



# **SHORTS:** FINDING WHERE YOU BELONG

**CURRICULUM GUIDE**  
GRADES: 1-5

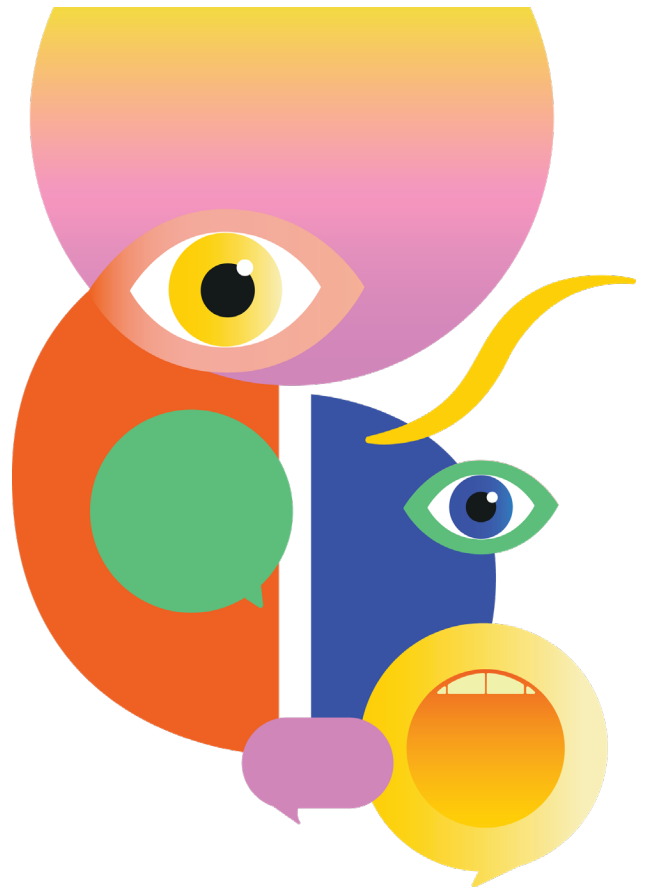
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Dear educators,

Thank you for attending the 44th Annual Mill Valley Film Festival's virtual screening of *Finding Where You Belong*, a collection of animated shorts. This year, our film selections for school screenings continue to focus on increasingly relevant issues of global empathy and active citizenship, and we believe these films will be powerful and engaging texts to use in your classroom.

We know that this year is likely one of the most challenging of your professional career, and we hope that this film and study guide can support the incredible work you're already doing. These curricular materials are designed to get students to engage deeply with film by the common-core aligned skills of developing an evidence-based interpretation of a text.

The discussion questions on the next page offer a variety of ideas for fostering small-group or whole-class dialogue. Individual handouts for before, during, and after viewing are provided as stand-alone activities to be used individually or in sequence. We have also included a handout that provides some context for the film festival experience, which may help to introduce your in-class screening.

Thank you so much for your tireless work!

Sincerely,

The CFI Education Team



## ABOUT CFI

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 CFI Education programs.

### Follow the Mill Valley Film Festival on social media

 @millvalleyfilmfest  @MillValleyFilmFestival  
 @mvfilmfest  californiafilminstitute #MVFF44

## STANDARDS

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which film had the best story? What was the story?
2. Which film was the most emotional? What emotions did you feel during that film?
3. Which film felt the most realistic? What made it realistic?
4. Which story was the most inspirational?
5. Which film most reminded you of a story from your own life or another story you know?
6. Consider other films you've seen. What made these films unique or important? What are some connections between these films and other films?
7. Which film in the program best fit the theme of the program? Why?

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



# SHORTS: FINDING WHERE YOU BELONG

## ABOUT THE FILMS

We can all feel a little out of place sometimes. But as demonstrated by this delightful collection of animated shorts from around the world, the journey to find where you fit in can be a fun and inspiring one.

# BEFORE VIEWING: JOURNAL REFLECTION

## Directions:

Before watching the films, write short responses to the following questions.

1. What does this program's title of "Finding Where You Belong" mean to you?

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2. What is a story you know from either a film or book that is about a character finding where they belong? What happens in that story?

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3. Think of a time from your own life when you had to find a place where you felt you belonged. Describe that experience.

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# DURING VIEWING: NOTEATCHER

## Directions:

During this program of shorts, you will see seven films. Use this notecatcher to keep track of the films so you don't forget them. After each film, write a one sentence summary of the storyline in your own words. Then, use six words to record your review (or opinion) of the film.

Title	Director(s)	One Sentence Summary	Six Word Review
A Lynx in the Town	Nina Bisiarina		
Louis's Shoes	Marion Philippe, Kayu Leung, Théo Jamin, & Jean-Géraud Blanc		
Shoom's Odyssey	Julien Bisaro		

# DURING VIEWING: NOTEATCHER

Title	Director(s)	One Sentence Summary	Six Word Review
Star Bound	Richard O'Connor		
Tulip	Andrea Love & Phoebe Wahl		
Blanket	Marina Moshkova		
Cinema Rex	Mayan Engelman & Eliran Peled		

# AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

**Directions:** Respond to the following prompts.

1. Of the films in this program, which was your personal favorite? Why?

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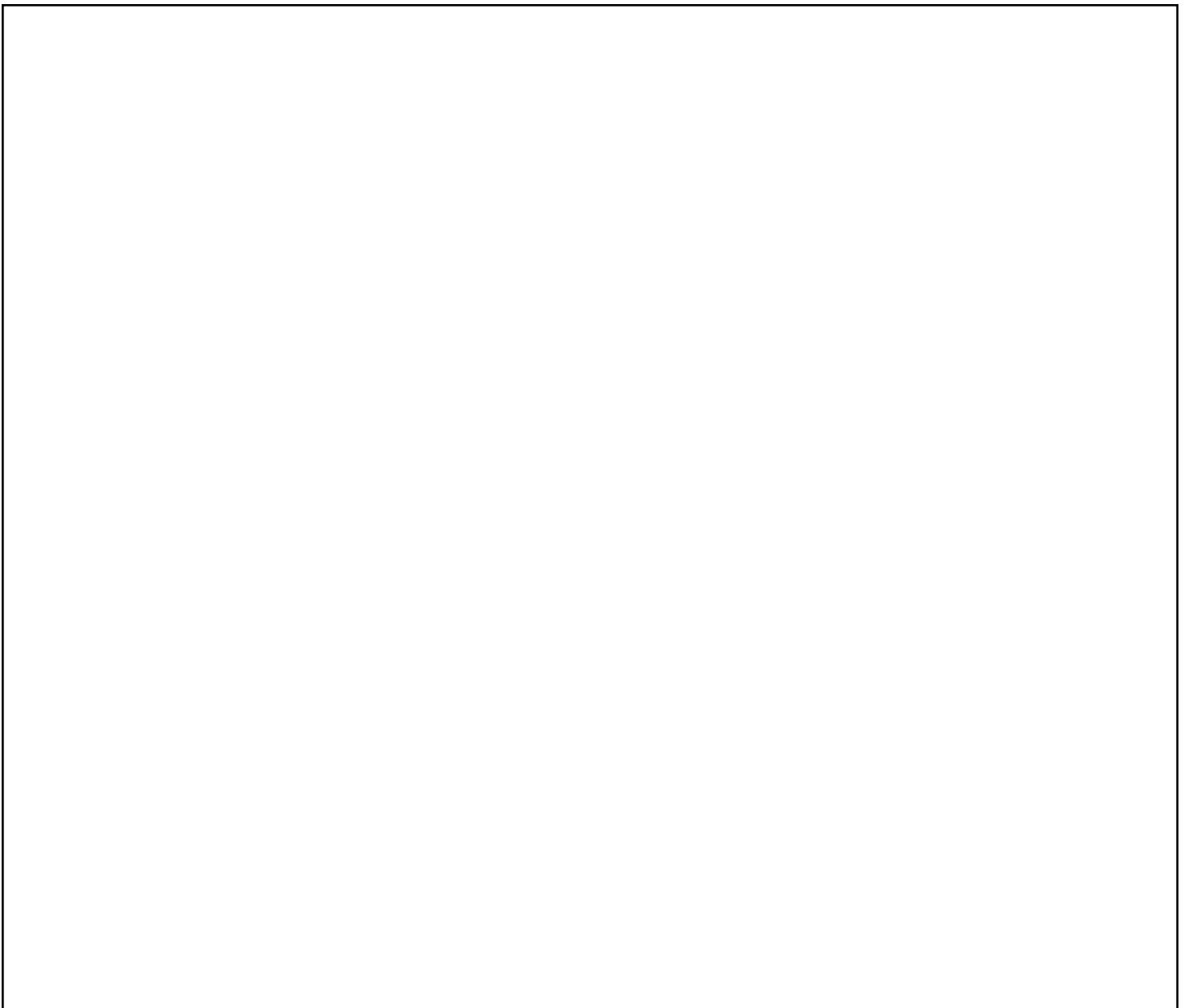
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2. In the space below, draw a picture of a scene from that film. Include as many details of the setting and main character as you can recall. Label the details in your drawing.





# ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS



An opening night screening at the Mill Valley Film Festival.

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## 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.

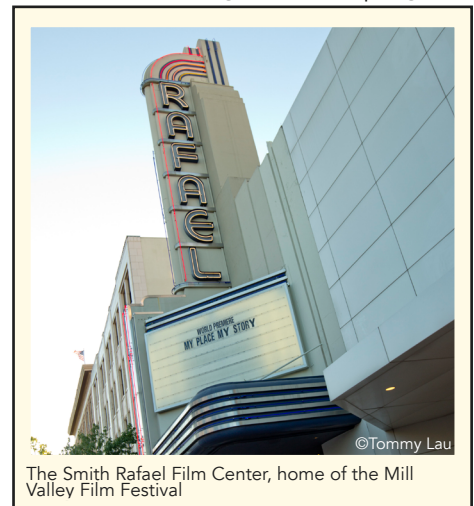
## History of the Mill Valley Film Festival

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

©Tommy Lau

## 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/>.