



TEACHING TRAILERS ONLINE: SPRING 2013

TEACHERS' NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Teaching Trailers Spring 2013 returns with a focus on developing students' ability to read closely and analyse moving image multimodal texts. We have retained the very successful format of the resource from last year so that all activities, along with a selection of new trailers, are now hosted on our website. To ensure regular updates and free resources register at: <http://www.filmeducation.org/signup.php>

WEBSITE

The activities on the website are designed to build students' knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the moving image, with a specific focus on film trailers as a genre in its own right. The HOME page hosts all the trailers in a clip viewer, organised by genre:

Sci-fi

- After Earth
- Oblivion
- Iron Man 3: Canned Heat
- The Host

Thriller / Action adventure

- Safe Haven
- Welcome to the Punch
- Trance
- Now You See Me?
- A Good Day to Die Hard

Comedy

- Identity Thief
- Robot and Frank
- Song for Marion
- Warm Bodies
- The Croods

Romance

- Beautiful Creatures
- Safe Haven
- Warm Bodies
- The Great Gatsby
- The Host



Drama

- Promised Land
- The Odd Life of Timothy Green
- Hitchcock
- Song for Marion
- The Great Gatsby

Fantasy

- The Odd Life of Timothy Green
- Oz: The Great and Powerful
- Jack the Giant Slayer
- The Croods

Horror / Supernatural

- Beautiful Creatures
- The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones

The website can be accessed at www.filmeducation.org/teachingtrailers

The site is organised into two main sections: THEORY and ANALYSIS. It is expected that teachers will use the on-screen materials for whole-class teaching and the downloadable PDFs to direct individual note-taking. Teachers can use the resource as a structured approach to this topic or select individual sections to target specific learning objectives.

THEORY

This section includes a range of activities to encourage students to consider:

- **What trailers are** – based on the trailer for *Safe Haven* and supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet, students consider definitions of a trailer and reflect on how trailers fit within a film distributor's marketing campaign.
- **Why trailers are produced** – based on the trailers for *Identity Thief*, *Oz: The Great and Powerful* and *Robot and Frank*, an activity designed to explore the purpose of trailers in terms of raising audience awareness and interest in a film.
- **Who trailers are aimed at** – based on the trailers for *The Odd Life of Timothy Green*, *Trance* and *Song for Marion* and supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet, an activity to explore how film distributors produce trailers aimed at specific audiences.



- **How trailers help fill cinemas** – based on the trailers for *The Host*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Warm Bodies*, an activity to learn about the importance of promoting ‘unique selling points’ (USP) in film marketing campaigns
- **Where trailers are shown** – an activity designed to encourage students to reflect on where trailers are found and how this might impact on audience response - supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet.
- **When trailers are released** – based on trailers for *Beautiful Creatures*, *Jack the Giant Slayer* and *Hitchcock*, an activity for students to consider how the timing of a trailer’s release is designed for maximum audience impact.

Specific trailer examples are used to develop students’ understanding of the purpose and style of this particular marketing format.

ANALYSIS

This section requires students to analyse different elements of film trailers in detail. Close reading of each trailer will develop students’ knowledge and understanding of key areas of study including:

- **Genre** – based on trailers for the science fiction films *Oblivion*, *Iron Man 3: Canned Heat* and *After Earth*, an activity designed to support students learning to identify specific genre features.
- **Conventions** – an interactive sorting and matching activity to establish some of the key conventions of film trailers.
- **Structure** – based on the trailer for *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*, an activity to develop students ability to observe and analyse the structural conventions of a film trailer - supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet
- **Soundtrack** – an active listening task based on the trailer for *Promised Land* to focus students’ attention on the purpose and effect a film trailer’s soundtrack.
- **Multimodal texts** – based on the trailers for *The Croods*, *Welcome to the Punch* and *Now You See Me*, an activity to consider how meaning is created in trailers through a powerful combination of different modes of communication - supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet for students.



CLOSE READING

This stand-alone section offers a focused close reading task in which students choose to analyse a trailer from the clip viewer on the HOME page. The accompanying, downloadable PDF worksheet guides students through a close analysis of trailers by bringing together the knowledge and understanding they have gained by working through other sections of the resource. The features focused on here include:

- genre
- narrative
- unique Selling Point
- target audience
- music
- shot types/camera angles
- pace
- dialogue
- voiceover
- special effects
- credits and intertitles

The activity concludes with a 'writing to explain' extension task.

MAKE A TRAILER

This interactive task comprises an online edit suite that breaks down two different trailers for *A Good Day to Die Hard* into component clips, and offers a choice of soundtrack. Students create their own version of the trailer to appeal to specific audiences. The downloadable PDF worksheet on this page of the site sets out detailed instructions for how to best approach this task.

CURRICULUM AREAS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Activities link to National Curriculum guidelines for learning in English; they can also be used as part of a media course at GCSE or equivalent.



KEY TERMS

These basic terms are used throughout the resource so it is worth drawing them your students' attention in order to clarify meaning.

Credits and intertitles: these are words on screen that give information to the audience

Dialogue: any conversations between characters

Genre: a type or category of film e.g. horror, romantic comedy etc.

Music: the choice of music can have a huge impact on the 'mood' of a film

Narrative: the 'story' or plot structure of a film or trailer

Pace: how quickly or slowly the shots within the trailer play

Shot types/camera angles: for example, close-up, medium shot or long shot

Special effects: includes computer-generated graphics, stunts and explosions

Target audience: the group of people a film or other product is aimed at

Unique selling point: what makes a particular film unique and 'sellable'

Voiceover: a voice recorded over the top of the trailer to give information to the audience

MORE RESOURCES

For a more extensive film language glossary, visit

http://www.filmeducation.org/staffroom/film_in_the_classroom/film_language/

For examples of shot types, see the SHOT TYPE REFERENCE SHEET in SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS here:

<http://www.filmeducation.org/thinkingfilm/english/supplementary-materials.html>

For teaching film language in more detail, please see:

<http://www.filmeducation.org/thinkingfilm/film/>