

# DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival  
for Young Audiences

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## Teachers' Resource Pack: **Bullets**

Senior Phase | Created by Andrew McLaughlin

**Discovery Film Festival: Sat 21 October – Sun 5 November 2023**

**DCA**

Dundee Contemporary Arts

**DUNDEE**  
ONE CITY, MANY DISCOVERIES

CREATIVE LAND SCOT  
ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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[discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk](http://discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk)

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With support from the DCA Cinema and Learning teams



## 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy/moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from:  
<http://www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk/resources>:

### ***Bullets***

Dir: Peter Pontikis

Sweden 2023 / 1h35m

Swedish with English subtitles



## Before watching the film

### Activities

**Trailer:** <https://vimeo.com/781747043>

#### **In a PSHE class:**

- Discuss the ambitions of your pupils
- Who can help them realise their dreams?
- What obstacles might prevent them?

#### **In a Modern Studies class:**

Try to illicit the class's prior knowledge and understanding of Sweden.

- Ask your class to describe Sweden and create a mindmap/word cloud of the most common ideas.
- You may want to ask them to compare their ideas of Sweden with Scotland.
  - Is it a more diverse country than Scotland?
  - Is it a richer country?
  - Is it a more equal county?
  - Are the houses different?
  - Are the schools different?

Discuss social and economic inequality in Scotland.

- What is the nature and extent of inequality in Scotland? How do we know?
- What are the causes of social and economic inequality?
- What are the consequences of social and economic inequality – on individuals, on families, on communities, on wider society?





## After watching the film

### The individual and the collective:

*Bullets* is very much about Abdel's hard choices. We see him try to do the right thing, but routinely get pulled into the dangerous and chaotic world of the gang.

### PSE Class discussion:

Making choices.

- What you would have done in Abdel's situation?
- How easy or difficult is it to do the right thing all the time?
- How do you think Abdel's situation contrasts with how those around him perceive his actions?
- Can you think of other situations where we judge people without knowing what they have actually been through? Has it happened to you?
- What lessons can be learned from a movie like *Bullets* when it comes to judging others?

*I recognise that each individual has a unique blend of abilities and needs. I contribute to making my school community one which values individuals equally and is a welcoming place for all. **HWB 4-10a***

*I make full use of and value the opportunities I am given to improve and manage my learning and, in turn, I can help to encourage learning and confidence in others. **HWB 4-11a***

### PSE Class discussion:

Getting Support and Being Supportive.

Abdel's teacher tries to help him despite the Head Teacher's objections.

- What were his motives? Do you think his own backstory shaped this?
- Do you think that the school as an institution should have done more to help Abdel?
- Which other individuals or organisations should have done more?
- Why didn't they?
- How could you help a friend in a similar situation?

### Research activity:

Have the class do some research to identify organisations the young people might turn to in Scotland.

*I understand that there are people I can talk to and that there are a number of ways in which I can gain access to practical and emotional support to help me and others in a range of circumstances.*

**HWB 4-03a**





### **In a Modern Studies class:**

Ali tries to help his students develop positive ambitions and dreams.

- Why do you think so many of the students struggle to value this opportunity?
- What responsibilities and opportunities do you have as an individual to create your own future?
- Are you limited by something? If so, what?
- What responsibilities and opportunities do you have to help your friends/peers?
- Who else can support you to create your own future?

### **Director's comment (Peter Pontikis):**

“*Bullets* is a project that sprung out of my own experiences as a substitute teacher in an area called Järva outside of Stockholm. When I started working there it was highly segregated, but not close to what it would be ten years later. Around 2017 the gun violence escalated at an alarming rate, and I reconnected with teachers and social workers that I knew back when I was working in Järva. I started interviewing them for what I thought at the time was a documentary. But soon I realized that this project would be far better as a fiction film especially after I decided to tell the story from the point of view of a 12-year-old boy. In the end *Bullets* is based a lot on research, but I think also that we, through the fictionalized accounts in the story, manage to bring out a higher truth about what it's like to grow up in an environment that doesn't allow you to remain a child; and where the failings of the adult world constantly force new generations into a life of alienation”.

- Does the fact that this film is based on real-life experiences of a teacher in Sweden surprise your class?

*I understand that there are people I can talk to and that there are a number of ways in which I can gain access to practical and emotional support to help me and others in a range of circumstances.*

### **HWB 4-03a**

*Based on my interests, skills, strengths and preferences, I am supported to make suitable, realistic and informed choices, set manageable goals and plan for my further transitions. **HWB 4-19a***

*Based on my interests, skills, strengths and preferences, I am supported to make suitable, realistic and I am investigating different careers/occupations, ways of working, and learning and training paths. I am gaining experience that helps me recognise the relevance of my learning, skills and interests to my future life. **HWB 4-20a***





### Modern Studies:

Social and Economic Inequalities (SQA Nationals, Higher)

Throughout the film, we see signs that money is tight in Abdel's household.

- Was poverty important in shaping the choices made by Abdel?
- How widespread is poverty in Scotland?
- How can poverty be reduced? Who is responsible?
- What role can the voluntary sector play in reducing inequality? (Consider the urban farm in the film)

Throughout the film, we see signs that money is tight in Abdel's household.

- Is ethnicity linked to social and economic inequalities?
- What impact does race/ethnicity have on shaping some people's lives?
- To what extent did community identity affect the police's ability to intervene or support the community? Can you think of examples of this kind of strain in Scotland?
- Why might some communities not trust the police/other authorities?

*I can explain why a group I have identified might experience inequality and can suggest ways in which this inequality might be addressed. **SOC 3-16a***

*I can contribute to a discussion on the extent to which people's needs should be met by the state or the individual. **SOC 4-16a***

*I can analyse the factors contributing to the development of a multicultural society and can express an informed view on issues associated with this. **HWB 4-20a***

**National 5** – Causes, Consequences and Responses to Social and Economic Inequality.

**National 5** – Responses to Crime – Police – effectiveness of the police in Scotland in tackling crime.





## Relationships:

Abdel's friends routinely pick on him throughout the film, yet he remains loyal to them.

- Why is it so difficult for Abdel to break away this friendship group?
- Why does this leave him more vulnerable?

Abdel's uncle is an authoritative figure in his life but he judges Abdel without understanding the motives for his actions.

- Why is this relationship so strained?

Abdel's mother is fearful for her son's future.

- How does this shape her relationship with him?
- How do Abdel's actions and choices impact on the relationship between his mother and his uncle?

*I understand the importance of being cared for and caring for others in relationships, and can explain why. HWB 4-44a*

*I recognise that power can exist within relationships and can be used positively as well as negatively. HWB 4-45a*

*I can explain the importance and the enduring and complex responsibility of being a parent/carer, and the impact on life choices and options. HWB 4-51a*





