

A MEDIA STUDY GUIDE TO

Moonrise Kingdom

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This study guide has been made to accompany a class viewing of Wes Anderson's 2012 film *Moonrise Kingdom*. The story follows the quest of two pubescents to be together, despite the best efforts of the adults in their lives. The film playfully addresses issues around what it means to be part of a family, what it means to love, and the human drive to know thyself.

With these universal themes in mind, English language learners (through the lens of the Ontario ESLEO curriculum) will reflect on their own experiences as young adults. They will be encouraged to participate in activities, oral communication techniques, and actions for engaging with media while also expressing creative choice in the portrayal of their first-language cultures.

Introduction





I admit we knew
*we'd get in
trouble.*

That part's true.

Learning outcomes

I will be able to...

- Consider the message of a film like Moonrise Kingdom.
- Reflect on how the process of growing up is shown in this movie.
- Discuss similarities and differences between ideas of growing up in this movie, and my culture.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- What are important experiences that help people grow up?
- How does your own culture recognize children becoming young adults? Is there a ceremony? A special party? A new responsibility?
- What happens when a child wants to grow up before their community says is the right time?
- What were some noticeable difficulties the protagonists faced?
- How do you think things would be like if the roles were reversed between adults and children?

Vocabulary List

Whimsy
Stylized
Precocious
Absurd
Symbolic
Fantasy
Adolescence
Puberty
Interpret
Melancholic

Record these words in your notes. Translate and define each word into your first language, either individually or in homogeneous groups.

Try it!

English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development



English as a Second Language ESL Level 5

Open

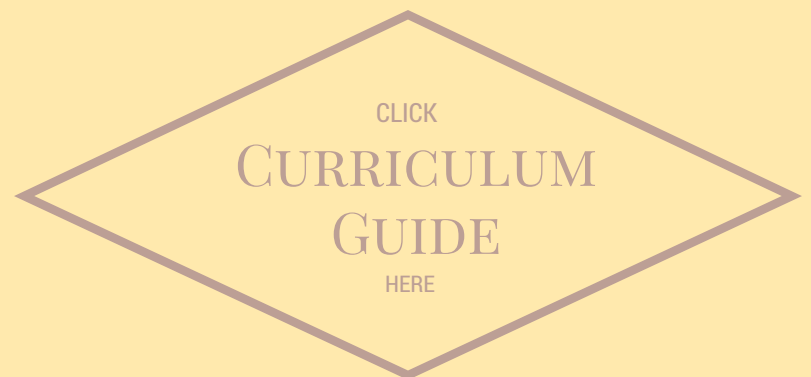
ESLEO

Links to the Curriculum

Although this media guide could be adapted to fit many classrooms, our team took on its design with a specific curriculum and course in mind: English as a Second Language Level 5 (aka ESLEO), from the 2007 Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12.

As in accordance with that curriculum and the 2010 *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario's Schools* document we have considered the 4 learning strands and triangulated forms of assessment when developing this resource and its activities.

To assist teachers who wish to use this specific curriculum we have created a separate resource that includes Overall and Specific Expectations this resource will meet, and categorizes the forms of assessment into the *As*, *For*, and *Of* categories.





Learning Activities

04 PRE-WATCHING

Brainstorm activity to engage the students with the theme of the movie.

Target Audience:

Students enrolled in Ontario's ESLEO course, grade 10

06 DURING THE FILM

Moment captures of important scenes from the film.

Critical Thinking Skills:

Compare & Contrast, Review (expressing opinion with support), Translate

Language-Based Activities:

Creative Writing Piece, or a Movie Review Task where they have to write a script and then perform it on film, upload it to YouTube.

Media Production:

Students are given a topic to analyze and they have to write and perform their understanding in a media.

07 AFTER THE FILM

Reflective Activity of the similarities and differences observed.

09 CLOSER LOOK

Extended analysis of selected scenes from the film.

13 RESOURCES

Available resources for extended study.

11 EXTRAS

Additional activity options for further learning.

Engage the students before you start! Here are some clips that the teacher and/or student can watch to learn a bit more about the background of the film before watching the actual film.

MOONRISE KINGDOM - OFFICIAL TRAILER

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_eOI3AamSm8
Moonrise Kingdom Official Trailer.

HOW TO DIRECT LIKE WES ANDERSON - STYLE AND TROPE BREAKDOWN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDeo49wtvdU>
A short introduction to Wes Anderson movies, his unique styles and stories.

WES ANDERSON | 5 VISUAL STYLE TRADEMARKS | COMPILATION

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xv6o1K8lpBE>
A short video of five visual trademarks often used by Wes Anderson in his movies.

MOONRISE KINGDOM – WHERE STORY MEETS STYLE

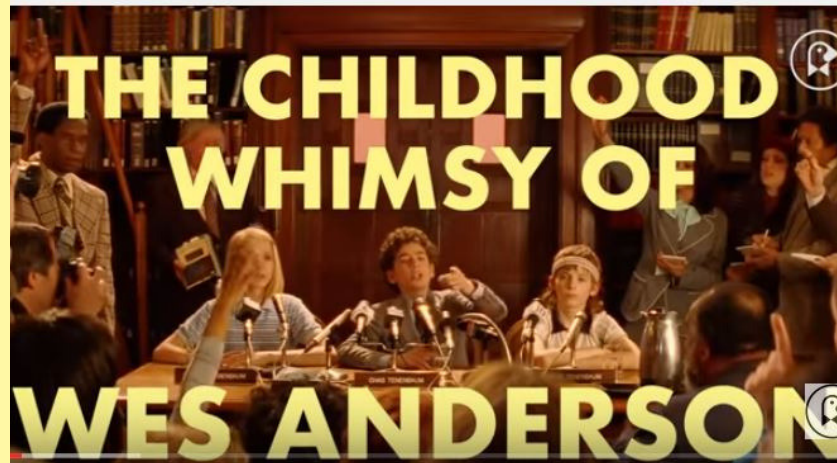
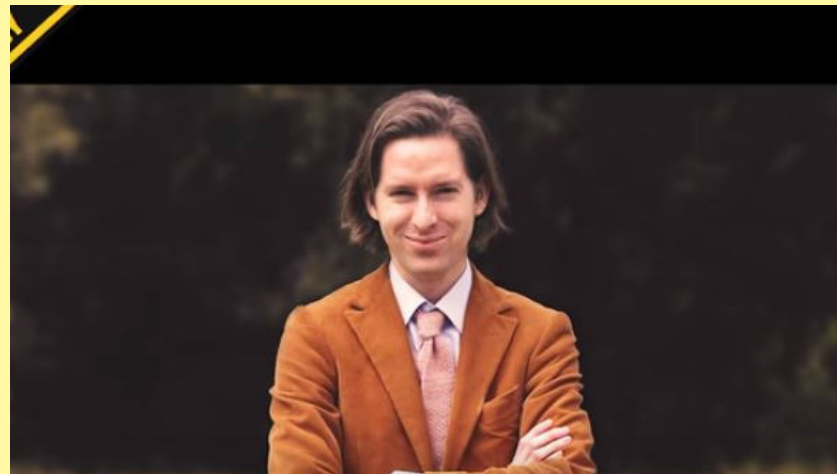
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_5lCnwDEo4
An screenplay analysis of the "Moonrise Kingdom" film. It takes a look at the intricate details that are easily missed by the audience that adds to the narrative in the film.

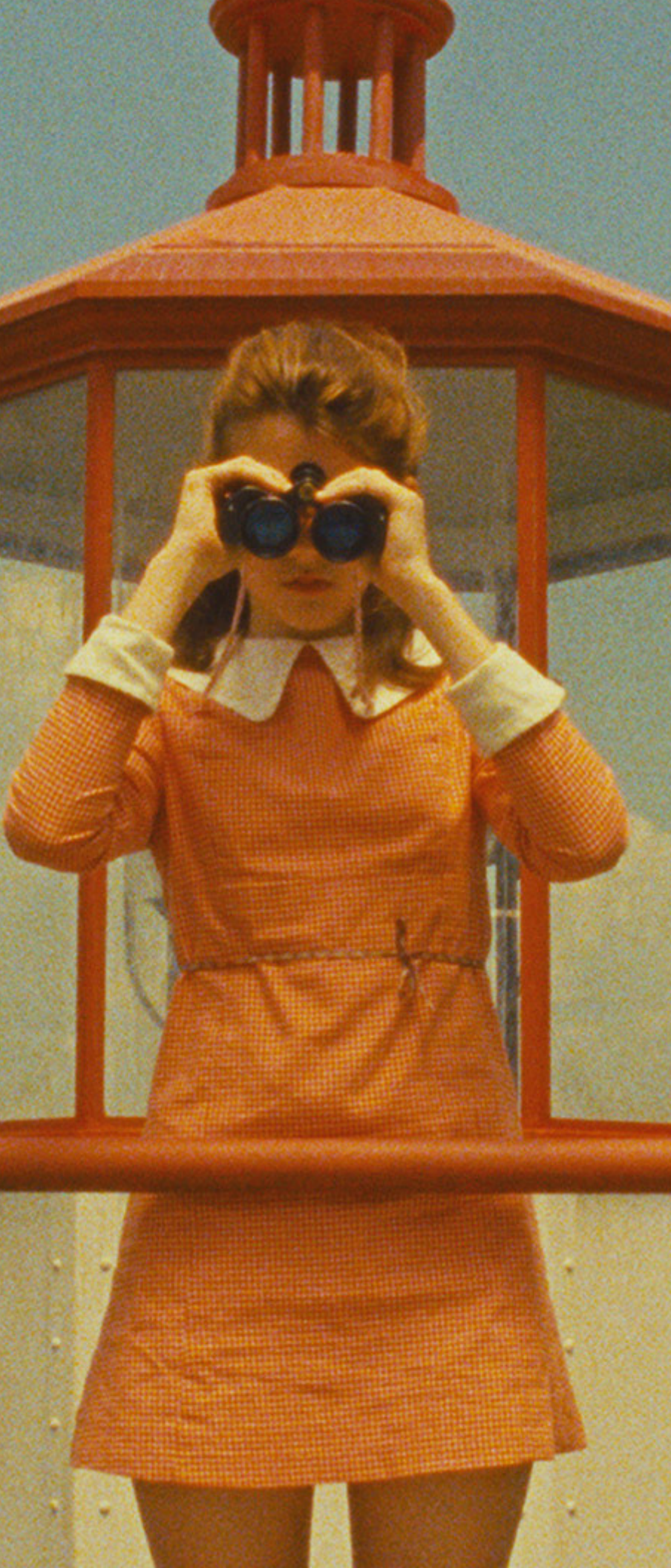
THE CHILDHOOD WHIMSY OF WES ANDERSON

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVdKbtDJgIE>
A short video analysis of Wes Anderson's films. It looks at the use and reasons behind his choice of using children in his films. The demonstration of differences in adults and child characters.

Let's think!

PRE-WATCHING VIDEOS





BEFORE THE MOVIE

Engage & Prepare

Activity: Brainstorm

Set up a placemat activity with small groups. On one placemat (e.g. a piece of large chart-paper), write 'childhood'. On another, write 'adolescence'. Instruct students: "Think about what each word means to you and contribute to each mat with a marker – single words, images, or phrases are all great options. Where you see a connection to another student's idea, draw a line between them!" Afterwards, encourage discussion and synthesis between ideas.

Can dos:

- **Vocabulary list**
- **Ask Questions about the interactions of kids when communicating, handling of issues, etc.**
- **Watch Youtube clips to engage students.**

DURING THE FILM

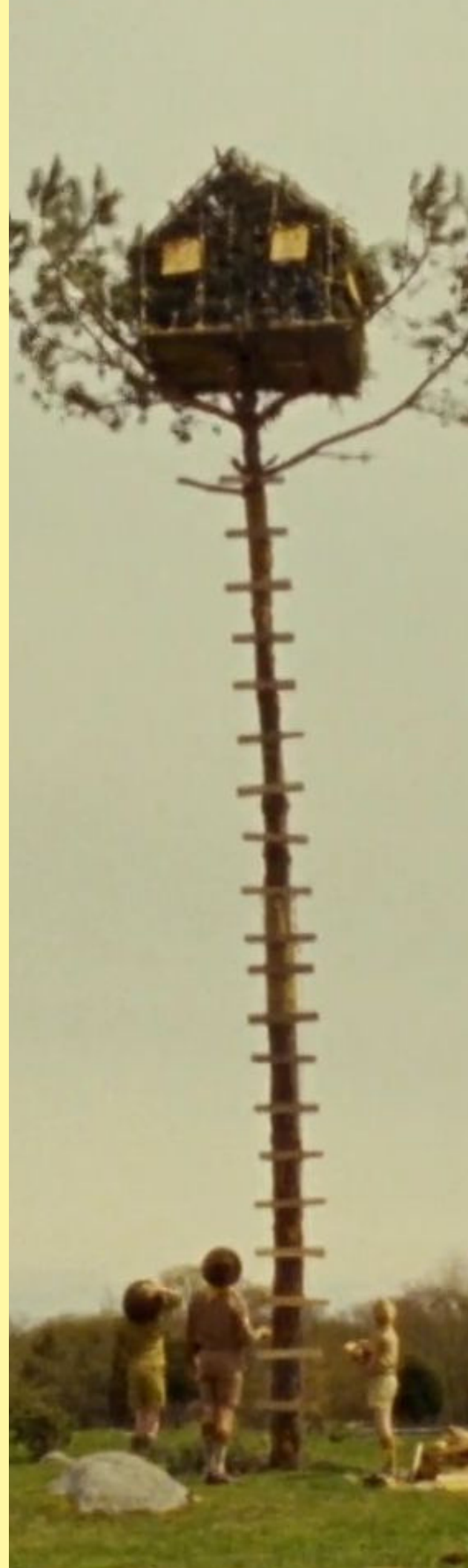
Capture Moments

Activity

Take notes during the film. Some options for notes are:

- i) moments throughout the film where you have felt the same way as the lead character.
- ii) scenes you feel are important in the lives of the leads
- iii) any moments you can relate to, either personal experiences or other films you have seen in the past.

"IT TAKES TIME TO FIGURE THINGS OUT" - SAM





After the film

REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY

Students choose a moment from the film and create a short script that builds off of that moment. They must specify the point in the film they're building from, and how they are connecting it to an experience from their own lives or cultures.

Reflection:

After doing your own skit and seeing those of your classmates, **what similarities and differences do you see across each other's ideas around growing up?**

Submit a short write-up of your reflection to this question.

Dramatic Skit

Each group member is responsible for participating in the creation and delivery of your group's work.

Pre-watching Activity explained

The first activity is to get everyone in the classroom thinking and engaged in the theme of the upcoming movie. Through brainstorming and discussions, students can start to make some connections about issues that are commonly experienced at their age. They can also start to see the similarities and differences that students from different cultures may or may not face.

"I HAVE BEEN TRYING REALLY HARD TO MAKE FRIENDS, BUT I FEEL PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE MY PERSONALITY" - SAM



'During' Activity Explained

The activity suggested for “during” the movie was designed with the intention to keep students thinking about the topics discussed in the “pre-watching” phase of the movie study. Having students think and make notes while enjoying would allow for better transition to the after movie activity. Having the students keep in mind the similarities and differences previously discussed would allow them to view the movie from a slightly different perspective.



CLOSER LOOK

Extended Analysis

Choose from one of the questions, to focus on as a group and create a presentation (next page).



- The wedding scene is 'unofficial', but means a lot to the kids. Is this normal? Have you seen or experienced something similar? Why do you think the kids felt it was important to do?
- The explosive personality of Suzy's father, compared to the adult's description of Suzy. Why do you think the film includes this connection?
- The last scene: when Captain Sharp offers to be Sam's guardian. He does this while climbing up the chimney to save the kids. Why do you think he did that at that moment? What meaning does the scene hold?

A **short presentation** that uses video clips to help explain your ideas, presented like a video-collage, to accompany a short presentation.

OR

A **short video** that you film with your own technology, that explains your ideas on your chosen topic.

Choose from one of the options on the left. Focus and prepare as a group.

Each group member is responsible for participating in the creation and delivery of your group's work.





Additional Activity Options

EXTRAS

Pre-Watch extended thinking:

A number of Anderson's fans have created videos that comment and critique on his film style and posted them to Youtube. Any of these would provide further insight into his work, but this video in particular breaks down the major ideas and elements of his films, with a special focus on Moonrise Kingdom. The vocabulary throughout the clip is also helpfully preparatory for watching the full film with a critical eye. As students watch the film, encourage them to look for and record examples of the different words as they see them in scenes.



Additional Activity Options

After Film Further thinking questions:

EXTRAS

1. There was a lot of communication in the movie, between the kids and amongst the adults. Sam and Suzy only used short letters, yet could conveyed so much to each other. The adults communicated via phone calls and letters, but were even more confused after each interaction. Why is that?
2. The concerns around Suzy being "troubled" were too much for the adults to handle, but they ended up having the same grown up problems. Discuss.
3. The director of the movie, Wes Anderson, puts a lot of effort in his film style. Is there a director from your country similar to him, in uniqueness? Tells us about him/her.



More Resources & References

OTHER 'COMING-OF-AGE' FILMS

The Perks of Being a Wallflower (2012 American film)

The Spectacular Now (2013 American film)

First Love (2010 Thai film)

Our Times (2015 Chinese Film)

You Are The Apple of My Eye (2011 Chinese Film)

From Me to You (2010 Japanese Film)

Ferris Bueller's Day off (1986 American Film)

Try this!

Find, translate, and present a coming of age movie or a director with unique styles from your culture, or another culture. Present and explain your findings, use clips from the movie or retell the story, and explain how you can relate.

"I hope the roof flies off and I get sucked up into space" - Suzy's Dad



References

Government of Ontario. (2010). Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools. Retrieved from <https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf>

Canada, Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 and 10 English as a Second Language and Literacy Development. Retrieved July 1, 2017, from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/esl912currb.pdf>



Disclaimer

Images

All images used in the creation of this document were collected online from film captures. They are used only for the sole purpose of this media study guide.

Videos

All videos suggested in this guide are searchable on YouTube for reference purposes.