

MADE IN DAGENHAM



Teachers' Notes

Film Education's online resource for learners aged 15-19 features digital teaching materials exploring the film *Made in Dagenham*. This resource is designed for students of Citizenship, History, Media, Film and English at GCSE, AS, A2 and equivalent.

Film synopsis

Made in Dagenham stars Sally Hawkins as Rita O'Grady who is the catalyst for the 1968 Ford Dagenham strike by women sewing machinists that led to the advent of the Equal Pay Act. Working in extremely impoverished conditions and for long arduous hours, the women at the Ford Dagenham plant finally lay down their tools when they are reclassified as 'unskilled'.

Resource overview

The resource is divided into three sections, each of which has relevance for particular subject areas:

Context: activities for students of History, Citizenship and English

- Women's Rights
- Primary and Secondary Sources: Research and planning
- Presentation

Expectations: activities for students of Film/Media Studies and English

- The trailer
- The poster
- The audience
- The stars

Britain onscreen: activities for students of Film/Media Studies and Citizenship

- Images of Britain
- Representing Britain
- Clip analysis
- Case study

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Context

Subject focus: History, Citizenship, English

Using 'Made in Dagenham' as a starting point, this activity is a historical enquiry investigating the position and status of British women in the late 1960s.

The enquiry is organised into two stages:

- Research and planning
- Presentation

It can be taught as a stand-alone activity or as preparation for the controlled assessment component of GCSE History. If you choose to use this activity in this way, students should be made aware that the sources they use in their presentation should be referred to again in the controlled assessment task.

Women's Rights

This opening task uses a clip from the film to introduce students to ideas about the status of women at the time. Primarily *Made in Dagenham* tells the story of women's rights to equal pay. Pay inequality, however, is not the only form of discrimination against women represented in the film and this close viewing task will provide students with the opportunity to consider other forms of discrimination against women.

The follow-up discussion points broaden students' perspective to include the rights of women today and to consider how the position of women in the UK might compare with those living elsewhere in the world. The downloadable PDF 'International Women's Rights' provides a matching activity introducing statistics about women's status and position around the world. Students have to match the statistic with a description of the human rights to which it alludes. Having matched this information, students try to prioritise one area for action. An extension activity directs students to explore the campaign document produced by the Fawcett Society designed to publicise the inequality gap between men and women in the UK today.

Primary and Secondary Sources: Research and planning

These pages provide students with a range of relevant web links to a selection of primary and secondary sources. Students are provided with three key research questions to begin their enquiry. Depending on the ability of your students, you may wish them to generate some of their own research questions. Students should be reminded to keep research diaries of their findings that will be submitted to you after their presentations to form part of your assessment.



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Presentation

In order to process the information found during the research stage, students will need time to share ideas with others. The onscreen activity provides a framework in which to conduct this discussion with focused prompt questions. The downloadable PDF 'Preparing your Presentation' offers students support in distilling their research into a coherent presentation. The presentation should show students have followed a clear line of argument to reach a substantiated conclusion and that they have used and referenced a range of sources including film, pictures and written sources. If you are using this to prepare for a controlled assessment for History GCSE, students could be encouraged to burn a CD of their presentation in order for this to be incorporated into your evaluation of their work.

Note for History teachers

As students undertake their research in groups, it is important to remind them of the value of keeping a detailed research diary. The timings of this activity will depend on whether you are using it in preparation for the GCSE History Controlled Assessment or a practice task to consolidate the skills and understandings of completing a historical enquiry.

Note for Citizenship and English teachers

The information retrieval and presentation skills required to complete this task make it suitable for English classrooms. The focus on Women's Rights and identities, and the presentation of an argument based on research also makes this an ideal activity for Citizenship lessons.

Expectations

Subject focus: Film/Media Studies and English

Organised into four parts, this activity is designed to encourage students to reflect on production and marketing elements of *Made in Dagenham* in order to build an understanding of the star system and target audience.

The trailer

Based on the trailer for *Made in Dagenham*, this activity is useful as a contextual introduction for all students. It develops skills of textual analysis making it particularly suitable for use in English, Media and Film Studies. Students work in groups to identify and analyse the trailer's key elements of time, place, character, narrative and genre. There is a downloadable PDF worksheet entitled 'Prediction activities' for students to record their findings in order to report back to the whole class. Having analysed the trailer, students are asked to consider what questions it raises about the film.

The poster

This task requires students to analyse the film's poster in detail with reference to the various selling points. This is best completed in pairs and should be followed up with a whole class discussion in order for students to share their findings.



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The audience

This task begins with a discussion about the target audience for *Made in Dagenham*. Students then explore how the film has been crafted to encourage audience identification with the character of Rita. The stimulus questions are based around a key clip from the film in which Rita calls for an all-out stoppage.

The stars

This task requires students to reflect on their personal knowledge and experience of certain film stars. Included are paragraphs taken from *Made in Dagenham*'s production notes describing the previous film appearances of three of the stars in the film. Students read this information and, based on their understanding of how certain stars are expected to appeal to specific audiences, make predictions about the relationship between the characters and themes represented in this film.

Britain Onscreen

Subject focus: Film/Media Studies and Citizenship

In terms of financing, production, content and marketing *Made in Dagenham* is a quintessentially British film. The central focus of this section is for students to talk through both familiar and unfamiliar ideas about identity and representation. It is up to your professional judgement as to how and when to direct students to feedback to the whole class. Similarly, some teachers may prefer each group to nominate a scribe and spokesperson whereas others may wish all students to make notes from their discussions and to conduct feedback less formally.

The first task is a discussion-based activity in which students work in pairs or small groups to reflect on their interpretation of the term 'British'. The questions to stimulate discussion have been based on the 2005 Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE) research into the topic. For further information about the Commission for Racial Equality's Report *Citizenship and Belonging: What is Britishness?*

Go to www.ethnos.co.uk/what_is_britishness_CRE.pdf

Representing Britain

In this task, students begin to consider the concept of British film having a 'national identity'. Discussion points focus students' talk around questions of British stereotyping, representations of Britain and the overseas appeal of British films.



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Images of Britain

This task makes explicit the links between concepts of Britishness and *Made in Dagenham*. Questions build on students' understanding of Britishness from the previous tasks by requiring them to apply their knowledge to analysing three still images from the film. The final question invites students to consider how Britishness might be represented in the film as a whole.

Clip Analysis

Based on a sequence from the film, this task requires students to analyse and consider both the role of British cinema in creating perceptions of Britishness, and how film can be interpreted based upon knowledge gained from previous media texts. The task begins by exploring elements of film language that are used to convey Britishness, and to compare the clip to other images that represent Britain in the 1960s. Students then move on to consider how *Made in Dagenham* is positioned in terms of British Cinema as a cultural institution.

Case Study

Subject focus: Film/Media Studies

This section of the resource, which will launch in September 2010, will explore the film from a marketing and production perspective featuring interviews with Producer, Stephen Woolley and Deborah Shepperd, Marketing Director, Paramount Pictures, UK.



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