

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL PRESENTS



MILWAUKEE FILM
FESTIVAL

SEPT. 25 - OCT. 9, 2014

EDUCATION SCREENINGS

The Starfish Throwers Education Screening

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to the Milwaukee Film Education Screenings! We are delighted to have you and thankful that so many Milwaukee-area teachers are interested in incorporating film into the classroom! So that we may continue providing these opportunities, we do require that your class **complete at least one activity** in conjunction with the screening of *The Starfish Throwers*. Your cooperation ensures that we are able to continue applying for funding to bring in these films and offer them to you (and literally thousands of students) at such a low cost.

This packet includes several suggestions of activities and discussion questions that fulfill a variety of Common Core Standards. Let me know if you need a different file format! Feel free to adapt and modify the activities for your own classroom. Students could also simply journal, blog, or write about their experience.

New this year we are introducing an Essay Contest to this packet! Submit writing from your students in response to the standard prompt we offer here by November 3, 2014 for consideration. A panel of judges will select the best essay and a runner-up in each grade range to receive a bookstore gift certificate as a prize. See the Essay Contest handout in this packet for more details.

You can send evidence of the work you did to integrate the film into your classroom electronically or by mail. This could include: links to online content, Google Drive folders, scanned material, photocopied or original student work concerning the film/film-going experience or even your own anecdotal, narrative accounts. **We should receive this evidence of your integration of the film into your classroom by November 15, 2014.** All of what you send us will help us write and fulfill the grants that allow us to bring these films to you and your students at such a low cost. We may also post some of the best work on our website (with students' first names and school only) later in the semester (if you would prefer we not share your students' work publicly, please let me know).

Send student work or evidence via email to cara@mkefilm.org or by mail to:

Milwaukee Film
Attn: Cara Ogburn, Education Director
229 E Wisconsin Ave, Suite 200
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Screenings of *The Starfish Throwers* with post-screening discussion fulfill the following Common Core ELA Literacy Standards for Speaking and Listening: SL.6.1-4, SL.6.6, SL.7.1-4, SL.7.6, SL.8.1-4, SL.8.6

Thanks again, and we'll look forward to seeing you next year!

Cara Ogburn
Education Director, Milwaukee Film



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The Starfish Throwers Curriculum Packet Contents

The Starfish Throwers provides teachers and students with an opportunity to explore issues of global hunger and the impact of activism or volunteerism. The following activities are designed to connect students' experience viewing *The Starfish Throwers* to other relevant events, texts, and themes while employing higher order thinking skills:

Before the screening:

◆ **Let's Go To The Movies!: Preview *The Starfish Throwers***

Common Core-English Language Arts (CC-ELA) Literacy Standards: RI.6.1-2, RI.6.7, RL.6.4, RL.6.2, RL.6.4, W.6.1-2, W.6.4, W.6.7, SL.6.1-4, SL.6.6, L.6.1-3, RI.7.1-2, RL.7.2, RL.7.4, W.7.1-2, W.7.4, W.7.7, SL.7.1-4, SL.7.6, L.7.1-3, RI.8.1-2, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, W.8.1-2, W.8.4, W.8.7, SL.8.1-4, SL.8.6, L.8.1-3

After the screening:

◆ **How to Read a Film: Questions to Consider for *The Starfish Throwers***

CC-ELA Literacy Standards: RL.6.1-3, RI.6.1-3, RI.6.7, W.6.1-2, W.6.4-7, SL.6.1-4, SL.6.6, L.6.1-3, RL.7.1-3, RI.7.1-3, W.7.1-2, W.7.4-7, SL.7.1-4, SL.7.6, L.7.1-3, RL.8.1-3, RI.8.1-3, W.8.1-2, W.8.4-7, SL.8.1-4, SL.8.6, L.8.1-3

◆ **Hunger: A Global Issue**

CC-ELA Literacy Standards: RL.6.1, RI.6.1, RI.6.7, W.6.1, W.6.2a-b, W.6.4, W.6.6-8, W.6.10, SL.6.1-6, L.6.1-3, RL.7.1, RI.7.1, RI.7.7, W.7.1, W.7.2a-b, W.7.4, W.7.6-8, W.7.10, SL.7.1-6, L.7.1-3, RL.8.1, RI.8.1, RI.8.7, W.8.1, W.8.2a-b, W.8.4, W.8.6-8, W.8.10, SL.8.1-6, L.8.1-3

◆ ***The Starfish Throwers* & Inspiration**

CC-ELA Literacy Standards: RL.6.1-2, RI.6.1, RI.6.7, W.6.1, W.6.2a-b, W.6.4-8, W.6.10, SL.6.1-2, L.6.1-3, RL.7.1-2, RI.7.1, RI.7.7, W.7.1, W.7.2a-b, W.7.4-8, W.7.10, SL.7.1-2, L.7.1-3, RL.8.1-2, RI.8.1, RI.8.7, W.8.1, W.8.2a-b, W.8.4-8, W.8.10, SL.8.1-2, L.8.1-3

◆ **Exploring Perspectives**

CC-ELA Literacy Standards: RL.6.1-2, RI.6.1, RI.6.7, W.6.1, W.6.4-6, W.6.6-10, W.6.10, SL.6.1-4, SL.6.6, L.6.1-3, RL.7.1-2, RI.7.1, RI.7.7, W.7.1, W.7.4-10, W.7.10, SL.7.1-4, SL.7.6, L.7.1-3, RL.8.1-2, RI.8.1, RI.8.7, W.8.1, W.8.4-10, W.8.10, SL.8.1-4, SL.8.6, L.8.1-3

◆ **Essay Contest**

Submit your students' writing to be considered for prizes! Writing for the Essay Contest will fulfill Writing Standard aims.



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Let's Go To The Movies!: Preview *The Starfish Throwers*
English Language Arts Activity

Teacher Resources:

Film Website: <http://www.thestarfishthrowers.com/>

Film Poster: <http://www.imdb.com/media/rm3966355456/tt3353428>

Film Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/44292667>

⇒ **TEACHERS!** The following activities are intended for use before your class visits the 2014 Milwaukee Film Festival Education Screening of *The Starfish Throwers*. By observing the film poster, previewing the film trailer, and engaging students in discussion regarding the film, students will build common background knowledge together. This will prepare them to think critically while viewing the film itself.

Directions:

1. Explain to the students that they will soon be visiting the Oriental Theatre for an Education Screening at the 2014 Milwaukee Film Festival. They will be viewing a film entitled *The Starfish Throwers* that follows the stories of three people around the world who are making a difference in the fight against hunger.
2. Share the film's promotional poster, found at IMDb.com (use link provided above). Ask students to observe the poster and to share what they notice. Use prompting questions such as:
 - Who do you think these individuals are?
 - What details do you notice here that may be relevant to the film (i.e. basket of produce, text reading "Everything big starts small")?
 - What other things do you notice on the poster (credits, film title, awards)?
3. After a discussion about the poster, have students predict what the film will be about. Students should take quiet time to write their predictions of the film. Continue to display the poster image during this activity so students can refer to characters or elements they notice.
4. Have some students volunteer to share their predictions, either by reading what they wrote, or summarizing their ideas for the class. (Note: These predictions can be revisited once students have seen the film. Analyze predictions for accuracy and further discussion.)
5. Explain that one way people learn of what a film is going to be about is through a film trailer. A trailer is essentially a film commercial that informs us of the basic storyline, introduces us to characters and setting, and intrigues us to want to see the film.
6. Watch the film trailer (use link provided above) and discuss their experience. What do they see now as being important in the poster? What new details do they notice in the poster that they may have ignored before?
7. Share the film's website (link above). Ask students to explore the site and share what they notice about the film's online presence.
8. Now that students have seen the film's trailer, poster and website, discuss the following:
 - What do you now know about the film?
 - What are you wondering about (I wonder how..., I wonder why...?)
 - Does this remind you of other films/books/stories? (Text-to-text, text-to-media)



How to Read a Film: Questions to Consider for *The Starfish Throwers*

Use these questions to spark dialogue about the film with your students **after** viewing *The Starfish Throwers*. Consider splitting the class into small groups to discuss one or two of the questions below, and then allow the groups to share their insights with the entire class. Another option is to use these questions as journal entry, student blog, or discussion board prompts.

1. What happens in the film? What important events occur? What is the resolution? Who are the important characters? What makes them important or influential for the story or argument the film makes?

These questions help students start to talk about plot, story, plot/narrative structure, character development, and conflict.

2. What is the film about? What themes, morals, or messages come up in the film?

*These questions help students start thinking about a film's themes, messages, and morals – and seeing them as different from the story itself. In other words, a film can be about the impact of hunger around the world and also about a larger concept like how one person can make a difference. Themes from *The Starfish Throwers* might include global perspectives, food security, hunger, poverty, volunteerism, empathy for others, urban farms/gardens, etc.*

3. Do some students in your class see different messages in the film as being more and less important? What differences do people see?

Discussing how students read the film differently helps students understand that films often express more than one message, and these messages speak differently to different viewers.

4. How does your real life affect how you understand a film? In other words, what might you notice or respond to differently in the film if you were of a different race or gender, age, or if you lived in a different city/country than you do?

Discussing how one's own perspective affects one's own interpretation of the film extends the previous question and gets students thinking about how films may be made differently for different audiences.

5. What do you notice about how the film was made? Because this is a documentary film, the story of the film is constructed through arranging footage, cutting in interviews and certain parts of the story at certain times to create an effect.

Discussing how a documentary is made helps students see non-fiction texts as constructed for a certain effect, encouraging a rhetorical approach to looking at such texts.

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Hunger: A Global Issue

This multi-part activity will help students assess what they knew about the issue of hunger before seeing the film, after seeing the film and through research. The activity is broken into parts that can easily be separated into individual activities.

Directions:

Part One: What do I know?

Students are asked to identify what they knew about hunger before seeing the film and after. (Teachers might elect to have students start this worksheet before seeing the film, filling in the first column and then returning to the sheet after the screening.) Finally, students can synthesize and reflect on the status of their knowledge now, identifying possible questions for further research or inquiry.

Teachers can feel free to adapt the worksheet template provided, adding additional boxes, etc.

Part Two: Research

Students will research specific information about hunger (and related issues) in the United States (generally) and their local community. Some topics or facts to find are suggested here, but students should add additional information they are interested in learning (perhaps given their remaining questions from Part One). Space has been provided for three student-initiated areas to research on the worksheet template.

Teachers can feel free to adapt this worksheet to include additional required facts to research or to change or add sites to compare (e.g. it might be instructive to compare the situation in India to that of the United States, given the film's global scope).

Part Three: Organizing Your Research

Students will use the free online infographic creation tool, Easel.ly (<http://www.easel.ly>), to arrange some or all of the information they gathered and make an argument using this visual medium of presentation.

Easel.ly should be easy for your students to use. In 2013, the American Association of School Librarians honored the site for being user friendly, intuitive, and simple enough that even a child in the 6th grade could successfully navigate the site and design their infographic without adult assistance. If you'd like to give a short tutorial to your students, however, there is a short video orientation to infographics here: <https://vimeo.com/37781587> that can be helpful for imagining the possibilities of the site.



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Hunger: A Global Issue

Part One: What do I know?

NAME: _____

Old Knowledge <i>What you knew about hunger before seeing the film</i>	New Knowledge <i>What you learned about hunger from viewing the film</i>	What questions do you now have about the topic of hunger? <i>These can be "I wonder..." questions!</i>



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Hunger: A Global Issue
Part Two: Research

NAME: _____

Research Questions/ Topics/ Tasks	Your Findings: USA	Your Community: _____	Write at least one sentence comparing and contrasting the statistics you found.
What are current rates of hunger?			
Describe how these rates have fluctuated over the last 10 and 20 years.			
What is the current homelessness rate?			
What are some organizations that provide meals for the hungry?			
What is the total population?			



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Your Research Questions/ Topics/ Tasks	Your Findings: USA	Your Community: _____	Write at least one sentence comparing and contrasting the statistics you found.
Other information to research: _____ _____ _____			
Other information to research: _____ _____ _____			
Other information to research: _____ _____ _____			



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Hunger: A Global Issue

Part Three: Organizing Your Research

NAME: _____

1. Think about the information you want to present given your research. What stands out? What is most eye-popping given the statistics you found, comparisons between the areas you researched, etc?

Identify here at least three facts, comparisons, ideas you want to focus on in your infographic:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2. Visit <http://www.easel.ly/> and create an account (so you can save your work). You'll use this site to help you make an infographic, a way of representing information with visual as well as textual cues. You can also watch a video made by Easel.ly (<https://vimeo.com/37781587>) to learn more about infographics!

3. Make an infographic to illustrate your research. Consider as you work what form will make your reader best understand the impact of the things you identified above? What is the argument you want to make given your research and what form might best suit that argument? Once you have completed your infographic, share it with your classmates!



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The Starfish Throwers & Inspiration

In this activity, students will first reflect in depth on the ways that the film inspired or taught them about the complexities of world hunger. Then, they will look at how others online have expressed being inspired by or learning from the film. Finally, they will write a short message (or tweet) about the film to share with others.

Feel free to modify the graphic organizer we have provided for brainstorming responses to the film. Alternately, you could elect to do this brainstorming as a whole class, perhaps combining this work with that of looking at the audience response section of the film's website together, depending on your access to computers.

Because many students in the middle school grades will not have yet reached age 13 (the age Twitter recommends one be prior to making an account) we have written this activity to be an analog tweeting activity. You might want to make a class Twitter on behalf of your students and post their tweets to get these messages out into the world and shared with the #ThrowStarfish movement. If your students are all over the age of 13 you could elect to have them make Twitter accounts to use for this activity as a means of teaching social media awareness.

Additionally, you can use the "#ThrowStarfish" template provided by the filmmakers (and included in this packet in a few pages!) to present your students' messages. We encourage you to take pictures of your students with their messages (or of the messages posted on a wall or individually) and hope that you will send them to us—we'd love to pass them along to the filmmakers (who will likely share with the film's subjects) so they can see how the film is inspiring young people.

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Part One: Inspiration

NAME: _____

Later in this activity, you'll be asked to express how you were inspired by the film through a tweet. First, though, you'll want to do some thinking so that your tweet can be its very best. Use the following graphic organizer to help with your brainstorming:

The facts about hunger as we know them are:

--

So the real problem is:

--

Possible solutions might be:

Solution 1:	Solution 2:	Solution 3:

Continued on next page...



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But some possible challenges to those solutions are:

Challenge 1:

Challenge 2:

Challenge 3:

I think I can help by...

Because...



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Part Two: Expressing Inspiration

First, review how others were inspired by the film by looking at the section of the film's website where they have gathered some images of people holding signs that say how the film inspired them. You can find this page (which also has a short video on it) here:

<http://www.thestarfishthrowers.com/audienceresponse/>

You can also look at the response on twitter by searching the hashtag #ThrowStarfish to see additional responses, including those too recent to have made it to their web gallery.

As a class, discuss the kinds of responses people are expressing here as well as how the film may have inspired you in similar or different ways.

On a large sheet of paper or the template we've provided for you, write your own short message to others that expresses your response to the film. Like the people pictured on the website, you'll write this message in the form of a "tweet"—a short message posted using Twitter, a popular social media format.

Tweets are limited to 142 characters (that means 142 letters or punctuation marks...not very long!). This means you'll need to choose your words very carefully for maximum impact! Be sure to include the hashtag #ThrowStarfish as you saw others do on the film's website to participate in this group. Post your tweet on your classroom wall. Later, your teacher may elect to take your photo with your tweet and/or post your tweets online for others to read.

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#ThrowStartfish



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Exploring Perspectives

This activity is designed to get students thinking further about the different kinds of reactions (positive, negative, mixed) Katie Stagliano, Allan Law, and Narayanan Krishnan received to their actions in the film.

Directions:

In Part One, students are asked to stake a claim and support it with some evidence. We have provided a graphic organizer to facilitate this thinking—teachers are encouraged to adapt it as desired to best serve their students.

In Part Two, they are asked to recall examples of different perspectives than their own and reflect on those. Though we have designed this as an independent writing activity, teachers could adapt this for small group or whole-class discussion.

Created to support critical thinking, this two-part activity allows students to practice situating their opinions amidst those of others, weighing the validity of a variety of perspectives while still having ownership over their own ideas.

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Part One: Staking a Claim

NAME: _____

For this activity, read the statement in the grey box in the center of the page. Then, explain if you *agree* or *disagree* in the appropriate box above or below, depending on your opinion.

I agree, because...

Do you *agree* or *disagree* with the following statement?

All of the main characters in the film made choices to help people in good ways.

I disagree, because...



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Part Two: Considering Other Perspectives

The three main characters in the film experienced different reactions to their actions from others. Use the following chart to summarize how each character was treated by different people in their lives:

Character Name	Community's Reaction	Family & Friends' Reaction	Other Peoples' Reactions
<i>Narayanan Krishnan</i>			
<i>Katie Stagliano</i>			
<i>Allan Law</i>			

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Now, reflect on the responses of others you summarized above:

What do you find interesting or important about these responses?

What responses did you agree with and why?

What responses did you disagree with and why?



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2014 ESSAY CONTEST

This year, Milwaukee Film is inaugurating an Essay Contest in conjunction with our Education Screenings. A judging panel will select the best essay and a runner-up from essays submitted in response to each screening's standard, provided essay prompt. Winners and runners-up will receive an award in the form of a certificate and a gift card to a local bookstore. Submissions will be read anonymously, with name and school information removed from each essay prior to distribution to judges. Judges will assess each essay using a rubric informed by the Common Core State Standards for writing appropriate to the grade band into which the writing falls.

Submission Details:

- You may elect to send all of your students' work or just a selection.
- For each submission, attach a completed and signed release slip (a set of these forms is attached).
- Mail all submissions to:

Milwaukee Film attn: Essay Contest
229 E Wisconsin Ave #200
Milwaukee, WI 53202

- **Submissions must be postmarked by November 3, 2014**
- Teachers of winning entries will be notified by November 21, 2014 and we will coordinate a date/time to present the award to the student. Due to anticipated volume, we unfortunately cannot inform all submissions' teachers.

Essay Prompt—Grades 6-8:

In the film, *The Starfish Throwers*, we follow three people who have committed a lot of their time to helping others. Helping others can be seen as a *selfless* act, something done only for others, with no benefit to the self. However, helping others can also feel good. Write an essay where you explain whether it is *selfish* to feel good about helping others or not. Be sure to explain why, using examples from the film.

Essays should be a minimum of three paragraphs and a maximum of five paragraphs long.

⇒ **TEACHERS!** Feel free to do preparatory work in your classroom to help students do their best writing on this topic. For example, you might discuss selfishness and selflessness, examples from the film of reactions to the programs begun by the film subjects, etc. After students have completed a first draft, feel free to have them workshop their writing and revise/edit their work accordingly. Submissions may be handwritten or typed, depending on your resources.



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MILWAUKEE FILM ESSAY CONTEST RELEASE FORM

Include a completed copy of this slip with each submission for the 2014 Essay Contest. Please type or print legibly.

Student Full Name _____

Teacher Full Name _____

Teacher Email _____

Teacher Phone Number _____

School Name _____

I hereby authorize the above named child's writing to be submitted for consideration in the Milwaukee Film 2014 Essay Contest:

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Full Name (printed) _____

.....

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