

MVFF EDUCATION



Steal
this
story,
please!

CURRICULUM GUIDE
GRADES: 8-12

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Dear Educators,

Thank you for attending the 48th Annual Mill Valley Film Festival's screening of the Documentary Feature, *Steal This Story, Please*. We are excited to return in our 2025 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 on 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

Movie Moments that Moved Me

- Describe a moment or a scene in the film that you found particularly surprising, disturbing, moving, conflicting, or confusing.
- What made this moment so powerful or compelling for you? Was it the story, the acting, the dialogue, the visuals, the soundtrack, or something else?
- How did this moment change the way you saw a character, situation, issue, or theme in the movie?
- How does the moment connect to bigger ideas?
- If you were explaining this moment to someone who hasn't seen the film, how would you describe why it matters?

Journalism & Democracy

- How does the film depict journalism as a political act? What does it suggest the stakes are when independent media is under attack?
- In what ways does Amy Goodman's personal story intersect with the broader narrative of how media should function in a democracy?
- What specific examples does the film use to show how journalism compels public response? How are these moments structured to highlight the power of the press?

Filmmaking & Narrative Choice

- How does the film balance a personal biography with a journalist's reporting? What do you notice about the narrative shift between Goodman's life and her journalism? How effectively does the film blend and balance the two?
- What storytelling devices does the film use to build urgency around the decline of independent media?

Truth & Ethics

- Does the film challenge the audience to reflect on their own media consumption? How does it frame corporate or political threats to journalism?
- How is Goodman portrayed? How does the film present her as a journalist and a subject at the same time? Is her perspective positioned as central, or as one of many?
- Are any potential biases addressed or revealed, either in the film's standpoint or in Amy Goodman's reporting? Is her perspective positioned as central, or one of many?



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

Directions: Select one discussion question from the list of topics we talked about from the film.

- Journalism & Democracy
- Filmmaking & Narrative Choice
- Truth & Ethics

Write an essay that answers the question and explains your ideas.

In your essay, make sure you:

- Share your opinion about what the film is saying about the topic.
- Use examples from the film - like a scene, a character's action, or the way something was shown on screen - to support your ideas.
- Connect the film's message to bigger ideas we discussed in class, or to real-world issues.
- Show that you've thought about the film by explaining why the topic is important or how different people might see it in different ways.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Democracy Now | Independent Global News

<https://www.democracynow.org/>

WBAI Radio | Democracy Now

<https://wbai.org/program.php?program=49>

Amy Goodman celebrates the 20th Anniversary of Teens in Print

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhJnt1ldwqE>

Teens in Print

<https://teensinprint.com/>

Teens in Print in the Classroom | Teacher Resources for Building Writer Identity

<https://teensinprint.com/forteachers/>

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.RI.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2

Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3

Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Name: _____



ABOUT THE FILM

Longtime activist and journalist Amy Goodman and a host of her colleagues tell her story in this intimate profile that doubles as a snapshot of the intertwining of politics and the US news media, along with the antagonism that has grown between the two. This involving documentary traces Goodman's formative experiences and frontline confrontations worldwide, from the harrowing (including her early career covering militarized genocide in East Timor and Chevron's brutal oil exploitation in Nigeria) to the celebratory (the release of a wrongfully incarcerated Black American prisoner). Described variously as principled, provocative, combative, and radical, Goodman cuts a commanding figure, inspiring countless others to pursue social justice.

As *Steal this Story, Please!* demonstrates, she has become a cultural icon whose work provides an alternative to mainstream media with its blackouts, censorship, and market-driven coverage. The film's astute observation of a consummate shaper of public information provides a rare and valuable perspective in our era of fast-changing news cycles.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

TIA LESSIN & CARL DEAL

Academy Award and Emmy Award winning filmmakers Tia Lessin and Carl Deal founded Elsewhere Films in 2007 to create documentary films of cultural relevance, social purpose and artistic integrity, and to strategically distribute these films to maximize their social and community impact.

They directed and produced the acclaimed *Trouble the Water*, a film about survivors of Hurricane Katrina, which was nominated for an Oscar for best documentary feature, and won the Gotham Independent Film Award and Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival



Tia and Carl also directed and produced *Citizen Koch*, which documented the rise of the Tea Party in the American Midwest that laid the groundwork for the election of Donald Trump and the birth of MAGA. The film premiered at Sundance, and was shortlisted for an Academy Award after being dropped by PBS under pressure from Founder David Koch.

They have also produced several of Michael Moore's films, among them: *Fahrenheit 9/11*, winner of the Palme d'Or, Academy Award winning *Bowling for Columbine*, *Capitalism: A Love Story*, *Where to Invade Next*, and *Fahrenheit 11/9*.

Carl and Tia have received grants from Chicken & Egg, Cinereach, Creative Capital, Ford Foundation's JustFilms, Fork Films, the MacArthur Foundation, Kindle Project, Pare Lorentz Documentary Fund, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, Jewish Story Partners, The Threshold Fund, Bertha Foundation and The Fledgling Fund. Their work has been recognized for its social and political impact and has played widely theatrically and on television and digital platforms (HBO, National Geographic, Ch. 4 UK, NETFLIX, iTunes, Amazon, Oxygen and PBS).

ECHOES OF AN EPIGRAPH

"Go to where the silence is and say something. The silenced majority is finding its voice."

FIRST ECHO | BEFORE VIEWING

- Read the epigraph aloud.
- What strikes you first?
- What does this quote seem to suggest or warn?
- If this were a headline, what story might follow?
- Jot down quick responses, predictions, or connections to your own life, current events, or prior texts or films.

SECOND ECHO | DURING VIEWING

- As you watch, listen for moments that echo or contradict the epigraph.
- Where does the film live up to this idea?
- Where does it complicate it?
- Keep a running note.

THIRD ECHO | AFTER VIEWING

- Return to the epigraph.
- How has its meaning deepened or shifted for you?
- Which scenes or characters embody this quote? Which resist it?
- If you had to rephrase the epigraph to match the film's message, what would you write?

RIPPLES | STRETCH THE IDEA

- Create a visual or verbal echo - a drawing, headline, tweet-length version - that shows how the epigraph reverberates beyond the film and into society, history, or personal experience.

BEFORE VIEWING

ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Introduction:

An anticipation guide for a film is a pre-viewing activity for you to respond to statements related to the film's themes, then revisit your responses after watching to see how your perspectives have changed based on new information and critical thinking.

How to use this Thinking Routine:

Read each statement carefully. Mark whether you agree or disagree. Be prepared to dig a little deeper into one topic or theme in a previewing extension activity.

Agree	Statement	Disagree
	The media we consume has a strong influence on our opinions and beliefs.	
	Independent journalists are more likely to report the truth than mainstream media.	
	Freedom of the press is essential for a functioning democracy.	
	All news outlets are biased, and it's impossible to be completely objective.	
	Speaking truth to power is risky but necessary for social change.	
	Journalists should prioritize telling stories that are ignored by mainstream media.	
	Investigative journalism can have a bigger impact than public protests.	
	Social media and online platforms have made it more difficult for traditional journalism to provide accurate and reliable information.	

BEFORE VIEWING | EXTENSION ACTIVITY

THE THREE WHYS

Introduction:

The film you are about to watch includes topics and themes from the statements included in the anticipation guide.

How to use this Thinking Routine:

Dig a little deeper into one of the topics or themes you have something more to say about. Consider the three why questions to elaborate your position and clarify your thinking.

Statement Copy the statement of your focus for digging a little deeper.	
Why might this topic matter to me?	
Why might this topic matter to people around me: family, friends, community?	
Why might this topic matter to the world?	



DURING VIEWING

ELEMENTS OF A DOCUMENTARY

Introduction: Documentaries create an impactful film by carefully balancing and blending narrative storytelling, visuals, sound, and point of view with factual information. The best documentary filmmakers use these creative tools, not to manipulate the truth, but to make complex realities relatable and deeply resonant for audiences. The elements of documentary are the different types of sound and image used to explore the subject of the film. There are six basic elements that can be found in all documentaries, though a film might not use all of them.

Directions: There are six basic elements that can be found in all documentaries, though a film might not use all of them. While viewing, use the chart below to record impactful moments and scenes from the film in the appropriate box based on what element of documentary filmmaking is used. After viewing, you will be asked to analyze which of the elements were used most effectively in this film and how blending and balancing these elements made the story relatable and resonant. After viewing, analyze which of the elements were used most effectively in this film and how blending and balancing these elements made the story relatable and resonant.

Narration Narration is the spoken word heard throughout a film. Sometimes the narrator is a person in the film, and sometimes it is a disconnected observer.	Actuality Footage Actuality footage refers to the unscripted footage recorded in the making of the documentary.	Archival Materials Archival materials are the pieces of film, video, photographs, documents, and sound recordings that were created for other uses prior to the documentary.
On-Screen Text Text is often used throughout a documentary to provide important facts, identify people, and present additional information.	Interviews Interviews are the recorded conversations with a person who has some connection to or knowledge about the subject of the film.	Animations/Reenactments Documentaries will sometimes use animation or staged recreations of situations and events in order to tell a story.

From CAFILM Education Resources: Documentary Film Analysis Toolkit
[CAFILM Documentary Analysis Toolkit](#)

AFTER VIEWING

RELATABLE & RESONANT

Balance & Effect

Consider how the filmmaker blends interviews, visuals, and sound throughout the documentary.

- How does the balance of these elements influence the way the message is received?

Persuasive Impact

Consider which elements - like narration, interviews, or archival footage - stood out the most.

- How does their combination persuade or inform the audience?
- How might the message change if one element were emphasized more or less?

Intentional Choices

Analyze the choices the filmmaker made in blending different documentary techniques.

- How do these choices shape your understanding or emotional response to the film's message?

DURING VIEWING

ISSUES | INDIVIDUALS | IMPACTS

Introduction:

The documentary explores how journalism uncovers important issues, tells the stories of individuals, and reveals the impacts of those stories on society.

How to use this Thinking Routine:

Select two or three issues highlighted in the film. For each issue, complete the chart below, showing how it connects to individuals and the impacts described or implied.

Issue What political issues, events, or figures are being represented? What problem was exposed? What question was explored?	Individual Whose story was told? What was their experience? Whose voices are amplified? Whose are missing?	Impact How did journalism or exposure affect them, their community, or society? What historical or contemporary conflicts are at play?



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

CRITIC'S CHOICE RESPONSE

- Why do you think the filmmaker chose to highlight the issues and individuals you identified?
- Which story impacted you most, and why?
- In your opinion, what responsibility do journalists have to cover these kinds of issues?

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. The paper itself is a clean, off-white color.

A Thinking Routine Adapted from Harvard Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education
<https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

AFTER VIEWING

UNVEILING STORIES

Introduction:

There are multiple layers of meaning in documentary film. This routine is for exploring topics involving issues of local, national, and global importance. It requires digging a little deeper into the human condition, systemic issues, and the power and limitations of representation in the news.

How to use this Thinking Routine:

Look beyond the surface of the stories covered in the film and explore the complexity of the topics and how they are connected to the bigger picture.

What is the story?	
What is the human story?	
What is the world story?	
What is the new story?	
What is the untold story?	

A Thinking Routine Adapted from Harvard Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education
<https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS

1. What political issues, events, or figures are being represented? What is the film's central political argument?

2. What historical or contemporary conflicts are at play? How does the film connect to current debates, policies, or civic life?

3. Did the documentary give representation to multiple perspectives? Whose voices are amplified? Whose are missing? Where is the line between persuasion and propaganda?

4. Were there any parts of the film you disagreed with, questioned, or wanted to know more about?

5. What do you think the film wants its audience to do, think, or feel after watching?

AFTER VIEWING

EXIT TICKET | JOURNALISM & DEMOCRACY

Instructions:

As a check for understanding and feedback on the film, respond to the following question and write your response (2-3 sentences) in the space provided.

- How might this documentary itself function as both a political statement and a journalistic artifact?

ADMIT ONE

ADMIT ONE



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

JOURNALISM IS NOT A LUXURY | CONNECTING THE STORY TO TODAY

Instructions:

There is no replacement for quality journalism. It is critical for sharing important news affecting our communities, our society, and the world. With dedication and timely reporting, journalists play a vital role in informing, engaging, and empowering citizens. This thinking routine is an effective way to connect the film to the world outside the classroom and reflect critically on journalism in real time.

Directions:

After mapping both worlds, create a short scene where the maid's family hosts the employer's family for a Birthday Party.

1. Think about the issues highlighted in the documentary.
 - Find a current news article, social media story, or local report that relates to one of those issues.
2. Summarize.
 - What is the issue and who are the individuals involved in your selected story?
3. Research Using the Reporter's Notebook
 - Do some additional research and try to clarify what is unclear or lacks sufficient information.
 - Make your best judgment on the issue.
4. Report.
 - Create your own news story or investigative report.
 - Select one of the creative options for publishing your investigative report.
5. Share.
 - Present your report to the class. Consider submitting it to your school publication or a news organization in your community.
6. Reflect.
 - How does modern journalism continue to influence awareness, change, or action?



REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

	WHAT I LEARNED/WHAT IS CLEAR	WHAT I NEED TO CHECK/ RESEARCH FURTHER
FACTS & EVENTS What happened? What evidence from the film confirms this?		
THOUGHTS & FEELINGS How did the characters think or feel about it?		
My Research, or what I learned about the issue from additional sources:		My Best Judgment on the Issue:

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

CREATIVE JOURNALISM OPTIONS

News Article	Write a simple news article by following the inverted pyramid structure. • Put the most important information first. • Then add supporting details in descending order of importance. • Use objective, clear, and concise language throughout.
Video Essay	Create a hybrid artistic essay by juxtaposing still images (screenshots, collages, drawings) with written reflections about how documentaries balance truth, politics, and art. • Be sure to have a clear message or claim.
Podcast Episode	Write and record a podcast following a simple three-phase process. • Define your concept by deciding what your podcast will be about and who your audience will be. • Choose a format: a solo monologue, an interview show, or a co-hosted discussion. • Create an outline then draft a script before recording.
Mini-Documentary Pitch	Create a one-page pitch for your own political documentary. Include: • Title, political issue, central question, and intended audience. • A description of the style (cinema verite, archival-heavy, narrated, experimental). • Ethical considerations. How will you avoid manipulation while still making an impact?
Political Remix Video	Using open-source footage, re-edit or storyboard a 2-3 minute sequence that changes the political emphasis of a real event. • Consider how editing reshapes meaning.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

DEBATE | ETHICS IN DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING

Instructions:

Truth and ethics in documentary filmmaking is a topic of debate. In this activity students will examine how filmmakers make choices about what to show, what to leave out, and how to represent real people and events, exploring the responsibilities of storytellers and the impact their work has on audiences. Engaging in this debate helps students think critically about honesty, perspective, and the ethical power of the media.

Directions:

Explore the ethical dilemmas in documentary storytelling by engaging in a structured debate.

1. Split into two groups:

- Group A: Documentaries must prioritize factual truth over narrative impact.
- Group B: Documentaries must prioritize audience engagement and impact of strict neutrality.

2. Research the topic and prepare your arguments.

- Use the film as a central point of reference!
- Understand the resolution. Analyze the debate topic fully to grasp the central concepts, potential areas of conflict or disagreement, and different angles you can argue.
- Research both sides. To build a robust case, you must understand your opponent's position as well as your own. This will help you anticipate their points and prepare strong rebuttals.
- Use credible sources. Support your claims with evidence from reliable sources such as academic journals, reputable news outlets, and expert analysis. Be critical of your sources to avoid misinformation.
- Gather diverse evidence. Collect a variety of evidence, including real-life examples, and expert opinions to make your points more convincing.

3. Conduct a debate following the structured format:

- Opening Statements: Each team presents their case, explaining their stance and addressing potential counterarguments.
- Cross-Examination and Questions: The moderator or audience members ask clarifying or challenging questions to the debaters.
- Closing Arguments: Each team delivers a concise closing statement to summarize their position and make a final appeal.

4. Audience Vote:

- Audience members cast an initial vote before the debate, and then a final vote after the debate to gauge how effectively the debaters delivered their message and swayed their opinions.

5. Reflection:

- Which arguments were most convincing and why?
- How do filmmakers balance truth and persuasion ethically?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

FILM REVIEW

Directions:

After watching the documentary feature *Steal This Story, Please*, review the film in writing using the industry standard format of this genre.

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 subject and story).
2. **Interpret** the film/filmmaker's 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

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS



An opening night screening at the Mill Valley Film Festival.

©Tommy Lau

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.



The Smith Rafael Film Center, home of the Mill Valley Film Festival

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) 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/>.