

# DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival  
for Young Audiences

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## Teachers' Resource: **Princess Dragon (Dragon Princesse)**

First/Second/Third Level | Created by Helen Appleyard

**Discovery Film Festival: Sat 22 October – Sun 6 November 2022**

**DCA**  
Dundee Contemporary Arts

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

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With support from the DCA Cinema and Learning teams



## 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy/moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from:

<http://www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk/resources>:

### ***Dragon Princess (Dragon Princesse)***

Dirs: Jean-Jacques Denis, Anthony Roux

France 2021 / 1h10m

French with English subtitles

# Princess Dragon (Dragon Princesse)

## Synopsis:

This is a charming story in which we have all the things that make up a good fairy tale: a king, a queen, a princess, a sorceress and a dragon – but there is a twist to the tale.

The story begins in the time honoured way – ‘Once upon a time’ – we are then introduced to a dragon named Dragon who despite having mountains of gold and jewels (not dissimilar to Smaug’s hoard in *The Hobbit*) is sad and lonely because he is the only creature in the forest that cannot have children.

He searches for someone to help him and finds a bizarre creature called a Frogceress, half sorceress and half frog, who he asks for help. Frogceress strikes a bargain with Dragon – she will give him the chance to have children and then will return to take Dragon's second most prized possession as payment.

Dragon is gifted with three seeds which grow into eggs; two hatch revealing baby dragons, which he names Rock and Zephyr. The third egg is more unusual; when it finally hatches it reveals a human baby with long green hair. The Dragon sees that she is truly his daughter as she can breathe fire. He names her Bristle: as well as fire breathing she can talk to other animals.

At the same time a daughter is born to the King and Queen of the kingdom who is named Princess. The King craves gold to help him become the most powerful king. The Queen who is kind and caring is locked in a tower to stop her using the King's wealth to help the poor of the kingdom.

Princess is very much like the Queen and leaves the castle against her father's wishes to help the poor. These two girls finally meet in the forest where a friendship is formed.

The story follows the girls' friendship as it continues to develop throughout the film as they try to understand each other and cope with their relationships with their fathers. Bristle and Princess go through emotional and physical changes as their fathers go to war over the Dragon's gold.

The film is created in a traditional 2D animation style which is reminiscent of a Studio Ghibli and Cartoon Saloon (*Song Of The Sea*) style of animation. It is beautifully drawn film with a gentle quality despite some strong themes.

The film is in can be watched in French with English subtitles, but also has a simple script which can be easily followed by those studying French.

**Age 8+**

## **Curriculum for Excellence subjects / themes**

Families, parental expectations, relationships, friendships, nature, cooperation, emotions (loneliness, rejection, compassion), greed, gender stereotypes, Literacy, Expressive Arts.



## Activities for before watching the film or while preparing for a visit to the cinema:

Watch the trailer at: <https://youtu.be/N4mp7dqkO5M>

The trailer is in French and has no English subtitles;

**Spoiler warning:** There are one or two moments in the trailer which do give some of the story away but it is worth watching if you are planning on doing the pre visit/viewing activities.

### Discussion Questions

As the trailer does not have subtitles it gives the children the opportunity to make predictions about the story unhindered by text.

- Who do you think are the main characters in the story?
- What are their relationships to each other?
- What do you think will happen in their story?
- Can you predict the main events in the story?
- Can you predict how the story might end?

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### Activity: Discussing stereotypical characters in fairy tales

Dragons and Princesses

What things come to mind when you think about Dragons and Princesses?

**Children's Task** – List the main characteristics that come to mind when you think of dragons and princesses in well-known fairy tales such as Sleeping Beauty.

Discuss the children's ideas about these characters and why they think this way?

- Can you think of any other films with Dragons or Princesses as the main character?
- How are Dragons and Princesses portrayed in films? Can you think of any films which portray exceptions to this stereotype?

*As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, key words and main ideas of the text, and use this information for a specific purpose. LIT 1-04a*

*Using what I know about the features of different types of texts, I can find, select and sort information from a variety of sources and use this for different purposes. LIT 2-14a*

*I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to and asking different kinds of questions. LIT 1-07*

*I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to literal, inferential, evaluative and other types of questions, and by asking different kinds of questions of my own. LIT 2-07*





## After watching the film

### Ideas for discussion after the film

Can the children identify some of the main themes in the story?

- **Friendships**
- **Growing up - changes**
- **Families**
- **Contrast between city and forest life**
- **Exploring the environment**
- **Working together**
- **Emotions (rage, acceptance, understanding, love)**

Did they make predictions? How did the film match their predictions?

Look back at the list of characteristics for the Dragon and Princess has the film changed their minds, are the characters in the film different to their initial thoughts?

Why does Bristle retreat into egg form when she is sad?

*When I engage with others, I know when and how to listen, when to talk, how much to say, When to ask questions and how to respond with respect.* **LIT 1-02a**

*When I engage with others, I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, show that I value others' contributions and use these to build on thinking.* **LIT 2-02a**

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## Activities – After the film

For teachers, this is a link to a short interview with Ankama (the production company that made the film) on drawing the right lines for *Princess Dragon*, giving some background notes on the film and animation style.

<https://www.toonboom.com/ankama-on-drawing-the-right-lines-for-princess-dragon>





## The Filmmaking Process – Film Literacy

Use the 3 Cs and 3 Ss to discuss what the children saw and experienced in the film. The following are some discussion questions and activities which will help to explore the film making process.

Film Literacy 3Cs and 3Ss	
<b>Camera</b>	The filmmaker used different shots to create tension and atmosphere. For example, close ups of Bristle and her father during the battle with the king. Why do you think he did this? How did the scenes make you feel?
<b>Colour</b>	Did you notice a change in colour which influenced how you might feel? The difference between the grey city and the green countryside. What was the film maker trying to get you to feel in these situations?
<b>Character</b>	Discuss the friendship between the two girls Dragon and Princess. How did their relationship change through the film? Do you have a favourite character? Why were they your favourite character?
<b>Setting</b>	Did you notice the style of the background compared to how some characters were drawn? The background was very softly created in a watercolour style – see Activity 1 for lesson idea.
<b>Sound</b>	Follow the link to a clip of the orchestra playing the initial music for Dragon's search and Bristle playing in the forest. <a href="https://youtu.be/_SoUNNF11pw">https://youtu.be/_SoUNNF11pw</a> Discussion ideas: How does this music make you feel? Which instruments are used to create this music? Does the music fit the scenes shown?
<b>Story</b>	Can you retell the main events of the story? Were there any surprises in the story? What were they?

*I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to and asking different kinds of questions. LIT 1-07a*

*I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to literal, inferential, evaluative and other types of questions, and by asking different kinds of questions of my own. LIT 2-07*





# Expressive Art Activities

## Activity 1: In The Style Of



The film is created in a 2D animation style which is a more traditional style of animation. The director states that they wanted to go back to a more classical illustration style. The Dragon and background of the film are created in a watercolour pastel style with a natural look.

There are some stills from the animation here:

<https://www.ankama.com/fr/animations/princesse-dragon>

Look through the images. How do the children think they have been created? Encourage them to think about colour, tone, and the layers used to create the background and characters, especially the dragon.

# Pupils' Task

Design and paint a background using watercolours to mimic the style of the animation.

Alternatively create a new member of the Dragon's family using the medium of watercolours.

*I can create and present work using the visual elements of line, shape, form, colour, tone, pattern and texture. EXA 1-03a /2-03a*

*Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through activities within art and design. EXA 1-05 /2-05*

*I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings.*

**I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work.** EXA 1-07/2-07



## Literacy Activities

## Activity 2: **What happens next...**

- At the end of the film we see Princess and the Queen helping to make the kingdom a better place for all but what is next for the other characters?
  - What happens to Bristle and her family? Does she continue to change and grow? Do her brothers have similar changes?
  - Where does the King end up? What's the end of his story?
  - What does the Frogceress do with all the gold?
  - Choose a character and predict what happened to them next. This could be completed as a piece of writing or a storyboard showing the next chapter in the story.

*I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience. LIT 1-20a / LIT 2-20*

*As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, key words and main ideas of the text, and use this information for a specific purpose. LIT 1-04a/ LIT 2-04a*

## Activity 3: **Similarities and Differences – Exploring Characters**

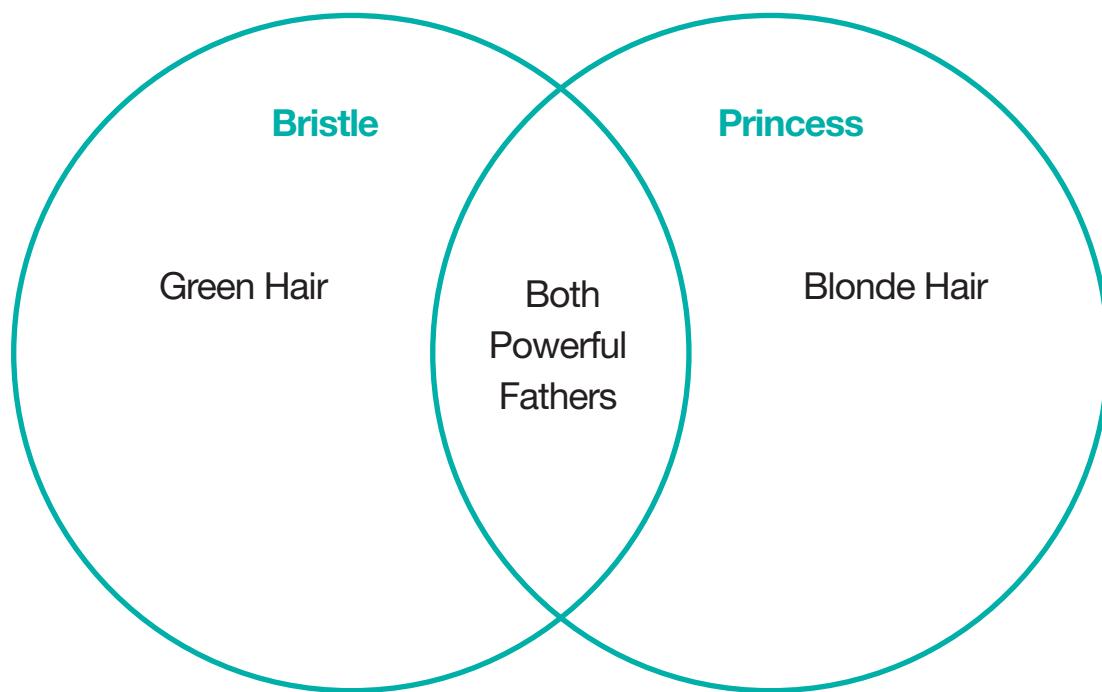


The film's main focus is the relationship between Bristle and Princess. Explore the characters in more depth by discussing what the girls have in common and their differences. Do they share any characteristics or problems?



Have the children work in pairs or groups to collect information about Bristle and Princess to a large Venn diagram. Think about how they look, their personalities, interests, families and the problems they encounter.

### E.G. Similarities and Differences



**Use the Venn diagrams to share thoughts and ideas.**

#### Suggested discussion questions:

- What do the girls have in common? (e.g. A loyalty to their family, they care about the world around them, powerful fathers)
- What makes them different? (e.g. Princess has a mother, Bristle can breathe fire and talk to animals)
- What makes them friends?

*I can share my thoughts about structure, characters and/or setting, recognise the writer's message and relate it to my own experiences, and comment on the effective choice of words and other features. **ENG 1-19a***

*I can: discuss structure, characterisation and/or setting; recognise the relevance of the writer's theme and how this relates to my own and others' experiences; and discuss the writer's style and other features appropriate to genre. **ENG 2-19***





## Activité 4: Storytelling

We know where Bristle and Princess come from. We see their back story develop as we watch the film but we are never told where the other characters came from.

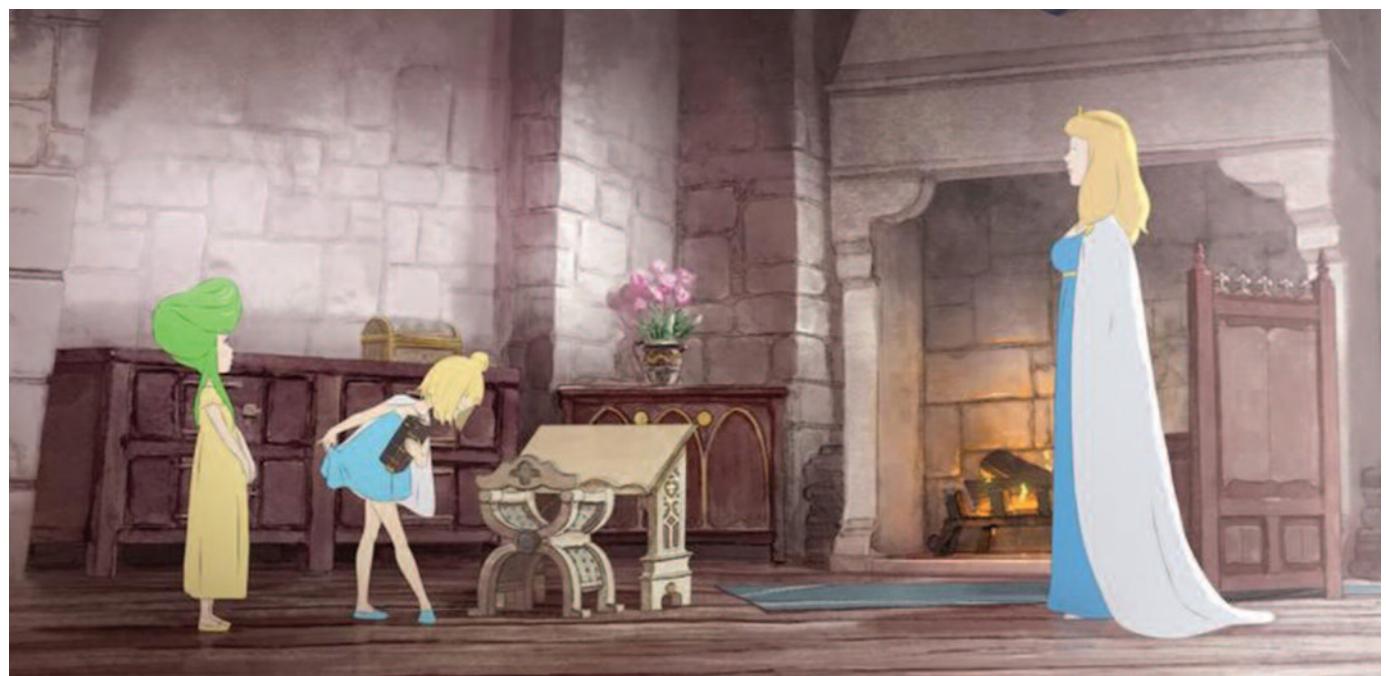
Choose a different character and write their back story, telling the tale of how they ended up in the story.

### Suggested Characters

- Dragon
- Frogsorceress
- The Queen
- The King

*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 5: Debating

This film explores many themes such as family dynamics, parental expectations, the acquisition of wealth and hunting of animals all of which could form the main questions in a classroom debate.

There are countless resources online which would help to set up debates which give the structure, roles, rules and procedures to follow.

Pupils should be encouraged to research their arguments in order to look at both sides of an argument in a reasoned way.

Before the debate they should be encouraged to write down their thoughts about for and against arguments. This could be an individual or group task.

Choose a debate question related to the film from the following list or create one of your own which is age and stage appropriate.

### Debate Questions Ideas:

- **Being wealthy makes you happy?**
- **The rich should be made to give some of their wealth to the poor?**
- **Men make stronger leaders?**
- **Parents should be able to tell you what to do?**

*I can convey information, describe events or processes, share my opinions or persuade my reader in different ways. LIT 1-28a / LIT 1-29*

*I can persuade, argue, explore issues or express an opinion using relevant supporting detail and/or evidence. LIT 2-29a*

*I can persuade, argue, evaluate, explore issues or express an opinion using a clear line of thought, relevant supporting detail and/or evidence. LIT 3-29a*



## Activity 6: **Gender Issues** (for Second and Third Level pupils)

In the library the Princess states "*I want a spell to turn into a boy... It would all be much simpler*".

- Why does she think life would be simpler as a boy?
  - Would she'd have been better off being a boy? Why? Why not?

This statement could be a good starting point to consider and discuss gender stereotypes as part of relationships, sexual health and parenthood outcomes.

## Discussion stimuli

Read out the following list (or your own) and with the pupils standing on a line ask them to move to one side of the room if they think the word is associated with boys and the other side if they feel it's more associated with girls. Encourage the children to be completely honest about their responses. If they feel it's associated with neither or both they could remain on the line.

Suggested list: Is it a boy or girl thing?

- Burping
  - Rescuing
  - Dancing
  - Cooking
  - Doctor
  - Nurse
  - Blue
  - Lawyer
  - Computer Programmer
  - Glitter
  - Pink
  - Cars
  - Comics
  - Reading
  - Red
  - Engineer... this list could be as long or as short as needed



Once finished use these discussion questions to extend the pupils critical thinking.

- Did you all agree which side to go to? Why did you agree?
- Is it true that these are just girls or boys things?
- Where do you think these ideas come from?
- What influences your thoughts? Family, peers, or the media?

Relate this back to the film. Why do you think that Princess wishes she was a boy and that it would make everything easier for her? Is she right? How are things different in our world? Alternatively there are a number of activities for Second and Third Level on:

<https://rshp.scot/>

<https://rshp.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Part-1.-Stereotypes-and-Equality-Activity-plan.pdf>

(Taken from rshp activity plans)

### Learning Intentions:

- Children learn about themselves, what makes them unique and the idea of diversity.
- Children learn about gender and consider stereotypes and gender-biased expectations.

### Success Criteria:

- I understand that how I look, how I behave, or my aspirations should not be limited by stereotypes, my sex or expectations of what boys and girls should do.
- I can give examples of, and can challenge, stereotypes.
- I show respect for others.
- I understand and accept diversity amongst my peers

*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 2-09a*

*I recognise that each individual has a unique blend of abilities and needs. I contribute to making my school community one which values individuals equally and is a welcoming place for all. HWB 2-10a*

*I know that popular culture, the media and peer pressure can influence how I feel about myself and the impact this may have on my actions. HWB3-46b*





## Evaluating this resource

We hope that you found this resource useful and appropriate.

Please do send us any 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)