

ADMIT ONE

GET INTO FILM

THREE MOVIES THAT MIGHT ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT BODY IMAGE...

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BODY IMAGE – how we view our physical self – is closely linked to self esteem. Young people, in particular, often feel under pressure to look a certain way and, at a time when their bodies are going through physical changes, compare themselves with their peers who may be developing at a different rate or in a different way. Celebrity images, advertising, and the fashion and fitness industries all add to the pressure.

Film is an accessible, non-threatening way to address these important and difficult issues. The education charity Into Film has a number of relevant films on its website, ranging from those whose main characters find ways to cope with being different, such as *The Elephant Man* (PG) and *Murderball* (12), or refuse to conform to the notion of ‘cool’, like *Napoleon Dynamite* (PG) – to the sobering documentary *Girl Model* (12),

which looks at the Eastern European fashion model industry and exploitation suffered by young girls, and the smart comedy *Mean Girls* (12) about teenage social hierarchies. Selected titles – accompanied by teachers’ notes, discussion points, activities and useful links – are highlighted in a new, downloadable, Into Film resource around the theme of Body Image.

Into Film is an education charity that puts film at the heart of young people’s learning and cultural experiences. Its film clubs provide access to thousands of FREE films and resources for learning through film and about film, incorporating film watching, making and understanding. To set up a free film club visit filmclub.org, email info@intofilm.org or call **0207 288 4520**.

INTO FILM RECOMMENDS...



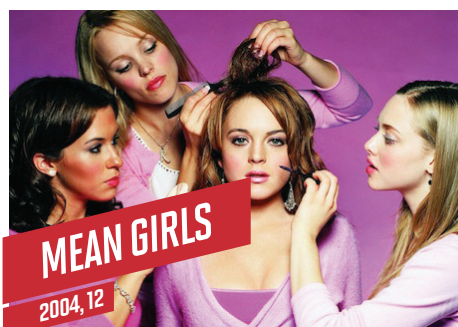
Ludovic, a seven-year-old boy, loves nothing better than to dress up as a girl, put on make-up and play with dolls. His parents think this is merely a phase, but become worried when Ludovic shows no sign of stopping. This charming and sharp film deals with things mostly from the child’s viewpoint, Ludovic’s flamboyance highlighting the unimaginative, unforgiving and inflexible attitudes of the surrounding adult world. Despite the prejudice, what ultimately comes through is Ludovic’s innocence and increasing defiance.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Ludovic feel different from the other children?
2. Why do Ludovic’s parents place so much emphasis on the length of his hair? Why do they think shaving it off will make Ludovic act differently?
3. Why do lots of neighbours and classmates treat Ludovic with such wariness and hostility? How does this impact on Ludovic’s behavior?

Review Starter

Ma Vie En Rose is about learning to express yourself truthfully, on the inside and outside...



Based on a real-life parenting manual, *Mean Girls* is a smart comedy about teenage friendships and high school cliques. After a lifetime of home schooling in Africa, Cady Heron is thrown into the jungle of American high school. Negotiating her way through the many complex social groups Cady falls in with ‘The Plastics’ and finds that ‘Girl World’ can be as confusing and as dangerous as anything she has seen in the animal world. Touching on issues around appearance and personal expression, this is a very funny, insightful look at the impact of peer pressure.

Discussion Questions

1. Most of the characters are segregated into different social groups in school. How do their physical appearances affect this?
2. How does peer pressure influence Cady and the other characters’ appearance?
3. The film satirises issues around body image and eating disorders. Do you think it offers any message beyond the laughs?

Review Starter

Mean Girls is a comedy about how far people can be willing to go in order to fit in...



Previously known as *Murderball*, wheelchair rugby is a game for those without fear. The film focuses on the bitter rivalry between Team USA and Team Canada in the build-up to the 2004 Paralympics. We get to know some of these quadriplegic athletes, the stories of their accidents, and how they have dealt with their disabilities through this ruthless and highly demanding sport. Their brutal competitiveness and daredevil natures, seen both off court and in the exhilarating competition footage, could offer a different view on people with severe physical difficulties.

Discussion Questions

1. Why are some of the players surprised and offended when people try to help them with everyday tasks like getting into their cars?
2. What did you make of Keith’s mood when he returns home after ten months in hospital?
3. How has wheelchair rugby helped the players deal with the change in their physical circumstances?

Review Starter

Murderball is about fiercely competitive athletes, who happen to be in wheelchairs...