ways you can help your peers who might be struggling with certain subjects in school?

Segment #2: “Don’t You Dare Lie to Me”

1. By bringing Michael home and giving him a place to sleep, the compassionate Leigh Anne goes beyond what most people would do to help Michael.

How far would you go to help a stranger in need? For instance, what would you do if a stranger asks you for directions to the Performing Arts Centre from the school foyer?

2. Last week, we talked about helping our friends and juniors. How about strangers who need help, or are less fortunate? Name 3 groups of people who might need assistance, and how a volunteer like you can help.
Segment #3: “At the Library”

1. Despite protests from her friends, Collins studies with Michael at the library. What do you think motivates her to do so?

2. Think about yourself. What are some factors that prevent us from helping those in need through volunteering?

3. How can we overcome them?

Segment #4: “98% Protective Instincts”

1. Michael is fiercely protective of his ‘family’, both at home and on the field. What do you think motivates Michael to behave this way?

Group Work

5. How is MONSTERS, INC. similar to THE BLIND SIDE? You may use the elements and genres discussed previously in your answer.

6. How is MONSTERS, INC. different from THE BLIND SIDE? You may use the elements and genres discussed previously in your answer.
7. Which film do you think brings out a stronger message of care and responsibility? Why?
Appendix I

Lesson Plan for Tanjong Katong Girl’s School

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the TWO lessons, students will be able to:
1. Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
2. Identify at least 3 main film genres.
3. Recognize the challenges that they might face in reaching their goals, and think about how they can overcome them.
4. Recognize that determination is important in order to bounce back from defeat and to achieve one’s goals.
5. Explain the concept and importance of determination in their own words.

LESSON #1

Date: 30 January, 1:00PM – 2:40PM
Class: 30-40 Secondary 2 students
Duration: 100 minutes
Topic: Basic Film Literacy...and Determination
Prerequisite Knowledge: None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>-To introduce herself</td>
<td>-Ice-breaker: To name their</td>
<td>-To get acquainted with the students.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Individual)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-To randomly pick 6-8 students for ice-</td>
<td>favourite movie and one reason why they like it!</td>
<td>-To get to know the movie tastes of students.</td>
<td>Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>breaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>BASIC FILM LITERACY</td>
<td>-To show 3 trailers to</td>
<td>-To brainstorm the different</td>
<td>-To understand that films that they see are made up of many parts and can be classified into different genres with audience expectations.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Group)</td>
<td></td>
<td>facilitate basic understanding of elements of films and genres.</td>
<td>parts that make up a film.</td>
<td></td>
<td>YouTube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(The Avengers; Brave; Bridge to Terabithia)</td>
<td>-To identify film genres.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35 min</td>
<td>SCREENING!</td>
<td>-*To screen segments of the</td>
<td>-To watch segments</td>
<td>-To look at an actual film in</td>
<td>DVD, Dreamgirls;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Group)</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Film: Dreamgirls</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Bill Condon, 2006)</td>
<td>-How the filmic elements come together to make a film entertaining -Star power, use of music, songs as dialogue, visual effects</td>
<td>film. -Segment 1: Introducing Dreamettes (07:07 - 10:10, 3min) -Segment 2: Effie plays back up (40:00 – 46:10, 6min) -Segment 3: Effie kicked out (53:00 – 62:16, 9min) - Segment 4: Magic, Effic bounces back (72:30 - 84:00, 11min 30s) - Segment 5: Effie’s new song (97:09 - 101:40, 4min 30s) - Segment 6: Effie wins (109:40 - 112:40, 3min) Total = Approx. 37 min</td>
<td>-To think of what they are watching guided by worksheet *Proposed guiding questions: -What are the character’s strengths and weaknesses? -What are the reasons for Effie's initial failure? -How does she make a comeback? -Have you or anyone you know made a similar comeback? How did determination help in making such a comeback?</td>
<td>segments and perform a deeper analysis of the film. -To guide students to look at both structure and content.</td>
<td>-Worksheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 20 min (Individual) | REFLECTION OF FILM CONTENT -Determination and self-confidence -Overcoming adversity | -To facilitate discussion on the learning points from the film’s content | -To discuss with peers and teacher on the topic of determination at the individual level. | -To allow students to reflect on themselves and understand that determination is important to overcoming adversity. | -PowerPoint -Worksheet |

| 10 min | Buffer |  |  |  |  |

**LESSON #2**

Date: 13 February, 1:00PM – 2:40PM;  
Class: 30-40 Secondary 2 students  
Duration: 100 minutes  
Topic: Basic Film Literacy...and Determination  
Prerequisite Knowledge: Elements of a film; classifying by genre; have seen required segments of Dreamgirls in class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>BRIEF RECAP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-To briefly recap key points of last lesson.</td>
<td>-PowerPoint -Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Individual)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-To get students to have a similar frame of reference to proceed to the content of the next lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 min</td>
<td>SCREENING!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-To watch segments</td>
<td>-DVD: <em>The Hunger Games</em> -Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Group)</td>
<td>-Film: <em>The Hunger Games</em> (Gary Ross, 2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-To think of what they are watching guided by worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Determination and achieving one's goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed guiding questions:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Segment 1: Happy Hunger Games (12:18-17:59, 5min 30s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-How does Katniss’ determination help her create an impression?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Segment 2: Training (36:44 - 47:01, 10min 30s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-While Katniss’ major goal is to win the games, what are some of the secondary goals she takes on during the games?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Segment 3: Surviving the Games (76:00 - 89:00, 13min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Do you think Katniss’ determination is inspirational? Have you encountered such inspirational determination in your personal experience?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Segment 4: Rue’s demise (91:18 - 103:35, 12min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Despite being determined to achieve her goals at all costs, there are certain principles that Katniss refuses to compromise on. What are these principles?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Segment 5: Saving Peeta (112:16 - 116:28, 4min)</td>
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<td>-Segment 6: Winning the game (120: 13 - 129:24, 9min)</td>
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<td>Total = Approx. 54’ min</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*To set context with a guiding question before screening of each segment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td><strong>Break</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 min</td>
<td><strong>Reflection of Film Content</strong></td>
<td>- To facilitate discussion on learning points from the film's content.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Group)</td>
<td>- To discuss with peers and teacher on the topic of determination</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- To compare and contrast the issue of determination presented in both</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dreamgirls</em> and <em>The Hunger Games</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- To allow students to go into more in-depth discussion on the topic of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>determination.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>- To recap key points and learning objectives.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Individual)</td>
<td>- To provide students with meaningful takeaways from the two lessons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td><strong>Buffer</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Worksheet 1 for TKGS**

**FILM LITERACY & EDUCATION**
*Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies*

**Lesson #1**

**Learning Objectives:**
By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:

- Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
- Identify at least 3 main film genres.
- Recognize the challenges that you might face in reaching your goals, and think about how you can overcome them.
- Explain the concept and importance of determination in your own words.

---

**Introduction:**

1. Name your favourite movie.

2. Why do you like this movie?

3. Movies versus Films: Is there a difference?

4. Seeing versus Watching: Is there a difference?

**Film Components**

5. What do you notice when you are watching a film? Brainstorm with your peers 3 - 5 components that make up a film. (E.g. Acting)
**Film Genres**

6. Write down 3 film genres. Discuss with your peers keywords that could describe each of these 3 genres.

**SCREENING TIME**

We are going to watch 6 segments from DREAMGIRLS.

**Segments #1 and #2:**
Introducing the Dreamettes and Effie Sings Back Up

What genre do you think Dreamgirls belongs to? From the segments you have seen so far, what do you think makes Dreamgirls entertaining?

**Segment #3: Effie is Kicked Out**

Why was Effie kicked out of the group?

What makes Effie’s character stand out? What do you think are her strengths and weaknesses?

**Segment #4: Magic, Effie Tries Again**

What do you think were the reasons for Effie’s initial failure?
Segment #5: Effie’s New Song

Effie’s dreams to be a successful singer are repeatedly thwarted by Curtis. What do you think motivates her to press on?

Segment #6: Just Desserts

How did Effie make a come back?

Personal Reflection

7. Have you or anyone you know made a similar comeback to Effie’s story? How did determination help in making such a comeback?

8. Think about a long-term goal that you have. What are 3 obstacles that might prevent you from achieving it? What are some ways you think you can overcome these obstacles?

9. What do you think are good ways to motivate yourself to be determined to reach your goal?
Learning Objectives:
By the end of the TWO lessons, you will be able to:
✓ Identify any 5 elements that make up a film.
✓ Identify at least 3 main film genres.
✓ Recognize the challenges that you might face in reaching your goals, and think about how you can overcome them.
✓ Explain the concept and importance of determination in your own words.

Recap
- Films are made up of different components.
- Films can be categorized into different genres.

SCREENING TIME
We are going to watch 6 segments from THE HUNGER GAMES.

Segment #1: Happy Hunger Games
What do you think motivates Katniss?

Think about yourself and some of your goals. What motivates you?

Segment #2: Training
How does Katniss’ determination help her create an impression?
Segment #3: Surviving the Games

What are some of the obstacles that Katniss overcame in this segment?

Think about yourself. What is one difficult obstacle that you overcame recently? How do you think determination played a part in you reaching your goal?

Segment #4 and #5: Rue and Peeta

While Katniss’ major goal is to win the Hunger Games, what are some of the secondary goals she takes on during the games?

Do you find Katniss’ determination inspirational? Have you encountered such inspirational determination in your personal experience?

Segment #6: The Final Winner

Despite being determined to achieve her goals, there are certain principles that Katniss refuses to compromise on. What are these principles?

Personal Reflection

8. From what we have discussed, how can we define ‘determination’, and why is it important?
9. What is one aspect of your life that you have displayed determination in? How about one aspect of your life that you think you need more determination in achieving your goals?

10. Compare and contrast DREAMGIRLS with THE HUNGER GAMES. How are they similar or different? You may use what you have learnt about film components and genres discussed last week in your answer.

11. Which film do you think brings out the message of determination better, DREAMGIRLS or THE HUNGER GAMES? Why do you think this is so?
Appendix J

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Dear Sir / Madam,

We are a group of undergraduate research students from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University.

We are currently working on our final-year project, which aims to introduce a new and innovative semester-long film literacy programme to the lower secondary curriculum. The programme aims to open the eyes of students to the world of films, and help them to see films as more than just entertainment.

The programme will also be used to teach moral values, build character, and provide socio-cultural insights to people, society, and life in Singapore. It will also highlight pertinent global issues that have become more relevant as our nation faces increased diversity and multiculturalism.

In line with our research, we are conducting trial class sessions for your child and his/her peers in school. Their contribution to our project in these trial class sessions will be invaluable to the pilot testing of a trial film programme for students in the near future. Each session will be observed by a Ministry of Education-certified teacher from the school.

The trial class sessions will be conducted on the following dates and times:

- TBC
- TBC

Your child may also be selected for a focus group session that will be conducted after the second trial class session. The aim of this focus group is to collect more information and opinions on the programme. Any information given to us by your child will be kept strictly confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of research.

The focus group session will be conducted on DATE and TIME.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our final-year project supervisor, Dr Liew Kai Khiun, at kkliew@ntu.edu.sg, Dr Stephen Teo at steo@ntu.edu.sg or research student, Mr Eternality Tan, at eternity_tan@hotmail.com.
I, _____________________, parent/guardian* of ____________________ allow/do not allow*, my child/ward to take part in the trial classes and focus group sessions.

____________________
Signature of Parent or Guardian / Date

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information
Appendix K

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE AND QUESTIONNAIRE

- Seat participants with clearly labeled number tents.
- Welcome
- Purpose of Focus Group
- Set ground rules (e.g. process of speaking; scope of responses)
- Reassure confidentiality

Introductory Questions:
1. In general, how do you feel about the two lessons?

Transition Questions:
2. What are the things that you like about the lessons?
3. What are the things that you dislike about the lessons?

Key Questions:
4. Do you think the lessons are useful for you? Why, or why not?
5. What do you think we can do to improve the lessons?
6. Do you think learning about movies in the classroom is important? Why, or why not?
7. Do you think learning through movies in the classroom is important? Why or why not?
8. What do you think of your current CME lessons?
9. Do you think that using films to teach CME is useful? Why or why not?

Ending Question:
10. Would you like to have more of these lessons in your school? Why, or why not? As part of the school curriculum or as part an after-class enrichment programme?
11. Is there anything that we have missed? Do you have anything else that you want to tell us?

- Debriefing
- Closing remarks (e.g. thank participants; give out incentives)
Appendix L

Extracts of Interviews

The following extracts were chosen to be part of the Annex as they represented important findings and issues raised by the interviews during the in-depth interview process.

Extracts from TK’s interview:

“So films are a great way to learn, it’s like bu zhi bu jue zong, it’s subliminal. It’s a great way of imparting value, messages and information. So I do think film, the medium, has a huge role to play. It can be used a lot more than it is being used right now in Singapore.” A film like that [Capricorn One] would certainly have its place in film literacy course or program about science fiction but it is also thought-provoking in relation to investigative journalism, in relation to truth in media, in relation to many things. It really depends on the instructor, if he or she would bring from his or her viewing experience, specialization and preferences – a repertoire of films could be used to stimulate students.” (p. 4)

“But this is not done on a mass basis, so I think it is important for it to become part of a curriculum because today, nowadays, film is not just a peripheral entertainment. I mean now literally anybody can be a film maker, and therefore the need to be exposed to it, the need to understand, the need to learn about film. And since particularly where we live, the school system is such a core part of people’s life, I think that it is a very important place to start. It is great at the polytechnics, at the universities, we now have film curriculum. But we need to actually start younger. I do believe that. So I see a place for it, I know it is not happening yet, but I think it is something that is very important. I would personally support and champion that kind of evolution.” (p. 2) “Then again being in the Singapore context, if something is part of the official school curriculum, it has got a certain stamp of legitimacy, of approval, of importance, which actually in the scheme of things is a good thing.” (p. 3)

Extracts from LD’s interview:

"So definitely just plain numbers, cinema going is higher than ever and it is mainly driven by youth, Having work in a commercial distribution company, cinema going, not only in Singapore but in many of the major urban cities around the world, like China, Taiwan and HongKong, you see youths-driven. Then again, 99% of what they watch on the big screen or the entertainment that they receive, were talking about, probably less TV, moving towards mobile or internet but all that they are watching and receiving are the more popular mainstream genres."

"Actually the main question is selection, who is in charge of selecting the films and when making the selection you have to consider classification, you’ve to mention the cost, I just mention issues pertaining to the cost right. And then also, when making a selection, what are the issues you want to talk about through showing the film or what are the things you want to teach by showing the film and that is suitable for the children."
"Popular films that have stood the test of time, that have universal values that are important and meaningful for the young to learn. I would say yes to such popular films. (p. 4) "I do agree that when you came up with a curriculum you could start somewhere. But over the years, as I graduate from Sec 1 to Sec 4, perhaps you can go even deeper, you can choose more complicated subject titles and film titles to be taught?"

**Extracts from IS’s interview:**

“I think that they lack in knowledge for the true range of the types of films that are out there because even though there is a very huge- because of per capita, Cineplexes, or because of per head we have the most or something like that right, but I mean the commercial venues sort of show the same ones over and over again so I think that there are a lot of people who don’t even know that there are many independent venues screening alternative films.”

“On the very kind of basic level I would say that exam system in Singapore is all consuming and it does change the way a lot of people value information. Which is why in the sense we’re talking about the issues we are talking about now because if something is not in the curriculum or if something is not examinable it is not valued and unfortunately some things can be categorized as not serious and entertainment because of this.”

“Well I think because the visual is very powerful and when combined with story and sound and characters that people can see on screen, I mean it’s the most effective and immediate way, there is a good reason why people did propaganda films in the past during world war two. Many wonderful film makers came from that genre because of the power of images and the power of the story. So film would be a very immediate way to do this.”

“Yes, definitely for sure. I mean this is quite a tried and tested technique. I mean a lot of French cultural theorists use, people like Bach and people like that, they use very popular text and they sort of point out things that you can pick up from it like mainstream stories or fables and things like that. So I think that every single theme has something that can lend itself to greater critical apparatus it’s just that you have to be equipped to do it.”

**Extracts from PW’s interview:**

“Okay, I guess like, skills versus values and life skills. I think people are definitely more wired but it doesn’t mean that they are more sociable and all, it doesn’t mean that their personal skills are better. so that whole EQ thing, I don’t think that’s err.. in fact i think that’s regressing a little. Because I guess maybe part of their nature is people equating having friends on Facebook as being sociable in the real life setting."
"I think film is a popular medium and everybody watches films either in the multiplex or watch in on their phones or on their computers. So it’s a very popular medium that we can use as an entry point to engage the students and get them to think as supposed to exhibitions or plays. Because I think that is more of acquiring taste than watching films. So I do think that film is an easy and accessible medium for students to visit in art centres and museums as an entry point for them to know more about arts in general."

"I think that would be very interesting… there’s always been film clubs and there’s blogs and people always talk about films; do we like this and like that. So this one brings it in a, I guess a more structured way instead of a one to many approach and you just absorb whatever I tell you. But I guess if the whole point is to help them discover film or think about film and you give them the tools and the guidelines then I think that’s the better way to go. Like what you said, Have them write reviews or write debates and even have group discussions and presentations kind of thing. Because I mean if the whole point is for them to read, to be able to read film but also be able to read film elements then you also want them to generate their own thought and their own thinking and personal kind of writing so there should not be one way of thinking, or one way to think about a certain theme."

Extracts from LJ’s Interview:

"The way film is actually appreciated is actually definitely not by individual opinion but rather upon discussion with one another, everybody trashes out their opinions and differences and then they get a way to find their own opinions. I think that’s a better way of film appreciation."

"One of the common things that I do tend to notice in today’s society is many people does not actually have a strong and distinct aspiration. Most aspirations are typically linked to capitalism as well as the social expectations of them either to be wealthy, to be successful, to be higher in the corporate ladder. But other than that there are actually other ways of exploring life itself. Life is definitely more than just having wealth, success and power. And I guess actually films can help to address that by showing them there’s definitely more to life than just these few elements that are mentioned."

"First of all, I do agree that screening films might be better than the conventional, structured kind of curriculum that the students are actually going through for education. It’s not only more dynamic, it actually immerses them in a more surreal, I mean it’s realistic but yet it’s still surreal kind of environment."

Extracts from TLW’s Interview:

“I think character education is very important, I agree, with the broad direction of the ministry, I think it’s critical more than ever. I agree with that. How it’s to be done is the problem, I think, because I really don’t think it can be done in the force-feed you, these are
the 5 tenets 10 commandments and whatever. Precisely why character education is important is because the world is a lot more complicated, a lot more fluid so if I give you the 10 commandments, and 5 tenets you may not be able to find your way through, you will find contradictions along the way and then you will question yourself and things like that, so I think what you need to equip the students with are not a set of things but critical thinking skills to help them make decisions which is always going to be difficult.”

“Especially when you use Hollywood films they have very strong stories, so the stories present situations that can promote discussions. Better than the written text probably because it takes longer to read, some kids cannot visualise. Film is multisensory, affects more people directly. Discuss. Then from discussion I can start bringing up moral complications perhaps.”

"I think you can have very ambitious objectives, maybe, and that’s where the film part really comes in, because film is so engaging and so situated and whatever, the kids already start to reflect a lot about heritage, which a normal, boring lesson wouldn’t be able to do. So they benefit."

**Extracts from TM’s interview:**

“I think the school will have to reinforce some of the values that home is imparting. So, over the years you can see that with so many distractions, especially the internet and other kinds of very complex and actually very useful gadgets, but sometimes they can be things that can be abused. So, I guess we have to play our parts in school as well”

“I guess so, because some of the basics, like basic courtesy, the kindness, the p’s and the q’s, this I find lacking and it’s not because they are rude or they are purposely being. But I guess it’s because they are not aware and at home I don’t think it is sometimes reinforced and it is not emphasized and kids sometimes don’t just learn, they actually watch how adults behave. So, you can teach kids but they learn best when they watch the adults.”

“With the right movies or even if there are some movies which may have certain darker issues we can always use that to teach. Because sometimes it is important to tell them what’s bad out there for them to know what’s good and we cannot be in a utopia all the time.”

I think you should have a mix and match. There’s no one way to skin a cat so it’s important to see. Because even in schools there are different abilities so it will be good to vary your teaching methods. If not, especially for languages, you will find that the subject will be too dry and with the present generation of kids and future generation of kids, they might not really be in sync with what we used to know, how we were taught. They will not be in sync so we have to be relevant for the future.
Extracts from KE’s Interview:

“Thus, as the world becomes increasingly visual, I think that films, television or things derived from these mediums have a place in our lives. . . . I think they have an instinctive understanding of how the medium works, in terms of storytelling. Everyone is very familiar with the conventions, however, the problems are that they just do not know how to give names to these conventions and they do not know how to analyse them at a deeper level. They are passive consumers of these form of media, rather than active consumers of them.”

“As long as you can see and you have grown up in this culture, you can understand visual storytelling in film and television. How deeply you understand it or how conscious you are of its high manipulative nature is really up to how conscious you are of the language of film. . . . It is only by looking at the language of film that you understand how it is being constructed and how it engages audiences through its sequence of shots, etc.”

“There is no doubt that we want our students to have good values. You want to have a very strong moral kind of compass to navigate the world because you want to make sure that your society continues to grow and remains strong in this global kind of economy. So it is important that education is giving them the right cultural values. Because the school is like a microcosm of society where you understand what it means to work within your society, so it is very important that you learn the right values in that sense. Not artificial controlled thing, but in a natural way I think. The problem with CME or NE or any of these initiative is that yes, these things are valuable, yes these things are important. But the way they pursue them may not be very effective, because they are too kind of overt and they are too kind of preachy to have a very strong impact. Because like if you have a NE lesson and I give you a survey form, you know what you are supposed to write. But knowing what to write and giving the right answers is not the same as internalising those values. And in order for values like that to become part of who you are, you have to think deeply about them, you have to question. So you can’t have a curriculum that says “you will think this”, “this is the right way to do it”, “don’t do this, do this” kind of thing because that kind of preaching won’t be internalised. It is just like “make sure you do this or you’ll get punished” kind of thing, like a fear-driven principle. If you want students to have their kind of moral integrity on their own accord, you have to give space to think about these issues on a deeper level. And why is it important to follow these kinds of values in your life? And film can do that without being preachy. Because sometimes film allows for good moral debate. Because characters are often caught in a deep moral dilemma and understanding moral dilemma in that kind of context will help the students think through what it means to be caught in that kind of situation or to have values or not to have values.”

Extracts from NOC’s Interview:

“having film literacy is transferrable to any kind of media literacy so whether wants to do gaming and things basic story telling production skills and ability to appreciate what not and short sizes, perspective and all of that character development it all comes together it is not a discrete art form it has a you know ties with the industries so with that carrot in mind students
entertainment can also have more serious benefits than they used to think, they don’t have to be consumers they can be producers, they can be purveyors of it.”

“I mean the first run I tell the kids is always the I sit back and get entertained but if they become more adept at film studies we usually they won’t just be the passive recipient anymore. And they probably will be able to catch stuff, things would jump out at them but if you talking about kids who are just starting out, never had a … passive entertain me kind of a person yeah I think going through the movie again will definitely be you know an opportunity to grow things out whatever it is, the social context, the issue at hand.”

“You need a teacher to give some measure of input otherwise there’s no knowledge which to apply. So there’s always a knowledge acquisition stage and you can’t escape from that but in terms of knowledge application and synthesise and then developing voice that will actually have to come in time but even within that one year course there were kids who had their own insights you know about movies, about how they perceive this journey, how it played out in the movie and so on so yeah it’s not exactly to discrete things”

Extracts from HE’s interview:

"I think they all have a general awareness of that. I think most of the kids today have an awareness of that. You just have to get it out from the background into the foreground and you have to sharpen"

“More importantly, consider that many students today are not good readers. They do not like to read. This is because it is a different generation, a very multi-modal, imagery and sensory focused generation, with a very short attention span. So, if we’re purely talking about trying to get them to understand the workings of human relationships, to see things on different layers, film is a modernized method to doing this, as compared to Literature.”

“The cultural capital that teachers and educators have in Singapore is actually quite weak when it comes to the Arts. It might actually be a problem as there may be language and literature teachers who might not be as exposed to and as ready to pick up the little nuances and possibilities of the Arts. So when they try to incorporate films, other media or art forms into their teaching that might actually be a challenge or obstacle to them because they cannot see the possibilities.”

“The first or first two years should be popular films because there is no point turning the kids off. Even popular films, even comedies, are so rich in terms of different devices and intents, such as messages. You graduate slowly from there in relation to looking at different students profiles and different schools.”
Extracts from SGP’s Interview:

“It's not simply how engaged they were when watching it but how they interact with us, how they answer the questions, how they want to express their views after the film, after watching the video."

"Definitely they being more digitally inclined will have an impact to their social skills. I won't say their values or what the way they interact with their friends, the social norms would be different from when we were i'm means not saying that i'm very old or young but it's rather different because these days we tackle other problems like cyber bullying, flaming online, creating memes of their friends so it's just another platform that we need to look into. How they express themselves."

“I think most of them will enjoy because to them film equals entertainment and film they have a lot of visual stimulants, sound. I think they'll be very receptive but again, you shouldn't side track. You shouldn't show a film just for the sake of showing, you must know really what we want, what message you want to bring out.”

Extracts from MAH’s Interview:

“there's a difference between seeing and watching then viewing. I think they see, the better ones would watch but i don't think anyone would actually view the film.... For them it's just absorb but it's not much thinking going on. Film literacy I think it's quite poor because literacy involves inter-textuality right. You need to juxtapose two films and talk about similarities and differences and talk about the themes that cut across films. It is very bad i think, it is I don't know if it's exposure or it's just that they are not aware.”

"Then that (using popular films) will be constructivism because you are using things which they already know. That's constructivism. I think it will work better, it will appeal better to students i think they need to be drawn into the popular ones then you actually teach like film as an art through the olders ones than you can see the transition and ... for example like the total recall 1990, 2012 if you they notice that the trailers the USP was different 1990 was the special effects, 2012 was action, CGI and all that so that is worth studying and they should know I don't know. I still think it will appeal to them more if you go, if it's ahistorical.

I think it is to be to prepare you for life in a sense that you are able to make the right decisions, think critically. I mean like you know, technically the 21st century competencies right? Those are the aim of education. Critical thinkers, able to work in a team. That is the aim of education.”
Extract from AP’s interview:

“You probably have people who are very much into this and want to do the finer aspects, but that’s not for the broad base.”

“Why we don’t do it at a national level is because every school is different – the cohort, the students are different. Every cohort of students are different but not only that, but the groups of students in different schools will have different abilities, will have different backgrounds and so the entire culture is very different. So we find, its best for the school itself to make the decision that they want to do this. And once they’ve done that, it means the school is taking ownership.”

“Education is also a part of growing, so how do you grow? If you’re reading just for the exams then it’s a bit wrong. You know, it’s important to do that but if you have a passion in a particular area then how do you grow in that area? So we talk about the purpose of education and look at it from an individual perspective. Basically it is for the individual to grow as much as he can, and that’s what they say you know, in terms of potential. To reach your potential.”

Extract from LKK’s interview:

“But that’s also another possibility but I’m not sure how many clubs are going to do that and whether the teacher in-charge normally is a very geeky person. And I do not know they, how to put it, how open they are to it. But there are possibilities but I would not see that film literacy should be just dedicated to CCAs. I think that there is a lot more potential actually in being, how do you say it, integrated into the curriculum.”

“our youths must have the ability to also when they look at something, to be questioning, to ask is that truth, is that the reality, is that accurate. If not you have all sorts of people doing all sort of funny things. Or they embrace certain cause that will actually ruin their own lives and the lives of others.”

“In fact you ask me actually it is something that we do advocate when we talk about values education, like even in MOE. To use films, video snippets, it’s so powerful. Because we find that those just case studies, unless it’s very full, you know that means the description is full, the context, but again students once they read that they’ll be like ‘oh god there’s so much to read’ you know that kind of thing.”
Extracts from MAL’s Interview:

“Like I said, it’s a good thing but then maybe we can think about the skills related to that. You know like the broader things which you can pull out of that and apply across other areas as well. So it depends on you know, if film literacy is just about erm… I don’t know whether there are parallels in appreciating art; parallels in appreciating music; maybe there are certain things which are common to these. You know, about looking at something and looking for meaning in that thing. So those could be like broader themes or broader ideas that they could pull out of it and teach, rather than film literacy. ”

“For me the biggest thing is the selection of movies. You know? And if you are not selecting movies and, uh, you are asking people to select movies then maybe giving them some guidelines on what would be appropriate. You know? Because I mean obviously there are films that are very anti-establishment. Not to say it's bad. But then, you know, to prepare the person that "Okay, this is an anti-establishment film." You know, "these are the messages - do you agree with it/ do you disagree with it" Being able to look at everything sceptically. And not just, um, accept it as "this is a movie, let me just go with it. Just be influenced by whatever - it's fine too." You know? So I think the selection of films would be important. You know? Like whatever you select, there must be a very clear reason why you have selected it. If it is for teaching a value, what is the value? Is that value in alignment with our social values? You know? Um, those are things that might concern principals and teachers lah. Yeah. Then of course the language - whether the language would be suitable for the students?”
Appendix M

Proposed Semester-Long Film Literacy Programme Template

Programme Title:

Film Literacy & Education: Learning About Movies, Learning Through Movies

Programme Objectives:

By the end of the programme, students will be able to:

✓ Identify components, processes, concepts and conventions that define popular, foreign and alternative cinema.
✓ Differentiate between a good and bad film.
✓ Recognize that films, including popular ones, contain themes and messages that they can analyze, evaluate, and apply.
✓ Examine films in a critical and analytical way.

Programme Details:

The programme will span over 18 weeks, ideally in Terms 1 and 2 of the school year. The programme is targeted at Secondary 1 and 2 students from the Express Stream and Integrated Programmes (IP). Lessons will be conducted on a weekly basis with each lesson lasting a duration of 90 minutes. The programme will take up all 10 weeks of Term 1 and 8 weeks of Term 2, in lieu of the need for preparation for the mid-year examinations.

Recommended Class Size:

25 – 35 (max. 40)

Assessment Criteria:

Students will be assessed primarily based on group projects, participation in class discussion and an end-of-term write-up. The breakdown of the assessment criteria are as follows:

Term 1

✓ Participation in class discussion: 30%
✓ 1st Group Project: 40%
✓ Reflection: 30%

Term 2

✓ Participation in class discussion: 30%
✓ 2nd Group Project: 40%
✓ Movie Review: 30%

Cumulative Final Assessment

✓ Term 1 grade: 50%
✓ Term 2 grade: 50%

Assessment Guidelines:
This section serves as a broad guide only. Any modifications should be done at the discretion of the instructor and must be communicated to the students.

**Participation in class discussion**

Students are expected to interact with their peers in the classroom in the following ways:

- Share their experiences or the experiences of others.
- Share their thoughts on the topic or question in discussion.
- Share their feelings toward the topic or question in discussion.
- Engage in peer-to-peer or group discussion whenever required.

**Group projects**

Students are expected to work with their peers (max. 5 in a group) to complete and present a research project to their classmates and the instructor. Each presentation should last a maximum of 8 minutes. An additional 2 minutes is allocated for the group to respond to 1 or 2 questions from the instructor.

1**2 Project: Superhero Week – Choose a superhero movie and engage in an analysis of its filmic components and the film’s messages/themes.**

- Presentation: 60%
- Q&A: 15%
- Intra-group peer evaluation: 25%

2**2 Project: Animation Week – Choose an animated film and engage in an analysis of its animation technique, and the film’s messages/themes.**

- Presentation: 60%
- Q&A: 15%
- Intra-group peer evaluation: 25%

**End-of-term write-up**

Students are expected to complete one write-up at the end of each term. A 350 – 500 word Reflection and Movie Review must be submitted to the instructor at the end of Terms 1 and 2 respectively.

Students can choose a topic (out of a list of 10 topics) to write about for the Reflection. They will be assessed on:

- Content: 70%
- Clarity: 20%
- Language: 10%

Students can choose a film (out of a list of 20 films) to write about for the Movie Review. They will be assessed on:

- Analysis of the film components: 30%
- Analysis of the film messages/themes: 30%
- Linking film components with film messages/themes: 20%
- Clarity: 20%

**Template Outline:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</table>
| 1    | Introduction to Film Literacy | Students will be able to:  
- Recognize the importance of film literacy  
- Recognize the learning and assessment objectives of the programme  
- Outline the basic components that make up a film  
- Explain the concept of film genre | o Teacher to brief students on learning and assessment criteria  
- Teacher to introduce the importance of film literacy by discussing ‘Seeing vs. Watching’ and ‘Films vs. Movies’ concepts  
- Movie trailers of popular films will be played.  
- Students to engage in open discussion about components that make up each film and the genre of each film. | Recommended trailers: Man of Steel, World War Z, Monsters University, The Hunger Games, Oz the Great and Powerful, Ip Man, Hero |
| 2    | The Hollywood Blockbuster | Students will be able to:  
- Identify the components that make up a blockbuster.  
- Identify the onscreen and offscreen processes that make up a blockbuster  
- Recognize what makes the film, X-Men: First Class, a successful blockbuster | - Teacher to introduce onscreen elements that make up a blockbuster. E.g. Stars, visual effects, music, editing  
- Teacher to introduce offscreen elements that make up a blockbuster. E.g. The box office mechanism, Hollywood marketing, the role of studios and seasonal film.  
- Segments of X-Men: First Class will be screened.  
- Students to discuss in groups and share with the class about what makes X-Men: | Recommended film: X-Men: First Class  
Segments of X-Men: First Class must be selected for class use beforehand.  
Other suggested films: The Avengers; Iron Man; Thor |
### The Asian Blockbuster

**Students will be able to:**
- Identify how the blockbuster concept applies to an Asian context.
- Identify how an Asian blockbuster differs from a Hollywood blockbuster.
- Recognize the concept of self-identity in *Ip Man* and *X-Men: First Class*.
- Assess which film handles the theme of self-identity better.

- Teacher to conduct a quick recap of the last lesson.
- Segments of *Ip Man* will be screened.
- Teacher to involve students in open discussion of blockbuster concepts in Asian context and how *Ip Man* differs from and is similar to *X-Men: First Class* as a blockbuster.
- Students to discuss in groups and share with the class how both films handle the message of self-identity and which film handled the message better.

**Recommended film:** *Ip Man*

**Segments of *Ip Man* must be selected for class use beforehand.**

**Other suggested films:**
- *Hero; The Host*

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### Dramatic Films & Acting

**Students will be able to:**
- Identify the narrative structure and storytelling elements in a dramatic film.
- Recognize that character goals and motivations drive narrative in a dramatic film.
- Recognize examples of good set-ups and climaxes by watching segments from *A Few Good Men*.
- Identify the concepts of justice and fairness.

- Teacher to introduce the concept of a dramatic film and the narrative structure behind it (i.e. 3-Act-Structure).
- Teacher to introduce how the motivations and goals of characters drive narrative in a dramatic film.
- *A Few Good Men*’s set-up and climax will be screened for students to see the concepts in action.
- Teacher to

**Recommended film:** *A Few Good Men*

**Other suggested films:**
- *The Prestige; The Dark Knight; The Terminal; The Pursuit of Happyness*
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<th>5</th>
<th><strong>Actors: Stars &amp; Celebrities</strong></th>
<th>Students will be able to:</th>
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<th>Recommended film: <em>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone</em></th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>through the film segments.</td>
<td>involve students in open discussion on the themes of the film, particularly justice and fairness</td>
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<td>o Identify what makes an actor a celebrity</td>
<td>o Teacher to conduct a brief recap of the previous lesson.</td>
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<td>o Explain the relationship between celebrity culture and successful films</td>
<td>o Teacher to introduce how actors attain celebrity qualities and how celebrity status is important for box-office success.</td>
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<td>o Recognize how actors become celebrities through the example of <em>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone</em></td>
<td>o Segments of <em>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone</em> will be screened to highlight how child actors can become celebrities.</td>
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<td>o Recognize the concept of justice being played out in both <em>Harry Potter</em> and <em>A Few Good Men</em>.</td>
<td>o Students to discuss in groups and share with the class on how the <em>Harry Potter</em> series also presents the concept of justice and whether this is a better presentation when compared to <em>A Few Good Men</em>.</td>
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<td>o Examine which of the two films handled the concept better.</td>
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<th>6</th>
<th><strong>Science &amp; the Over-Reliance on Technology</strong></th>
<th>Students will be able to:</th>
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<th>Recommended film: <em>The Matrix</em></th>
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<td>through the film segments.</td>
<td>involve students in open discussion on the themes of the film, particularly justice and fairness</td>
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<td>o Identify elements of the science-fiction genre and the unique concerns it deals with.</td>
<td>o Teacher to introduce the genre elements of science-fiction and its unique concerns.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Recognize how <em>The Matrix</em> embodies the</td>
<td>o The first half of <em>The Matrix</em> will be screened and students will be told to look out</td>
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Guidelines for 1st Group Project for Superhero Week in Week
Students will be able to:

- Identify the importance of visual and sound effects in science fiction films.
- Describe how *The Matrix* uses visual and sound effects.
- Explain how these visual and sound effects affect audiences when they are watching the film.

7 Visual & Sound Effects

Students will discuss in groups and share with the class on how *The Matrix* used visual and sound effects and how it drives the narrative.

Recommended film: *The Matrix*
| 8 | **Superhero Week** | Students will be able to:  
  - Learn from their peers on various topics.  
  - Present their work to their peers. | Students to deliver their group presentation within 8 mins and answer 1 or 2 questions from the teacher. | Order of presentations must be set beforehand |

| 9 | **Stages of Filmmaking** | Students will be able to:  
  - Identify the three main stages of filmmaking (i.e. Pre-production, Production & Post-production)  
  - Recognize how the concepts they have learnt thus far fit into the stages of production.  
  - Recognize how *Be Kind Rewind* takes a comical but insightful look at the process of production.  
  - Explain how *Be Kind Rewind* is similar to YouTube parodies or home-made videos.  
  - Recognize the themes related to creativity, innovation and intellectual property rights after watching the film. | Teacher to introduce the three stages of filmmaking and lead an open discussion on which stages the concepts thus far fit into.  
  - *Be Kind Rewind* will be screened and teacher will point out the comical exploration of the production process and how the ‘films’ in the film resemble YouTube parodies.  
  - Students to discuss in groups and share about the themes that the movie delivers. | Recommended film: *Be Kind Rewind*  
Segments of *Be Kind Rewind* must be selected for class use beforehand.  
Guidelines for the end-of-term Reflection to be made known to students. |

| 10 | **Directors & Their Filmmaking Styles** | Students will be able to:  
  - Recognize that directors are the creative heads of the filmmaking process.  
  - Describe the role of the director in a film production. | Teachers to conduct a recap of the previous lesson  
  - Teachers to introduce the role of the director. E.g. creative head, coordinator of technical aspects, | Recommended films:  
Christopher Nolan: *Inception*;  
*Batman Begins*  
Michael Bay: *Transformers*; |
o Recognize that different directors have different styles of filmmaking by watching segments of films from Christopher Nolan, Michael Bay and Clint Eastwood
o Recognize that directors embody the concepts of creativity and innovation
directing actors etc.
o Segments from selected films will be screened.
o Students to discuss in groups and share with the class on how the three styles of filmmaking differed from one another in the use of action and spectacle.
o Students to discuss in groups and share with the class the need for a director to have creativity and innovation.

| Term Break |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 11 | Asian Cinema & Culture (India) | Students will be able to: |
| | | o Outline the concept of Asian cinema. |
| | | o Recognize the themes and concepts that are intrinsic to Asian Cinema |
| | | o Differentiate between Hollywood and Asian cinema. |
| | | o Recognize some conventions that are unique to Indian culture and cinema. |
| | | o Identify the themes of friendship and family from the film *Thalapathi*. |
| | | Teacher to introduce the concept of Asian cinema and explain to students on what makes Asian cinema distinctive. |
| | | Teacher to highlight the distinctions between Hollywood and Asian cinema. |
| | | Screening of segments from the film *Thalapathi*. |
| | | Teacher to conduct an open discussion about the conventions that are unique to Indian cinema. |
| | | Students to discuss in groups and share with the class about the |
| | | Recommended film: *Thalapathi* |
| | | Segments of *Thalapathi* must be selected for class use beforehand. |
| | | Guidelines for 2nd Group Project for Animation Week in Week 13 should be released to students. |
| | | Students will be split into groups of max. 5 pax, after which they can pick a film for |

Recommended films:

Armageddon
Clint Eastwood: *Million Dollar Baby; Invictus*
| 12 | **Asian Cinema & Culture (China)** | Students will be able to:  
- Recognize some conventions that are unique to Chinese culture and cinema  
- Identify themes of perseverance and teamwork from the film *Not One Less.* | Teacher to recap the concept of Asian cinema  
- Screening of segments from *Not One Less*  
- Teacher to conduct an open discussion about the conventions unique to Chinese culture and cinema  
- Students to discuss in groups and share with the class about the themes of perseverance and teamwork and how they can apply them to their everyday lives. | Recommended film: *Not One Less*  
- Segments of *Not One Less* must be selected for class use beforehand. |
| 13 | **Animation Week** | Students will be able to:  
- Learn from their peers on various topics.  
- Present their work to their peers. | Students to deliver their group presentation within 8 mins and answer 1 or 2 questions from the teacher. | Order of presentations must be set beforehand |
| 14 | **Use of Music in Films** | Students will be able to:  
- Identify the various music styles used in films (e.g. orchestral, electronic, hybrid, peculiar)  
- Recognize the use of music in films can reflect culture and tradition (e.g. Spanish music, French music, Indian music)  
- Examine the popularity of famous themes from movies and its effect on the film and audiences |  
- Teacher to introduce the various music styles through audio clips  
- Teacher to demonstrate how music in films can reflect culture and tradition through film and audio clips.  
- Students to listen to some famous movie themes and discuss on its effect on the film and audiences.  
- Recommended audio clips:  
  - Orchestral – John Williams;  
  - Electronic – Trent Reznor & Atticus Ross;  
  - Hybrid – by Hans Zimmer;  
  - Peculiar – by Ennio Morricone;  
  - Johnny Greenwood  
  - Spanish music – Alberto Iglesias;  
  - French music – Yann Tiersen;  
  - Indian music – A.R. Rahman;  
  - Chinese music – Tan Dun |  
| 15 | **Documentaries** | Students will be able to:  
- Describe the documentary style  
- Identify how the documentary style differs from narrative features  
- Recognize the documentary’s ability to explore social issues  
- Assess the truth of the ‘reality’ depicted in documentary filmmaking |  
- Teacher to introduce the documentary style and talk about the difference between documentaries and narrative features.  
- Screening of segments from *Bowling for Columbine* and *Mad about English*.  
- Students to discuss in groups and share with the  
- Recommended films: *Bowling for Columbine*;  
  - *Mad about English*  
  - Segments of the films must be selected for class use beforehand.  
  - Other suggested films: *The Cove; Food.* |
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<tr>
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<th><strong>How to Write</strong></th>
<th><strong>Classical</strong></th>
<th><strong>Alternative</strong></th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>a Movie Review</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hollywood</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cinema</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Students will be able to:</strong></td>
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<td>o Identify the components of a movie review</td>
<td>o Recognize the Classical Hollywood filmmaking and acting style.</td>
<td>o Identify the differences between Alternative Cinema and Classical</td>
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<td>o Outline the structure of a movie review</td>
<td>o Recognize the conventions of continuity editing and realist acting.</td>
<td>o Identify the differences between Alternative Cinema and Classical</td>
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<td>o Produce a movie review</td>
<td>o Identify these conventions being applied in the film <em>12 Angry Men</em>.</td>
<td>o Identify the differences between Alternative Cinema and Classical</td>
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<td>o Identify the value of understanding multiple perspectives after watching the film.</td>
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<td>o Teacher to introduce the concept of Classical Hollywood filmmaking and acting style such as continuity editing and realist acting.</td>
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<td>o Segments of <em>12 Angry Men</em> will be screened.</td>
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<td>o Teacher to conduct an open discussion on how the conventions were applied in the film.</td>
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<td>o Students to discuss in groups on the theme of multiple perspectives.</td>
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<td>o Teacher to introduce the concept of Alternative Cinema and talk about the differences</td>
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<td>Recommended film: <em>Rashomon</em></td>
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<td>Segments of <em>Rashomon</em></td>
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Guidelines for the end-of-term Movie Review will be released to students.

Recommended film: *12 Angry Men* (1957)

Segments of *12 Angry Men* must be selected for class use beforehand.
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<tr>
<td>o Recognize the subversion of Classic Hollywood Cinema’s conventions in the film <em>Rashomon</em>.</td>
<td>o Screening of segments from <em>Rashomon</em>.</td>
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<td>o Examine how the film showcases the value of understanding multiple perspectives differently.</td>
<td>o Teacher to conduct an open discussion on how the film is different from a Classical Hollywood film and how it displays the value of understanding multiple perspectives.</td>
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<td>o Assess which film better delivers the value of understanding multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>o Students to discuss in groups and share with the class on which film they felt displayed the value of understanding multiple perspectives better and how the value can be applied to their everyday lives.</td>
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