

Educational material

A Game Beyond the Screen, Come on, Mom



CLASS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: 8th grade

TEACHING AREA: Culture and media

TEACHING UNIT: *A Game Beyond the Screen, Come on, Mom*

CLASS TYPE: Analysis and interpretation of short freestyle films

DURATION OF A TEACHING UNIT: 45 minutes

A GAME BEYOND THE SCREEN

Mate Balota Primary School Film Group, Buje, 2025

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. Do you have a smartphone? What do you use it for?
2. How do you spend your free time?
3. Do you play video games? How often do you play them? Do you neglect your responsibilities, family, and friends because of video games?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch a short film *A Game Beyond the Screen* produced by Mate Balota Primary School Film Group from Buje.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. What is the cinematography in the film like? What is its symbolic function?
2. What elements does the sound in this film consist of?
3. In what ways is the video game that the boy is playing depicted?

WATCHING THE FILM

STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS

What do you think of this film? Be sure to provide arguments for your impressions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM

1. How does the film start?

After the name of the film, we see a boy walking and entering the school building. At the same time we hear the sounds of birds chirping and children talking.

2. Which shot is next?

A medium close-up of the boy in profile.

3. What's the boy doing?

He is playing video games on his phone and ignoring his friends who want to play with him. This shot announces the topic of the film.

4. Which shot follows?

In the next shot, the boy pushes away his friends' hands which are bothering him. A somewhat chaotic feeling is created.

5. How is the boy's room depicted?

It is depicted with drawings. On the left there's a bookshelf, and on the right a desk with a computer monitor.

6. What contributes to creating an atmosphere and tension in the scene in the room?

The disturbing, non-diegetic instrumental music contributes to the atmosphere and tension, followed by the noises of a video game.

7. Which editing transition is used to go to the next shot?

A dissolve, which indicates that a certain amount of time has passed, i.e. that the boy has been playing video games for a long time.

8. What does the next shot show?

The next shot shows the boy filmed from behind and in a close-up, while we can hear various noises of a video game. All of this points to the boy's complete immersion in the world of the video game.

9. In addition to him banging his fist on the table, how else is his anger emphasized?

Banging his fist on the table is further emphasized by music.

10. What is the boy's relationship with his mother like?

After she cooks lunch, the mother goes into the boy's room, and after a brief fight, the boy pushes her away.

11. What is shown in the next shot?

The next shot shows a conversation between the mother and father about their son's behavior. Both are filmed in a medium shot in the kitchen.

12. Which scene follows?

In the next scene, the father goes to his son's room and it's clear they're fighting, and the conflict is further emphasized by tense music. The father takes his son's phone (a prop of a phone mask), after which the son feels bad.

13. What happens next?

The boy's in a medium shot, walking up and down, which means he's bored and doesn't know what to do. During this we see shots that indicate the boy's state of mind, as well as the passage of time. Then we see a dissolve (editing transition), and in the next shot the boy is sitting in front of the window, looking out. Along with instrumental music, we can hear sounds of children playing outside.

14. How does the next shot suggest it's in the exterior?

We see branches in the shot, and we hear the sound of birds chirping.

15. How does the film end?

The boy joins a ball game with two other boys.

16. What is the final shot of the film? What is its message?

In the final shot of the film, the boys are shot from behind, in a medium shot. They are hugging and at the end they put their heads together. This shot wants to show the importance of friendships, spending time with friends, and finding support in your friends.

17. What is this film's topic?

The film's topic is relevant because it deals with video game addiction and the importance of socializing with peers.

18. What is the cinematography in the film like?

The cinematography is black and white, based on light and shadow. We can't see the characters' faces or clothes, because the film isn't about an individual story but a universal problem that affects a lot of young people.

19. Which art form inspired the film crew to use this kind of visual?

Shadow theatre.

20. What elements does the sound in this film consist of?

It consists of non-diegetic instrumental music and various noises. At the beginning of the film, there is also speech; when the boy's friends invite him to play, but speech is mostly absent and everything is based on movements behind the screen.

COME ON, MOM

Dr Ivan Novak Primary School Media group from Macinec,
Gornji Hrašćan Primary School, Gornji Hrašćan, 2025

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. Name a few words you associate with the word mom.
2. Do you think mothers are strong and courageous women? Why?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch a short film *Come on, Mom* produced by Dr Ivan Novak Primary School Media group from Macinec and Gornji Hrašćan Primary School from Gornji Hrašćan.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. Pay attention to the opening and closing shots of the film.
2. Which elements of sound are present? How do they contribute to the atmosphere of the film?
3. Which symbols appear in the film? How are they related to the film's topic?
4. Think about why no mothers are shown in any of the shots. What does the film emphasize?

WATCHING THE FILM

STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS

What do you think of this film? Be sure to provide arguments for your impressions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM

1. How does the film start? What can we see and hear?

The film begins with a shot of a hand holding a gingerbread heart with the words *To the Best Mom* written on it, which introduces the film's topic. At the same time, we hear nostalgic and gentle instrumental music.

2. Who is the narrator in this film? What does the viewer find out? What is this kind of narrator's voice called?

The narrator is a girl who expresses her feelings after her mother had a stroke. This kind of voice is called a voice-over.

3. What do we learn about the mother's condition?

The mother has to learn everything from scratch: walking, talking and eating.

4. When do the letters of the name of the film first appear?

They first appear in a shot of a spinning bowl, but at that time the letters don't yet form clear words but are scattered.

5. What is the symbolism of that shot?

Just as the girl's mother utters her made-up words which makes her unintelligible, the words in the bowl do not yet form an intelligible word or sentence.

6. What other symbols appear in the film? How do you interpret them?

At the beginning of the film, a gingerbread heart with the inscription *To the Best Mom* symbolizes the girl's love for her mother, as well as how she sees her mother. There's also a plant shot from a high angle, symbolizing a new beginning. At the end of the film there's an hourglass, symbolizing the girl's patience, as well as the duration of her recovery.

7. How does the film end?

The film ends with a shot of intertwined hands from a high angle, symbolizing the unbreakable bond between mother and daughter, whose love remains strong, regardless of illness and inability to communicate. Then the name of the film appears, and is additionally spoken out loud by the girl, who is actually addressing her mother, whom she wants to give strength to.

8. What does the film emphasize?

The film emphasizes the girl's inner world and her emotions.

9. What elements does the sound in the film consist of? How do they contribute to the atmosphere of the film?

The sound consists of the girl's speech (voice-over) which gives the viewer insight into her emotional world, as well as of non-diegetic, gentle instrumental music which contributes to the feeling of sadness, but also underlines the girl's incredible strength.

EVALUATION

- monitoring student activities while watching a film
- checking the understanding of the film by asking questions
- teaching sheet (quiz)

THE TEACHING SHEET (QUIZ) is available on the Film EDUcation website.