# Using films to teach about the cultures of the English-speaking world
## A material package

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Lukion opetussuunnitelmassa 2020 painotetaan muun muassa oppilaiden kulttuurista osaamista. Tällä tarkoitetaan esimerkiksi sitä, että opetuksen tavoitteena on auttaa oppilaita selviytymään erilaisissa kulttuurisissa ympäristöissä sensitiivisesti eri kulttuureihin suhtautuen. Nykyiset englannin kielen oppikirjat ja muut materiaalit eivät kuitenkaan välttämättä täysin vastaa oppilaiden tarvitsemaa kulttuurillista opetusta. Oppikirjojen teksteistä sekä tehtävistä puuttuu autenttisuus sekä usein myös keinot motivoida oppilaita.

Tämän materiaalipaketin pohjana toimii teoriaosa, jossa käydään läpi kulttuurin sekä kulttuuritietoisuuden käsityksiä sekä elokuvien autenttisuuden ja motivaatiokyvyn hyödyntämistä opetuksessa. Teoriaosuus käsittelee myös englanninkielisiä maita Kachrun kolmen ympyrän mallin avulla ja perustelee materiaalipakettiin valikoituneet maat tämän avulla. CEFR 2001 ja Lukion opetussuunnitelma 2020 toimivat perustana koko materiaalin tekemiselle, ja ne kertovat materiaalipaketin aiheiden käsittelemiseen vaadittavat kulttuurilliset sekä kielelliset taidot.

Materiaalipaketti sisältää monipuolisia tehtäviä jaoteltuina erilaisten kulttuurillisten aiheiden alle. Tehtävien tarkoituksena on lisätä ja monipuolistaa oppilaiden tietoutta englanninkielisten maiden kulttuureista elokuvien avulla, sekä helpottaa oppilaiden mahdollista tulevaa kulttuurienvälistä kommunikointia. Suuri osa tehtävistä onkin keskustelua ja elokuvien pätkien tai trailereiden katsomista, mutta myös tiedon itsenäistä etsintää. Maat, joista materiaalipaketin elokuvat ovat peräisin, on valittu pohjautuen sekä Kachrun teorian Inner Circle:stä että Outer Circle:stä, maiden elokuvateollisuuksien suomien mahdollisuuksien eli englanninkielisten elokuvien, mukaan. Materiaalipaketti on tarkoitettu lukion englannin kielen opettajille, jotka haluavat käyttää elokuvia opetuksessaan ja tarvitsevat lisämateriaalia kulttuurista opettamiseen.

| Asiasanat – Keywords culture, cultural awareness, intercultural competence, film, authenticity, language teaching |
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# 1    INTRODUCTION

The world is becoming more culturally diverse and blended every day, as different cultures spread around the globe. Cultures are not situated in or tied to certain countries as strongly as they once may have been, and so the idea of learning more about the diverse cultures that surround us becomes more relevant. Before modern time's spread of culture, relatively easy travel possibilities and fast internet connections, intercultural communication may have been seen as something one should maybe know something about when traveling abroad. Today, intercultural communication is known as not only happening when we are far away from home, for example while traveling, but also when talking online to people on the other side of the globe, or in our own neighbourhoods. Thus, focusing on teaching about different cultures is also important.

Different curricula, such as the Finnish National Core Curriculum for upper secondary education, emphasize the importance of teaching about cultural issues (Opetushallitus 2020: 34). Nevertheless, the aforementioned curriculum only proposes one course of possible eight to be about culture. This often leads to the textbooks made for that course to focus on very superficial matters, as there is little time to go through all that the culture of English-speaking countries has to offer. In most cases the superficiality of the material can be seen when culture is handled looking at popular or material culture, but deeper issues within cultures are not examined.

However, as by the education level to which this material package is meant for, which is upper secondary students, the students have in most cases already encountered and dealt with many of the matters textbooks discuss. Or, as Savolainen (2020: 83) found about English textbooks for comprehensive school: if the textbooks handle multifaceted cultural issues, they often focus on a

specific already well-known country in the English-speaking world such as England. Thus, new teaching material about culture is needed.

Films are something that can connect people in many English-speaking cultures. As stated in the study by Ruusunen (2011: 89-90), films offer great and diverse ways of teaching. According to the study, films were seen most suitable to be used while teaching about culture. This is due to the unique authenticity and motivation films offer students. The research also suggested a material package to be made for English teachers who would want to use films to teach about culture. Thus, this material package is for upper secondary education teachers who require aid in coming up with exercises about culture in films all around the English-speaking world.

The main themes of the package are family, hobbies, traditions, history, stereotypes, minority groups, arts, and sensitive issues. These topics are approached through diverse exercises such as watching film scenes, working with transcripts, discussions about differences in cultures and filling in tables.

In the following chapters, the theoretical framework for the material package is presented. Chapter 2 presents different definitions for culture, and the concepts of cultural awareness and intercultural competence are explained, as well as their roles in foreign language teaching and learning. This chapter also explains why film was chosen for this material package as a medium for attaining intercultural competence.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the role of English as a global language, as well as explains the countries that are focused on in the package and why. Then, Chapter 4 presents the curricular framework, CEFR and Finnish National Core Curriculum, which this package is based on. Chapter 5 presents the aims, target group and task types for the material itself. Finally, Chapter 6 includes reflection of the thesis as well as the produced material.

# 2    CULTURE

Culture is a substantial part of language learning, as a language might be impossible to teach without acknowledging the culture or cultures in which the language is used. The connection between a language community and the community's culture can be seen for example in their shared history, beliefs, and way of life (Sapir [1921] 1961, cited in Hinkel 1999a: 2). Because of this linkage between language and culture, and because of the importance of culture in this package, it is crucial to consider the definitions and terminology related to it.

First, this chapter introduces some of the definitions for culture. Then, cultural awareness an intercultural competence as well as their role in language teaching are introduced. Finally, the last section introduces film as an authentic source for cultural examination.

## 2.1    Defining culture

Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept to define, and different researchers have emphasized slightly different aspects of it. Johnson and Johnson suggest culture is usually "viewed as a shared way of life for a group of socially interacting people" (2002: 3). Geertz shares this idea with a more thorough view of culture as a "historically transmitted semiotic network constructed by humans and which allows them to develop, communicate and perpetuate their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about the world" (1973: 89). Thompson adds to these definitions by calling culture "the pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs" (1990: 132). What

is common to these definitions is seeing culture as something that assembles people with similar ways of being and living together.

Researchers have also established some subdivisions of the concept of culture. Tomalin and Stempleski (1994) divide the aforementioned cultural themes into `big C´; achievement culture, which includes topics such as art, history and institutions, and `little c´; behaviour culture, which includes "culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions, especially as expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviours" (p. 6). Huber and Reynolds (2014: 13-14) prefer to divide culture into three sections: material culture (e.g., food and clothing), social culture (e.g., language, religion and laws) and subjective culture (e.g., values and practices). All of these definitions of culture and divisions of cultural matters are valid, as there has not been a consensus of one straightforward definition. As stated by Harklau, culture can also transform "according to who is perceiving and interpreting it" (1999: 110).

Though the definitions of the concept of culture may be somewhat stable, definitions of specific cultures are not immutable. In fact, as Huber and Reynolds (2014: 15) point out; politics, history and economic issues as well as communication and cooperation with other cultures affect and change a culture. Salili and Hoosain (2008: 4) support this by referring to current globalization as a reason for there being few independent cultures. This is further explained as the modification that develops in cultures because of the reciprocal influence people have on one another between different cultures. As cultures are often thought of as being tied to certain nations, Kramsch (1993: 224) supports Salili and Hoosain's view by stating: "... the notion of national culture itself has become significantly more differentiated than it used to be in the times of easily identifiable, monolithic nation states". What is more, when looking at culture from a more individualistic perspective, Kramsch (1993: 206) notes that "National traits are but one of the many aspects of a person's `culture´".

Huber and Reynolds (2014: 14) add to the idea of individualism in the perceiving of cultures: "... all people belong simultaneously to and identify with many different cultures." For example, individual members of a family may belong to distinctive cultural groups such as different generational groups or sexual orientation groups. Then again, a family itself is a cultural group that is part of a larger group, such as a nation, that is seen as having specific cultural traits. Huber and Reynolds (2014: 14) further point out that "... the meanings and feelings which people attach to the particular cultures in which they participate are personalised as a consequence of their own life histories, personal experiences and individual personalities". Huber and Reynolds (2014: 13) also add that those groups have individuals with differing practices that can change over time.

When it comes to culture in foreign language education, the fact that culture is a social construct is often forgotten (Kramsch 1993: 205). Teaching about a foreign culture has mainly consisted of the people in the target culture and their general perspectives on life. However, as Huber and Reynolds (2014) discuss, if inappropriate cultural identities are ascribed to people by others, often based on visible characteristics, such as ethnicity, it can have a negative effect on people's "psychological well-being and social adaptation" (p. 15). This is due to cultural affiliations influencing people's own identities as well as how they see other people from different cultures with different ways of being. This brings forth the reasoning for the designing of this material package as well, as according to Lindström (2015: 4), textbooks often present cultures one-sidedly looking at more powerful nations rather than smaller ones, from a tourist's point of view, and encouraging stereotypes. Cultural stereotypes again often refer to assumed characteristics people from specific nations get stuck with only because of their nationality.

## 2.2    Cultural awareness and intercultural competence

As contemporary societies suffer from extremism and misunderstandings within them, intercultural competence has become exceedingly important. Especially in extremely culturally diverse societies, educating citizens about intercultural communication is required to guarantee everyone's wellbeing (Huber and Reynolds 2014: 9). Cultural awareness is defined by Tomalin and Stempleski (1994: 5) as being aware of the culturally induced behaviour of oneself and that of others. Cultural awareness also aims to develop people's capabilities in describing and illustrating their own cultural points of view. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) continue on Tomalin and Stempleski's view by saying that in addition to being able to explain one's own standpoints, being culturally aware also means to be aware of other cultural groups' viewpoints and values and trying to "understand their reasons for their actions and beliefs" (p. 217). Through the development of one's cultural awareness, it is possible to gain a degree of intercultural competence, the concept of which will be explained next.

Huber and Reynolds (2014: 16-17) define intercultural competence as "... a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action which enables one… to:"

- Accept and appreciate differently culturally affiliated people,
- Display respect and appropriateness during interaction and communication with differently culturally affiliated people,
- Build valuable relationships,
- Learn and know about one's own cultural connections by encountering cultural difference

In other words, intercultural competence is

> The ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures (Meyer 1991: 137, as quoted by Cortazzi and Jin 1999: 198).

Huber and Reynolds (2014: 23) add that having intercultural competence means to have understanding of other cultures and being curious about people with different cultural affiliations. It also means being critically aware of one's own culture.

In language teaching, when culture is seen as data that is carried by a language, cultural awareness becomes an objective detached from language. However, language and culture are interconnected as language is a social practice, thus cultural awareness facilitates gaining language proficiency (Kramsch 1993: 8). In addition to this, "competence in a language is crucial to understanding the cultural perspectives, beliefs and practices to which it is linked" (Huber and Reynolds 2014: 24). The next section will focus more on the connection of language and culture and language teaching.

## 2.3    Cultural awareness and intercultural competence in foreign language acquisition and teaching

According to Kramsch (1993: 23-24), language classes have recently focused on culture from two points of view. The first viewpoint includes facts about the target society, highbrow and lowbrow information such as classic works of literature and everyday customs. Kramsch states that "this view of culture has favored facts over meanings and has not enabled learners to understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets" (Tajfel 1982, cited by Kramsch 1993: 24). Thus, this angle towards culture causes language learners to presume a consensus between the target culture and their own or even keeps the learner oblivious to the target group's cultural identity, which in turn makes the learner unaware of their own culture. The second outlook has given learners narrow and stereotypical ways to deal with culture by establishing a set of cultural categories for behavioural patterns, which language learners are expected to apply to target cultures. This could mean, for example, that students are presented with the idea that since Finnish people generally do not engage in small talk, Finnish people can be characterized as reserved and shy. This type of

categorization of cultures may cause students to be unable to see culture past nationality and leaves the learner on their own in incorporating their knowledge in intercultural encounters.

According to Tomalin and Stempleski (1994: 82), in order for English learners to communicate well with people from English-speaking cultures, they need not only focus on the behaviours of the people in the subject culture, but also see how their own culture impacts their own behaviour. In other words:

> a second language learner's understanding of conceptualizations and constructs in second culture is fundamentally affected by his or her culturally defined worldviews, beliefs, assumptions, and presuppositions (Hinkel 1999a: 6).

Hinkel (1999b: 132) continues that although language learners had a perfect command of the language, "... their nonlinguistic knowledge of the world, as well as pragmatic presuppositions in interaction and speech acts, may be distinct from that of native speakers." In fact, Scollon (1999: 181) brings up the responsibility that teachers have for acknowledging the students' cultures and the subject cultures when talking about social interaction and values. What this means is that the material chosen for language education should be such that it presents cultures in a versatile manner from different viewpoints.

However, before trying to deal with another culture, it is important for students to understand their own culture. As Kramsch points out, "students usually have little or no systematic knowledge about their membership in a given society and culture" (1993: 228). Kramsch (1993: 205, 238) explains that when dealing with other cultures, the learner must relate their own culture with the other thus challenging and questioning their own views and assumed meanings compared to those of the target culture. In allowing language learners to examine their own culture in relation to the subject culture "the foreign language classroom thus promotes cross-cultural interaction and opens new possibilities of understanding" (ibid.: 79). Teaching culture should thus happen from an intercultural perspective which allows the observation of both the

learner's own, and the target culture, taking an internal and an external look at a culture rather than merely transporting information from one culture to another (ibid.:205, 210).

Lantolf (1999: 29) says that developing learners' intercultural understanding is the key in culture education, as it is impossible "to replicate the socialization process experienced by natives of the culture". Rather learners require abilities in correct language use and in recognizing different practices between cultures in communication situations (Hinkel 1999b: 132-133). Hinkel (1999b: 135) adds that teachers need to create communication between the learner's own culture and the target culture.

The environment for learning about cultures in language classes should thus encourage learners themselves to detect and analyze links between cultural phenomena. The question is how to "have enough diversity of perspectives available to avoid stereotypical generalizations?" (Kramsch 1993: 196). One solution to this might be diverse material for culture teaching that provides language learners with varied aspects of cultures, as this material package does. Next, the reasoning for choosing films as a source for diverse material to gain intercultural competence will be examined and explained.

## 2.4     Film as a medium for attaining cultural awareness and intercultural competence

When it comes to teaching culture in language classes, language textbooks may completely pass culture as a subject on its own by displaying the language being learnt in "international contexts". What this means is that the textbook writers, who are tied to certain cultures, may try to represent another culture. For example, if a Finnish textbook writer writes about Nigerian and Indian friends going on a holiday in Australia, there are multiple different cultural issues that should be considered in the scenario. Firstly, the author of the story has their own culture. Secondly, so do the characters as well as the people in

where the events are set. Thus, the author trying to represent another culture does not work, as their own culture influences how they choose to present situations and what their lexicogrammatical and interactional choices are. These types of materials reinforce learners' suppositions about other cultures behaving in the same manner as their own culture. This in turn hinders learners' abilities in understanding their own culture as they are unable to compare it with another (Gilmore 2007: 105).

According to Stoller (1988: 4), during classes, films are mostly used as "time fillers" and as something learners watch without a specific purpose. They are often considered not academic enough to use as devices for learning. However, many educators recognize the potential films have in strengthening learners' skills in both language and in understanding culture (ibid.: 1). In order for this type of learning to take place, the material to be used in teaching must be chosen carefully. As Scollon (1999: 195) states, "when used with care, the study of popular culture products may shed useful analytic light on differences across cultures." What is more to being able to compare differences in cultures, Huber and Reynolds (2014: 44) add that films can also assist in examining more complicated subjects such as issues concerning diversity. Films with diverse subject matters can thus be helpful in teaching about the habits, practices and values of other cultures. This helps learners to "get the sense of cultural awareness and the sense of the humanity of other people" (Yalcin 2013: 265).

One of the most substantial parts of cultural awareness that language learners can gain is communicative competence. Communicative competence again is linked to authenticity. Kramsch (1993: 178) states about authenticity that it "does not lie in the text but in the uses speakers and readers make of it." This refers to for example films and how, when used purposefully their authenticity can be utilized. However, if the learning material is not critically selected, it can be seen as the educator avoiding their obligations (ibid.: 179). Thus, authentic materials should always be critically displayed and reviewed in class.

According to Stoller (1988: 2), films present learners with authentic language that is not usually experienced in class environments, which demands learners to pay attention: "These more realistic demands, in turn, motivate students to participate actively in film/videotape related activities." Learning materials based on films can thus also motivate learners trough their authenticity.

This chapter has introduced the multiple definitions for culture, presented the concepts of cultural awareness and intercultural competence, and showed their place in education. This chapter also suggested films to be used in learning about culture, because of their versatility, authenticity, and possibilities to motivate learners. The next chapter will introduce the division of the English-speaking world and how it will be taken into consideration for this material package.

# 3 THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD AND ENGLISH AS A WORLD LANGUAGE

English is a global language. This is, for example, due to the spread of English by geo-historical ways by voyagers and colonizers as well as by socio-cultural reasons such as business and entertainment (Crystal 2012: 29-30). This chapter will present the countries with most English usage leaning on Kachru's model of three concentric circles. This model was chosen due to its status as a pioneer in demonstrating "World Englishes" and English usage around the world. The model will then be used in choosing and justifying the use of films from the chosen countries in this material package.

As language and culture are interconnected because "cultural values are both reflected by and carried through language" (Harklau 1999: 109), it is important to acknowledge the many cultures around the world linked with the English language. Y. Kachru (1999: 76) writes about B. Kachru's (1985) division of the English-speaking world into the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The countries in the Inner Circle are Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This is due to these countries having most inhabitants speaking English as their native language. The Outer Circle includes countries such as India, Kenya, Nigeria, Philippines, Singapore, and South Africa. Some of these countries are former colonies of the United Kingdom or have otherwise been influenced by the United Kingdom or the United States. In the Outer Circle countries, "nativized varieties of English have achieved the status either of an official language or of a language widely used in education, administration, the legal system..." (Kachru 1999: 76). The Expanding Circle includes countries such as China, Japan, Brazil, and most or all European countries. In these countries English is

learnt as a foreign language and has an important role for example in the fields of technology and science.

The countries whose films are in focus in this material package are all the Inner Circle countries, as well as India, Nigeria, and South Africa, from the Outer Circle countries. All the Inner Circle countries will be focused on as native English-speaking cultures. All these countries also have valuable film industries and thus many films to be used as sources for exercises regarding culture in the package. India, Nigeria, and South Africa were chosen from the Outer Circle countries because of the substantial role of English in these cultures, as well as for their film industries and the great number of films in English made from these cultures.

As a great deal of language learning materials still concentrate on the cultures of the Inner Circle countries and the English used in them, it is also important to acknowledge the differences in the Outer Circle countries in this regard.

> It has been shown in several studies that the institutionalized varieties of English used in the countries of the Outer Circle have developed their own grammatical and textual forms to express their contexts of culture (Kachru 1999: 77-78).

Kachru (1999: 85) also adds that dealing with language produced by people from the Inner Circle and the Outer Circle, should be reciprocally sensitive. This means that as cultural variations can be seen in language use, the reader or listener of the language must be educated in intercultural awareness.

This chapter has thus presented the role of English around the world as well as Kachru's three concentric circles about the use of English. The next chapter will present the curricular framework both from the European, as well as the Finnish perspective, and how they support the need for this type of material package.

# 4       CURRICULAR FRAMEWORK

There are several policy documents meant as instructions for teaching and learning languages at schools. The principal document in Europe is The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (from now on abbreviated CEFR). CEFR "stimulates reflection and exchange between language professionals for curriculum development and in teacher education." (CEFR 2020: 11). The objective of CEFR is to present coherent learning targets (ibid.: 11). CEFR also serves as a foundation for the Finnish teaching and learning policy documents: Finnish National Core Curricula (from now on abbreviated FNCC). These sections present what is stated in both CEFR and FNCC for upper secondary education about teaching culture.

## 4.1       The Common European Framework of Reference

The main sections in CEFR involve the levels of language proficiency, language use, the learner's competences, language teaching and learning, designing tasks and assessment. The primary focus will be on the learner's competences, as that chapter discusses issues involving culture that should be considered in a learning environment. In addition to this, language proficiency levels will be covered from the point of view of culture in language learning.

CEFR (2001: 2) broadly expresses the need for diverse languages and cultures to bring about enrichment and mutual understanding. In the chapter Sociocultural Knowledge, CEFR (2001: 111) points out that the teaching of culture needs proper attention as learners may have negative stereotypical views of cultures. Thus, culture is an important subject that can broaden people's world views. It should also be handled with care.

CEFR brings forward the term intercultural awareness (previously mentioned and explained in this thesis in Section 2.2). It is said that, in addition to the understanding of the relation between one's own culture and a foreign one, "intercultural awareness covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes." (2001: 103). Stereotypes have an important role in how a culture and its people are perceived. However, certain skills are required in order to be able to approach other cultures with respect.

CEFR (2001: 104-105) presents intercultural skills and know-how as, for example, the capability to relate one's own culture to a foreign culture, cultural sensitivity, and being able to deal with intercultural misunderstandings. CEFR (2001: 105) also introduces existential competence as a learner's attitude towards cultural issues. These include, for example, the interest and openness towards other cultures, and a willingness to recognize other cultural views. Together these skills shape a learner's cultural awareness and eventually create intercultural competence (this term is previously mentioned and explained in this thesis in Section 2.2).

CEFR 2020 builds upon the 2001 version. CEFR (2020: 124) stresses the importance of openness and curiosity to expand one's cultural awareness. When building on pluricultural repertoire, when needed, someone with good knowledge of cultural issues should be able to recognize that practices differ from one culture to another, as do behaviours (e.g., gestures). Sensitivity and for example accommodating language and reactions are also important.

CEFR 2020 also lists cultural skills needed for certain levels of language proficiency. The language proficiency scales are most often presented in six levels from A1 to C2. Broadly, A-level users are basic language users, B-level users are independent language users and C-level users are proficient users. In the next paragraphs, the focus will be on the skills required at level B2, as A-

level skills are often attained during basic education, and B2 is the level of many English users during their final years in upper secondary education. The following skills are what this material package aims to improve with its exercises.

In facilitating pluricultural space (CEFR 2020: 115) the B2-level language user can:

- Use their sociocultural knowledge to proceed in unfamiliar situations and resolve misunderstandings in intercultural encounters.
- Acknowledge and understand different worldviews and adapt their ways of working in intercultural situations to fit everyone's needs.
- Collaborate with differently culturally orientated people and discuss differing views, encouraging a shared communication culture.

The chart regarding building on pluricultural repertoire describes a B2-level language user as being able to:

- Relate cultural aspects from one culture to another they are familiar with.
- Adjust their behaviour accordingly when self-evident concepts in one culture do not match with the other.
- Clarify cultural cues
- Analyze and discuss communication manners and culturally determined behavioural patterns in cultures both their own and others, and possible misunderstandings (CEFR 2020: 125).

## 4.2     Finnish National Core Curriculum

The focus of this chapter will be on the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education (Opetushallitus 2020). Separate curricula for early childhood education and basic education exist, but as this thesis and material package are made to be used in upper secondary education, the other curricula will not be focused on. Most schools also have their own more specific curricula

that are based on the national curriculum, but as this thesis is not intended for a specific school, I will focus on the curriculum on a national level.

FNCC (Opetushallitus 2020: 4-5) is divided into sections consisting of values, implementation of education, guidance for students, assessment, learning objectives and contents as well as language proficiency scales. Of these, learning objectives for language education and language proficiency scales concerning culture will be focused on, as this thesis deals with teaching culture in foreign language classes.

FNCC stresses the importance of transversal competences comprehensively in all subjects. These competences are listed as follows:

- o Well-being competence
- o Interaction competence
- o Multidisciplinary and creative competence
- o Societal competence
- o Ethical and environmental competence
- o Global and cultural competence (Opetushallitus 2020: 34)

Of these competences, global and cultural competence will be examined further due to the topic of this thesis. According to Opetushallitus (2020: 35), students will learn to distinguish differences of aspects such as heritage and values between cultures both in Finland as well as more globally. This learning will lead to appreciation of an individual's own cultural identity, and furthermore enhance students' acting for cultural diversity. These abilities to recognize cultural issues will be gained through diverse media and reference materials (Opetushallitus 2020: 35). The need for these diverse materials for teaching about culture is the basis for this material package.

As the previous paragraphs focused on all subjects in the curricula, the focus will now move onto foreign languages. Instruction in foreign language teaching should encourage students in their cultural competence to participate actively in the world. Teaching should also motivate students to see global issues surrounding language, culture and equality. The teaching of foreign languages

should be such that it increases the interest of students and motivates them. Language learning should also lead for students to be able to take part in creative international cooperation. Lastly, students should be helped in examining issues from diverse perspectives (Opetushallitus 2020: 89).

Students are not required to gain native-like language proficiency, rather the goal is to strengthen their function in a global world building effective communication. Students should use this knowledge to exhibit their competence in acting in a culturally diverse world (Opetushallitus 2020: 90). Opetushallitus (2020: 89) states about the concept of text that "texts are multifaceted, and can be for example written, spoken, visual or audiovisual texts, or combinations of these forms of expression". This means that the diverse use of different types of texts is highly encouraged by the FNCC.

As discussed in Section 4.1, language proficiency levels are used as a basis for competence. For this point, three levels from possible twelve (A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, A2.2, B1.1, B1.2, **B2.1**, **B2.2**, **C1.1**, C1.2, C2.1, C2.1) were chosen from the language proficiency table, based on the average language competences upper secondary students may have. The tables deal with the cultural suitability of communication, and how students of certain levels are expected to act in these situations.

At B2.1 (first stage of independent proficiency), thoughts are usually expressed appropriately, and the situation is taken into consideration. At B2.2 (functional independent proficiency), thoughts are expressed naturally in diverse situations and the student is able to modify their language use depending on the situation. At C1.1 (first stage of fluent language proficiency), the language use is flexible as making indirect references and irony can be used (Opetushallitus 2020: 179).

This chapter has introduced the policy documents CEFR and FNCC. These were further examined on the basis of how the importance of culture is presented in sections concerning language learning as well as in the tables for language proficiency level. These sections discussed subjects such as cultural

awareness, intercultural competence, and cultural diversity. The next chapter will go further into detail about the aims, target group and task types of the material package based on these themes from the documents and earlier chapters.

# 5 MATERIAL PACKAGE FRAMEWORK

This chapter will present the framework for this material package. In the following sections, the aims, target group and task types are introduced as well as the rationale for making the package.

## 5.1 Aims

As discussed in Chapter 4, culture is heavily emphasized as a theme in curricula. The main aim of this material package is thus to highlight the benefits of teaching culture, some of which are:

- o Increasing learners' curiosity, interest, and motivation in target countries,
- o Nurturing tolerance towards different ideologies, religions, and cultures,
- o Giving learners a liking for the native speakers of the target language,
- o Playing a useful role in learning the geography, history, etc of the target culture,
- o Helping learners to observe similarities and differences among various cultural groups (Yalchin (2013: 262) citing Genc and Bada (2004))

As mentioned above, teaching culture can motivate students. However, it is often still dependent on the used material. Thus, as language learners may not always be easily motivated, Stoller (1988: 2-3) brings up motivation and films, saying that the authenticity of films motivates learners. What might be behind films as good motivators could be because films "…make it easier to understand different cultures when combining both seeing and hearing the different traditions and habits of foreign cultures." (Ruusunen 2011: 89). In addition, as classrooms are somewhat limited settings when it comes to authentic texts being utilised, films and exercises related to them offer possibilities to learn differently.

In many cases, the emphasizing of culture in curricula may not be seen in the materials used by teachers. This is sometimes due to the unauthenticity of the most common teaching tool: the textbook. The unauthenticity of textbooks may come from for example as mentioned in Section 2.4, when textbook writers try to represent cultures they do not actually represent. Another example is as textbooks do not represent language use in real situations, as the texts are written for educational purposes. Thus, this material package uses films from diverse English-speaking cultures as authentic materials and provides versatile exercises. With this, language teachers are given new ways of teaching about cultures, as well as helped in seeing films as appropriate tools for teaching.

## 5.2    Target group

The material package has been constructed to be used by English language teachers in Finnish upper secondary schools. The exercises are targeted towards students who have already experienced some English language courses in upper secondary education. This is due to the material package's exercises being such that the students' level of English language proficiency should be approximately at the B2 -level. As explained in Chapter 4, this level of proficiency should be striven for as at this level, students will have language knowledge and cultural understanding to be able to internalize new information about challenging subjects. However, the tasks in the material package can also be adapted for lower classes and younger ages in some cases.

Looking at the English language courses that are a part of the FNCC, the material package could be incorporated into course ENA3 English language and culture as instruments for creative expression. The object of this course is to advance students' cultural understanding and see the importance of arts through these cultures (Opetushallitus 2020: 93). ENA3 and the material package have somewhat similar aims regarding the students' learning. The

material package does not explicitly try to use culture as a means to understand arts, in fact it uses arts to teach about culture.

## 5.3    Task types

The tasks in the material package have a main focus on listening comprehension and speaking. As emphasized in both CEFR and FNCC in Chapter 4, effective and culturally aware communication is what students should aim towards. As Gilmore (2007: 103) states, especially authentic audio-visual materials can be utilized to advance learners' communicative competence. In other words, the exercises in this material package have been made with a communicative approach in mind, as to "expose learners as much as possible to spoken or written texts that have not been fabricated for pedagogic purposes" (Kramsch 1993: 185).

The material package is divided into eight 75-minute lessons and some extra exercises. The themes for the lessons are family dynamics & gatherings; hobbies free time & school; traditions; history; stereotypes, accent & vocabulary; minority groups; arts & scenery; and sensitive issues. All the lessons include a discussion about the topic of the class at the beginning of the lesson. This is in order to familiarize the students with the topic, as well as possibly bring up some new terminology about the subject. There are also several discussions or writing exercises based on trailers or film scenes that have been watched. Filling in tables, looking at transcripts, and searching for information online are also in the package. The teacher is also given suggestions about which films to use.

The exercises have been created to go through the subjects most effectively in a way that supports the aim of increasing the students' communicative competence and cultural awareness. Also, as summarized by Kramsch, with the aid of the exercises of this material package "learners will be able to better

understand the speaking customs and ways of life of the target country, and thus behave more appropriately in native-speaker environments" (1993: 185).

This chapter has introduced the framework for this material package. The aims -section presented the benefits of teaching culture, motivation that could be gained from films, and the need for this type of material because of the authenticity of the material used in this package. Then, the target group -section presented and justified the target group for this material as upper secondary students. Finally, the task types were explained.

# 6      DISCUSSION

This thesis has provided the basis for the material package in the appendix. As seen in Chapter 4, both CEFR and FNCC support and encourage the teaching of cultural skills such as global and cultural competence. These skills include understanding different aspects of culture. Using, for example, Huber and Reynolds' (2014: 13-14) division of culture into material -, social -, and subjective culture; students should be able to know both about the differences between their own cultures and that of the target cultures as well as act in a respecting manner especially when it comes to differences considering the target cultures. However, students can only reach this type of cultural awareness and intercultural competence if they are taught about culture in diverse and authentic ways.

Culture and language have always been connected and thus culture should also have its own separate focus in language classes. When it comes to teaching English and choosing cultures which should be focused on, a good point to start is Kachru's model of three concentric circles presented in Chapter 3. In most textbooks, Inner Circle countries have been focused on when culture has been addressed. Even in these cases, however, the focus has been on the countries' popular culture, whereas minority groups or subjective culture such as beliefs have mostly been disregarded. When mentioned, minority groups and Outer Circle countries may have been dealt with concentrating on negative issues. This means that usually issues such as poverty or slavery are brought up. As Savolainen (2020: 84) also states, often these texts are put into textbooks as optional material.

Films were chosen for this material package as a connective theme because of their various and wide range of possible uses. The authenticity and motivation

provided by films for students also influenced this decision. Using films was also inspired by a thesis in which it was recommended that a material package should be made. That thesis concluded that films were seen as extremely suitable for teaching about culture, but that teachers lacked the knowledge of suitable films as well as exercises about them (Ruusunen 2011: 91).

Thus, this material package was made for teachers to teach about the cultures of the English-speaking world with the help of films in upper secondary education. The material provides teachers with film suggestions and several subjects to choose from. The exercises focus on the lessons' subjects from viewpoints that aid students in gaining cultural awareness. This means, for example, exercises in which students try to see matters from other cultures' viewpoints and find positive differences in other cultures.

The goal for this material package was to create film-based exercises that present students with certain cultures that are not usually focused on in English classes. The execution of creating these exercises was quite demanding and difficult. I spent a lot of time trying to come up with the types of exercises that would best suit the needs of the students in helping them understand other cultures. I developed several exercises that ended up not being used in this material package. This was due to the exercises being mostly independent searching of different matters on the internet for the students, but I soon realized that I was unable to tie the exercises to the larger theme of films. However, these exercises could, for example, form another material package on learning about cultures while teaching students independent researching.

In the end, I was able to create multiple exercises that work well in theory, but have not yet however, been tested in reality. The objective for this material package was reached within the framework it could be reached. This means that time, as well as the intended size of the material were some of the limiting factors while making the package. I could have spent time more efficiently, as I

sometimes got stuck in adjusting minor issues for longer than necessary. The material could also have dealt with more countries from the Outer Circle of Kachru's model, as for example, only one Asian country was selected. During the making of this material, I had to learn how to think both as a learner and a teacher. I believe this to have strengthened my future abilities as a teacher as well.

In the future, in addition to the aforementioned suggestion of a material package that could build students' independent working methods, if the current material package would prove to be useful, it could be further expanded by adding TV-series, reality television, or even content made by so called influencers on YouTube or other social media, as the themes behind the exercises. This would make it possible to compare even more different sides of media and culture.

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# APPENDIX – TEACHING MATERIAL

# Using films to teach about the cultures of the English – Speaking world

- A material package

By Katri Heinänen
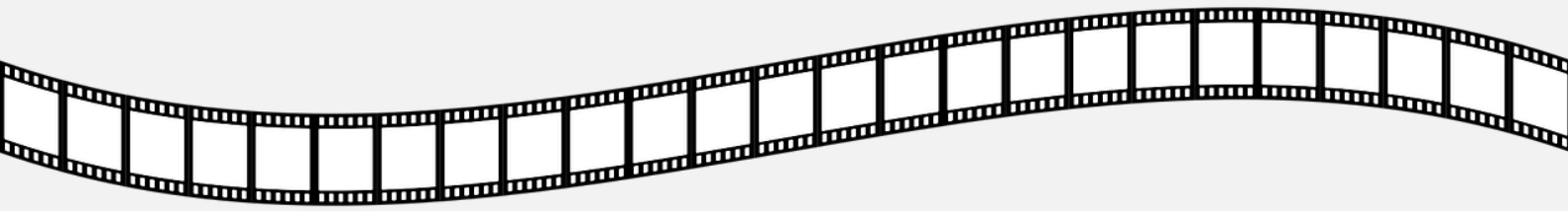
Dear fellow teacher,

This material package was created to give teachers the means to use films when teaching about culture in language classrooms. Especially as films offer great opportunities in getting to know other cultures and as they can be used in motivating students. The exercises in this package are here to help in exactly those things!

The exercises are mainly designed for upper secondary school students, but the level of difficulty can be changed in many cases. The material is divided into nine sections: forming a possible short course on cultures. Eight of these sections are designed as 75-minute lessons with specific themes. The ninth section is a collection of exercises that can be used for the whole duration of the course or as longer exercises for the classes. The lessons include multiple different types of exercises, which will be marked with the following symbols:

| Watch | Think by yourself | Write | Act | Group work | Search | Pair work | Read | Whole class discussion |
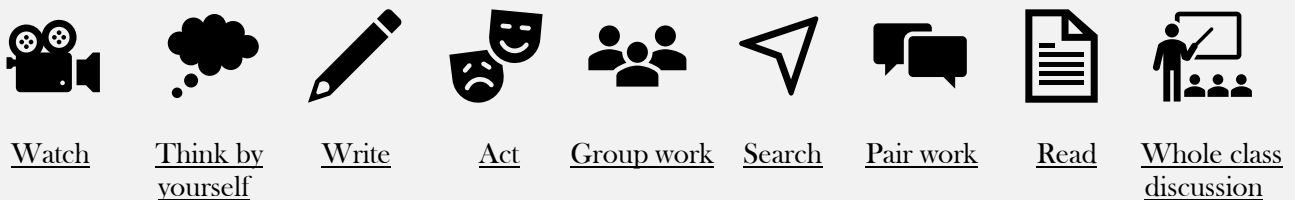
In addition to the exercises there are further directions directed solely to the teacher, and those can be found in these green boxes before the exercises they refer to:

> Hello.
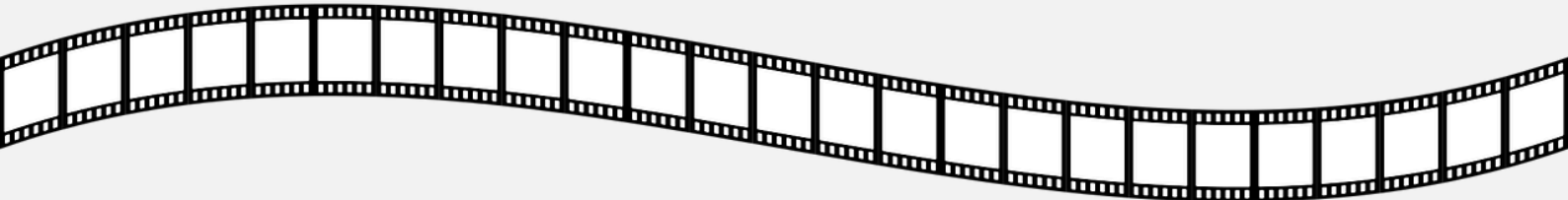
Due to copyright issues, it is impossible to add direct links to video platforms such as YouTube into this material package. However, using this site is recommended in all the exercises that require showing trailers or scenes from films. Enjoy the exercises!

# PROGRAMME

# 1. Family dynamics & gatherings

- What comes to mind when you think about the word *family*? Write down some thoughts.
- In small groups, share your thoughts, and if you want to, tell about your own family. How do you see the dynamics of your own family?
- Does someone want to share something to the hole group?

Do a quick introduction to the plots of the films the upcoming clips are from.
The Wedding Party (2016, Nigeria): A wedding between a young woman and a young man whose mother seems to think he is marrying beneath himself.
Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994, United Kingdom): Over the course of five social occasions, a committed bachelor considers that he may have discovered love.
Search for the speeches from these films. They can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "priest".
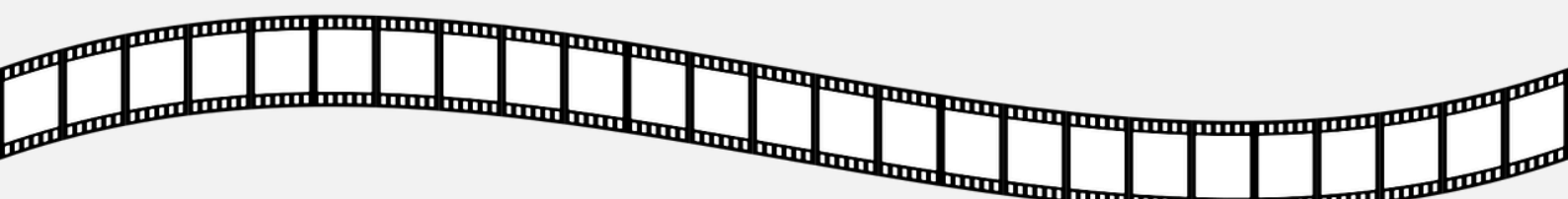
- Watch the speeches. Focus on the family members' reactions while they are watching the speeches of the two priests.
- Discuss in small groups: What are your first impressions about the family members? Looking at the families' reactions in the scenes, what can we deduce about the families? Could something that happened in the clips possibly happen in your culture?
- Discussion in the whole group about the main findings in the clips. For example: How does the humour differ in the clips?
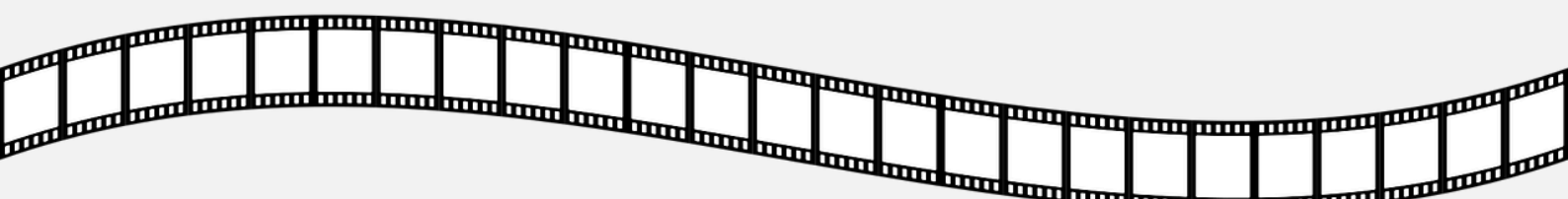
- Think about the most memorable thing or moment you have witnessed at a family gathering (such as wedding, birthday party, Christmas...).
- In pairs, tell your partner between three to five of the most important words regarding this memory.

- Try to reconstruct your partner's story by telling it to them.
- Tell your partner the real story.

Show stills from films representing different kinds of families such as the families of the main characters in <u>Brave</u> (2012, United States, United Kingdom), <u>Bend it like Beckham</u> (2002, United Kingdom, United States, Germany), <u>Whale Rider</u> (2002, New Zealand, Germany).

The stills, as well as the upcoming clips, can be found on YouTube by typing "Brave dinner scene", "Bend it like Beckham I want her to win" & "Whale Rider why aren't you out there with us".

- Look at the still pictures of the families of the films. In groups, discuss your first impressions of the families you see in the pictures. What do you think the family dynamics will be like?
- Watch the clips.
- While watching, write down what catches your eye in all the elements presented in the clips. What is the first thing you noticed about the family and the surroundings? Sounds? Colours? How did the family interact with each other?
- Discussion with the whole class. What can you tell about each of the families' dynamics? Was something different than you had thought based on the pictures?

## 2. Hobbies, free time & school

- To a partner, perform a pantomime explaining your hobby/hobbies without using any words.
- Discuss why you have your hobbies as your hobbies. What are the main things that you do when you go to a practice (or however you participate in your hobby)? Do you feel like there is something that your parents/guardians/coaches expect from you regarding your hobby?
- In your culture, is there something you think you could not take part in in your free time because of your gender for example?

> Search for the clips from Billy Elliot (2000, United Kingdom, France). They can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "boys don't do ballet" and "final scene".

- Discuss in groups what you think the reaction of the father will be like when he finds out his son is doing ballet instead of boxing?
- Watch the clip.
- Discuss in the same groups what do you think will happen at the end of the film? Will the father's attitude towards his son's hobby change?
- Watch the final scene.

> Search for the clip from Bend it like Beckham (2002, United Kingdom, United States, Germany). It can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "representation of ethnicity".

- Watch the scene focusing especially on the mother's behaviour.
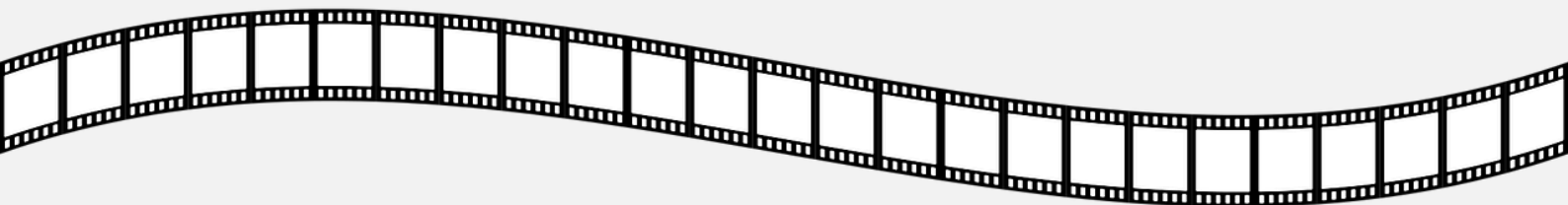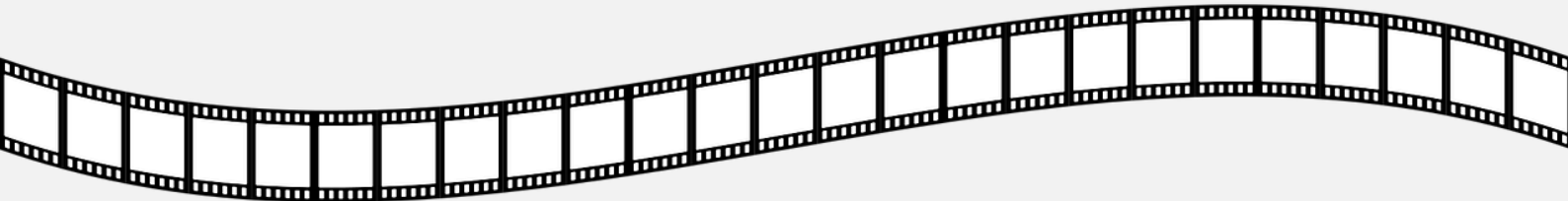
- Try to see the mother's point of view. Come up with at least four reasons why she doesn't want her daughter to play football and write them down. You can also for example write down what emotions you think she might be feeling.
- Go through your findings in groups.

Search for the clip from <u>Wonder</u> (2017, United States, Hong Kong, Canada). It can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "two things about yourself scene".

- Read the transcript of a scene from a film aloud with a partner. One will read the parts of Auggie and the teacher, and the other reads the parts of Julian, Another student 1 and Another student 2.
- Watch the scene.
- Discuss with your partner what you thought would be different in the scene based on what you had thought about the text version.
- Also discuss: What do you think the relationship between Julian and Auggie will be like? If you think they might not become friends, why is that? What are the differences in the scene you could see compared to events in Finnish classrooms?

The transcript:

**Teacher:** Um, everyone's gonna come up with two things that they think everybody else should know about them. Number one, I used to work on Wall Street. For a long time. And two, I left Wall Street to pursue my dream and teach. Boom, who's next? Yes.

**Julian:** Julian Albons. And I think it's cool how you're pursuing your dream.

**Teacher:** Thank you very much, Julian. Let's hear your two things.

**Julian:** One, I just got Battleground Mystic on my Wii and it's totally awesome. And number 2, we got a ping pong table this summer.

**Teacher:** Amazing. Any questions for Julian?
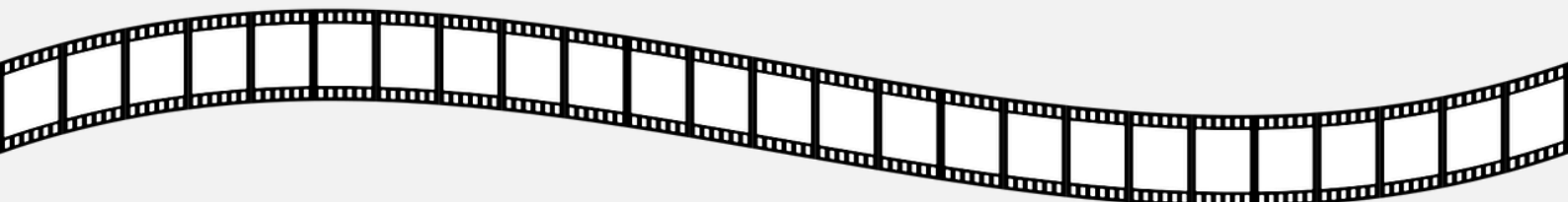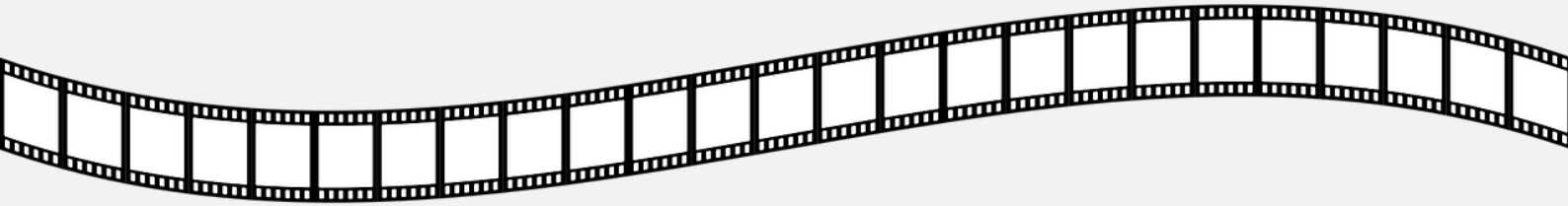
**Another Student 1:** Is Battleground Mystic multiplayer or single player?

**Teacher:** Let's not those kinda questions.

**(ALL LAUGH)**

**Teacher:** Okay, uh...

**Auggie:** (SIGHS)Hi. My name's August Pullman. Auggie. And, um... I have a sister named Via and a dog named Daisy. I love Star Wars. And I just said three things. Yeah. Sorry.

**Teacher:** That sounds like a bonus to me. Three things. Thank you very much, Auggie, that was perfect. Who's next?

**Julian:** Oh! I actually have a question for Auggie. What's the deal with the braid in the back of your hair? Is it like a Padawan thing?

**Another student 2:** What's a Padawan thing?

**Julian:** Oh. It's from Star Wars. Padawan is a Jedi apprentice. Who's your favorite character, Auggie?

**Auggie:** Boba Fett.

**Julian:** What about Darth Sidious? Do you like him?

https://www.vulture.com/article/clueless-is-a-great-teen-movie-its-also-a-satire.html
(Jen Chaney (8. July 2020). Vulture: *Clueless* Is a Great Teen Movie. It's Also a Satire About the White and Wealthy).
An article about the film Clueless (1995, United States). You can choose a part of the text to be read that is the most relevant for the subject of school and culture, or another article or film review.
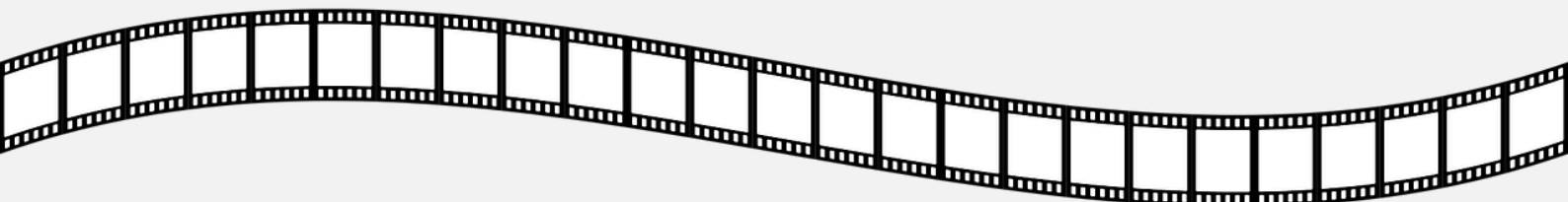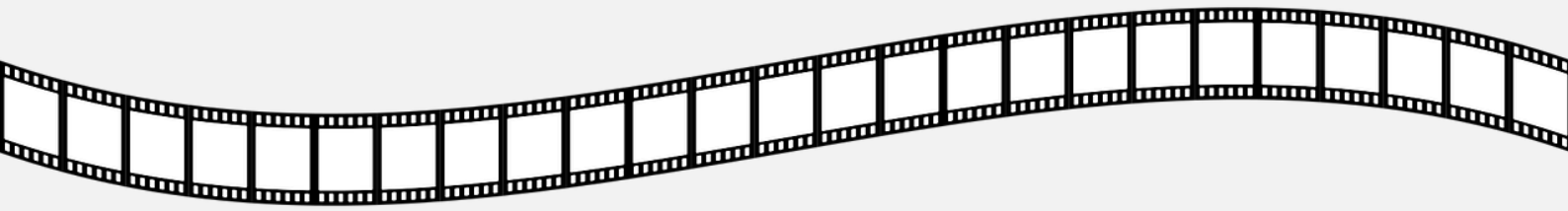
- Read the article.
- Write down at least three of the most difficult words in the text in a Word Cloud the teacher has created.
- Go through the words together with the whole class.
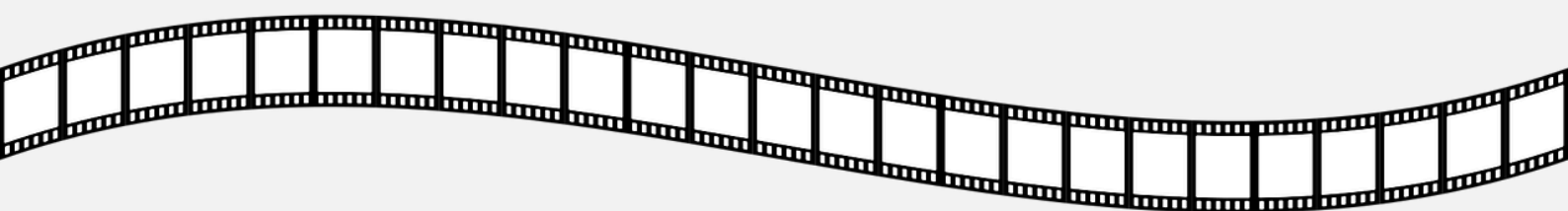
# 3. Traditions

- Discuss in small groups about your own cultures' biggest events/festivals/celebrations. What are the main parts of the celebrations? What kind of food is eaten? Do people wear different clothes to what they normally wear?
- Does someone want to share something with the whole class?

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https://www.history.com/topics/halloween/history-of-halloween (History.com Editors (18. November 2009 (updated 25. October 2021)) History: Halloween 2021).
A text about the history of Halloween. Choose parts that are suitable for your class.
You can also choose another holiday.
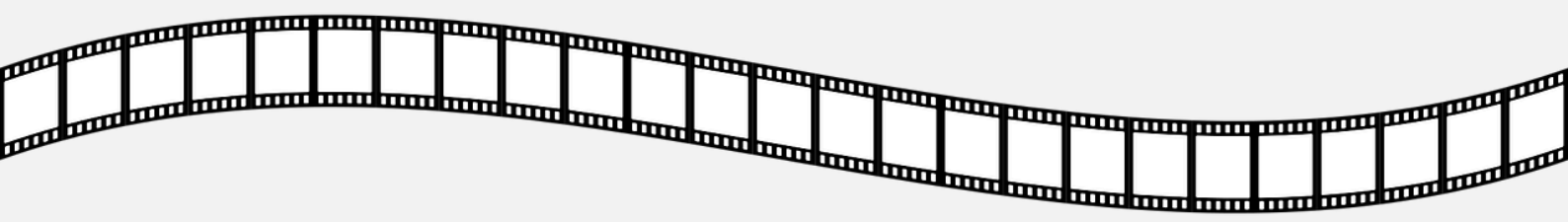
Search for a clip from for example Hocus Pocus (1993, United States), or another movie that has a trick-or-treating scene. Those can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "trick-or-treat", or something similar.

---

- Listen as the teacher reads about the history of Halloween aloud to the class.
- Watch a scene depicting what Halloween looks like in modern day United States.
- Discuss in small groups what seems to have changed in the ways of celebrating Halloween throughout the years. How does Halloween in the United States differ to the one in your culture (if it is celebrated)?
- Share your thoughts with the whole class.

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- Form pairs. From the list below, choose one or two events you would like to know more about. Try to choose events you haven't heard of before.
- Search information on the event on the internet and write down some main things about it on bullet points.
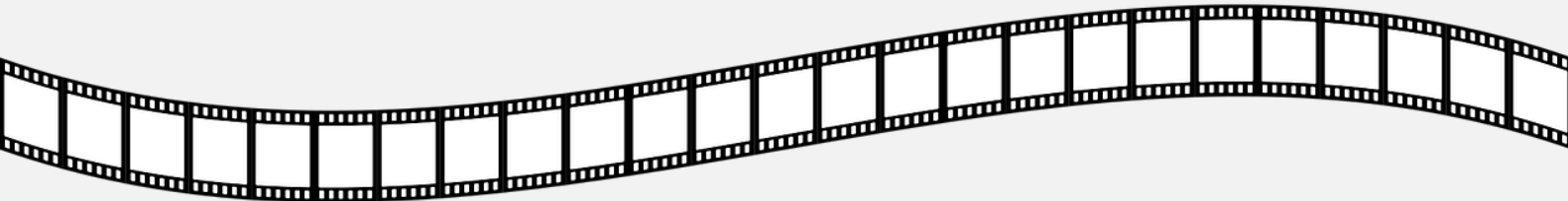
- Tell about the event to the whole class.

| Australia | New Year | Adelaide Fringe Festival | Riverfire in Brisbane |
|---|---|---|---|
| Canada | Winterlude | The Ex | Folklorama |
| England | Bonfire Night | Jorvik Viking Festival | The Queen's Birthdays |
| India | Holi | Kumbh Mela | Diwali |
| Ireland | Puck Fair in Killgorin | St. Patrick's Day Parade | Lisdoovarna matchmaking Festival |
| New Zealand | Pasifika Cultural Festival | The Maori Kai Festivals | Womad Festival |
| Nigeria | Argungu Fishing Festival | Osun Festival | Calabar Carnival |
| Scotland | Edinburgh Fringe | Burns Night | (Higland Games) |
| South Africa | Cape Town Minstrel Carnival | The National Arts Festival | Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees |
| United States | Independence Day | (Thanksgiving) | Super Bowl |

- Without using the words Thanksgiving of Highland Games, try to search for pictures online that present your vision of what these events look like. Show the pictures and the words you used to a partner.
- Alternatively, you can try to make your phone's (AI) virtual assistant to say the words to you without you saying them to it.
- You can try other events in the list as well.

Search for the clips from the films Made of Honor (2008, United States, United Kingdom) and Home for the Holidays (1995, United States). They can be found on YouTube by typing "made of honor highland games" and "home for the holidays part 6".

- Watch the two scenes.
- Between the two scenes, discuss with the whole class if the events in the clips responded to your expectations about Thanksgiving or the Highland Games. What was new information?
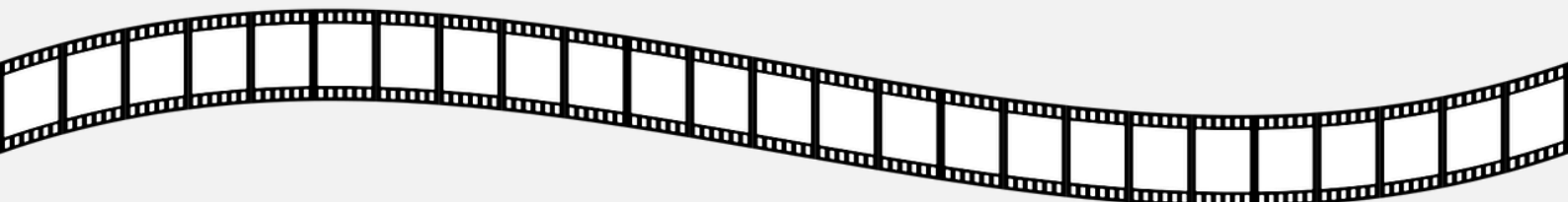
# 4. History

- Discuss in groups: What do you know about the history of the following countries? What are your first thoughts about the countries when you think about their history?

- Australia
- Canada
- England
- India
- Ireland
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Scotland
- South Africa
- United States

- Gathering the groups' thoughts with the whole class: Each group says one thing about every country they know, or think they know something about.

https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/former-british-colonies.html (Victoria Simpson (8. September 2020). WorldAtlas: Former British Colonies).

- Read the article.
- Did the text have information in it that surprised you or was it mostly things you already knew? What (if something) surprised you?

Search for the trailers of the films Sarafina! (1992, South Africa, United Kingdom, France, United States), Ned Kelly (2004, Australia, United Kingdom, United States, France) and Bloody Sunday (2002, United Kingdom, Ireland) on YouTube.

- Read the questions below and watch the trailers.
- First answer the questions by what you could deduce from the trailers.
- You can also search information about the films on the internet to fill your answers.
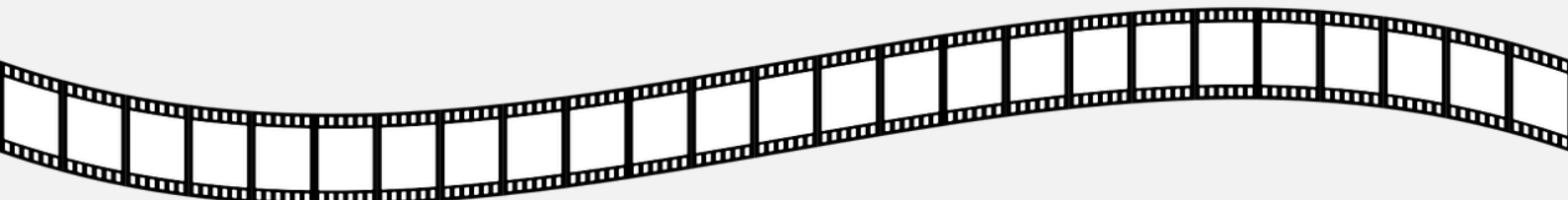
- In addition, you will read the plots of the films. These can be found on for example on https://www.imdb.com.
- Going through the answers with the whole class.

Questions:

| | |
|---|---|
| In which countries are the events of Sarafina!, Bloody Sunday and Ned Kelly set? | Sarafina!:<br>Bloody Sunday:<br>Ned Kelly: |
| What are the time periods of the events? | Sarafina!:<br>Bloody Sunday:<br>Ned Kelly: |
| What are the main events and why are they happening? | Sarafina!:<br><br><br><br>Bloody Sunday:<br><br><br><br>Ned Kelly: |
| Some characters depicted in the films are based on real people, some are not. Who are the main people of the real events? | Sarafina!:<br><br>Bloody Sunday:<br><br>Ned Kelly: |

Answers:

| In which countries are the events of Sarafina!, Bloody Sunday and Ned Kelly set? | Sarafina!: South Africa. Bloody Sunday: Northern Ireland. Ned Kelly: Australia. |
|---|---|
| What are the time periods of the events? | Sarafina!: 1976. Bloody Sunday: January 30, 1972. Ned Kelly: 1871-1880. |
| What are the main events and why are they happening? | Sarafina!: Soweto Uprising. South African teenagers protested the Bantu Education system that dominated in the apartheid era that wanted to introduce Afrikaans as the language of teaching. The police ended up shooting at least 176 students (according to some estimations: up to 700). Bloody Sunday: An illegal march in Derry organized by Roman Catholic civil rights supporters that turned violent when British paratroopers opened fire, killing 13 and injuring 14 others. Ned Kelly: The life events of Ned Kelly, an Australian bushranger, outlaw, gang leader and convicted police-murderer. There were police shootouts and other dealings with the law enforcement. In many cases Kelly was unjustly convicted. |
| Some characters depicted in the films are based on real people, some are not. Who are the main people of the real events? | Sarafina!: High school students in Soweto, South African Police. Bloody Sunday: Roman Catholic civil rights supporters, British Army paratroopers. Ned Kelly: Ned Kelly, members of his gang, the police. |
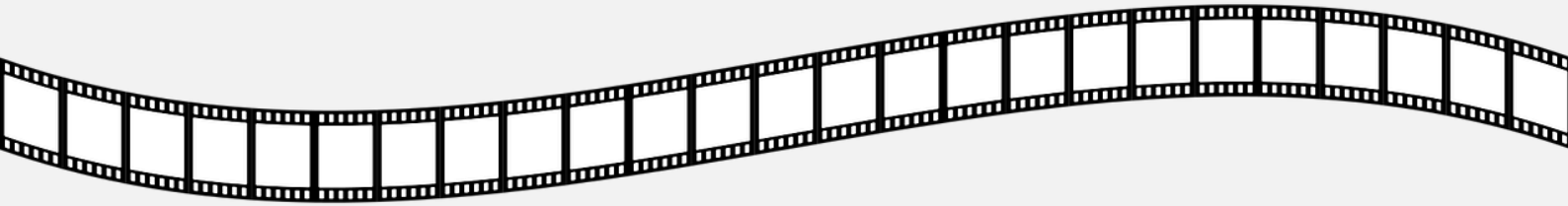
- Discuss in groups (searching for answers on the internet allowed): How do you think that the events depicted in the films have affected the cultures of their countries of today? How can the events be seen in today's world? Can you see any commonalities with the events and our recent history?
- Gathering thoughts with the whole class.
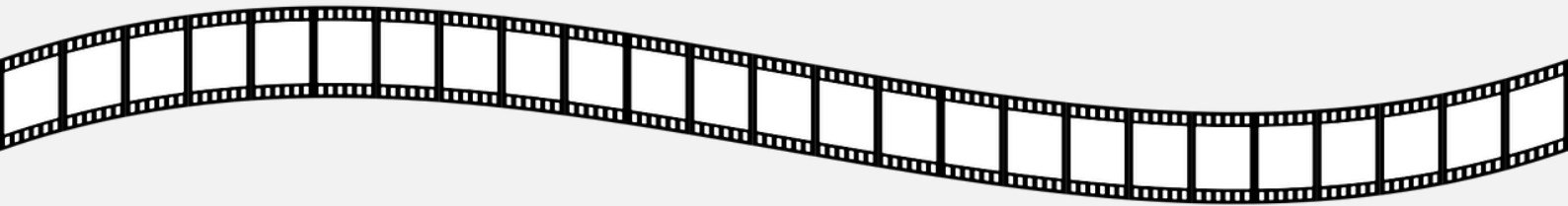
# 5. Stereotypes, accent & vocabulary

- Think of, and write down stereotypes that come to mind when thinking about the cultures in the following countries: (Don't be afraid to name even the bad ones)

- Australia
- Canada
- England
- India

- Ireland
- New Zealand
- Nigeria

- Scotland
- South Africa
- United States

- Is there something good about stereotyping?
- Discussion with the whole class.
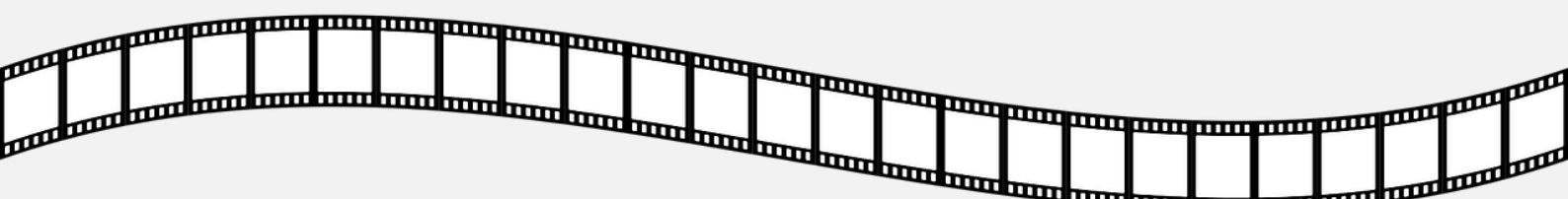
> Search for the clip from <u>Dirty Rotten Scoundrels</u> (1988, United States). It can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "Janet's return scene".

- Read the transcript below aloud with a partner.
- Try to guess or conclude the country, what the scenery looks like, and what people are like in the film. Come up with reasoning for your conclusions.
- Watch the scene.
-With a partner, act the scene aloud replacing Lawrence's accent and vocabulary to a general American English accent and vocabulary.
- You can also discuss Janet's accent. Where could she be from? Try to have the whole conversation in Janet's accent.

The transcript:

**Janet:** Come on, everybody. I want you to meet Mr. Big Stuff. I was showing Nikos property in Florida. He goes "If I'm gonna invest 16 million bucks, I wanna do it someplace new." I say "Like, where?" He goes "How about Australia?" And then it hits me. Boom! Australia, what,

are you kidding me? We gotta go meet Mr. Australia himself!, I say. He goes "Why not?" I go "Why not?" Pretty soon, the whole group goes...

**The group**: "Why not?"

**Janet**: So here we are. So, Nikos Papandropolous, I'd like you to meet the favorite son of Australia, Chips O'Toole… Well, aren't you gonna say anything?

**Lawrence**: G'day, Nikos. How's it goin', sport? Good on ya, cobber. Chips O'Toole. Hotels and oil from down under.

**Janet**: Do you still have any of those situations available in Sydney?

**Lawrence**: No, it's all gone, Paula. Never mind, Nikos. People drop out, don't they? Anyway, come on up to the house. We'll put couple of some shrimps on the barbie for ya.

**Janet**: Hey, I almost forgot somebody! Mr. Junior Partner. The man Chips can't do without. The whiz kid. Randy Bentwick. Unfortunately, Randy is a mute.

- The following tables have slang words from different cultures. Fill the tables with other possible words for the terms.
- Additionally, if you know any other words specific to these cultures, add them and their explanations on the tables as well.
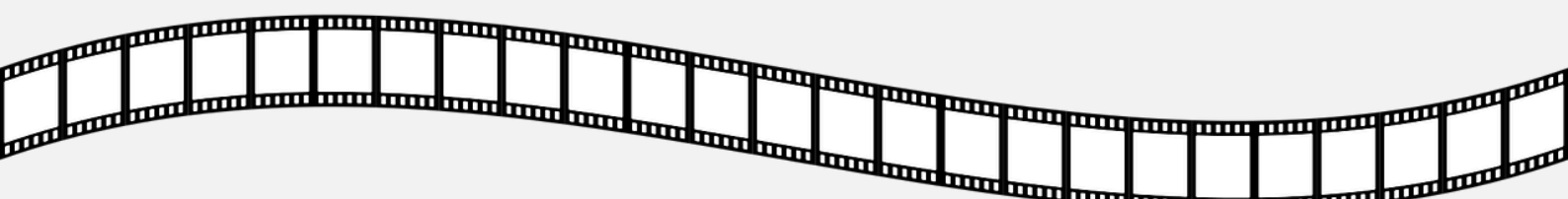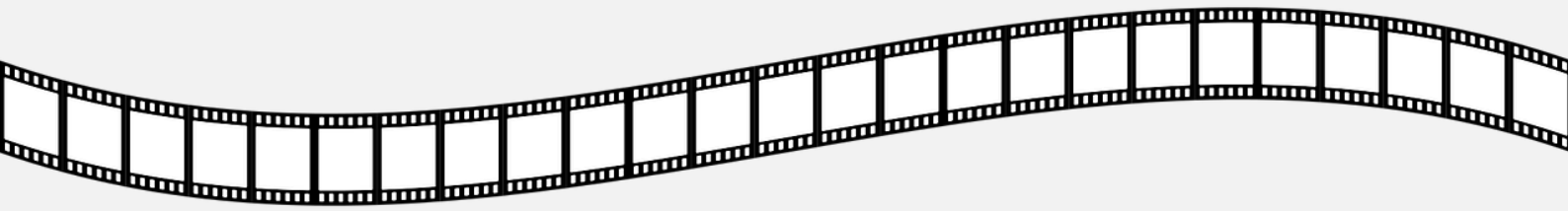- Going through the answers with the whole class.
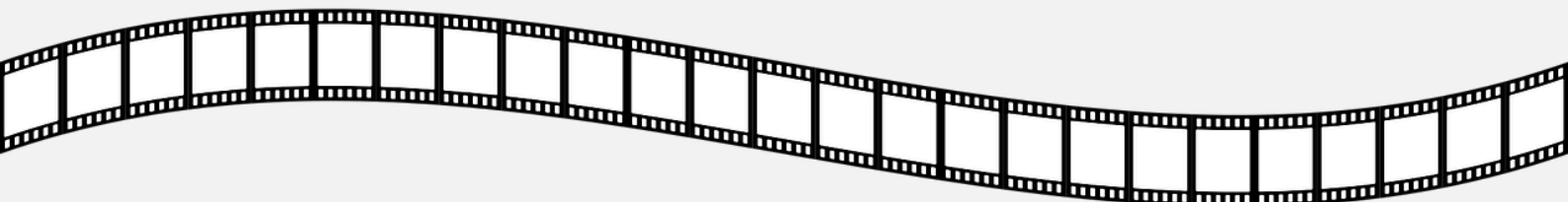
Questions:

| Irish Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Wee | |
| Wean | |
| Saunter | |
| Melter | |
| Haven't a baldy notion | |
| Yonks | |
| | |
| | |

| Scottish Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Hen | |
| Lad and lass | |
| Eejit | |
| Gloaming | |
| Auld | |
| Ken | |
| Hairy Coo | |
| | |
| | |

| US Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Dope/Fire | |
| GOAT | |
| Jacked | |
| Slay | |
| Stan | |
| Spill the tea | |
| Yeet | |
| Ankle biter | |
| | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

| Canadian Slang | Meaning |
| --- | --- |
| Eh |  |
| Molson muscle |  |
| Knapsack |  |
| Toque/Tuque |  |
| Keener |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

| British Slang | Meaning |
| --- | --- |
| Bloke |  |
| Leg it |  |
| Snog |  |
| Bird |  |
| Daft |  |
| Dodgy |  |
| Chuffed |  |
| Knackered |  |
| Taking the piss |  |
| Innit |  |
| Cuppa |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

| Kiwi Slang | Meaning |
| --- | --- |
| Kiwi |  |
| Chilly bin |  |
| Buggered |  |
| Stubbies |  |
| Chur |  |
| Wop wops |  |

|  |  |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |

| Australian Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Barbie | |
| Brekky | |
| Brolly | |
| Crikey | |
| Hard yakka | |
| Sheila | |
| Woop woop | |
| | |
| | |
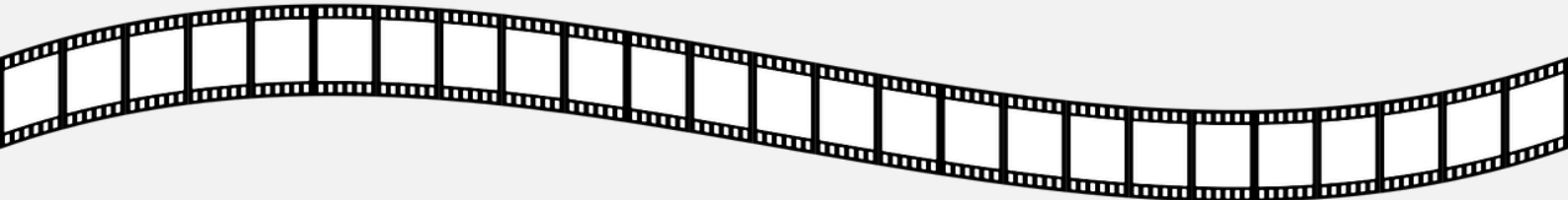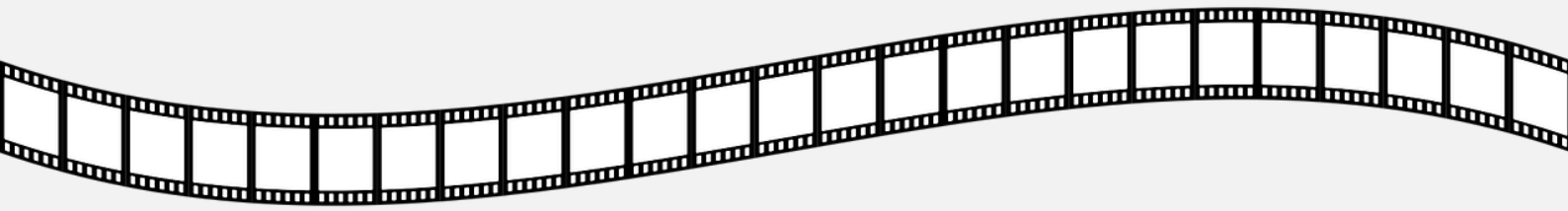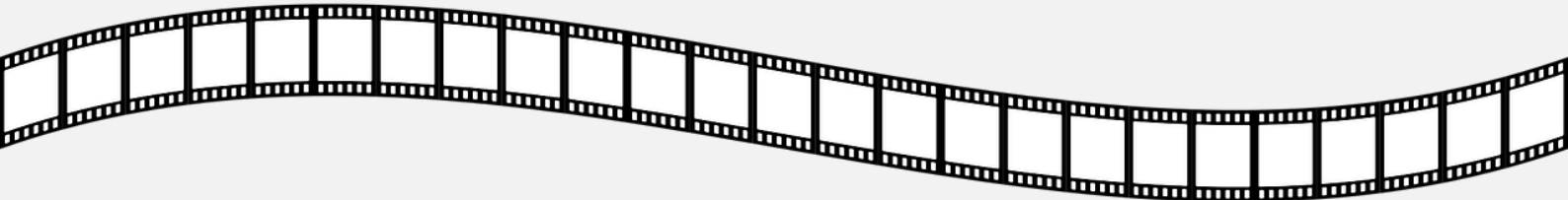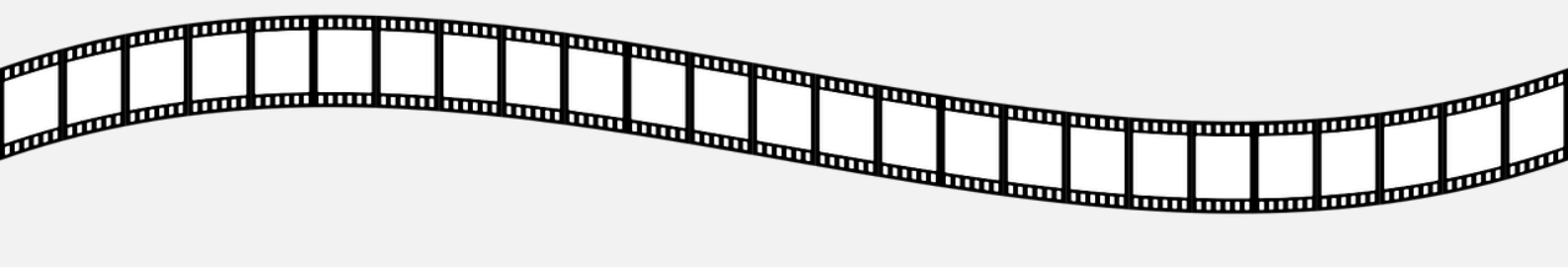
Answers:

| Irish Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Wee | Small |
| Wean | Child |
| Saunter | Walk |
| Melter | A very annoying person |
| Haven't a baldy notion | To have no idea |
| Yonks | A long time |

| Scottish Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Hen | A (young) woman |
| Lad and lass | Boy and girl |
| Eejit | Idiot |
| Gloaming | Twilight |
| Auld | Old |
| Ken | Know |
| Hairy Coo | Highland cow |

| US Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Dope/Fire | Very good |
| GOAT | The greatest of all time |
| Jacked | Very muscular |
| Slay | Do something confidently |
| Stan | A devoted fan |
| Spill the tea | Tell the truth/Gossip |
| Yeet | To throw something |
| Ankle biter | Small child |

| Canadian Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Eh | Can be used as, for example, a question mark, or to end a statement |
| Molson muscle | Beer belly |

| | |
|---|---|
| Knapsack | Backpack |
| Toque/Tuque | Beanie/cap/hat |
| Keener | Nerd/Geek |

| British Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Bloke | A man "dude" |
| Leg it | Run away |
| Snog | Kiss |
| Bird | A (young) woman |
| Daft | A bit dumb |
| Dodgy | Something that is suspicious |
| Chuffed | Excited about something |
| Knackered | Very tired |
| Taking the piss | To be joking |
| Innit | Isn't it |
| Cuppa | A cup of... tea |

| Kiwi Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Kiwi | New Zealander/Kiwi bird |
| Chilly bin | Cooler |
| Buggered | Very tired |
| Stubbies | Shorts |
| Chur | Thank you |
| Wop wops | Middle of nowhere |

| Australian Slang | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Barbie | Barbecue |
| Brekky | Breakfast |
| Brolly | Umbrella |
| Crikey | Expression used when surprised |
| Hard yakka | Hard work |
| Sheila | A woman |
| Woop woop | Middle of nowhere |
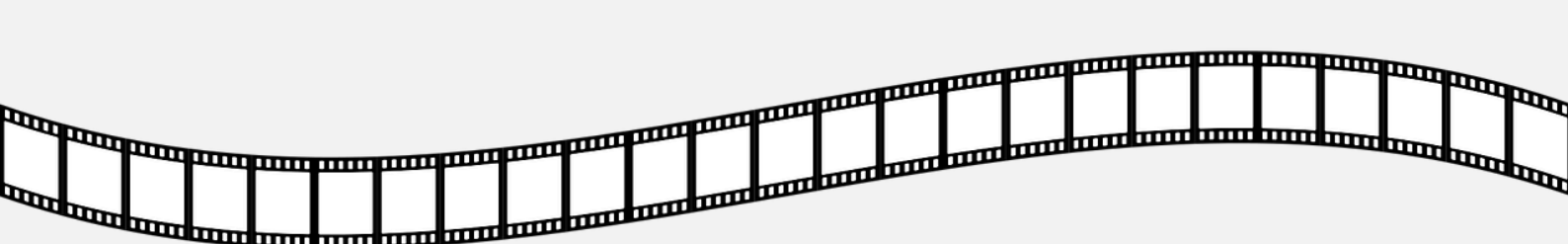
Search for the clips from the films <u>Love actually</u> (2003, United Kingdom, France, United States) and <u>Hot Fuzz</u> (2007, United Kingdom, France). They can be found on YouTube by typing "love actually Colin goes to America" and "hot fuzz sea mine".

- Watch the scenes.
- Discuss with a partner: What is your initial reaction? What stereotypes can you notice in the scenes? What are your own thoughts about the accents on the forefront?
- Gathering thoughts with the whole class.
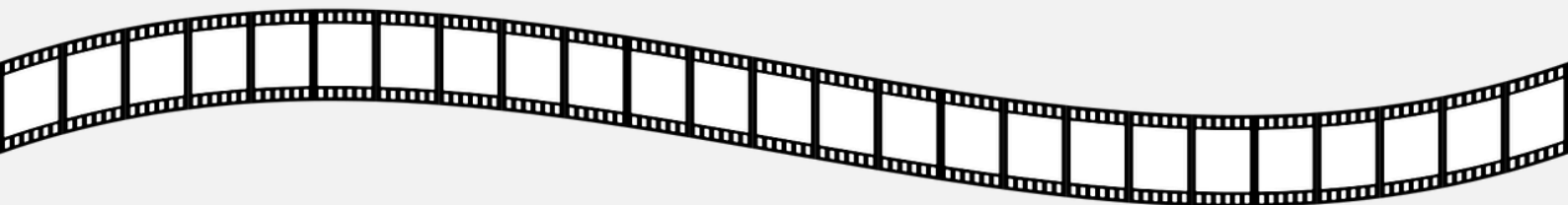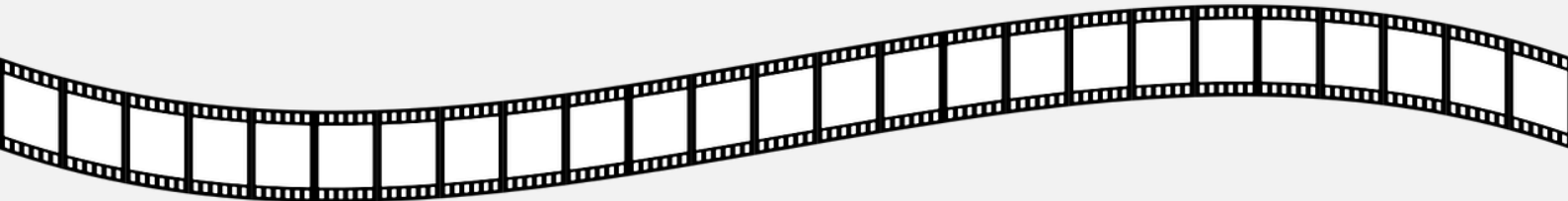
# 6. Minority groups

- Discuss in groups: When thinking about Aboriginal Australians, The Māori in New Zealand and black people as a minority group especially in the United States; What are your first thoughts about these groups? What do you think might be better in these cultures compared to the majority cultures in the countries?
- Everyone in the group comes up with at least one question that they have about the aforementioned cultural groups. Every person in the group must search online for the answer to someone else's question.
- If you want to, and if you are or have been, you can also discuss your own experiences about being a part of a minority group.
- Gathering thoughts with the whole class.

> Search for the clip from Crocodile Dundee (1986, Australia). It can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "Neville Bell the Aboriginie".
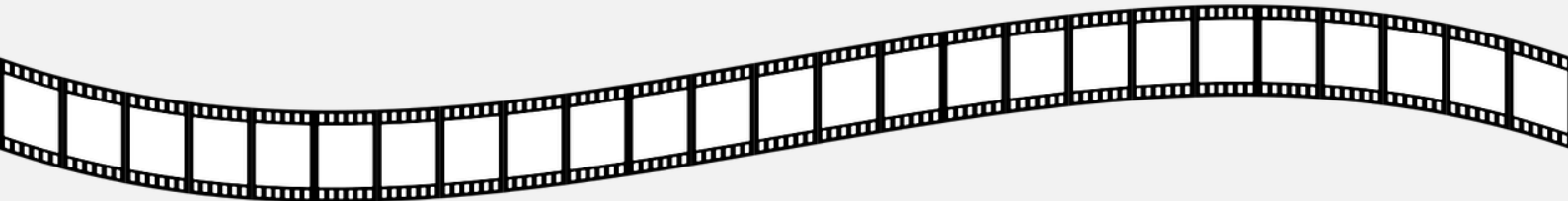
- The scene has three characters. A white Australian man, an Aboriginal Australian man, and a white American woman. The following things are said by the characters. Only with the above information about the characters, think by yourself and guess which line belongs to which character.

| | |
|---|---|
| I hate the bush | |
| Women are strictly taboo at these turnouts | |
| I better go with Nev and have a chat with the Pintinjarra | |
| You believe it will take your spirit away | |
| I'm on my way to a corroboree over at the Jabba | |

- Watch the clip.
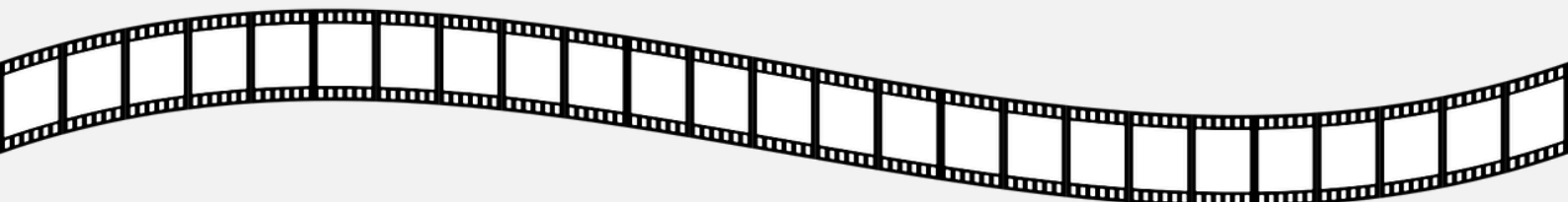
- Discuss with a partner what makes the scene funny, and what was something that you did not expect.
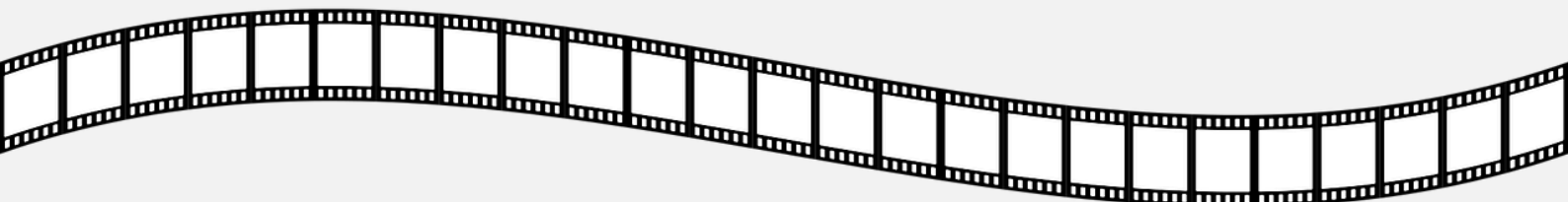
- Write down your answers for the following true or false -statements. If you have additional information about the statements, add that to the table as well.
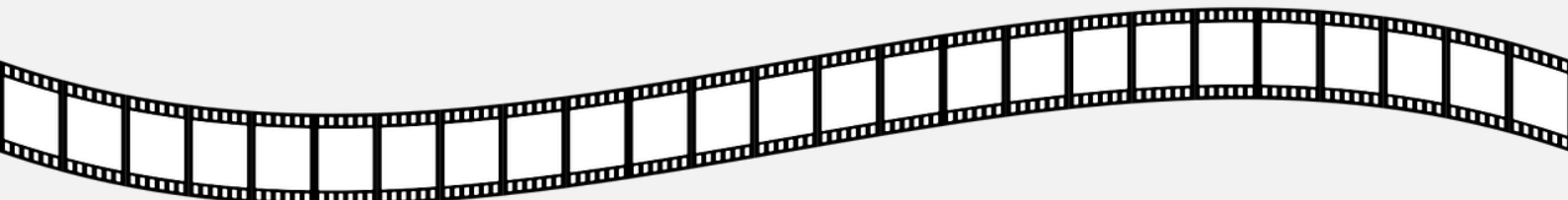- Going through the answers with the whole class.

Questions:

| Statement | True | False |
|---|---|---|
| Haka is a war dance. | | |
| About 14% of Americans identify as black. | | |
| There are about 20 Indigenous Australian languages. | | |
| In the United States, black households have only 10 cents of wealth for every dollar held by white households. | | |
| The Māori greeting happens by people pressing their noses and sometimes also foreheads together and breathing deeply. | | |
| Aboriginal Australians are the oldest population of humans living outside Africa. | | |

Answers:

| Statement | True | False |
|---|---|---|
| Haka is a war dance. | | False. It was possibly originally sometimes used for that purpose, but also for motivation and in all kinds of ceremonies such as weddings and funerals. |
| About 14% of Americans identify as black. | True. About 47 million people. | |
| There are about 20 Indigenous Australian languages. | | False. At the time of colonisation there were about 250. Now, about 145. Of those, less than 20 are considered "strong" as they are spoken by all generations. |
| In the United States, black households have only 10 cents of wealth for every dollar held by white households. | True. | |
| The Māori greeting happens by people pressing their noses and sometimes also foreheads together and breathing deeply. | True. During it the *ha* (breath of life) is exchanged in a symbolic show of unity. | |
| Aboriginal Australians are the oldest population of humans living outside Africa. | True. Extending back over 65,000 years. | |

Search for the clip from <u>Once Were Warriors</u> (1994, New Zealand). It can be found on YouTube by typing the name of the film and "clip haka".

- Watch the clip.
- What emotions does the haka awaken in you?
- Discussion with the whole group.

- Search the internet to find a summary of the plot of the film Remember the Titans (2000, United States). Read the plot.
- Rewrite the plot of the film by moving the main events of the film to another country and culture. Think about what changes and what stays the same. You can also move the events into another time period. You can choose a target culture from the countries mentioned below, or you can choose the culture/s you represent.

- Australia
- Canada
- England
- India

- Ireland
- New Zealand
- Nigeria

- Scotland
- South Africa
- United States
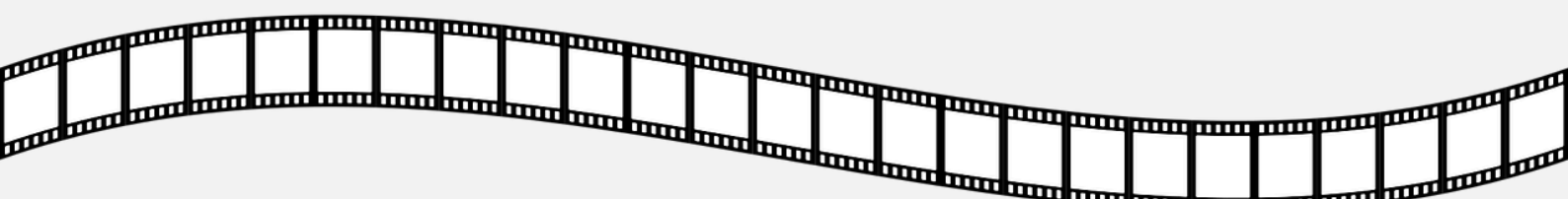
# 7. Arts & scenery

- Discuss in small groups: What kind of music do you listen to? Do you ever listen to film soundtracks? How would you describe your clothing/overall style?

Search for the songs from the films <u>Sarafina!</u> (1992, South Africa, United Kingdom, France, United States), <u>Braveheart</u> (1995, United States), <u>Four Weddings and a Funeral</u> (1994, United Kingdom), <u>Whale Rider</u> (2003, New Zealand, Germany), <u>Boyz n the Hood</u> (1991, United States) and <u>Monsoon Wedding</u> (2001, India, United States, Italy, Germany, France, United Kingdom).
They can be found on YouTube by typing "Sarafina lords prayer", "braveheart a gift of a thistle", "four weddings and a funeral love is all around", "whale rider go forward", "boyz n the hood main theme" and "monsoon wedding chunari chunari".
Play the songs only partly, and on such parts that have no singing, or singing that can't be easily pinpointed to a certain country or culture.
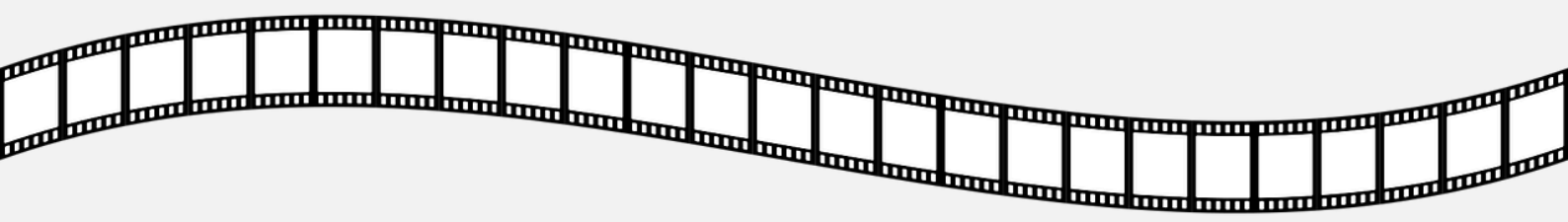
- Listen to some songs from films around the world.
- Try to guess the origin country of the music. Try to justify your guess.

Search for the clips from the films <u>Four Weddings and a Funeral</u> (1994, United Kingdom), <u>Monsoon Wedding</u> (2001, India, United States, Italy, Germany, France, United Kingdom) and <u>The Wedding Party</u> (2016, Nigeria).
They can be found on YouTube by typing "four weddings and a funeral dance", "monsoon wedding chunari chunari" and "the wedding party: all wedding entrances".

- The teacher will put on music that can be danced to and that is known to all. Get up and dance and see how the music naturally makes you move.

- Watch the scenes from the films focusing on the dancing as well as the clothing.
- Discuss with a partner: What are the main things in all the dances that differ from your culture's habit of dancing? What about clothing?

- Form pairs. One gets the films Monsoon Wedding, The Wedding Party and Sarafina!, the other gets Ned Kelly, Four Weddings and a Funeral and Remember the Titans.
- One at a time, search for these films on imdb.com. There you will find a section called filming locations. Do an image search for these filming locations and show your partner pictures of these locations. Your partner will try to guess which country, or even the city the picture is from. They can also try to justify their answer.

Search for the clips from the films Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984, United States) and The Wedding Party (2016, Nigeria).
The first clip can be found on YouTube by typing "Indiana Jones and the temple of doom dinner at Pankot palace". In the case of the other film, the whole film is in YouTube, and the scene involving food is at around the one-hour mark.

- Watch the scenes.
- Discuss in groups: in the film The Wedding Party, how would you describe the main differences when it comes to dealing with food compared to your own culture?
- In Indiana Jones ad the Temple of Doom, the scene might not be accurate in all aspects, but there are certain things that can be thought about. What are the first things that you notice to be different compared to your own culture? How can this scene be harmful when thinking about Indian culture?
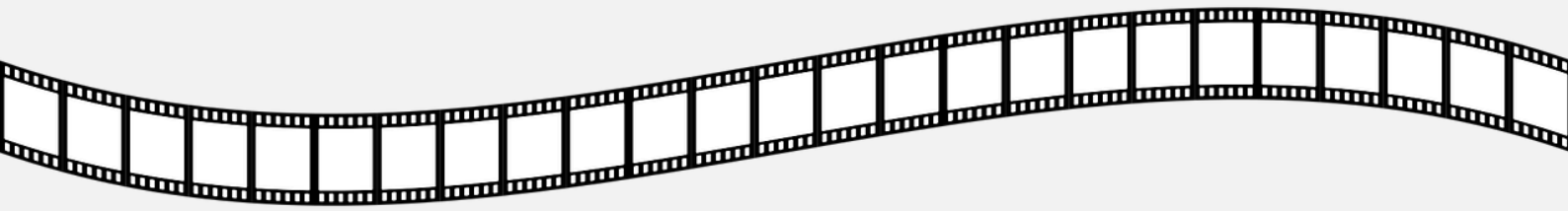
# 8. Sensitive issues

If students do not come up with these topics during the conversation in class, introduce issues such as arranged marriage and having sex before marriage. Are the students familiar with the concept of an arranged marriage? These two issues will be the topics of the debate.

- Discussion with the whole class: Is there something that comes to mind when thinking what could be a sensitive issue when talking about culture?

The basics of this debate exercise: There are four teams. The first two teams will debate on the subject of premarital sex, while the other two teams debate about arranged marriage. Of these topics, one team is for the chosen topic, while the other is against it. The teams will speak alternately for a few minutes at a time, presenting their arguments. While the other team is presenting their argument, the opposing team is recommended to take notes that they can use during their next turn to speak. Each team has three speaking turns, of which the last will be to present their closing statements.
The members in the teams may not agree with the side they are chosen to defend. That is also one of the reasons having this exercise. The students are taught to try to see things from other perspectives than from their own culture's perspective.
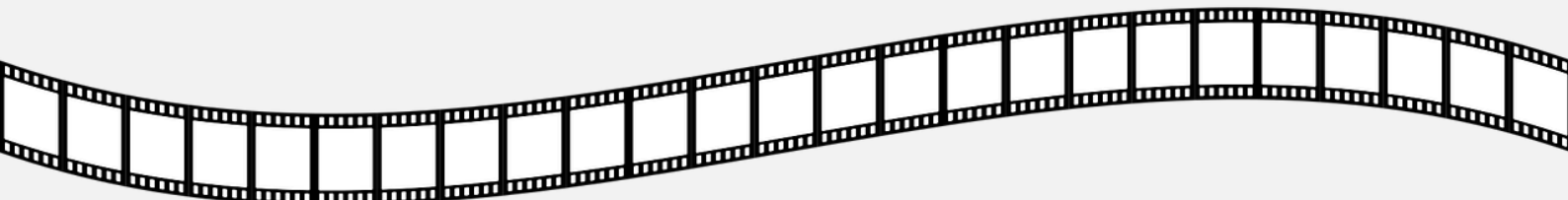
- The teacher tells about the upcoming exercise and the class is divided into four teams:

| Team 1: For premarital sex | Team 2: Against premarital sex |
|---|---|
| Team 3: For arranged marriage | Team 4: Against arranged marriage |

- The teams are given 20 minutes to prepare for defending their side. During this time, the teams will search information on the internet to support their side. They will write down their main points and decide on the order of delivering their lines. They must remember however also to respond reasonably to the other team's arguments.
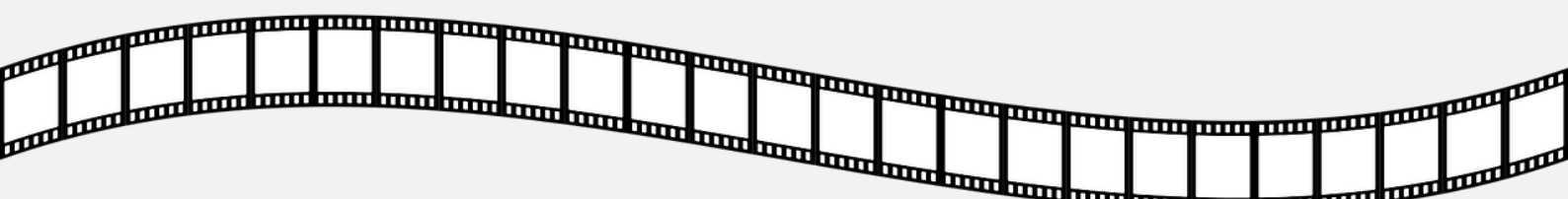- Questions to consider while writing down your arguments:
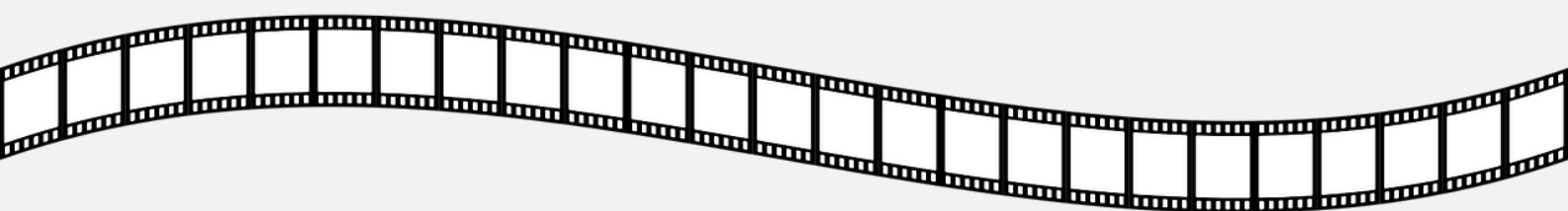
- Why is your side important?
- How can you use culture to justify your arguments?
- What are the downsides of the other side?

Search for the scene from the film <u>The Wedding Party</u> (2016, Nigeria) and the trailer of <u>Monsoon Wedding</u> (2001, India, United States, Italy, Germany, France, United Kingdom). In the case of the first film, it is in YouTube, and the scene in question is at about the one-hour and 25 minute mark. Monsoon Wedding's trailer can also be found on YouTube.

- Watch the scenes.

- The class is divided into groups, so that every group has at least one person from each team. Talk about if the scenes woke any thoughts that did not come up during the debate? Can you understand why the characters are as they are and think as they think? You can also discuss your own opinions about the subjects. Try to come up with justification to why you think the way you do.
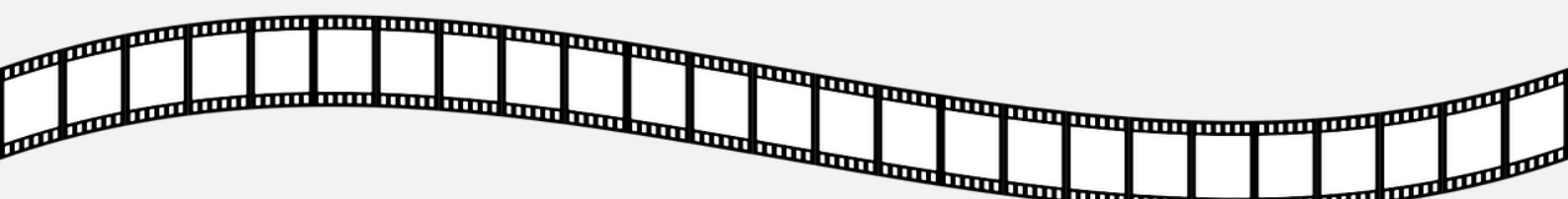
# Extra exercises

## Longer than one lesson exercises

- As there are many films based on Shakespeare's works, there could be a comparison of a film that is more tightly based on his writings such as <u>Twelfth Night</u> (1996, Ireland, United Kingdom) to a modern version of that same story such as <u>She's the Man</u> (2006, United States, Canada). This would offer a great opportunity to also examine the differences between cultures, as one is based in the United Kingdom, and the other in the United States. The same could also be done with for example Jane Austen's works.

- The class could also refilm a scene from some film. This would give students the opportunity to try multiple different posts in a project. The possible rewriting of the script, acting, filming, costuming, set designing, directing... This kind of assignment could also be used to see what changes culturally when the cultural environment and possible time period changes.

- Writing one's own script. This can be done in many ways. For example, the teacher can give certain parameters within which the students must stay. The parameters can be about which cultures and subjects are okay to deal with and so on. The script can be based on an already existing film or book, and the settings and cultures can be changed.

## Shorter exercises for any lesson

- Half of the students watch a scene without hearing the dialogue, while the other half only hears the dialogue without seeing the scene. Then they try to reconstruct the scene together.

- Retelling the story/scene from another character's point of view.

- Writing a continuation on the film if it has an open ending.

- Viewing a film/scene and ticking off items from a list as they happen/ as the things are seen on screen. Ensuring attention.
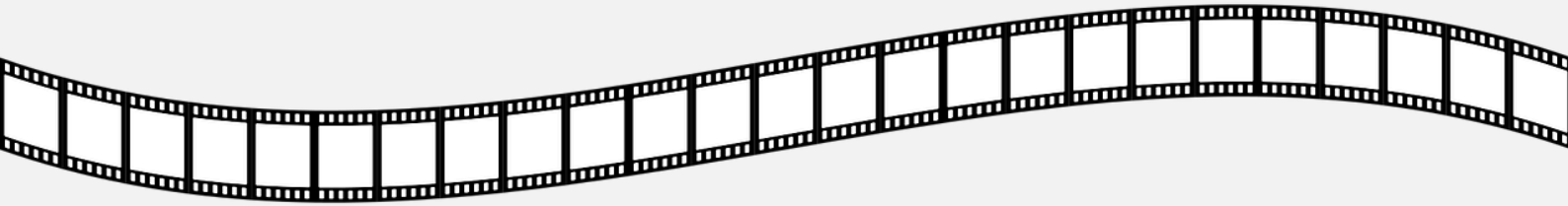
- Put students into groups in which everyone has watched a different film at home. They tell each other about their films with the help of questions such as: What did you learn about the specific culture/s by watching the film? Can you relate to the main character/s and why? What happens in the film?...

Exercises for the whole duration of the course

- Writing a journal while watching films at home. For example, some of the films mentioned in this package can be put on a list and students can decide which films they want to watch. At minimum three films must be watched. While watching these films, the students will write down notes for example about what culture specific things they have learned while watching, or other things they noticed or learned.

- If this material package is organised as a whole short course, it could be good to have a compiling exam or essay about the course. This could be done for example so that during the course, the students need to watch at least two films, of which some are mentioned in this package. These films can be found on YouTube, Yle Areena or for example Netflix. As Netflix is a paid service, the course could have one account to be used by the students one at a time. After watching the films at home, the students write an essay of about 500 words either by comparing the two films according to the themes that have been handled during this course, or they write about how the films handled the issues dealt with during the lessons.