

# DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival  
for Young Audiences



## Teachers' Resource: I Am William (Jeg er William)

Levels 2 and 3/4

Created by Ian Cameron

Discovery Film Festival: Sat 20 October - Sun 4 November 2018

[discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk](http://discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk)

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## Introduction

Discovery Learning Resources give you exciting classroom activities to enhance Curriculum for Excellence delivery.

They are created by classroom teachers and education professionals. Each resource aims to:

- support and extend working with film in the classroom
- help prepare teachers for a class visit to a Discovery Film Festival film and to extend the impact of that visit for delivery of CfE
- develop confidence in Moving Image Education approaches and working with 21st Century Literacy / moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from

[www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk/resources](http://www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk/resources)



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## I Am William (Jeg er William)

Dir: Jonas Elmer

Denmark 2017 / 1h23m

Danish with English subtitles

### Synopsis

William's life is anything but easy. His mother has mental health issues, so he is staying with Uncle Nils, a Del Boy wheeler-dealer. When Uncle Nils racks up a sizable gambling debt and gangsters are out to get him, William has to step up and muster courage and imagination to save himself and his Uncle, while also juggling three class bullies and his crush, Viola.

This is a light-hearted film about some complex subjects that many children experience throughout their lives. Although some of the content can be challenging, the humour balances the film out, especially from the lovable rogue Uncle Nils.

**Themes:** Loss, friendship, belonging, bullying, dealing with mental health

**Advisory:** Contains references to gambling and gang behaviour. References made to people with mental health issues as “nutcases” which is resolved at the end of the film.

Use of “gay” as derogatory term by Uncle Nils (resolved at the end of the film), “crap” once, reference to breasts as “melons” once, exclamation of “what the hell?!” twice, one use of “bastard” and “balls”.



## Before watching the film

### Activity 1 – Creating the Context 2 – What is Bullying?

Pupils should be asked if they can define bullying. Pupils often find it difficult to define bullying, mistaking it for falling out with friends or one-off incidents. Pupils should not be corrected at this point, just given the opportunity to share their thoughts. These should be recorded as a class on a whiteboard etc.

Pupils should then watch the short Pixar film *For the Birds*. This can be found on the Disney *Monsters Inc* DVD extras, the Pixar Shorts Compilation (Amazon - £3.99) or for free in Glow Scotland through the Literacy Shed link below or YouTube also below.

<https://www.literacyshed.com/the-thinking-shed.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkHSv8pkNXo>

Pupils should decide who is being bullied in the film and why. They should be asked to identify the ways in which the little birds made the big bird feel unwelcome. These might include: ganging up, making fun, walking away, ignoring, conspiring against, being complicit in hurting, continued behaviours. Pupils will probably come up with some of these in their own words. These should be noted on the blackboard/whiteboard as well.

Pupils should compare their original answers with the ones they have written on the board now. Pupils should try to rate the answers thinking about the statements that are most true about bullying. This can be done as a class, coming to a consensus of opinion after a discussion in shoulder partners. The teacher should number the statements that have been recorded on the board, starting with number one being the statement that defines bullying the most.

Pupils should be asked to pay attention to bullying behaviour they see in the film. This can be followed up by a brief discussion after the film, or used as initial stimulus to introduce the Health and Wellbeing topic in class.

*I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support. **HWB 1-08a / HWB 2-08a***

*As I explore the rights to which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately and accept the responsibilities that go with them. I show respect for the rights of others. **HWB 1-09a / HWB 2-09a***



## Activity 2 - Watch the Trailer

Pupils should watch the trailer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yE-jq347TrM>

This would be a good point to talk about language and how humour can be different in different countries/culture. In the trailer the Uncle refers to things he doesn't like as "gay". This is not a term we would find acceptable in British films aimed at children.

Take this opportunity to discuss that during the film they may come across other incidences like this where a direct translation of a word or phrase may be unexpected. You should point out that this works the other way too. In some cultures, including Britain, calling someone a shoe is not considered offensive, while it's one of the most offensive insults you can use in Egyptian Arabic. In Vietnam crossing your fingers is also considered extremely offensive, but would not be a problem in a British film, in fact would be a sign of wishful thinking and optimism. In British films we might use "fag" for a slang name for a cigarette, but Americans might be offended as it is a derogatory term for a homosexual. This can be tailored to each class depending on the knowledge/maturity of individual classes/pupils.

Pupils should watch the trailer through once in its entirety. Pupils should then watch the trailer again and fill out the table in **Activity Sheet 1**. They should only complete the first column. Pupils should be told there are no right or wrong answers at this stage, only their own thoughts and ideas based on what they have seen.

Pupils should then be given time to share with shoulder partners or in small groups. The focus of discussions should be where pupils have exactly the same or very different answers. Pupils can then be chosen at random to share theirs and their partner's/group's ideas.

Using their ideas or some of the other ideas that have been shared, they should create a poster for the film, thinking about the key ideas they think would sell the film. They should not only consider the picture and title, but also a tagline they think would best describe the film. Pupils should keep their sheet somewhere safe to allow them to complete it after they have seen the film. See **After the Cinema - Activity 3**.

*I am learning to select and use strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to help make the meaning of texts clear. LIT 1-13a*

*I can select and use a range of strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to make meaning clear and give reasons for my selection. LIT 2-13a*



### Activity 3 – Questions to think about

In the last activity pupils should have generated some of their own questions about the film.

Other questions to ask them to think about might be:

1. Why is William staying with his uncle?
2. Who are William's friends?
3. Who is your favourite character and why?
4. What would you have done in William's situation?
5. Were you able to predict the ending at any point? Were there any clues in the text?

*I am learning to select and use strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to help make the meaning of texts clear. **LIT 1-13a***

*I can select and use a range of strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to make meaning clear and give reasons for my selection. **LIT 2-13a***

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## After watching the film

### Activity 1 – Making links



Pupils should be asked to think of other texts (written, film or otherwise) which they are reminded of when they watched the film. They should complete **Activity Sheet 2** to show these links. Pupils should be reminded that there are no right or wrong answers to this, as long as they can justify their answer in context of the film they have watched.

*I am learning to select and use strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to help make the meaning of texts clear. LIT 1-13a*

*I can select and use a range of strategies and resources before I read, and as I read, to make meaning clear and give reasons for my selection. LIT 2-13a*

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## Activity 2 - Understanding the Context

Explain to the pupils that William has moved school and he now has a journey to school that he is not comfortable with.

Pupils should be asked to make a map of their journey to school. They should include any key landmarks (shops, school, friends/relatives houses) that they would encounter on the way. They should mark some of the dangers they might encounter on the way. They should also mark places of safety where they feel secure. Pupils should consider a key for their map.

*I can describe and recreate the characteristics of my local environment by exploring the features of the landscape. **SOC 1-07a***

*Having explored the ways journeys can be made, I can consider the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of transport, discussing their impact on the environment. **SOC 2-09a***





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## Activity 3 – Checking Predictions



Pupils should be given the worksheet they started in **Before watching the film – Activity 2**. The pupils should now fill in the last column on the sheet and compare it to the answers they wrote down before the film. Pupils should then be given time to share with a shoulder partner bits they got right and the predictions they did not quite get. They should give a justification to their partner as to way this was.

Pupils should then work in groups of 2-4 to storyboard their own trailer for the film (**Activity Sheet 3**). They should consider which parts they would include in their trailer without giving too much of the plot away. They should decide whether they will have a voice over or, as in the original trailer, have William’s voice used with excerpts from the film. Not all the sections of the storyboard need to be filled. Equally, if the pupils would like to they might use another sheet. Pupils should be chosen at random to share their finished storyboards with the rest of the class, giving the group reason for choosing the sections they have.

**Extension:** Pupils can try this for another film that either the whole class has watched together or their favourite film. They could also be given time to prepare the activity as a drama presentation, acting out the scenes they would use from the film.

*By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in a logical sequence and use words which will be interesting and/or useful for others. LIT 1-26a*

*By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience. LIT 2-26a*



## Activity 4 - Understanding Character (1)

Explain to the pupils that Uncle Nils and William are deliberately opposing characters. They are driven by different motivations which drive the story or narrative forward. Directors or story writers often do this to create conflict in the story to make it more interesting. They have a common goal (to get a better life), but have contrasting ways of getting there.

Using **Activity Sheet 4**, pupils should work in pairs to think about the words that best describe William and Uncle Nils. Pupils should work on each part.

Pupils should imagine the press have got hold of his Uncle's story about winning the horse race. Pupils should work in pairs with one pair playing the part of William or Uncle Nils and one playing the part of an interviewer. They should conduct an interview asking about the lead up to winning the money. The pupil playing the character from the film should make reference to things they saw in the film and try to think carefully about how the character would answer the questions. e.g Uncle Nils would probably be cagey about anything relating to his business exploits or illegal gambling.

*To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can identify and consider the purpose and main ideas of a text. **LIT 1-16a***

*To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can identify and consider the purpose and main ideas of a text and use supporting detail. **LIT 2-16a***

*I have developed confidence and skills in creating and presenting drama which explores real and imaginary situations, using improvisation and script. **EXA 1-14a***

*I can create, adapt and sustain different roles, experimenting with movement, expression and voice and using theatre arts technology. **EXA 2-12a***



## Activity 5 - Understanding Character (2)

William has obviously left not only his mum behind in his move to Uncle Nils, but also his friend group. Pupils should think about how William feels about this move. Pupils should be given time in small groups to make a short plan about the things that are going on in his life after he has moved. They should consider the things that are going well and also the things that are worrying him or stressing him. They should think about the points in the film before he and Uncle Nils win the money. These might include:

- being still able to see his mum, but only on Sundays
- the strange messages he gets from his mum
- the bullies on the bridge, either being picked on or standing up to them
- walking Cuba
- the police officers coming around
- his changing relationship with Viola
- meeting the gangsters

Pupils should then use these ideas to write a letter/postcard from William to one of his old friends from Roskilde. Pupils should be reminded to write in first person and be mindful of tense within the piece.

*Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create my own stories, poems and plays with interesting structures, characters and/or settings.*

**ENG 1-31a**

*Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create stories, poems and plays with an interesting and appropriate structure, interesting characters and/or settings which come to life.* **ENG 2-31a**



## Activity 6 – Creating a New Ending

William and his Uncle Nils strike it lucky by betting all the money Nils has made on a horse that has only an outside chance of winning. They cannot believe their luck when the information given to him by his mother has William picking the right horse, therefore allowing Nils not only to pay off his betting debt, but also having enough money left over to make them both very comfortable financially.

This is not possibly the most morally just ending to the film, suggesting that neither Nils nor William are in charge of their own destiny. As a class, pupils should brainstorm some ideas that would be more morally acceptable as an ending to the film. These ideas should be recorded on the blackboard/whiteboard for the whole class to see. Possible scenarios might include:

- William convincing Nils to save an old woman/man from being robbed. The woman/man turns out to be a millionaire who gifts the money to them as a reward.
- William somehow saving the gangster from being knocked down, therefore writing off the debt.
- William and Viola coming up with an elaborate plot to raise the money by arranging a community barbeque or fair or fun run with entry fee.
- William saving Cuba from some catastrophe and being rewarded.

Pupils should then re-write the ending from the second last day to include their favourite ending to the story (**Activity Sheet 5**).

*Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create my own stories, poems and plays with interesting structures, characters and/or settings.*  
**ENG 1-31a**

*Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create stories, poems and plays with an interesting and appropriate structure, interesting characters and/or settings which come to life.* **ENG 2-31a**



## Resources

### Activity Sheet 1 - Predicting the Narrative

	<b>Before the Film</b>	<b>After the Film</b>
What is the Genre of the film?		
Who is the main character?		
Other Characters		
What language is the film in?		
Three main things that happen in the film.		
How does the film end?		
What questions do you have?		



## Activity Sheet 2 – Making Links

Make as many links as possible to other texts you have read or seen. Use the headings in the sheet to help.

### List texts where...

<b>...the main character is a child who has lost their parents.</b>	<b>...a child is bullied.</b>
<b>...there is an uncle or aunt that is kind, but finds looking after a child difficult.</b>	<b>...the lead character ends up being friends with someone they didn't initially get on with.</b>
<b>...the plot ends happily because of a stroke of luck.</b>	<b>...gangsters are involved.</b>



### Activity Sheet 3 - Storyboard

<b>Storyboard -</b>				
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.





## Activity Sheet 4 – The Main Characters

In the boxes below write as many words or phrases as you can to describe the characters under the appropriate heading. You might use some of the words or phrases below to add into the boxes.

Looks	
Uncle Nils	William

Feelings	
Uncle Nils	William

determined blond caring brash angry large weak happy grumpy  
forlorn yearning unkempt plump jolly tidy obsessive gentle grand  
helpful downtrodden peaceful helpless thoughtful tired lank dirty







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## Evaluating this resource

We hope that you found this resource useful and appropriate.

Please do send us film reviews, letters from your pupils, documentation of classwork and your feedback by e-mailing [mike.tait@dca.org.uk](mailto:mike.tait@dca.org.uk)

## Would you make a good Discovery Film Festival Case Study?

We are seeking a number of simple Case Studies in how teachers have used or are using Discovery films in the classroom across Curriculum for Excellence and across the Levels.

Any case studies that we develop would be intended for presentation on GLOW, the Creativity Portal and on Discovery Film Festival websites. We have a simple template to be completed and are keen to have classwork and documentation included.

If you would like to be a Discovery Case Study please e-mail [sarah.derrick@dca.org.uk](mailto:sarah.derrick@dca.org.uk)