



FIGHTER

Age 13+

FILM – A LANGUAGE WITHOUT BORDERS

A project of

VISION KINO
Netzwerk für Film und
Medienkompetenz

BFI Film
Forever

IFILM
DET DANSKE FILMINSTITUT

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Creative
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THE PROGRAMME »FILM – A LANGUAGE WITHOUT BORDERS«

Film is a language without borders; it has the power to connect people regardless of their origin, age, gender and life experience.

Because contemporary society has been shaped by political and social processes such as industrialisation, colonisation, mediatisation and globalisation, we believe we can use film as part of conversations about identity, community, and belonging.

Based on this understanding, German non-profit organisation **VISION KINO**, together with the **BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE** and the **DANISH FILM INSTITUTE**, have developed this programme, consisting of eight European

feature films for children and young adults, as well as three classic short films.

The selection of films is supplemented by educational materials which will provide students and teachers with opportunities to discuss emotions, identity and the common exploration of European film.

In addition, research in Denmark, England and Germany will examine the way in which the selected films offer children and young adults a collective movie experience as well as an opportunity for intercultural learning. Joint results from the three countries form the starting point for the dissemination of the programme in other European countries.

About us

“Film – A Language Without Borders” is a project of the British Film Institute, the Danish Film Institute and Vision Kino gGmbH and was developed by Mark Reid (BFI), Charlotte Giese (DFI) and Sarah Duve (Vision Kino gGmbH)



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Materials published by:
Vision Kino gGmbH
Network for Film and Media Competence
Sarah Duve (V.i.S.d.P.)
Große Präsidentenstraße 9
D-10178 Berlin
Tel: +49 (0)30 2757 7571

Concept and Text: Laura Caterina Zimmermann
Editorial: Elena Solte
Editors: Lilian Rothaus, Elena Solte
Design: Laura Caterina Zimmermann
Picture Credits: Jens Juncker-Jensen

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY GUIDE

These educational materials refer to the film FIGHTER from the programme “FILM - A LANGUAGE WITHOUT BORDERS”. They are based on the publication “Materials for Film Education in Migration Societies” that contains information on the educational approach underlying the programme, as well as general teaching ideas and reflection offerings.

This particular study guide also provides suggestions for reflection on your lessons. For your personal notes, boxes can be found at the end of each chapter.

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FILM DETAILS

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DURATION: 97 MINS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY: NATASHA ARTHY

Film Themes	Identity, Family, Values, Protest, Martial Arts, Love, Prejudice and Stereotypes, Gender Roles
Teaching Subjects	Religion, Citizenship, Philosophy, Social Studies, Music, Sports
Countries / Year	Denmark / 2007
Grade Levels	Age 13 and above
Age Recommendation	13-year-olds and above
Cast	Semra Turan, Nima Nabipour, Cyron Bjørn Melville, Behruz Banissi, Molly Blixt Egelind, Xian Gao, Sadi Tekelioglu, Denize Karabuda, Ertugrul Yilan, Özlem Saglanmak
Production Company	Nimbus Film
Language	Danish and Turkish with English subtitles
Format	digital, colour
Rating	PG – Parental Guidance

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SYNOPSIS

At school Ayşe is introduced to the martial art of Kung Fu. Quickly she becomes the best and her teacher recommends a prestigious Kung Fu club where she would be trained at her level. Ayşe knows that her father will not allow her to do that. He just about accepts that she took up Kung Fu in order to defend herself. However, since women and men are being trained together at the new club, as expected, he forbids her from participating. A game of 'hide-and-seek' begins: Ayşe secretly goes to training four times a week, feigning good grades to reassure her father, who sees her as a future doctor, and together with Yasemin prepares for her upcoming engagement party to Yasemin's brother Ali.

However, her many obligations and the secrecy are soon beginning to overwhelm her. To obtain the black belt, her coach determines that Emil, a boy from the team, should train with her every day. Emil likes Ayşe and tries his hardest to find out whether Ayşe returns his feelings. She does, but more important to her is the Kung Fu training and the upcoming big competition for which she has signed up.

During the black belt exam, Omar suddenly appears who is supposed to fight against her. Since he refuses to fight a girl, the coach throws him out of the team. By accident, Ayşe discovers that Omar is a friend of Yasemin's sister and has long known who she is. At the engagement party of Yasemin and Ali he reveals Ayşe's secret. This results in a big dispute and many misunderstandings whereupon Yasemin's parents call off the engagement.

Ayşe's family is so angry and disappointed that the father sends her away from home. After meeting a friend from the Kung Fu club, Ayşe learns that she will not be relocated and that she will have to repeat the class. She makes the difficult decision to turn her back on Kung Fu in order to reconcile with her family. She helps her father, who is studying for his taxi driver's license, when she receives a phone call from Yasemin. Ali is in danger because Yasemin's family has learned that she is four months pregnant. Only with her kung fu skills can Ayşe save her brother from a beating by Yasemin's brother.

Ayşe advises her brother to apologise to the family and decides to attend the Kung Fu competition after all. She tells her father that she will not study medicine. He seems to accept that he cannot change his daughter. At the competition, she wins against Emil and enters the finals against Omar, with whom she reconciles.

Characteristic of martial arts films are fight scenes, which are usually staged very artistically and stylised. Since every fight can be reminiscent of a real act of violence, you should prepare your students for the genre and the fight scenes that occur in it.

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BEFORE THE FILM

GENRE MARTIAL ARTS

FIGHTER is a martial arts film. A suitable preparation for the film is an introduction to film genres in general and martial arts films in particular.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING

Group work on film genres

Groups of 3 – 4 students each choose a film genre that they are familiar with. Using the following questions, the students discuss that genre:

- What films can you think of from that genre?
- What is a typical scene for that genre?
- What sets this genre apart from other genres?

Afterwards the selected film genres will be introduced to the others in a short presentation.

Research Assignment on Martial Arts Films

- What is a martial arts film?
- Which martial arts are mainly shown in martial arts films?
- Who are important directors and actors in martial arts films?
- What are typical narrative structures of martial arts films?

SUGGESTED REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Which film genres are known to most students?
- What expectations do students have of the film?



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AFTER THE FILM

DISCUSSING THE EXPERIENCE

After the film, ask the class to express their first reactions and then open up the room for questions.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING

The following teaching suggestions can either be combined with each other or implemented individually.

Film Discussion

- What would you like to say about the film?
- What questions remained unanswered in the film? Is there something you did not understand?
- Did you like the film? Why?

Acting Out Key Scenes

In small groups of about 4 students a key scene from the film is reenacted. The scene is selected by the group, rehearsed and then presented to the group. Together, the scenes are matched with the story:

- Is the scene from the beginning, the middle or the end of the movie?
- Find a caption for the scene that describes what it is mainly about.
- What made you choose this particular scene?

Interpreting the End of the Film

Remember the end of the film.

- What do you think Ayşe's father will think of her martial arts from now on?
- What do you think will happen between Ayşe and Emil?

Message of the Film

Every film has a message or several messages.

What do you think the filmmaker wants to tell us with this film?

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SUGGESTED REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Did the students like the film?
- Which themes in the film did the students find most interesting?
- Which protagonists were most popular with the students? What is the reason for that?
- What did students like about the film, what did they not like?



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PROTAGONIST AYŞE

The film shows the protagonist going through a difficult phase in her life. Everyone around Ayşe seems to expect something from her: her parents want her to study medicine and become engaged to Yasemin's brother; the Kung Fu coach wants to see Ayşe perform her best; Ayşe's teacher encourages her to study more and Emil would like to have a relationship with her. Only slowly does she find out how she wants to position herself and what it is that she really wants.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING

Charakterise Ayşe

Collectively characteristics are gathered that match Ayşe. Each student gives an example of a scene from the film in which this character trait comes to the fore.

Running as a Metaphor

When Ayşe is on the streets of Copenhagen we almost always see her running. She is often in a hurry, but the running can also be understood symbolically. In the final scene we can see Ayşe walking slowly for the first time under a motorway bridge.

- Why is Ayşe so often shown running? Think about the practical reason for this and what it could symbolise.
- What is Ayşe running away from?
- Why is Ayşe walking slowly for the first time in the final scene?

The Film Title

In the original Danish version (as well as the UK release) the film is called FIGHTER, in the German version this was changed to FIGHTGIRL AYŞE.

- What is Ayşe fighting for and against?
- Is Ayşe winning this fight?
- What different expectations do the original title and the German title raise?
- Can you think of alternative titles that would also be suitable for the film?

Symbolic Language of the Dream Scene

A recurring element in the film is the dream scene in which Ayşe fights against a black-dressed and masked person. Ayşe's interaction with the masked person changes and in the end she defeats it. Ayşe's transformation can be reconstructed by looking at the film stills (p. 21). The three scenes shown are separated into individual images and distributed to small groups of 4-5 students. The students put the film stills in the right order and analyse the pictures together:

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- What is shown in the pictures?
- What postures and expressions does Ayşe have in the pictures?
- What could be the meaning of the dream scenes?

Rewrite the dialogue between Ayşe and her father

After Ali was beaten up by Yasemin's brother and Ayşe saved her brother with her Kung Fu skills, she has a conversation with her father.

Father: "If you hadn't acted like that they would be married now. And I'd be a taxi driver. What are we going to do with you? Who wants someone like you? You're not good for anything and it doesn't look like this will ever change."

Ayşe: "Right. It's true what you're saying, dad. I can't do it."

Father: „What?"

Ayşe: „My A levels."

Father: "You're bad at school. As if we don't already have enough trouble."

Ayşe: „I'm just not like Ali."

Consecutively, every student is assigned the role of either Ayşe or Ayşe's father and reads the dialogue out loud together with another student, so that at the end everyone has read each role once.

Then they discuss the following:

- How do you feel as Ayşe's father in this conversation?
- How do you feel as Ayşe in this conversation?

Afterwards, the students write a new dialogue between Ayşe and her father discussing the consequences of the escalation at the engagement party. How could the conversation between the two have been different?

Again, the new dialogue is read out loud by the class taking on the different roles.

Planning the future – naming personal strengths

Ayşe's father has very precise ideas about the future of his daughter. Ayşe does not really know what she wants to do. Do the students already know how they imagine their future career?

As a first step towards a career aspiration, students think of their own strengths and write them down. Then they read out loud one strength and give an example why this strength distinguishes them particularly. For each student one additional strength is identified by the class.

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SUGGESTED REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Could the students identify with Ayşe?
- Which tasks were more difficult for the students than others? What could be the reason?
- What do the students think of the opinion and behaviour of Ayşe's father?
- Do the students already know how they imagine their future careers?



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FILM DESIGN

The film lives from its extraordinary editing and its visual aesthetics such as lights/shadows and colour design. Ayşe is mostly seen running. It alternates between different camera settings (long shot, medium long-shot, close-up, medium close-up and sometimes extreme close-up), which adds a lot of dynamic pace to the film. This editing style is also used for fights and situations of conflict.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING

Parallel Montage

In a parallel montage, the narrative switches back and forth between two or more storylines. This type of editing is used very impressively twice in FIGHTER. Students work in groups of 3-4 on the worksheet Parallel Montage. The worksheet includes film stills that have been cross-cut and should be analysed using the questions on the worksheet. The groups can choose to analyse either both or one of the two scenes.

Afterwards, the results can be compared on the worksheets and the following questions discussed:

- What effect does the parallel montage have on you?
- Can you think of any other situations in the film where a parallel montage could also be used?

Slow Motion Technique

The film uses slow motion technique several times. Ayşe's face is always close or very close in these scenes. Slow motion is used, for example, to give a moment a special meaning. The effect of using this technique is to be examined using some images from three scenes shown in slow motion. You will find the scene pictures in the appendix (p. 17 - 19).

- Which scene is this?
- How does the slow motion technique work in this scene?
- Why do you think it was used?

Afterwards, the students write an inner monologue from the viewpoint of Ayşe during one of the three moments or from Emil's viewpoint during the one illustrated moment.

- What is Ayşe/Emil thinking?
- What is Ayşe/Emil worried about?
- What does Ayşe/Emil wish for?

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SUGGESTED REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Did the students remember the film's storyline well?
- What means of visual design are students familiar with from their use of smartphones?



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GROUP WORKSHEET

PARALLEL MONTAGE

In a parallel montage, the narrative switches back and forth between two or more storylines.

Look at the film stills and answer the following questions:

- What part of the film are these scenes from?

- What happens in these scenes?

- What do these scenes have in common?

- What is the parallel montage trying to show? What effect is it trying to have?

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FILM STILLS FOR GROUP WORKSHEET

PARALLEL MONTAGE (SCENE 1)



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FILM STILLS FOR GROUP WORKSHEET

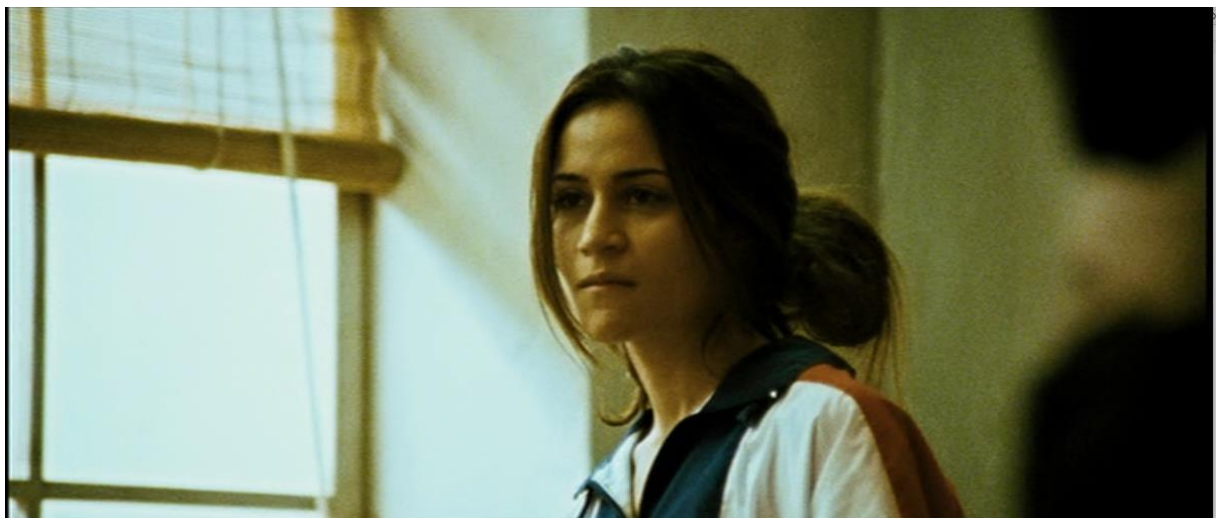
PARALLEL MONTAGE (SCENE 2)



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FILM STILLS

SLOW-MOTION-TECHNIQUE (1)



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FILM STILLS

SLOW-MOTION-TECHNIQUE (2)



FIGHTER

FILM STILLS

SLOW-MOTION-TECHNIQUES (3)



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FILM STILLS

DREAM SCENES

