

DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival
for Young Audiences



Teachers' Resource: Spider Thieves (Niñas Araña)

Senior Phase

Created by Gordon Mackenzie

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

discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk

DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts


EUROPA CINEMAS
MEDIA-PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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ONE CITY, MANY DISCOVERIES

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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



Spider Thieves (Niñas Araña)

Dir: Guillermo Helo

Chile 2017 / 1h34m

Spanish with English subtitles

For Senior Phase students of Spanish / English / Media

This pack has been designed to offer activities and discussion for both English / Media students, and for learners of Spanish. English and Media activities are found on pages 3 to 10, followed by similar activities for students of Spanish from page 12 onwards.

Synopsis

Inspired by actual events, this teenage thriller is a social commentary on dreams, class and reality in contemporary Chile.

Three teenage girls from a Santiago shanty town set in motion a plan to climb buildings and break into the apartments of the wealthy in order to steal the fashionable clothes and lifestyle accessories they see advertised on TV and at fancy department stores. Word spreads and soon enough they become the notorious “spider thieves”.

Advisory: Contains quite a lot of swearing in the subtitles, as well as implied sex (though not seen onscreen), drinking, smoking and violence (a fist fight, where one character has a nose-bleed). One of the main characters is a heavily pregnant 13 year old.



Before watching the film



The Title

The title is *Niñas Araña*, which translates in to English as *Spider Girls*. What ideas do you think of when you think about Spider Girls?

-
-
-

What kind of film do you expect *Spider Girls* to be?

What do you think might happen in the film?

The film's translators have chosen to translate the film as *Spider Thieves*. Does that change your ideas about the film?

.....

The Poster

Describe what you can see in the poster. Who is the main focus on? What can you tell about the characters from looking at the poster?

Look back at the previous page, at what you thought might happen in the film based on the title. Does the poster confirm what you thought? Have you changed your mind?

Is this poster effective? If you saw this at a bus stop, would it grab your attention? Would you want to see the film?



Contrasts

The film is full of contrasts. Here are two stills from the trailer:



Compare and contrast the two stills. Think in particular about the locations, use of colour and background.

After watching the film

Contrast

Spider Thieves is a film that shows many contrasts in Santiago, Chile. For example, it contrasts people who are very poor with those who are comparatively rich.

Below is a table showing some of the contrasts visible in the film. Complete the table with evidence of each of the contrasts, and whether these people are portrayed in a sympathetic (friendly) manner or not.

Contrast		Evidence – characters, locations, dialogue	Are they portrayed sympathetically?
Contrast between poor and rich people	Rich people		
	Poor people		
Contrast between people who live high up and at ground level	People who live high up		
	People who live at ground level		
Contrast between those who commit crimes and those who don't	People who commit crimes		
	People who don't		
Contrast between those only interested in possessions (clothes, perfume etc) and those interested in other important things (housing, family, food)	People only interested in possessions		
	People interested in housing, family, food etc		



Media bias

The film uses newspapers and TV to tell the story of the Spider Thieves. Sometimes, the media reports stories accurately, and sometimes it ‘spins’ stories to change opinions about what is happening.

Look at the headlines from the film. Do you think these are fair to the Spider Thieves, or are biased against them? Put a tick (✓) next to the headlines that you feel are fair, and put a cross (x) next to the ones that you think are unfair – where you feel the headlines are deliberately trying to change your opinion.

	✓	x
<i>“Gang of thieves climb tower block”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“13 year old girls commit robbery by climbing tower block”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“They are called the Spider Thieves – the famous group climb buildings in wealthy areas to rob apartments”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“They don’t steal effects or do damage”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“This is completely the government’s fault”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“We can’t guarantee they won’t do it again”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“They fool footmen, climb fences, hop on balconies and sneak off to do it again”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“The media is calling them a dangerous gang of Spider Thieves”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Spider girls finally caught, one of them 7 months pregnant”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“The three girls ended their mischief at the Las Condes police station. They’ll be put under evaluation at a Child Protection Centre. Although these teens are brazen, they are too young to be prosecuted as adults. Their final words were ‘Look! We’re on TV!’”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Having looked at these headlines, look back at your own headlines and news story you wrote on the previous page. In retrospect, do you feel what you wrote was fair to the girls and the story? Or did you try to sway the reader’s opinion?
2. The film, too, tries to change how you feel about events. Imagine you read the headline “13 year old girls commit robbery by climbing high-rise”. How would you feel about the girls in that news headline? Is that headline a fair summary of the film?
3. Compare that to how you feel about Avi, Estefany and Cindy having seen the film. Do you feel more or less sympathetic towards them than the short headline “13 year old girls commit robbert by climbing high-rise”? What has affected your opinion of them?

Director's Commentary

"The issue of criminals who become media 'stars' has been addressed many times in cinema. What makes this story different it is that they are 13-year old girls and that their climbing is somewhat a poetic metaphor of social mobility.

This is not a film about delinquency. It's neither a biopic, nor a documentary. It is a story about friendship, disappointments, dreams, adventure, vertigo, companionship, and ingenuity of these young girls, who at bottom only sought to enjoy the things they could never have. Three teenagers who wanted to change their destiny."

Guillermo Helo, Director of Spider Thieves

The director states that the three girls wanted to change their destiny.

1. Before they became Spider Thieves, what was their destiny? What was likely to happen to them in their future?
2. In your opinion, did they manage to change their destiny?





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Advisory: Contains quite a lot of swearing in the subtitles, as well as implied sex (though not seen onscreen), drinking, smoking and violence (a fist fight, where one character has a nose-bleed). One of the main characters is a heavily pregnant 13 year old.

.....

Before watching the film



El título

La película se llama *Niñas Araña*. ¿Cómo se dice *Niñas Araña* en inglés?

¿En qué piensas cuando escuchas el título *Niñas Araña*?

-
-
-

Según tu opinión, ¿a qué género pertenece *Niñas Araña*?

¿Qué va a pasar en la película?

En inglés, la película se llama *Spider Thieves*. ¿Piensas que es una buena traducción? ¿Por qué?

.....

El póster

¿Qué puedes ver en el póster?

Habiendo visto el póster, ¿qué va a pasar en la película? ¿Has cambiado de opinión?

¿El poster es eficaz? ¿Te gustaría ver la película?





After watching the film

Los contrastes

Niñas Araña is a film that shows many contrasts in Santiago, Chile. For example, it shows the contrasts between people who are very poor with those who are comparatively rich.

Below is a table showing some of the contrasts visible in the film. Complete the table **in English** with evidence of each of the contrasts.

Los Contrastes	La evidencia – los personajes, los lugares, etcétera
Los ricos	
Los pobres	
Lo que viven en los apartamientos	
Lo que viven en el campamento*	
La gente materialista*	
La gente que no son materialista	

In Chilean Spanish, un campamento = shanty town

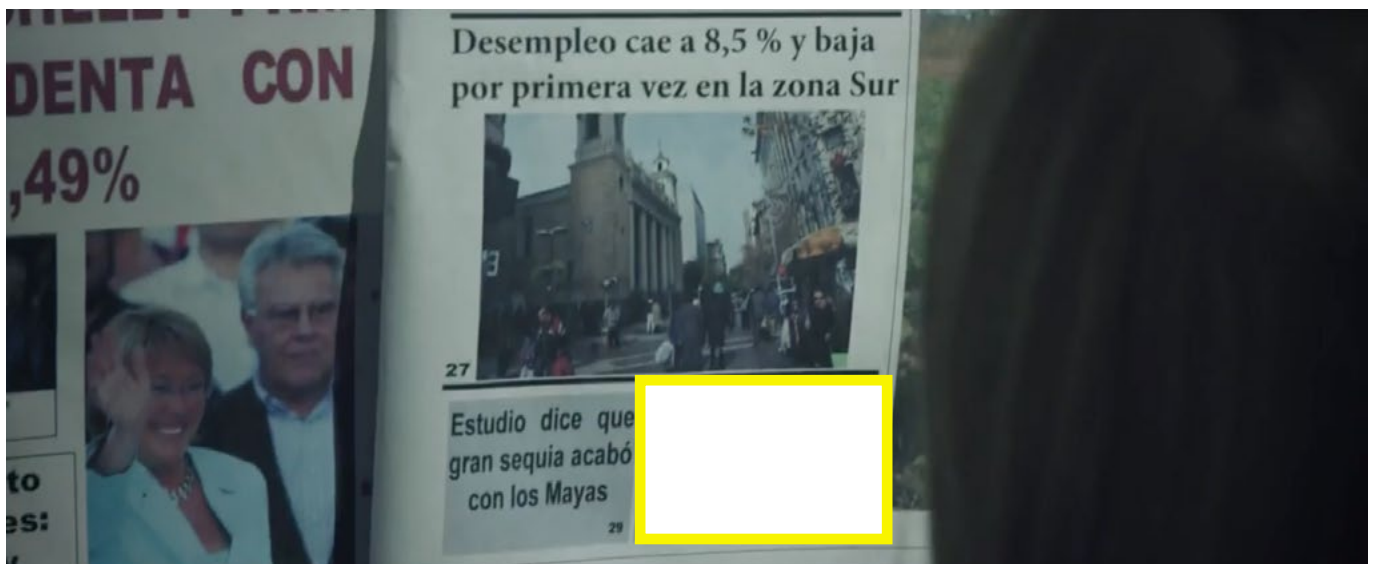
Materialista = materialistic, excessively concerned with material possessions like clothes, money, cars etc.

Los Medios De Comunicación

The Spider Thieves' exploits are reported in the media, which we see in the film through newspaper front pages and TV news reports. Imagine you are a newspaper journalist in Santiago, Chile, reporting on the story of the Spider Thieves. You have to write a series of news articles about the Spider Thieves.

What headlines would you write in Spanish at these three following points of the story? Remember that headlines should be short and concise –only one sentence long.

- After the Spider Thieves commit their first break-in
- Once the Spider Thieves have broken into a dozen different apartments
- When the Spider Thieves are eventually caught by the police





Media bias

The film uses newspapers and TV to tell the story of the Spider Thieves. Sometimes, the media reports stories accurately, and sometimes it ‘spins’ stories to change opinions about what is happening.

Look at the headlines from the film. Do you think these are fair to the Spider Thieves, or are biased against them? Put a tick (✓) next to the headlines that you feel are fair, and put a cross (x) next to the ones that you think are unfair – where you feel the headlines are deliberately trying to change your opinion.

	✓	x
<i>“Banda roba edificios en el barrio alto escalando”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Ninos de 13 años cometen audaz robo en edificio de Las Condes”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Las llaman ‘las arañitas’ – suben los edificios de Las Condes para robar en apartamentos”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“No roban pertenencias y no dañan los apartamentos”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Esto es exclusivamente culpa del gobierno”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“No podemos garantizar que no lo vuelvan a hacer”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Engañan a conserjes, escalan rejas, entran por los balcones, se escabullen para volver a carga”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Solo en esta última semana, las jóvenes son llamadas Niñas Araña”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Por fin atrapan a arañitas que trepaban hasta con 7 meses de embarazo”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>“Las tres niñas terminaron sus crímenes en la comisaría de Las Condes”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Having looked at these headlines, look back at your own headlines you wrote on the previous page. In retrospect, do you feel what you wrote was factually correct and fair to the girls and the story? Or did you try to sway the reader’s opinion?



Entrevista con las actrices

Read the following article, from *La Cuarta*, a Chilean daily newspaper, then answer the questions that follow **in English**.

ACTRICES DE “NIÑAS ARAÑA” SON AMIGUIS

La Cuarta, 17 May 2017

La película contará las vidas de Avi, Cindy y Estefany, chicas de trece años que viven en una toma ilegal de terrenos.

Michelle Mella, Javiera Orellana, Dominique Silva son las chiquillas que le dan vida a esta cinta. “No quiero que prejuzgan la película porque retrata la delincuencia, o porque es chilena, si es chileno es bueno y la película pasa por acción, comedia, drama, está muy entretenida”, nos contó Dominique (18), la más chica de las tres y la única que no seguirá el camino de la actuación. “A mí me gusta la Odontología”, contó la talentosa cabra.

Por otro lado la Javiera (18) nos contó que ella estudió teatro. “Me gustó mucho esta experiencia audiovisual, creo que lo mío va por ahí. Me encantó la experiencia de grabar con mis compañeras y con Guillermo fue super buen, una gran experiencia”.

La más grande de este ramillete es Michelle con 24 pepitas quien ya es actriz profesional. “Trabajar con las chiquillas fue un lujo. Al comienzo yo tenía más herramientas, pero ellas

entendieron rápido el trabajo y la verdad es que son muy talentosas.

- *Nos hicimos muy amigas, tratamos de juntarnos y hablamos mucho por Whatsapp...*
- *¿Cómo se llama su grupo de Whatsapp?*
- *Se llama “Arañitas VIP”, porque solo estamos las tres.*

Según su director Guillermo Helo las chiquillas fueron muy mateas durante las grabaciones. “Hubo desorden a veces, pero era algo de esperar en un grupo tan entretenido como el que tuvimos. Trabajar con ellas fue un lujo, son tremendamente talentosas”

1. How old are the characters of Avi, Cindy and Estefany? (1)
2. Complete the sentence: Dominique Silva doesn't want you to jump to conclusions about the film because it deals with _____ or because it's _____.....it contains action, comedy, drama and is very _____. (3)
3. What does Dominique want to do when she is older? (1)
4. List the three girls in order of age, youngest to oldest. (1)
5. What did Javiera love about working on the film? (2)
6. What is “Arañitas VIP”, and why is it called that? (2)
7. Translate the underlined section into English, from Hubo...(10)



Yo: Michelle Mella

This article from *La Tercera's* Tendencias section, Chile, was published on the 10th of June 2017. It details some things that Michelle Mella, the actress who plays Avi, likes to do. Choose four sections from below, and give at least three details **in English** for each section detailing what she likes to do.

LEO

Siempre estoy revisando obras de teatro y guiones, pero además me gustan los ensayos. Ahora estoy leyendo mucho a Byung-Chul Han, un filósofo surcoreano que tiene una manera de escribir muy lúdica y concreta, entretenida y comprensible. También he estado investigando sobre el vínculo entre el teatro y la educación. En ficción, leo a Bolaño y Mario Bellatin.

COMPRO

En la feria. Me encanta el ambiente, el olor, la energía que tiene, todo. Compro de todo, desde zapatos hasta la pasta de dientes. Me gusta ir conociendo ferias nuevas, aunque ya tengo mis regalonas en Santiago y en Quilpué.

COMO

Comida Thai, es mi nueva obsesión. Lo mejor es que en la mayoría de los lugares tienen amplias y buenas opciones vegetarianas. He probado varios y hasta ahora mi favorito es una "picá" que sirve colaciones Thai cerca del Metro Salvador.

PRACTICO

Bikram Yoga. No sólo porque es un ejercicio corporal tremendo y botas toxinas al sudar como si no hubiera mañana, sino porque además trabajas la concentración, la paciencia y el autocontrol. Es una verdadera meditación activa y después de salir victoriosa de una clase me siento capaz de enfrentar cualquier cosa.

VIAJO

Mis hermanos menores viven en la Quinta Región, así que trato de ir lo más que pueda a verlos. "Mochilié" a Machu Picchu y he estado varias veces en Argentina, pero quiero viajar más y más lejos. En lo posible fuera del continente, conocer Europa y Asia. Sueño con vivir una temporada al otro lado del mundo y estoy trabajando para eso.

ADMIRO

¡Uf! ¡A tantos y por tantas razones distintas! En la cercanía admiro a mis colegas teatreros y audiovisuales que viven sacando proyectos contra corriente, porque en Chile cuesta y mucho; mirando hacia las estrellas, a Paul McCartney.

VEO

El Reemplazante en Netflix y, además, me estoy poniendo al día con la segunda temporada de Twin Peaks, antes de la tercera. Soy lenta con las series, no aguanto verlas de corrido, así que en general prefiero las películas. En mi casa tenemos un proyector, así que nuestras noches de cine son deliciosas.

TOMO

Agua, mucha, y té. Podría tomar té todo el día. También me gusta mucho el café, pero me regulo o mi guata sufre las consecuencias.



Additional Resources

UNICEF Chile released a short (45 second) video about the film, in clear, slow Spanish, which makes an excellent introduction to talking about life in other countries:

<https://www.facebook.com/unicefchile/videos/1429383420438556/>

UNICEF Chile also hosted a 20 minute long interview with cast and crew during the film's premiere. Whilst the video is probably too long for most classes, the accompanying article has much potential for classroom use:

<http://unicef.cl/web/unicef-participo-en-avant-premiere-de-la-pelicula-ninas-arana/>



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

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