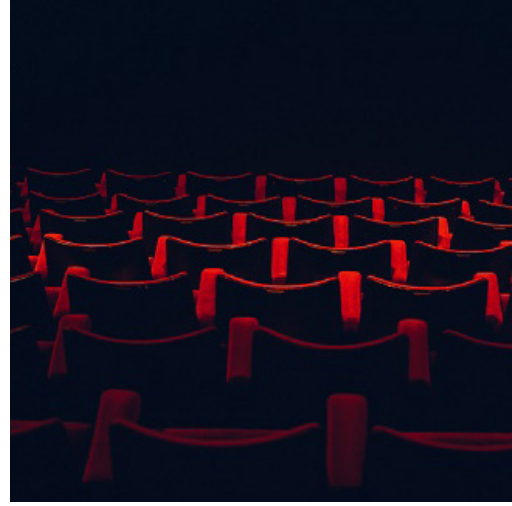




January/February 2017

CRAZE OF THE MONTH: AWARDS CEREMONIES



What are awards ceremonies?

The first two months of the year are awards season in the movie and music industries. The Golden Globes took place on 8 January with the BAFTAs (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) coming up on 12 February and then the big one, the Oscars, on 26 February. In the world of music there are the Grammy Awards on 12 February and the Brit Awards on 22 February.

The annual fest of glitz and glamour always stirs up some controversy and it is likely that your pupils – and their parents – will be talking about them in the playground and classroom the following day.

How can awards ceremonies be used for literacy teaching?

We know that tapping into children's interests is a great way of engaging them in learning. Our research shows that children who enjoy writing very much are seven times more likely to write above the level expected for their age compared with children and young people who do not enjoy writing at all. Similarly, children and young people who write outside school daily are five times more likely to be writing above the expected level for their age compared with young people who never write outside school¹.

Our Craze of the Month taps into children's and young people's interests to improve outcomes in literacy. The activities featured here relate to the English Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum in England²:

Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to:

- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

Writing – composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by:
 - writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional)
 - writing about real events
 - writing for different purposes.

1 Clark, C. (2016). **Children's and Young People's Writing in 2015**. Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual survey. London: National Literacy Trust

2 DfE (2013). The National Curriculum in England. Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document.



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Using it in the classroom

Awards season offers some great opportunities for cross-curricular learning with particularly strong links to art, drama and media studies. Here we'll focus on how it could be used to promote literacy. The activities start with simpler ones designed for KS1/2 students and progress to ones more suitable for KS3/4.

Awards trivia

Ask pupils to put together a series of questions based on one or more of the awards ceremonies (e.g. which movie holds the record for most Oscar wins? Who is the most successful British artist of all time at the Grammys?) They can then challenge their classmates to complete their quiz, either in writing or orally. Why not award your own Oscar for the top scorer?

Who are you wearing?!

Sometimes it seems as though the ball gowns and tuxedos are more important than the films and songs that win the awards! Challenge students to design a red carpet outfit for their favourite actor or singer. They can sketch the outfit and annotate it with notes about the colour, style and fabric – this could be a great opportunity for younger pupils to practice their descriptive vocabulary.

For more ideas to develop vocabulary check out our free descriptive writing competition [Descriptosaurus Time Machine](#).

Critic's choice

Ask pupils to study the nominations at one of the awards ceremonies (animated feature film at the Oscars or British single at the Brit Awards could be good options) and write a review of a film they have seen or album they've heard. What did they like/not like about it? Is it worthy of its nomination? Should it win? Check out some of the reviews pupils have left on the [Into Film website](#) for inspiration.

Predictions

Related to Critic's choice above, ask pupils to research the nominations in a particular category and make a prediction about who they think will win. They should be able to justify their answer with relevant observations. Why not ask pupils to interview their parents and other family members and record their predictions too? You could make a display of their reviews and predictions and review them after the ceremonies.

The acceptance speech

Challenge pupils to write an acceptance speech for someone they think will win an award. Remember – there are strict time limits and the winners often get very emotional so they might want to practise their speech before delivering it to the class!

Controversies

It seems that no awards ceremony is complete without a dose of controversy. Last year #oscarssowhite trended following a lack of diversity in the nominations. In January this year Meryl Streep made headlines around the world when she used her Golden Globe acceptance speech to attack Donald Trump (who, predictably, hit back calling her "overrated" on Twitter). Use these controversies to spark interesting debates and discussions in the classroom – what can Hollywood do to ensure black actors and actresses are better represented? Should celebrities use awards ceremonies to voice their own political views or should they simply be about the films and music?



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Further information

For more information about the different awards ceremonies, including lists of nominations and winners, see:

- The Golden Globes www.goldenglobes.com
- The BAFTAs www.bafta.org
- The Oscars www.oscar.go.com
- The Brit Awards www.brits.co.uk
- The Grammys www.grammy.com

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This academic year the Network is concentrating on creative, engaging and practical ways to develop and enhance parental and community engagement in school. Check out the resources **Our Books** and **Our Stories** for ideas and activities.