

Facets Multi-Media, Inc.,
The Chicago International Children's Film Festival
and The Facets Kids Film Network

Present

Best of the Fest

Award-Winning Films from the Chicago International Children's Film Festival

Curriculum Guide

by

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Welcome

Known as, "Cannes for Kids," the Chicago International Children's Film Festival (CICFF) is the oldest and largest festival of films for children in the USA. The CICFF is presented annually by Facets Multi-Media, Inc., a not-for-profit film and video organization. Programming positive, humanistic children's films and reaching out to diverse young audiences are cornerstones of Facets Multi-Media. Since our founding more than 30 years ago, we have provided children with arts programs of unprecedented focus and innovation.

The Facets Kids Film Network's Best of the Fest has been years in the making. With the support of the Louis R. Lurie Foundation and The Boeing Company, we licensed, secured the public performance rights, and prepared a DVD version of this "traveling film festival" of ten wonderful films that can be shown in a network of agencies, centers, schools, and organizations that care for children.

Best of the Fest comes with programming suggestions, a complete Curriculum Guide, marketing materials, and audience development ideas. We hope these materials are helpful in your effort to reach the new generation with high quality films.

Enjoy!

Milos Stehlik, Director, Facets Multi-Media, Inc.

Nicole Dreiske, Director of Children's Programs, Facets Multi-Media, Inc.

Engaging Children with Film

Media influences children's behavior, their attitudes, their values, and their developing world outlook. Adults are urged to guide children to critically evaluate media. By engaging children in film-related learning activities, we provide them the opportunity to develop and to demonstrate media literacy skills. The overall goal of media literacy is for our children to understand, analyze, evaluate, and produce media.

Talking about movies encourages children to think, speak, and to write critically. To start the process of critical thinking, many of the activities in this Guide consider the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? We also aim to help children understand how every film operates on different levels: asking them about the story of the film; about way the film was made; and about the filmmaker's purpose. We also ask children questions about the cultural and historical background of the film.

The film activities go further – asking children to respond with original drawings, with writing, by creating lists, by grouping similar ideas, by comparing aspects of the film with their own lives. Most importantly, the activities engage children in authentic processes related to making films. As they draw panels and storyboards for their own films, they express their own unique ideas, engaging in the fine art of film.

Using this Guide to plan your own Film Festival

Short descriptions of the ten festival films and the recommended running order follow on the next page. And while it is possible to organize a single screening in which children watch all ten films in one sitting, they will learn more and appreciate more if they attend just one or two films in a sitting. Think about it – we wouldn't read them several books at once without checking for understanding. Stopping to consider these filmed stories offers children an amazing opportunity. They will appreciate taking the time to complete these engaging film activities.

Perhaps the most effective way of presenting the festival is with just one film per session. True, the film will just take few minutes. Working with a 30 – 40 minute session will leave enough time to engage children in the film learning activities. Each film has:

- *Leader's Guide* (2 pages) with: a description of the film; vocabulary ideas; Film Talk discussion starter ques-

tions; activities that are linked directly with 2 reproducible children's Activity Sheets; ideas for further research; and related video titles.

- *Children's Activity Reproducible Handouts* (2 pages). Children can respond directly on the activity sheet to suggestions given by the leader. Children will also need writing and drawing materials: pens, pencils, markers, crayons.
- *Family Take-Home Interactive Reproducible Handouts* (2 pages). Families can continue the experience at home! By including a film description, parents can read the film story to children and ask what the film looked like. These handouts also include key questions for parents to ask as well as interactive film activities.

Should you decide to put together your own program of several films in one sitting, select from among activities in the Leader's Guides, and use the Reproducible Activity Templates (pages 67 – 73) for children's activity handouts. There is also a Film Vocabulary sheet on page 74 that can be used to extend learning in the festival.

Based on responses of our children's film jury, we think the films will interest children from ages 5 - 9. Leaders are encouraged to adapt activities to the specific ages and learning levels of your group. You may want to distribute larger sheets of paper that will offer children greater opportunity to respond in drawing and writing. And because the films interest ages that span readers and non-readers, you may be asking for: spoken responses, drawn responses, letters, words, sentences, or paragraphs. For example, in the film about apples—children may simply color red, or draw one apple, or draw 3 related film scenes. In responding on the text box, children may draw another picture, write one letter, a word, a phrase, a sentence, or film directions and dialogue.

Learning Objectives

As a result of their participation in the activity, children will:

- Analyze how the elements and principles of film can be organized to convey meaning
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create works of visual art (storyboards) using problem solving, observing, designing, sketching and constructing
- Identify how film contributes to communication, celebrations, occupations, and recreation
- Know how images, sounds, and movement convey stories about people, places and times
- Identify and describe how film/video communicates the similarities and differences among various people, places, and times. (Illinois Learning Standards, ISBE, 2006.)

Festival Film Descriptions and Sequence of Running Order

In making the Best of the Fest as flexible as possible, we've packaged it so that presenters can choose to present:

- one film at a meeting session, followed by film activities, or
- two or more films at a meeting session, followed by film activities, or even
- all films at a meeting session, followed by film activities.

The Family Take-Home Interactive Activity Sheets continue the experience at home!

We have placed the films on the DVD in a running order sequence that is designed to provide the optimum sequential film viewing experience for young viewers.

Our recommended Film Running Order is presented on the DVD as follows:

1. Domo-Kun and the Egg, Directed by Tsuneo Goda (Japan/ 5"/ 2005/ Animation)

Little Domo stumbles upon a strange egg at the foot of a large tree. His godfather, Usaji, disapproves of keeping the egg. But Domo's determination wins out. Domo and Usaji bide their time until, one day, the egg begins to crack. You'll want to see the big surprise that awaits Domo and his godfather!

Note to Group Leaders: This film has subtitles. The DVD includes an option to view the film with a recorded reading of the subtitles. Alternatively, an adult can be assigned to read the subtitles live during a screening. The reader should prepare by viewing the film in advance; use a microphone for larger groups.

2. Luka, Directed by Adrienne Michel-Long (Ireland/ 3"/ 2004/ Live-Action)

A young boy named Luka steps into a timeless world of mishap and adventure in a moment of distraction as he follows a balloon racing across the sky.

3. Mondo's Myths: Where Did the Night Come From? Directed by Andrés Lieban, (Brazil/ 8"/ 2005/ Animation)

Inspired by the geometric designs of the clay objects made by Brazilian Native Indians, this animation takes us back to a mythological "age of dreams," when objects had life and when a big snake kept the night locked inside a coconut. What would life be like without the night?

**4. Nineteen, Directed by Jörg Hiller
(Colombia/ 8"/ 2005/ Live-Action)**

A shy boy named Pipe wins a baby chick in a raffle and names him, "Nineteen," because that was his lucky number. Pipe develops a special relationship with his new pet, who soon becomes Pipe's best friend. But when the chick grows into a rooster, it longs for a life with other chickens. Pipe realizes that he must let his friend go. In the process, Pipe learns of the importance of making friends and connecting with other kids like himself.

Note to Group Leaders: This film has subtitles. The DVD includes an option to view the film with a recorded reading of the subtitles. Alternatively, an adult can be assigned to read the subtitles live during a screening. The reader should prepare by viewing the film in advance; use a microphone for larger groups.

**5. Egghunt, Directed by Paul Yan
(USA/ 4"/ 2005/ Animation)**

This is the tale of a hungry caveman on a quest to fill his stomach. He discovers a nest full of plump eggs just out of reach. He must devise a way to get the eggs or lose them all. Along the way, he discovers a lesson in friendship.

**6. The Mantis Parable, Directed by Josh Staub
(USA/ 8"/ 2005/ Animation)**

In this moving tale, a caterpillar is trapped in a bug collector's jar and in need of help. The film presents a classic parable — a short story with moral, often featuring animals — in a manner that engages young viewers in figuring out the message of the film.

**7. Do Other Things, Directed by Helena Giersz
(USA/ 4"/ 2005/ Animation)**

This upbeat story brings two young rabbits waiting for their apple tree to grow. They need the apples so their mother will bake them an apple pie!

**8. The Magic Lion, Directed by Charles Githinji
(Canada/ 7"/ 2004/ Animation)**

Set in the country of Kenya, a boy goes on a quest to save the life of his grandfather who is very sick. The boy sets out in search of a mysterious village of healers who make special medicines. But on the way, the boy encounters a strange lion, caught in a trap, that takes him on an adventure — but will the boy be able to get the medicine and return to his grandfather in time?

**9. Confection, Directed by Eva Saks
(USA/ 4"/ 2003/ Live-Action)**

Amanda receives a delicious pastry — one she plans to eat soon. But on a busy New York street corner, Amanda has a change of heart after a poor man applauds her talents. This film, that closes our festival, leaves viewers with a very good feeling and food for thought.

**10. Little Pig is Flying, Directed by Alicja Jaworski
(Sweden/ 10"/ 2004/ Animation)**

Little Pig dreams of being able to fly. She leaves the pigsty and all her friends who tell her that pigs can't fly. On her journey, she meets animal friends who teach her many of their skills. But she doesn't learn to fly... until she meets a pilot with an airplane.

Note to Group Leaders: This film has subtitles. The DVD includes an option to view the film with a recorded reading of the subtitles. Alternatively, an adult can be assigned to read the subtitles live during a screening. The reader should prepare by viewing the film in advance; use a microphone for larger groups.