



## **London Children's Film Festival 2006: Teachers' Resource**

### **Winky's Horse (Het Paard van Sinterklass) (5+)**

#### **Introduction**

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*Winky's Horse* observes different cultures and looks at the challenges these differences present to children, presented in a warm, funny and child-focused way. Winky learns to make new friends in all sorts of unusual places, and as in films like *Lassie* and *Free Willy*, she finds comfort in animals rather than the confusing adults and children around her. The film is set in the Netherlands at the festival of Sinterklass, which gives an opportunity to look at cultures and traditions from around the world, as well as topics such as family and friends, communication, migration and cultural differences.

#### **Synopsis**

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Winky moves from China to the Netherlands with her family. She has to learn a new language, new customs and make new friends. School is very different, and one day after class she runs away and finds a kindred spirit in a nearby field. When she learns about the festival of Sinterklass, she becomes determined to ask him for a horse of her very own, but her parents, struggling to make their new restaurant a success, don't seem to understand. Will Winky get what she most desires and feel at home in her new country?

#### **Audiences**

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This film is recommended for use at Key Stage 1&2 and is suitable for children aged 4 and over. It has links with curriculum-based work on National Literacy Strategy, Art and Design, and Citizenship.

#### **Curriculum Links and Suggested Classroom Activities**

### **Art / Design**

- Find out which winter festivals people in your class celebrate. Pupils can then make a mask to depict one of the characters from these winter celebrations.
- Winky's favourite animal is a horse. Pupils can make a model of their own favourites out of paper mache and make a display of them in your classroom.

### **Literacy**

- In the Netherlands children learn that on the eve of the Feast of Sinterklass, St Nicholas arrives on his steamer, with his assistant Zwarte Pieten. Many Dutch children watch this on television. From this point on, they put out their shoes by the fire in the hope that Sinterklass will fill them with presents. On the eve of his feast day, he travels over the rooftops on a white horse and if the children have been good, Zwarte Pieten goes down the chimney and lays out the presents, taking the carrots and straw that may have been left out for the horse.
- Write a letter to your headteacher asking for all the good things you want in your school. Give reasons for all the things on your list and think what you could do to help achieve them.
- Learn about winter celebrations in other parts of the world and write poems to describe them.

### **Citizenship**

- Inspired by Winky's journey to the Netherlands, pupils could write a story about a new land that they visit with their family, real or imaginary. What food do the people there eat? What traditions do they have? What friends do they make?
- Make a list of all the different winter celebrations your class have at home. Split into small groups and tell each other the stories of what happens on these special days and why you celebrate them. Make a group artwork (a painting, collage, model etc) using elements from all the stories you share.

### **Weblinks**

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#### **More about Sinterklass**

<http://www-astro.physics.ox.ac.uk/~erik/sint/sint.html#explanation>



### **Other Winter festivals**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_winter\\_festivals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_winter_festivals)

### **Horse fun and games**

<http://www.ultimatehorsesite.com/fun/fun.html>

### **Learn more about China**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country\\_profiles/1287798.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1287798.stm)

### **Learn more about The Netherlands**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country\\_profiles/1043423.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1043423.stm)

We suggest that teachers and parents check the suitability of recommended books, films and other media for the children in their care before use. London Children's Film Festival cannot be responsible for the content of any recommended media, including websites.

### **Film Details**

<b>Country</b>	Holland, 2005
<b>Director</b>	Mischa Kamp
<b>Running time</b>	95 min
<b>Language</b>	Dutch with English subtitles



‘Het Paard van Sinterklaas’ © 2005 Bos Bros Film & TV

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foto Victor Arnolds