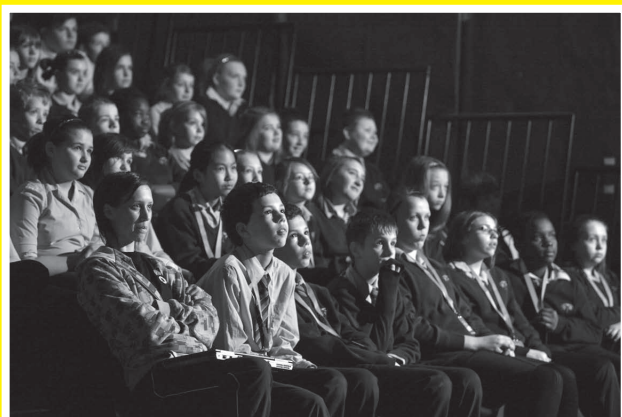


# Case study: Projector Community Languages

## Using the Foreign Language curriculum to engage in wider viewing of world cinema

This was a pilot project under the *Film: 21st Century Literacy* strategy that aimed to:

- Create partnerships between schools and their local independent cinema
- Increase access to film education for young people aged 14–19 through exploring cultures and languages spoken within the diverse communities of Manchester and the North West
- Focus on the community languages of Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu and Italian
- Increase understanding of the languages spoken in the region
- Break down barriers and increase social cohesion



A range of study sessions, creative workshops and CPD training for teachers took place at the Cornerhouse cinema in Manchester and at several schools in the region.

The study sessions involved the screening of the film followed by an engagement session with study materials that encouraged young people to look beyond the surface of the screen and think critically about the films' intentions, techniques and qualities, developing their engagement in filmmaking.

The Arabic film used was *A Thousand Months* (Faouzi Bensaidi, 2003), which was studied for GCSE and AS/A2 levels. *A Thousand Months* enabled the exploration of village life, family relationships, school life, Ramadan, and social issues. The project also included a creative workshop for young people studying Arabic that focused on a visual arts exhibition in Cornerhouse's galleries – Contemporary Art Iraq

Kassim Darwish is an independent Muslim school for boys aged from 11–16 years based in South Manchester. The school has 162 students who are British Muslims from different ethnic groups. In the October 2010 Ofsted report, no students were learning English as a second language or had special educational needs. Arabic, Urdu and French were taught at the school.

- 92% of the young people said that attending the study session increased their understanding of other cultures
- 94% also said that the session had definitely increased their interest in learning languages
- Pupils studying Arabic in years 8, 9, 10 and 11 at Kassim Darwish Grammar School for Boys created an animation in response to the exhibition in Arabic
- Overall, the numbers of pupils who said they wanted to go on to study languages at A Level rose by one fifth

The animation in response to *A Thousand Months* produced by the young people can be seen at:

[www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-media/a-thousand-newspapers](http://www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-media/a-thousand-newspapers)

*"I really hope more sessions like these can take place, because over the last few months, I've seen improvements in my students' confidence and in using Arabic."*

Arabic Teacher, Kassim Darwish School

## Teachers' pedagogic practice

The Arabic language teacher reported educational and cultural benefits of attending the workshop:

- Bringing my students to Cornerhouse to learn Arabic through film, contemporary art and digital technology has been extremely valuable, because the learning is fun, enjoyable and much more engaging
- Learning Arabic in a creative environment, like the cinema and gallery spaces, was very stimulating and motivating. Working alongside a language tutor from Manchester Metropolitan University and an artist/filmmaker is a great opportunity for them to also learn other skills (such as making an animation, shooting a film, recording sound), as well as improving their language skills
- The role play activities that took place after watching the film was a real highlight, because every student had to take part to re-enact a scene, using Arabic

## Parents' view

*"I'm starting to get positive comments from the parents, who are very happy that I have taken them to these events, because their children come home talking about what they have been doing and how much they enjoyed themselves."*

Arabic Teacher, Kassim Darwish School

## Long-term legacy

As a result of the successful creative workshop sessions, Cornerhouse commissioned the development of a series of film-based resources for educators wanting to teach languages using film in the classroom, with a particular focus on Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu and Italian. These are available to download from the Cornerhouse website: [www.cornerhouse.org/education/resources-download](http://www.cornerhouse.org/education/resources-download)

The pilot also commissioned the development of a Teacher's Toolkit as a guide for educators wanting to teach languages using film in the classroom, with a particular focus on Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu and Italian. This is available to download for free from: [www.cornerhouse.org/film/film-media/toolkit-for-teachers-using-film-to-teach-languages](http://www.cornerhouse.org/film/film-media/toolkit-for-teachers-using-film-to-teach-languages)

## Summary of the benefits of using film in education

- Increases young people's interest in foreign language learning
- Makes foreign language learning relevant, accessible and stimulating
- Combines foreign language learning with art and film, and increases other skills (such as presentation and ICT)
- Gives students access to films in languages that are rarely seen in mainstream film distribution and from countries that may not be widely distributed in the UK
- Allows students to explore cultures and languages spoken within diverse communities
- Builds links between students and their local independent cinema, often for the first time

## Facts and Figures

- £13,000 invested by *Film: 21st Century Literacy*, with additional funding from Routes Into Languages
- 190 young people participated, from 11 mainstream or supplementary schools
- 25 teachers attended the INSET session at Cornerhouse
- 8 teachers attended the six study sessions with young people
- 10 language and film professionals delivered study sessions
- 7 creative engagement workshops delivered
- 6 study guides produced, for GCSE Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu and Italian
- 1 Teachers Toolkit published, to help other teachers integrate world cinema into languages teaching

