

LITERACY LESSONS

Introduction

These activities are to be used in conjunction with Film Education's study clip resource to celebrate the Blu-ray and DVD release of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, as a book and film, provides many unique and valuable Literacy lessons. The themes of family, loyalty and life journeys are universal, and these activities aim to help children understand how the film's director, Michael Apted, used the language of film to bring these to life on screen.

The activities are designed to be used in conjunction with the clips from the film that can be found on the Film Education 'Dawn Treader' clip-reel DVD. Each clip has been chosen to illustrate a key area of visual literacy learning.

Each clip-focussed activity can be used as a single lesson, or as a week's literacy project. Suitable for 7-11 year olds, they aim to develop children's understanding of how meaning is articulated in a filmed version of a book.

Visual Literacy: Close-analysis

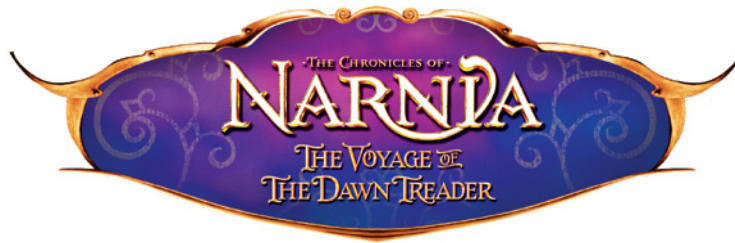
The key focus for each lesson is to use a close-analysis approach to each clip. When watching the clip: watch it once without any intervention, then watch the clip again with the finger poised over the pause button, ready to ask your pupils 'why'? For example:

- Why start the clip with this shot?
- Why that camera angle?
- Why choose this shot to follow that one?
- Why is the set decorated in that way?
- Why does the music change at that point?
- Why are the characters in those positions?
- Why use natural lighting for this scene?
- Why use those particular colours to set the scene?

Through a dialogic teaching approach, the learning intention is to develop children's understanding of how the different aspects of film language come together to make meaning on screen.

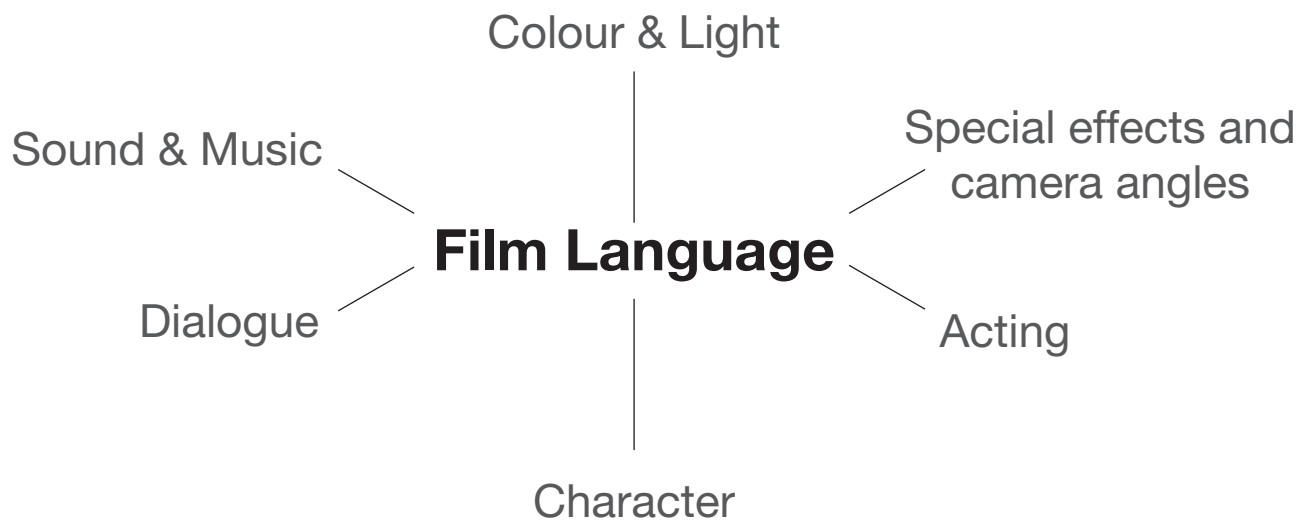
Using *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* as stimulation for this kind of discussion will help develop higher order thinking skills that will have a positive impact on written work, and on a more general understanding of creating meaning in a text.

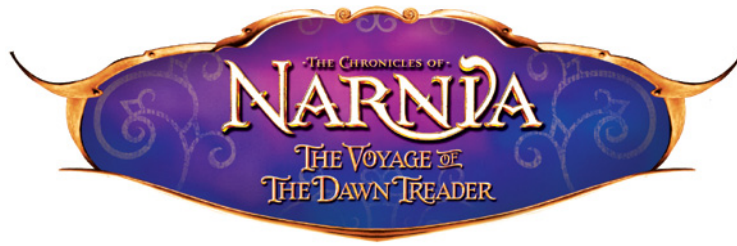
These notes provide you with a series of stimulus questions, further to those suggested in the 'Visual Literacy: Close-analysis' section, that will help to give the clip some context, then to take understanding to a deeper level.



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The clips and questions refer to this Film Language Mind Map:





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Clip 1: Banquet (approximately 1 minute 8 seconds)

DARK AND LIGHT

Context:

Ramandu, a fallen star, tells Caspian, Lucy and Edmund where they can find the 7th sword that they need to restore harmony in Narnia. She also forewarns them of the dangers of 'Dark Island'.

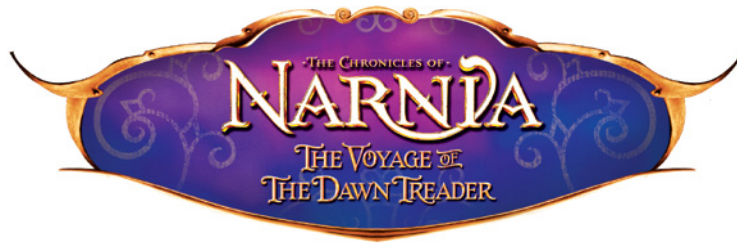


Discussion questions:

1. Which characters are key to this scene?
2. How do you know?
3. What is 'light' in the scene and what is 'dark'? Why?
4. What colours are in the sky? Why?
5. How would the scene be different if there weren't such a contrast between dark and light?
6. What if the scene had been shot at twilight or dawn? How would it be different?
7. What is 'Dark Island'? How do you know?
8. How do the characters feel about the situation?

Activity:

Create a photographic 'still life' series of photos recreating the look of Ramandu, the fallen star character from *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* using a darkened window and a light source such as a torch or desk lamp. Your aim is to use different camera angles, light and shadows to emphasise one character above the others. Work out a short story scenario and storyboard it with your photos.



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Clip 2: Dragon

(approximately 1 minute 48 seconds long)

SOUND AND MUSIC

Context: The Dawn Treader is attacked by a dragon. Reepicheep comes to the rescue.

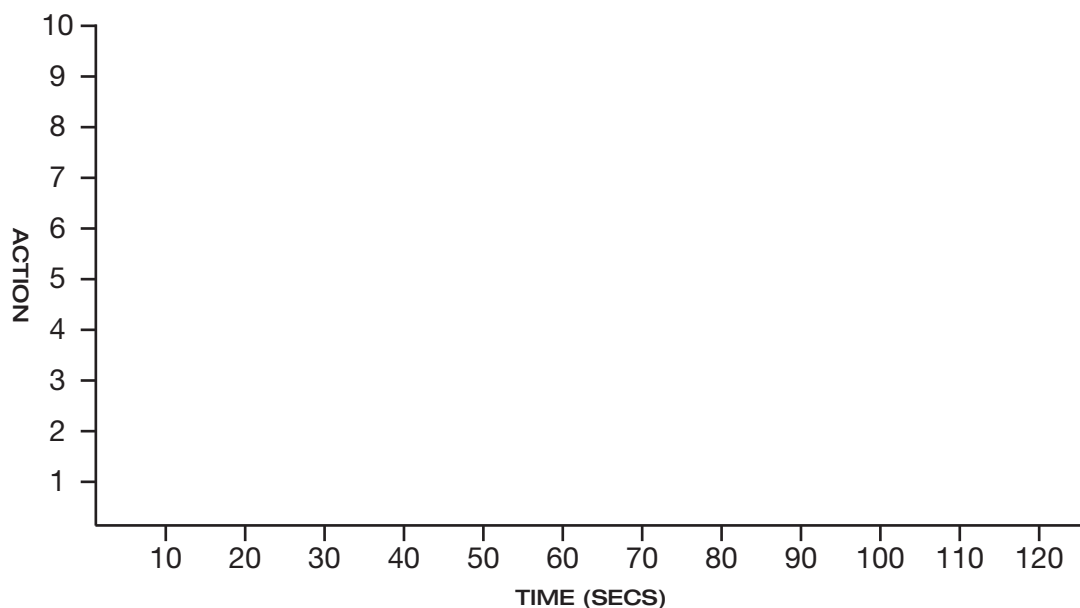


Discussion questions:

- Describe the music that accompanies this scene.
Here are some words to help you: pitch; duration; dynamics; tempo; timbre; texture; silence.
For definitions of these terms, go to:
<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-1-and-2/subjects/music/keystage2/index.aspx>
- What effect does this music have on the mood of the scene?
- What do you notice about the music and the rhythm of the wings as the dragon is flying?
How does this help to build tension?
- Watch the scene with the sound muted. Imagine that the whole film was shot in silence.
How would you create tension?

Activity:

- Darken the screen whilst the clip is playing and make a list of the sounds that you can hear.
Describe the 'sound picture' for the scene.
- Now watch the scene. Create a 'story development graph' (like the one below) which shows where the key moments of action are.



- Now plot the key sound effects on the graph using a different coloured pencil.
- Discuss the relationship between the sound, music and action. What does the graph tell you?



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Clip 3: Dufflepuds (approximately 57 seconds long)

SPECIAL EFFECTS AND CAMERA ANGLES

Context: Our heroes encounter the Dufflepuds, dwarf-like creatures who have made themselves temporarily invisible.

Edmund is looking for his sister.

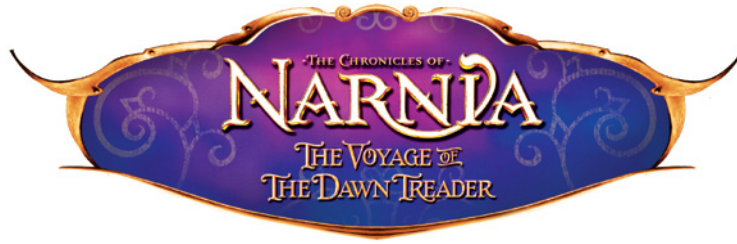
Discussion questions:

Carry out a shot by shot analysis of the clip with the children.

Here are some notes to help you:



Opening shot: close-up (CU) of sword.
Followed by: mid shot (MS) of Caspian on the ground, plus others in background. Feeling of confusion and fear.
High angled shot showing location and men encircled by apparently floating swords.
MS from behind Edmund's shoulder.
MS of men looking confused.
MS from behind Edmund's shoulder – this time the invisibility is wearing off and the Dufflepud in Edmund's sight is slowly being revealed.
Camera pans around as each Dufflepud is revealed.
CU of Dufflepud as he threatens them with his 'fangs'.
CU of Caspian – looking less frightened and slightly amused.
MS from behind Caspian's shoulder.
CU confused Dufflepud.
CU, two Dufflepuds who are swaying underneath the weight of another.
Camera follows as Chief Dufflepud falls to the ground.
MS men moving around – tone now relaxed.
Camera pans from the handle to the tip a sword, camera stops on a CU of the Chief. Another sword appears at the bottom of the screen. Chief looks panicked.
CU Edmund.
CU Dufflepud, who glances left.
CU Chief.
Cut to: CU Edmund.
Cut to: CU Caspian.
Cut to: CU Chief, whose eyes flicker to the right.
Cut to: CU Edmund.
Camera pulls out into a long shot as the mansion appears from nowhere.
MS Edmund.



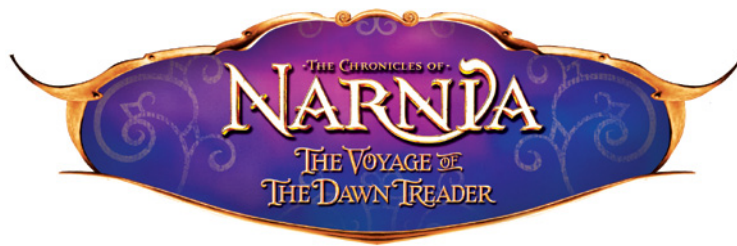
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There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, and you will find that each child notices something different in the clip – or interprets something in a different way.

1. Why start the sequence with a shot of the sword?
2. Why use a high angle shot early on in the scene?
3. Why does the camera pan around as the Dufflepuds start losing their invisibility?
4. Why does the camera follow the shaft of the sword when the Chief Dufflepud falls down?
Why have another sword appear at the bottom of the screen?
5. Why does the camera show two Dufflepuds glancing sideways at key moments in the clip?
6. Why are there so many 'cut to' shots at the end of the scene? What effect does this have?
Why not just have one long mid shot?

Activity:

Create a list of the special effects that were needed to make this scene work. How could these effects have been achieved before computer generated technology? Try to work out a way of filming this scene with your friends and the props / tricks you can make up yourselves.



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Clip 4: Magic Pond (approximately 45 seconds long)

ACTING / DIALOGUE

Context: Edmund finds the Magic Pond and talks to Lucy about the riches that he wishes he could take back home. Caspian reminds him that it's impossible to take anything out of Narnia.

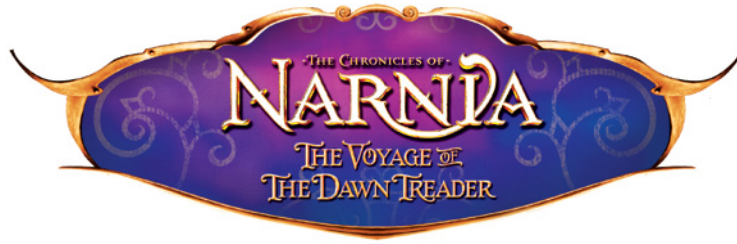


Discussion questions:

1. What happens when Edmund dips the shell into the pond water?
2. Describe Edmund's reaction to what happens.
3. Listen to what Edmund says to Lucy. What is he planning?
4. What is he thinking and feeling as he is saying these words?
5. Use a mirror to recreate Edmund's facial expressions in a mirror. Describe the facial expressions using adjectives like: excited and greedy.
6. What would you do if you were in the same position? Would you listen to Prince Caspian's advice, or take some of the treasures from Narnia back home? Explain your answer.

Activity:

Using a digital camera, record children's faces as they try to recreate Edmund's facial expressions. Create a display linking the photos to the emotions, thoughts and words that the children discussed in response to the clip.



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Clip 5: Stealing Rations (approximately 1 minute 7 seconds long)

CHARACTER

Context: Reepicheep catches cousin Eustace stealing rations from the ship's supplies. He teaches him a lesson.



Discussion questions:

1. How is the opening shot lit? What is Eustace doing? What does this suggest about his character? How would it be different if the scene were shot in bright light?
2. Eustace bumps into a set of hanging pans when he's surprised by Reepicheep. Why include this bit of action?
3. When we first see Eustace and Reepicheep on screen together, Reepicheep is slightly higher up than Eustace. Why?
4. Why does Reepicheep give Eustace a knife?
5. When they start their duel, how do the other people on the ship react? Why?
6. Watch the clip again. Put yourself in Eustace's shoes. Write down what his thoughts might be throughout the clip. How does he feel about his situation? What does this say about his character?

Activity:

Create character profile sheets for Eustace and Reepicheep. Think about how they look, speak and act. How are they the same? How are they different?

	Reepicheep 	Eustace 
Appearance		
Most likely to say		
Least likely to say		
Typical actions		
Personality type		