

DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival
for Young Audiences

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Teachers' Resource Pack: **Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake**

Second and Third Level | Created by Sarah Sturrock

Discovery Film Festival | Mon 2 – Wed 18 November 2026

DCA

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ONE CITY, MANY DISCOVERIES

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ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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dca.org.uk/discovery-film-festival

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Introduction

Discovery Learning Resources give you exciting classroom activities to enhance Curriculum for Excellence delivery.

They are created by classroom teachers and education professionals.

Each resource aims to:

- support and extend working with film in the classroom
- help prepare teachers for a class visit to a Discovery Film Festival film and to extend the impact of that visit for delivery of CfE
- develop confidence in Moving Image Education approaches and working with 21st Century Literacy/moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from:

<https://www.dca.org.uk/discovery-film-festival-resources/>

Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake (L'Olivia i el terratrèmol invisible)

Dir: Irene Iborra Rizo

Spain/France/Belgium/Switzerland, 2025/1h 11min

French and Catalan with English subtitles



Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake

(L'Olívia i el terratrèmol invisible)

Synopsis:

When 12-year-old Olivia, her little brother Tim, and their mother are forced to leave their home and start again in a new community, Olivia turns their difficult situation into an adventure. Convincing Tim that they are starring in a film, she uses imagination, friendship and courage to help their family face change and discover their own strength. The film is French/Catalan with English subtitles.

Advisory note:

The film explores themes of poverty, anxiety and depression, which may prompt discussion around learners' own experiences or those of people they know. Teachers should be mindful that some learners may have personal experience of financial hardship, housing insecurity, family difficulties or mental health challenges. The film deals with it in an empathetic and supportive manner. Should discussions around mental health and wellbeing raise concerns, teachers should follow their usual wellbeing and safeguarding procedures.

The film contains one instance of bad language. Teachers may wish to make learners aware of this beforehand and use it as an opportunity to discuss appropriate language choices in different contexts.

Teacher's notes:

Age and stage recommendations, including CfE objectives:

The film is suitable for ages 10 and above. This pack is aimed at Second and Third Level learners. This film is recommended for P6–S2. The following CfE Experiences and Outcomes are covered in this pack:

Literacy and English: **LIT 2-02a / LIT 3-02a, LIT 2-07a / LIT 3-07a, LIT 2-10a / LIT 3-10a, LIT 2-20a / LIT 3-20a, LIT 2-26a / LIT 3-26a**

Expressive Arts: **EXA 2-02a / EXA 3-02a, EXA 2-05a / EXA 3-05a, EXA 2-19a / EXA 3-19a**

Health and Wellbeing: **HWB 2-01a / HWB 3-01a, HWB 2-08a / HWB 3-08a, HWB 2-13a / HWB 3-13a, HWB 2-44b / HWB 3-44b**

Social Studies: **SOC 2-16b / SOC 3-16b**



Teacher quote:

Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake provides an excellent opportunity to explore themes of mental health, resilience and change through the eyes of a young person. Its beautiful animation helps communicate complex emotions in an accessible way, while the subtitles encourage learners to engage with multilingual texts. Film is a powerful tool in the classroom, offering high levels of engagement while supporting literacy, comprehension and critical thinking. As Scotland's Film Education framework develops, films like this allow learners not only to analyse moving image texts but also to explore how stories can be told through filmmaking and animation.

Before watching the film:

Activity 1: Judging a Film by the Poster (Literacy, HWB, Expressive Arts)

To analyse visual clues in a film poster. To make predictions about a film's themes and story.
To explain and justify opinions using evidence.

Part 1:

Display the poster and ask learners:

What do you notice?

Record observations in their jotter/on a whiteboard under the following headings:

- Characters
- Settings
- Objects
- Emotions

Encourage learners to look beyond the obvious. For example, discussion prompts or given questions could be: Why are the children in a shopping trolley? Why are they above the city? Why are they smiling? Why might the city beneath them appear grey?

Part 2: Think, Pair, Share

In pairs/ small groups discuss the following questions:

- What do you think the title might mean?
- What clues suggest this might be a hopeful story?
- What challenges do you think the characters might face?

Activity 1: Judging a Film by the Poster (Literacy, HWB, Expressive Arts)

Part 3: Film Literacy Focus

Film posters are designed to tell us something about a film before we watch it. Whole class discussion.

Why do you think the filmmakers chose:

- Bright blue skies?
- A shopping trolley?
- A city backdrop?
- The yellow lettering?
- A group of people rather than one character?

Part 4: Prediction Challenge

Write a short prediction to come back to after the film.

Based on the poster, I think Olivia's Invisible Earthquake is _____. I think the film will explore the themes of _____ because _____.

Part 5: Third Level Extension

The poster includes review quotes 'Wonderful' and 'Touching'

Discuss:

- Why might filmmakers include reviews on a poster?
- What expectations do these words create?
- How might these influence whether someone chooses to watch the film?



Activity 2: **Meet Olivia (Literacy & Film Literacy)**

Focus: Character Analysis

Learners create a character profile for Olivia using evidence from the film.

Include:

- Personality traits
- Challenges she faces
- Important relationships
- Things she fears
- Things she hopes for
- Evidence from specific scenes

They could complete this task in pairs/ as a whole class then create one for one of the other characters independently.

Extension (Third Level):

Discuss how the filmmaker helps us understand Olivia's emotions through facial expressions, music, dialogue and animation.





Activity 3: **Meet Olivia (Literacy & Film Literacy)**

In the film, Olivia and her family reflect on a hot air balloon trip taken with their father before he died. The balloon becomes a symbol of an important family memory and the people we carry with us even when they are no longer present.

Discuss:

- Why are memories important?
- Can places, objects or photographs remind us of people?
- Why might the filmmakers have chosen a hot air balloon for this scene?
- What feelings do the colours in the scene create?

Creative Task:

Create a hot air balloon collage or artwork.

Inside the balloon, learners can include:

- Important memories
- Special places
- People who have helped them grow
- Experiences that make them who they are

The basket can contain:

- Values they carry with them
- Skills they've learned
- Things they want to remember

Extension (Third Level):

Discuss how filmmakers use colour, lighting, music and symbolism to communicate emotions and memories.



Activity 4: **The Superheroes of Our Own Lives (Health & Wellbeing)**

The film contains the quote: "We're the superheroes of our own lives."

Discuss:

- What makes a real-life superhero?
- Does a superhero need powers?

Task: Learners design their own "Everyday Hero" profile.

Include:

- Their strengths
- People they help
- Challenges they've overcome
- Their support team

Extension:

Create a comic strip showing a real-life act of courage or kindness.

Activity 5: **Community Matters (Social Studies & Health & Wellbeing)**

Focus on Mamafatou bringing food and supporting the family.

Discuss:

- Why was this moment important?
- How can communities support one another?

Create a class mind map:

- What makes a strong community?

Learners then investigate/ Research:

- Local food banks
- Community fridges
- School breakfast clubs
- Mutual aid projects

They can create poster/leaflets/presentations/videos/podcasts and share with the class/wider school community in order to encourage acts of community kindness.



Activity 6: **Hacking It! (Music & Literacy)**

In the film we see them perform a rap about 'Hacking It' and dealing with living in the situation they do.

Discuss:

- Why might music help people express emotions?
- Why do people write songs about difficult experiences?

Challenge:

Write and perform a short rap about:

- Overcoming a challenge
- Supporting a friend
- Belonging
- Resilience

Could be performed live or recorded using GarageBand or any video/voice recording tool.

Activity 7: **Telling Stories Through Sand (Expressive Arts)**

In the film, when Mamafatou decides to look after Olivia and Tim, she tells them the story of her life using sand to do this. Create a piece of artwork inspired by Mamafatou's sand sequence.

Discuss:

- Why might someone choose art rather than words to tell a story?

Create:

Learners create a visual representation of an important memory using sand, chalk, collage, digital drawing, textured materials or natural materials.

Then write a short explanation of the story behind their artwork.

Activity 8: **Hidden Challenges (Social Studies & Health & Wellbeing)**

The film explores poverty and hidden struggles. Explore the concept that not every challenge is visible.

Provide anonymised scenarios involving caring responsibilities, financial difficulties, moving house and anxiety.

Discuss:

- How might this person feel?
- What support could help?

Introduce the concept of:

- Young Carers
- Community support services
- Trusted adults

Keep the focus on empathy and understanding rather than personal disclosure.



Useful websites/links:

Young Carers:

Dundee: <https://carersofdundee.org/carers/young-carers/>

Fife: <https://fifeyoungcarers.co.uk>

Perth and Kinross: <https://www.pkavs.org.uk/carers-support/young-carers/>

Angus: <https://www.anguscarers.org.uk/young-carers/>





Evaluating this resource

We hope that you found this resource useful and appropriate. Please do send us any film reviews, letters from your pupils, documentation of classwork and your feedback by e-mailing olivia.knight@dca.org.uk

Would you make a good Discovery Film Festival Case Study?

We are seeking a number of simple Case Studies in how teachers have used or are using Discovery films in the classroom across Curriculum for Excellence and across the Levels.

Any case studies that we develop would be intended for presentation on GLOW, the Creativity Portal and on Discovery Film Festival websites. We have a simple template to be completed and are keen to have classwork and documentation included. If you would like to be a Discovery Case Study please e-mail olivia.knight@dca.org.uk