

Educational material

Why Me?



CLASS DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: 3rd grade

TEACHING AREA: Culture and media

TEACHING UNIT: *Why Me?*

CLASS TYPE: Analysis of a short documentary film

DURATION OF A TEACHING UNIT: 45 minutes

WHY ME?

Polina Dimitrova Dincheva, Bulgaria, 2025

MOTIVATION

Conversation with the students

1. Do you think we live in a world where violence is part of everyday life? Explain your answer.
2. How would you define terrorist attacks?
3. What do you know about the city of Beslan? Do you know where it's located?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FILM

You will watch a short film *Why Me?* by Bulgarian director Polina Dimitrova Dincheva. In 2025, at Four River Film Festival in Karlovac, Croatia, this film won the Yellow Flag, an award presented to filmmakers whose works, with their topics, stories, protagonists and creative solutions, most successfully and convincingly condemn violence - on the broadest spectrum from verbal to physical - as a social evil, especially among younger generations.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WATCHING

1. Pay attention to the beginning and the end of the film.
2. Who guides the viewers through the story?
3. What kind of footage makes up most of the film? What effect does this achieve?
4. How and when do the Russian and Bulgarian tragic events become universal?
5. What is the sound in the film like and how does it contribute to the film's message?

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 begin? What can we see and hear?

The film begins with shots of nature. We hear noises (such as birds singing), non-diegetic instrumental music, and the narrator's voice.

2. What do we call a narrator's voice that is added to the visual?

A voice-over.

3. What is the atmosphere like in the opening shots?

The atmosphere is idyllic and calm: the beautiful nature, springtime, birds singing, greenery, sunshine. This atmosphere is further emphasized by non-diegetic music.

4. What does the narrator say next?

The story moves on to the first day of school; waking up, excitement, going to school, hanging out with friends, the school play.

5. What kind of footage do we see which is typical of documentary films?

Archival footage.

6. When does the first archival footage appear?

It appears just before the attack. First we see footage of parents, students and teachers gathering before school starts, followed by the footage of the attack.

7. What function does the archival footage serve?

It contributes to the authenticity and credibility of the story, while also creating a shocking effect. Also, it evokes discomfort and fear in the viewer, while drawing them into the events of that day.

8. Which shot follows the archival footage?

A shot of an abandoned and derelict school corridor.

9. Which shots are repeated?

Shots of idyllic nature and shots of preparing for the school play on the first day of school, i.e. shots of an ordinary school day interrupted by a terrorist attack.

10. Which shots are next?

A shot of a Cyrillic caption and a shot of the school hall filled with photographs of children, stuffed animals and crosses.

11. Why is this shot important?

When they see this shot, the viewer realises that a tragedy has occurred where children were killed, and that the narrator's voice conveys the feelings of a girl who did not survive.

12. What is the terrorist attack in Beslan being connected to?

It's being connected to a terrorist attack on a train in Bulgaria.

13. Why is this connection made?

It strives to show that terrorist attacks happen everywhere and that there are always innocent victims, including children.

14. What follows the shots describing the terrorist attack in Bulgaria?

A large number of short shots, archival footage of conflicts and terrorist attacks around the world.

15. How does the film end?

The film ends with an extreme wide shot of the school hall in which children died during the terrorist attack in Beslan.

The hall is shown as a place of remembrance, which is clear based on the photographs of the victims, crosses, candles, flowers and stuffed animals inside the hall.

16. What message does the film convey?

This film is a plea for peace in the world, highlighting how innocent children suffer in wars, conflicts and terrorist attacks.

The narrator emphasises the need to build a world without killing, violence and children victims.

17. Which stylistic device is used at the beginning and the end of the film?

The beginning and the end of the film are based on antithesis. The beginning shows an ordinary day of a young girl going to school for the first time, while the end shows the school hall as a place of remembrance, pointing to tragedy.

18. How does the film end?

It ends with an extreme wide shot of the school hall and a film caption that reads: *In memory of all the children...*

19. What does the sound in this film consist of?

All three elements of sound are present – speech, music and noises.

20. Why is the narrator's voice particularly important?

The narrator's voice not only recounts events that happened but, more importantly, conveys the feelings and thoughts of the girl who was kidnapped in the terrorist attack, creating a powerful impact on the viewer.

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.