

**MVFF**  
**EDUCATION**



# **THE BOOK OF JOBS**

**CURRICULUM GUIDE**  
**GRADES: 9-12**

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Dear educators,

Thank you for attending the 47th Annual Mill Valley Film Festival's screening of *The Book of Jobs*. We are excited to return in our 2024 fall season with a combination of both in-person screenings for local schools and online screenings for those of you joining us from afar.

As media educators, we support film as the literature of the twenty-first century. This powerful medium sits in a critical part of human culture, at the intersection of art, industry, technology, and politics. It is a universal language that lets us tell stories about our collective hopes and fears and gives us the opportunity to make sense of the world around us and the people in it. This year, our film selections for school screenings continue to focus on increasingly relevant issues of global empathy and active citizenship, and we believe this film will be a powerful and engaging text to use in your classroom. These curricular materials are designed to get students to engage deeply with the film by the common-core aligned skills of developing an evidence-based interpretation of a text both orally and in writing.

The discussion prompts have been crafted to offer students the opportunity to grapple with questions of ethics and social justice through representations of culture in film. They offer a variety of options for fostering small-group or whole-class dialogue by addressing the film industry in general and this film in particular. If your students are already familiar with a process of writing evidence-based interpretive essays, consider using the suggested essay prompts for a short writing piece, or consider the film review format as an alternative. Additionally, student handouts for a variety of thinking routines are provided for before, during, and after viewing the film with a particular emphasis on social-emotional learning. Extension activities offer further creative opportunities for students to consider the cultural impact of the film as both an art form and a political platform. We have also included a handout that provides some context for the film festival experience, which may help to introduce your screening experience.

Thank you so much for your tireless work! Enjoy the film!

Sincerely,  
The CAFILM Education Team

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. On one level *The Book of Jobs* could be considered a meta narrative. The main character, Claudia, is reading from a published memoir of the same name at the beginning and end of the film. How does the film story draw attention to the importance of storytelling and stories in real life?
2. Form and structure play a big part in creating meaning in film. How effective are the film's chapter headings for cueing the viewer of sub-topics and changes in tone? What insights do they provide for the viewer? Do the chapter headings work together to highlight the broader meaning or the overall message of the film?
3. What is the moral of the story? Does the story affirm or subvert common values?
4. What is the central conflict of the film? Does the ending of the film resolve the overall conflict? Or, does the ending of the film raise more questions?
5. What is the film's central theme? How is the theme developed and emphasized throughout the story? Is the central theme expressed in a fresh, unique way?
6. What are some of the other key themes in the film? How are these themes related to the context surrounding the film?
7. Does the film follow or critique dominant ideologies? Does it reflect and shape particular social or cultural tensions?
8. Describe a moment or a scene in the film that you found particularly disturbing or moving. What was it about the scene that was especially notable or compelling?
9. How does the film cue particular reactions on the part of viewers (sound, editing, characterization, camera movement, etc.)? Why does the film encourage such reactions?
10. How would different people view this film differently based on their social location, lived experience, or worldview?
11. If you could require one person, or group, to view this film, who would it be? What would you hope their main takeaway would be?
12. How does the film critique the influence and obsession with technology and the devices we're convinced we need to transcend life?
13. How does the film function as a cautionary tale?
14. By studying how films are made and received, we discover how creators and audiences respond to their moment in history. By searching for social and cultural influences on films we better understand the ways in which films bear the traces of the societies that made and consumed them. Thinking back on what you have discussed, what new insights do you have about the film, the world in which it was made, or the process of making films?

# DISCUSSION NOTECATCHER

**Directions:**

Use this notecatcher to record what you take away from discussing the questions above.

## IDEAS I HEARD DURING DISCUSSION

## MIND-POP IDEAS

Ideas that came to my mind during discussion.

## ONE IMPORTANT THING I LEARNED DURING DISCUSSION

# INTERPRETIVE ESSAY PROMPTS

1. The Book Of Jobs paints a vivid picture of Silicon Valley in the early 2000s through the eyes of a young girl, Claudia, who idolizes Steve Jobs as her life's inspiration until his passing. Now, with hindsight, Claudia reflects on her youth with a mix of cautionary wisdom and millennial insight. Write an essay in which you show that life is not a means to an end, it's just being, and the magic is integrating all of it, and not shutting the door on any of it.
2. The Book of Jobs raises some important concerns about the influence of technology and how it serves humanity. Claudia doesn't just dream of being a part of it, she is planning on it. At the same time, she realizes she is part of a "guinea pig generation" as millennials who were the first to be raised with computers and the internet. Write an essay in which you show it is both fortunate and unfortunate to go through an academic career with such a big online presence, more importantly, the use of social media platforms.
3. On one level, this coming-of-age film serves as a cautionary tale. On another level, the film offers various life lessons that are both philosophical and existential. Write an essay in which you show the value of both in one narrative film text and how, together, they offer the viewer several valuable takeaways.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**KFTV Kemps Film TV Video US Indie 'The Book of Jobs' unique production in Cherokee Nation (exclusive)**

<https://www.kftv.com/news/2023/12/12/book-of-jobs-wraps-production-cherokee-nation-silicon-valley>

The Cherokee Nation Film Commission has lent its support to the Indie coming-of-age story, *The Book of Jobs*, which wrapped filming in Tulsa on December 12, doubling the town for Silicon Valley, Northern California.

**Steve Jobs (2015) Docudrama, Biography, Drama (Danny Boyle 2015)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nPSdlyRgDc&rco=1>

Steve Jobs takes us behind the scenes of the digital revolution, to paint a portrait of the man at its epicenter. The story unfolds backstage at three iconic product launches ending in 1998 with the unveiling of the iMac.

**DIY Genius**

<https://www.diygenius.com/smartphone-and-social-media-addiction-documentaries/>

7 Documentaries on the Dark Side of Smartphones and Social Media Addiction.

**Are You Addicted to Technology? Documentary, Reality TV, Short (Matthew Bate & Jake Blackburn 2021)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7xsXn-rvwM>

Face it, you're a slave to your tech. Hopelessly glued to your screen from the moment you wake up to the moment you go to bed. Through this personalized interactive documentary, host and clinical psychologist Dr. Kim Le, will pull back the curtains of your relationship with technology to reveal just how addicted to tech you really are.

**Intentional Generations: Why millennials and Generation Z are so anxious.**

<https://www.intentionalgenerations.com/blog/why-millennials-gen-z-founders-anxious>

Generations are a lens through which to understand societal change, rather than a label with which to oversimplify differences between age groups.

## ABOUT CAFILM

The nonprofit California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through year-round programming at the independent Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, presentation of the acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival, as well as cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CAFILM Education programs.

**Follow the California Film Institute on social media**



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# STANDARDS

## Common Core State Standards ELA-Literacy

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the texts says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how the author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## ABOUT THE FILM

How much hero worship is too much? Growing up in the heart of Silicon Valley, budding Millennial Claudia Lerner only needs one aspirational model: Steve Jobs, whose products, career, image, and philosophy she idolizes from an early age. So much that at one point her mother (Judy Greer) asks, “Did you join a cult or something?” Viewed throughout her first couple decades of life, our heroine’s relentless drive to excel like guess-who isn’t necessarily a help as she must confront hurdles like her parents’ divorce and mom’s cancer diagnosis. Turns out, “What Would Steve Do?” isn’t a guiding principle that applies to everything in a teenage girl’s existence. In the autobiographically inspired seriocomedy of writer-director Kayci Lacob’s heartfelt debut feature, the irresistible force of Claudia’s ambition meets an unmovable object—reality—and she must learn “to become me,” not the Apple of an icon’s eye.



## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKER**

### **KAYCI LACOB**

Kayci Lacob was born in Stanford hospital, is a graduate of Stanford's undergraduate and graduate programs, and is a longtime Northern California resident. She is inspired by the Bay Area -- its beauty, people, and culture. As a young woman who grew up in the epicenter of technological innovation, where everyone around her seemed to constantly be striving for "more," Kayci is much more interested in the relationships we have to technology and to each other than she is in the technology itself. A first-time filmmaker, Kayci is obsessed with the works of other auteurs, who broke ground with their first films – Greta Gerwig, Sofia Coppola, Richard Linklater, and Celine Song. *THE BOOK OF JOBS* is her first feature film. She's proud to have made it with nearly all of her department heads also being women.

## **THE GENESIS OF THE STORY**

*The Book of Jobs* is the director's effort to capture a time (the early 2000s) and a place (Silicon Valley) as experienced by an obsessive young girl who, from her early youth, idolizes Steve Jobs as her life-compass and inspiration...until the day he dies. The lead character, Claudia, personifies the promise of her time: the stakes, the victories, the heartbreaks and transformations, and in doing so, speaks for a generation that became synonymous with its namesake.

While the film isn't a direct autobiography, it is a memoir of sorts, inspired by many events and feelings the director herself experienced. For better or for worse, Silicon Valley is undeniably and forever a part of the director's identity. Silicon Valley is always innovating for the future, so in an effort to understand her perspective on the world, the director chose to look back, reflect, and reveal the Valley's profound impact on herself and others.





## FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT

With his breathtaking inventions, Steve Jobs influenced a world where we all become more connected, sharing our love for information, visual entertainment and music together. Like anything, tech can be abused and unleash unhealthy addictions. The film doesn't shy away from these topics that are especially relevant to young people.

The director's hope is that THE BOOK OF JOBS captures the original innocence and excitement of our digital age, while also serving as a cautionary tale about its consequences. It is a movie about how millennials became millennials, and where they might go from here.

The Book of Jobs takes us through powerful milestones: the dissolution of our lead's parents' marriage, her mother's health struggles, an unexpected tragedy at her high school along with humorous obstacles any teenage girl faces, all while she uses Jobs as her north star on life's compass. It also captures the creation of The Millennial – a generation that survived a tidal wave of new technology, absorbed 9/11, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and bin Laden's death.

We're still dealing with the impact of the digi-revolution, but as we sort it all out, The Book of Jobs looks back and celebrates a time, place and a man who changed everything — and looks forward to a world that can harness his brilliance, with perspective and confidence.



# BEFORE VIEWING

## ANTICIPATION GUIDE

### Directions:

The film you are about to watch follows a girl growing up in Silicon Valley in the shadow of Steve Jobs' triumphant return to Apple, and his outsized influence on her imagination, ambitions and relationships.

Before viewing the film, respond to this anticipation guide to consider some of the themes in the film. Read each statement below. Decide whether you agree or disagree, then write a one or two sentence explanation for your opinion.

Statement	Agree or Disagree	Explanation
Some places are more than a place, they can hold power, they can change you.		
Some obsessions fade as you grow up.		
What feels like the far off destiny of your future, is right around the corner.		
It is difficult to navigate the conflicts of being a teenager and a self-paced or socially imposed itinerary for the future.		
The future is always better than before.		
History is made by those who dare to see another world.		

## BEFORE VIEWING

### JOURNAL PROMPT

**Directions:**

Writing in a journal is an effective and powerful way to remind you of your goals and your learning in life. It is a personal space to hold a thoughtful and deliberate conversation with yourself. The following prompt will get you thinking about a topic connected to the film you are about to watch.

Everyone's definition of success is different. What is your definition of success?

[illegible]

## DURING VIEWING HEADINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS

### Directions:

The Book of Jobs is a film divided into chapters. Think of these chapters as headings. Headings are titles or subtitles that divide the main topic into subtopics. They organize the story into chunks of like information and they cue the audience of a transition into a topic change or a change in tone. As you watch the film, note each chapter change and record the details, or highlights, according to how you interpret the filmmaker's intent and how you think each chapter connects to the whole story.

BLACK SMOKE	
DUCK AND COVER	
A PACT	
MACINTOSH	
A THOUSAND THINGS	
CONTAGION	
DUMBLEDORE	
WE DO NOT FAIL	
CORNEAL DAMAGE	
POSITIVITY	
LITTLE BOXES	
NOT LIKE THIS	
THINK DIFFERENT	



## **DURING VIEWING**

### **ELEMENTS OF MISE-EN-SCENE**

#### **How to Use This Thinking Routine:**

The graphic organizer is designed to help students understand and observe choices in mise-en-scene in a narrative film text. Students can use this organizer during a film screening to record their observations.

#### **What is Mise-en-scene?**

Mise-en-Scene refers to all the elements in a film that appear on screen, within the boundaries of the frame.

The elements of mise-en-scene can be thought of as the visual storytelling elements that overlap with theater and stage performance.

"Mise-en-scene" is a French term that translates to "staging" or "placing on stage," and you will often also hear these terms in discussions of mise-en-scene.

There are five main aspects to consider when analyzing mise-en-scene: props, costumes/makeup, set/setting, physical performance, and lighting.

#### **Props**

The objects in the film that characters interact with. Props are often used to move a plot forward and sometimes they have symbolic significance.

#### **Costume/Makeup**

The clothes and accessories worn by characters. Costumes and makeup can reveal a character's personality, background, and social status.

#### **Set/Location**

The places and spaces where the story occurs. The setting can reveal information about the world of the film, including time, place, and season.

#### **Physical Performance**

The visual elements of performance, such as movement and gesture. Physical movements can reveal a lot about a character's inner state.

#### **Lighting**

The lighting in a film can be created by the sun or artificial lights. Use of shadows, colored lighting effects, can often influence tone and mood.

# ELEMENTS OF MISE-EN-SCENE

## GRAPHIC ORGANIZER/NOTE-CATCHER

### Directions:

Record meaningful or interesting details you notice in each element of the film's mise-en-scene.

Unique Use of Props	
Unique Costumes or Make-Up	
Unique Sets or Locations	
Unique Physical Performances	
Unique Lighting	

What specific choices in mise-en-scene were most important in telling the story of the film?

What elements of mise-en-scene (such as specific props, sets, or choices in lighting) had a symbolic meaning in the film? In other words, what big ideas/themes did they represent or relate to?

## AFTER VIEWING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

### Directions:

Recall, reflect, and then respond to each question, referring to specific scenes, events, and dialogue from the film as evidence for your response.

1. In addition to the invention of the Apple products that changed the world, the film references some other historical events that had a great impact on the world. What are they and how did they resonate with Claudia? How do they resonate with the viewer and contribute to the story, or the overall message of the film?

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2. What does Silicon Valley represent to Claudia? How do her feelings about Silicon Valley change from the beginning to the end of the film?

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3. According to the film, what was Steve Jobs responsible for, or what do his inventions truly represent to Claudia?

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4. What does WWSD mean? When does Claudia rely on using this question and try to answer it? Why?

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## AFTER VIEWING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

5. What connections does Claudia draw between Steve Jobs and Leonardo DaVinci when she finally ventures out into the city of Florence, without an itinerary, on the high school trip to Italy?

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6. What life lessons, or wisdom, does Claudia's teacher impart toward the end of the high school trip to Italy when they bump into each other at a cafe. What is Claudia's takeaway from this interaction? How does this scene resonate with you as a viewer?

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7. How does Claudia's plan for her future veer off her planned course and onto another path when she transitions to college? What happens that is both unexpected and enlightening for her?

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9. How does the conversation with a peer after a poetry reading at a coffee shop become so pivotal for Claudia? What is Claudia's takeaway from this conversation? How does this scene resonate with you as a viewer?

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# AFTER VIEWING

## THE FOUR C'S

### How to Use this Thinking Routine:

Respond to each prompt in complete sentences, citing specific scenes, events, and dialogue from the film as evidence for your response.

### CONNECTIONS

What connections do you draw between the film and your own life or learnings?

### CHALLENGE

What ideas, positions, or assumptions do you want to challenge or debate in the film?

### CONCEPTS

What key concepts or ideas do you think are important and worth holding on to from the film?

### CHANGES

What changes in attitudes, thinking, or action are suggested by the film, either for you or others?

A Thinking Routine Borrowed from Harvard Project Zero's Think Routine Toolbox:

<https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

# EXTENSION ACTIVITY

## POETRY ANALYSIS AND TEXT CONNECTIONS

### How to Use this Thinking Routine:

There is a moment in the film when viewers hear a quote from the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson: "It is not length of life, but depth of life."

For this activity you will read and analyze a poem written by Ralph Waldo Emerson. The following instructions will help you uncover the meaning of the poem and make a connection between texts.

### "To Laugh Often and Much" by Ralph Waldo Emerson

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/14327880-To-Laugh-Often-And-Much-by-Ralph-Waldo-Emerson>

#### POETRY ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. What does the title mean? Take a look at the title and reflect on what it means.
2. Put it in your own words Read the poem two or three times. You will see something different each time you read the poem. Write a brief summary of the poem in your own words. Highlight or list some of the words that are important to understanding the poem.
3. What do you think the poem means? Now think about the meaning of the poem, not just the obvious meaning of each word but what they mean beyond the literal. Do these words suggest something else?

Consider these questions:

- Who is the subject of the poem?
- What are they talking about?
- Why do you think the author wrote the poem?
- When is the poem happening?
- Where is the poem happening?
- What is the poet's attitude?
- How does the poem shift from person to person or between different times or places?

Most poems tell us about a poet's understanding of an experience so the beginning will be different then the end. The change may be in feelings, language (slang to formal), or connotation (positive to negative). Consider how these shifts convey the poem's message.

#### 4. Poetic devices: Tools of the poet.

Identify different poetic devices and how they convey the poem's message.

- Simile – comparison using like or as
- Metaphor – a direct comparison
- Personification – giving human qualities to nonhuman things
- Tone – what emotion does the speaker use as he talks
- Point of view – who is the telling the poem
- Imagery – creating pictures with words
- Alliteration – repeating the same letter

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

### FILM REVIEW

5. Theme Identify the theme, or the central idea of the poem. How does the theme convey the poem's message?
6. Look at the title again. Do you now have a different interpretation of the title?
7. Write a short analysis by following the suggested format. Begin with a brief introduction that includes the title, the author, and an explanation of the writer's position as well as the significance of the title. Include a brief overall statement of the meaning of the poem. This will lead you into the body of the analysis. In the body of the analysis, discuss how the poem was written, which poetic devices were used, the tone, the poet's attitude, and the shift of the poem from the beginning to the poet's ultimate understanding of the experience in the end. Add your personal interpretation of the poem.
8. Connect the poem to the Film. How are these two texts connected? Consider how both texts conveyed a message similar in theme. Consider how each text evoked an emotional response in the reader and the viewer. What are the broader social, political, and cultural implications of each text?



# EXTENSION ACTIVITY

## TAKE A STAND

### Directions:

"He was a complete genius. Most cult leaders are. You're so convinced that you need these things to transcend your life. It's almost impossible to live without his little inventions because every thirty seconds your brain craves the dopamine hit it gets from that little flash of light. And if that wasn't enough, you feed off likes, comments, and post tags like a bunch of little validation addicts."

- The Book of Jobs

Where do you stand on this issue?

1. Your View. Individually, consider your thoughts on this issue.
2. Share. In small groups, or as a class, share your individual perspective about the issue, and listen to the perspectives of your fellow students.
3. Look Again. Individually, look again at your original response. What had you not considered that other people brought up? Have you changed your perspective, and if so, what changed? How has your thinking shifted after hearing your classmates' perspectives - even if you haven't changed your mind?
4. Look Beyond. Finally, look beyond this specific issue or case. Consider: How does the issue remind you of other situations you've seen, heard about, or experienced?

### ISSUE

Teens and young adults are by far the largest age group affected by social media addiction. Because many young people experience FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out), they feel obligated to be on social media despite the mental health issues excessive use of social media can cause.

### TAKE A STAND

**On your own:** What do you think? Explain your perspective.

### STAND BACK

**As a group:** Where do your classmates stand? Listen to their perspectives.



## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

### POETRY ANALYSIS AND TEXT CONNECTIONS

#### LOOK AGAIN

**On your own:** Look again at your original response. What had you not considered that other people brought up? Maybe you changed your mind, maybe you didn't - that's OK! Either way, you heard other views. How has your thinking shifted after hearing your classmates' perspectives, even if you haven't changed your mind?

#### LOOK BEYOND

**As a group:** Look beyond this specific case. How does the issue remind you of other situations we've explored in class, or that you've seen, heard about, or experienced?



A Thinking Routine Borrowed from Harvard Project Zero's Think Routine Toolbox:  
<https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

# EXTENSION ACTIVITY

## FILM REVIEW

### Directions:

After watching the narrative feature *The Book of Jobs*, write a review of the film.

While a film review is an evaluation of a movie, it is not simply a viewer-response expressing the writer's feelings about the film. Instead, a film review attempts to do three things for the reader:

1. **Summarize** what the film is about (the story)
2. **Interpret** the film/filmmakers' intended meaning (the themes and claims)
3. **Evaluate** whether the film is successful in expressing the intended meaning (its effectiveness in conveying the themes and claims)

A review will support its perspective with evidence from the film, such as descriptions of important moments, characters, and scenes.

## Suggested Structure

### Introduction

- Introduce the film: title, director, and any relevant credentials (award wins for the film, other films by the director, origins for the film's story, etc.).
- Summarize what the film is about - briefly, and without any "spoilers" that give away plot twists and surprises.

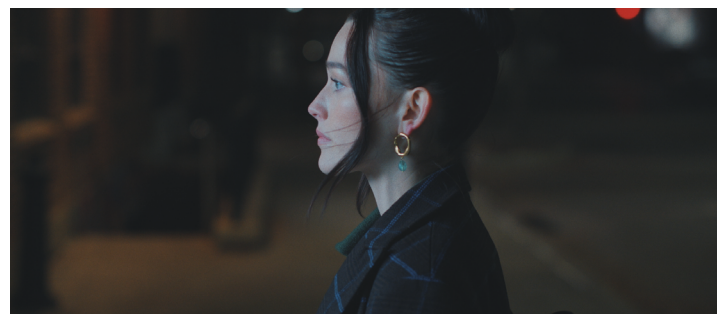
### Body

- Offer an interpretation of what the film/director is trying to say through this story. In other words, what is the film's theme, message, or primary claim?

### Conclusion

- Evaluate whether the film is successful or not in conveying its intended message.
- Identify who the intended audience is and how effective the film is in meeting their needs. Is the film for a particular age group or social group?

Final Tip: Make sure to include some critical appraisal of the film in the first and last sentence, but try to weave it throughout the review as well.



From CAFILM Education Resources: Narrative Film Analysis Toolkit  
<https://www.cafilmedu.org/curriculum-resources/>

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

### FILM REVIEW

## My Film Review

[illegible]

# ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS



An opening night screening at the Mill Valley Film Festival.

## What is a film festival?

A film festival is an event in which multiple movies are presented over the course of one or several days. Depending on the size of the festival, all of the screenings may take place in a single theater or may involve multiple venues throughout a city. Festivals also include special events like panel discussions with filmmakers and actors. Typically, filmmakers submit their works to a festival, where a team of curators selects the best entries for inclusion in the festival. For independent and international filmmakers, festivals are often an important way to raise awareness of a film, generate an audience, and/or attract a studio to purchase the rights to distribute a film in a wider release. Acceptance into a major festival can add significant prestige to a film, with some festival awards (such as the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or) considered among the highest honors a film can receive.

There are many film festivals through-

out the world, with some focusing on particular themes, such as highlighting LGBTQ films/filmmakers, specific cultural groups, or particular genres. While some of the more famous festivals may be in distant locations, there are hundreds of small festivals spread through every corner of the world and, increasingly, festivals are using streaming access to make it easier for the public to view their curated programs.

## History of the Mill Valley Film Festival

Since founding the Mill Valley Film Festival in 1977, Executive Director Mark Fishkin has shepherded this once small, three-day showcase into an eleven-day, internationally acclaimed cinema event presenting a wide variety of new films from around the world in an engaged, community setting.

The festival has an impressive track record of launching new films and new filmmakers, and has earned a reputation as a filmmakers' festival

by celebrating the best in American independent and foreign films, alongside high-profile and prestigious award contenders. The relaxed and non-competitive atmosphere surrounding MVFF, gives filmmakers and audiences alike the opportunity to share their work and experiences in a collaborative and convivial setting.

Each year the festival welcomes more than 200 filmmakers, representing more than 50 countries. Screening sections include world cinema, US cinema, documentaries, family films, and shorts programs. Annual festival initiatives include Active Cinema, a forum for films that aim to engage audiences and transform ideas into action; Mind the Gap, a platform for inclusion and equity; and ¡Viva el Cine!, a showcase of Latin American and Spanish-language films.. Festival guests also enjoy an exciting selection of Tributes, Spotlights and Galas throughout the program.



## Questions to Consider:

1. What is the purpose of a film festival? What are the benefits for filmmakers? For the audience? For the community?
2. How might the films at a festival differ from the films available to watch at your local movie theater?
3. What qualities do you think festival curators might look for in a film? If you are watching a festival film with a class/school group, what aspects of the film do you think made it appealing to the curators?

## Get Involved!

Many film festivals, including the Mill Valley Film Festival, have student film categories. If you are a filmmaker, explore FilmFreeway ([www.filmfreeway.com](http://www.filmfreeway.com)) for a database of worldwide film festivals where you can submit your film. The call for entries for MVFF opens in late February and closes in June. Youth filmmakers do not have to pay an entry fee. MVFF also offers many opportunities for volunteering. Find out more at <https://www.cafilm.org/volunteer/>.