

The Sandman

BGE FOURTH LEVEL UNIT



SCREENING
SHORTS



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BGE Fourth Level Es and Os

Activity	Experiences and Outcomes met
Before Watching: Sound On/Vision Off	LIT 4-05a; LIT 4-06a; LIT 4-18a; LIT 4-19a
After Watching: Discuss	LIT 4-01a; LIT 4-02a; LIT 4-04a; LIT 4-07a; LIT 4-10a
Genre and Film Language	LIT 4-04a; LIT 4-05a; LIT 4-06a; LIT 4-07a; LIT 4-08a; LIT 4-09a
Reading the Film's Language	LIT 4-05a; LIT 4-08a; LIT 4-09a
Developing and Reflecting	LIT 4-02a; LIT 4-05a; LIT 4-06a; LIT 4-08a; LIT 4-16a; LIT 4-21a; LIT 4-22a; LIT 4-23a; LIT 4-28a; LIT 4-29a
Creative Tasks	LIT 4-11a; LIT 4-13a; LIT 4-14a; LIT 4-15a; LIT 4-16a; LIT 4-20a; LIT 4-25a; LIT 4-26a; LIT 4-28a; LIT 4-29a; LIT 4-31a



Thinking Critically

- One of the joys of studying film is that there are many possible interpretations of what you see and hear. **Any idea can have value - as long as you can justify it!**
- These questions will help you to use evidence and develop alternative ideas. Use them as much as possible.

What do you think?

Why do you think that?

Do you have a reason?

Can you say more about that?

Is there another way?

How can you be sure?



Before Watching: Sound On / Vision Off

- You are going to “watch” the film, focusing on sound. You will hear the soundtrack of the film but not see what is happening.
- While the film is playing, note in the table:
 - **What you are hearing;**
 - **What you think those sounds tell you about the film, or what might be happening on screen.**
- After watching the film, go back to your list and discuss which sounds you did or didn't accurately predict.



Sound On / Vision Off



Sounds heard	What might be happening



'The Sandman'

(Paul Berry, 1991)



A little boy is sent upstairs to bed with just a candle to chase away the shadows. Negotiating the dark, creaky staircase, his trepidation grows, and when he finally reaches his room he races to the relative sanctuary of his bed. Sleep does not come easily; he hears chilling sounds all round him. Finally dozing off, the boy does not see the arrival of the Sandman...

WARNING: Please note this film contains strong images which may be distressing for some viewers. Teacher discretion is advised.



[The Sandman: BGE Fourth Level | Screening Shorts](#)

After Viewing: Discuss

1. What do you think the film is about?
2. What do you think the Sandman is?
3. Where do you think he comes from?
4. Where do you think the ideas for the film came from?
5. Does the film, or parts of it, remind you of anything else?
6. How do you feel about the film?



Reading the Film's Language (1)

- Re-watch the opening scene of 'The Sandman' (from 00:31 to 01:47).
- How does the story begin? What happens?
- Identify **five** examples of camera shots and/or sounds and explain why they are effective in setting the scene and atmosphere.



Reading the Film's Language (1)



Camera shot or sound	What is happening in the film at that point?	How does it set the scene and/or atmosphere?



Reading the Film's Language (2)

- Re-watch the sequence of the boy going up to bed (from 01:58 to 03:05).
- Freeze frame on **five** shots you think are significant. Write or draw on a storyboard what you see. Note any use of colour, lighting or sound that adds to the effect.
- Discuss the different camera angles used and how they make the viewer feel. How are they used to make us feel the boy's vulnerability and fear?



Reading the Film's Language (2)

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Comment	Comment	Comment
		
Comment	Comment	

Genre and Film Language

- Within genre films, there are certain plots, characters, settings, colours, sounds, film techniques, etc we expect to see. We call these **genre conventions**.
- What conventions would you typically expect to find in a horror film? Make a list.
- List as many horror films as you can. Do they use any/all of the genre conventions you listed?
- Which horror genre conventions are found in 'The Sandman'? How do these contribute to the suspense and horror of the film?



Genre and Film Language



Horror genre convention	How it contributes to the suspense and horror



Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends

- ‘The Sandman’ is a character from myth and fairy tale. What creepy myths, fairy tales and legends do you know? What about urban myths?
- Research other fairy tales, myths and legends. Where did they originate? What fears do they tap into? (E.g. ‘The Sandman’ taps into our fear of the dark.) **Complete the table** with your findings.
- Write the script or storyboard for one of the myths you researched. (Think back to the first task: how will you use camera shots and sound to set the scene of your film?)



Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends



Short summary of the myth/fairytale	Where it originated	What fears it plays on



Developing and Reflecting

- Re-watch the sequence of the boy going up to bed (from 01:58 to 03:05). Make a list of **descriptive nouns, adverbs, adjectives, imagery** that might describe how the boy is feeling.
- Breakdown the events of the film into its **narrative structure** of beginning, middle and end. Which part of the structure do you think is most effective or important? Explain your reasons.
- List **words/phrases/physical reactions** related to fear and nervous anticipation. Have you ever had times when you felt this way? How did it feel? How did you make yourself feel better?
- Create a list of other films, TV shows, books or stories that this film reminds you of **in any way**. Explain your choices.



Creative Tasks

- Re-tell the story in prose, trying to capture in words the same tension and suspense found in the film.
- Using stills from the film or your own drawings, create a comic-strip version of the film, adding thought and speech bubbles for the characters.
- Download 'The Sandman' from [Screening Shorts](#) and edit together a one-minute trailer for the film.
- Research the tale of the Sandman (e.g. from folklore, songs, E.T.A. Hoffmann's 'Der Sandmann'...). Create a [moving image essay](#) or PowerPoint on the different versions of this myth.



Credits

Resource developed by Gail Robertson
on behalf of Screen Scotland.

Original material taken from [Screening
Shorts](#).

For more information on Film Education
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