

# TEACHING TRAILERS 2017 ONLINE TEACHERS' NOTES

## Introduction

Teaching Trailers 2017 returns with a focus on developing students' understanding of the narrative image of trailers and the way in which they encourage audiences to want to see the film. We have retained the very successful format of previous versions of the resource so that all activities, along with a selection of new trailers, are now hosted on our website. To ensure regular updates and free resources register at: <http://www.thefilmSPACE.org/contact-us/>

## Website

The activities on the website are designed to build students' knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the moving image, with a specific focus on film trailers as a genre in its own right. The home page hosts all the trailers in a clip viewer, organised by genre:

### Action adventure

*The Book of Henry*  
*War for the Planet of the Apes*  
*Wonder Woman*  
*King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*  
*The Mummy*  
*Spiderman – Homecoming*  
*Baby Driver*  
*Guardians of the Galaxy 2*

### Biopic

*An Inconvenient Sequel*  
*Churchill*

### Fantasy

*Pirates of the Caribbean 5*  
*War for the Planet of the Apes*  
*Wonder Woman*

### Comedy

*Despicable Me 3*  
*Cars 3*  
*Hampstead*  
*Diary of a Wimpy Kid 4*  
*Whisky Galore*  
*A Man Called Ove*  
*Guardians of the Galaxy 2*  
*Snatched*

### Drama

*Frantz*  
*After the storm*  
*My Life As A Courgette*  
*Colossal*  
*Sarkar 3*  
*Jawbone*  
*The Red Turtle*  
*Miss Sloane*

## Historical drama

*The Beguiled*  
*Dunkirk*  
*Churchill*  
*The Zookeepers Wife*  
*King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*  
*Lady Macbeth*  
*My Cousin Rachel*

## Romance

*My Cousin Rachel*  
*A Man Called Ove*

## Sci-fi

*Blade Runner*  
*Valerian*

## Foreign

*Frantz*  
*After the storm*  
*Sarkar 3*  
*A Man Called Ove*

The website can be accessed at <http://www.thefilmSPACE.org/teachingtrailers/2017/>

The site is organised into four main sections: THEORY, ANALYSIS, NARRATIVE IMAGE & CLOSE READING. It is expected that teachers will use the on-screen materials for whole-class teaching and the downloadable PDFs to direct individual note-taking. Teachers can use the resource as a structured approach to this topic or select individual sections to target specific learning objectives.

## Theory

This section includes a range of activities to encourage students to consider:

- **What trailers are** – based on the trailer for *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet, students consider definitions of a trailer and reflect on how trailers fit within a film distributor's marketing campaign.
- **Why trailers are produced** – based on the trailers for *The Red Turtle*, *Churchill* and *Spiderman – Homecoming*, an activity designed to explore the purpose of trailers in terms of raising audience awareness and interest in a film.
- **Who trailers are aimed at** – based on the trailers for *My Life as a Courgette*, *Hampstead* and *War for the Planet of the Apes*, and supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet, an activity to explore how film distributors produce trailers aimed at specific audiences.

- **How trailers help fill cinemas** – based on the trailers *The Mummy*, *Baby Driver* and *Blade Runner 2049*, an activity to learn about the importance of promoting 'unique selling points' (USP) in film marketing campaigns
- **Where trailers are shown** – an activity designed to encourage students to reflect on where trailers are found and how this might impact on audience response - supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet.
- **When trailers are released** – based on trailers for *Snatched*, *Wonder Woman* and *The Beguiled* an activity for students to consider how the timing of a trailer's release is designed for maximum audience impact.

Specific trailer examples are used to develop students' understanding of the purpose and style of this particular marketing format.

## Analysis

This section requires students to analyse different elements of film trailers in detail. Close reading of each trailer will develop students' knowledge and understanding of key areas of study including:

- **Genre** – based on trailers for the sci-fi films *Guardians of the Galaxy 2*, *Blade Runner* and *Colossal*, an activity designed to support students learning to identify specific genre features.
- **Conventions** – an interactive sorting and matching activity to establish some of the key conventions of film trailers.
- **Structure** – based on the trailer for *A Man Called Ove*, an activity to develop students' ability to observe and analyse the structural conventions of a film trailer - supported by a downloadable PDF worksheet and interview footage with Dan Skinner explaining how trailers are produced for foreign language films.
- **Soundtrack** – an active listening task based on the trailer for *Jawbone* to focus students' attention on the purpose and effect a film trailer's soundtrack.

## Narrative Image

This section of the resource offers students an introduction to the concept of narrative image and its relationship to film trailers. With links to trailers including *My Cousin Rachel* & *Dunkirk*, activities offer students the opportunity to reflect on the production, purpose and style of trailers. Included is exclusive interview footage with Picture Production Company's Dan Skinner explaining the purpose of different trailers and offering unique insight into their production.

This section also includes the trailer maker offering students creative opportunities to re-mix the trailer for *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* to showcase what they have learned about how trailers help to create narrative images of films.

For further reading around the subject of narrative image, see *Visible Fictions* by John Ellis (ISBN: 978-0415075138).

## Close Reading

This stand-alone section offers a focused close reading task in which students choose to analyse a trailer from the clip viewer on the home page. The accompanying, downloadable PDF worksheet guides students through a close analysis of trailers by bringing together the knowledge and understanding they have gained by working through other sections of the resource. The features focused on here include:

- genre
  - narrative
  - unique selling point
  - target audience
  - music
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- shot types/camera angles
  - pace
  - dialogue
  - voiceover
  - special effects
  - credits and intertitles

The activity concludes with a 'writing to explain' extension task.

## Curriculum areas and learning objectives

Activities link to National Curriculum guidelines for learning in English; they can also be used as part of a media course at GCSE or equivalent.

## Key Terms

These basic terms are used throughout the resource so it is worth drawing them your students' attention in order to clarify meaning.

**Credits and intertitles:** these are words on screen that give information to the audience

**Dialogue:** any conversations between characters

**Genre:** a type or category of film e.g. horror, romantic comedy etc.

**Music:** the choice of music can have a huge impact on the 'mood' of a film

**Narrative:** the 'story' or plot structure of a film.

**Pace:** how quickly or slowly the shots within the trailer are edited together.

**Shot types/camera angles:** for example, close-up, medium shot or long shot

**Special effects:** includes computer-generated graphics, stunts and explosions

**Target audience:** the group of people a film or other product is aimed at

**Unique selling point:** what makes a particular film unique and 'sellable'

**Voiceover:** a voice recorded over the top of the trailer to give information to the audience

## More Resources

For examples of shot types, see the SHOT TYPE REFERENCE SHEET in SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS within THINKING ENGLISH here:

<http://www.thefilmSPACE.org/thinking-film/>

For teaching film language in more detail, please see THINKING FILM:

<http://www.thefilmSPACE.org/thinking-film/>