

Teaching matters

Articles and opinions on primary teaching, with tips and ideas for the classroom

FÍS – storytelling through film

FÍS, the film project for primary schools, celebrated its 12th anniversary at the FÍS Film Festival held in the Helix, DCU, on 16 November.

“The FÍS Film Project was a very rewarding experience for everyone in our two-teacher school. This project ignited creativity in so many ways and we are delighted we took part. Part of our prize is a trip to the Film School in IADT. This will be a tremendous day for our pupils,” reflected Garry Kane, Principal of Leenane NS, Co Galway, winners of the overall FÍS Film Award 2016. Presented by RTÉ star Sinead Kennedy with guest of honour Secretary General of the DES, Seán Ó Foghlú, the award ceremony was attended by 950 primary school children, their teachers and parents.

Representing school and community at national level

The FÍS Film Project enables children to learn about the techniques involved in storytelling through film. These skills include: planning, scripting, storyboarding, cameras, lighting, audio, music, set design, post-production editing, costume and acting. Throughout the process, children also develop skills in communicating, working in a team, taking responsibility, collaborating with others, making decisions and problem solving. Some schools choose to produce their stories as animations.

The project starts off in classrooms with ideas for film projects. The project culminates in five minute films submitted to the FÍS Film Project for consideration. The next stage of the project is an invitation to the national celebration event for the lucky finalists who represent their schools with pride at the national event in the Helix. Some education centres have been very active in having local screenings for participating schools in their catchment areas and these have been tremendous events for all involved.

FÍS is a fantastic way to mediate a particular curricular strand/strand unit, while integrating a variety of subject areas. It also affords opportunities to engage with the local community.

This year, films selected for the ‘Decade

of Centenaries’ awards conveyed a story or moving images that commemorated the anniversary of any key centenary event in 1916. The prize winning schools in this category were St Patrick’s NS, Ringsend and Cregmore NS, Galway.

The ‘Active School Flag’ category accepted films that told a story depicting how schools strive to achieve a broad and balanced PE programme or how schools promote inclusive physical activity across the school day/year for all members of its community. This category was won by St Patrick’s NS, Stamullen.

Learning at all levels

The FÍS Film Festival, is a key digital engagement project in a joint

equipment or software to be available for schools. With new multi-purpose devices, scenes can be captured, edited and produced all on the one device.

Support for teachers

The FÍS classroom resource pack offers the primary school teacher a structured approach to introducing film as a cross-curriculum medium into the classroom. It was developed by teachers for teachers and contains lessons that support the development of children’s creativity and critical response. A FÍS technical manual is also available with clear practical information about film-making processes and techniques at <http://www.fisfilmproject.ie/teacher-resources/>



Pupils from Leenane NS receiving the Aileen MacKeogh Award for Outstanding Achievement in Film-Making for their film ‘When Cropfields Cry’. Back row L-R: Seán Ó Foghlú, Secretary General, Department of Education and Skills; Dr Annie Doona, President, Dún Laoghaire IADT; and Ciara O’Donnell, Director, Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)



Pupils from Cregmore NS, Galway celebrate winning the Decade of Centenaries award for their animation. Back row (L-R); Dr Annie Doona, President IADT; Seán Gallagher, Deputy Director, PDST; Ciara O’Donnell, Director, PDST.

collaboration between PDST Technology in Education and IADT Dún Laoghaire. Students pursuing their Master’s degrees in Film and Media produce the entire show.

Participate without entering the competition

It is possible to participate in the FÍS Film Project without ever entering the competition and many schools do this. Why not introduce film-making to your class and, when you and your pupils become more confident, consider entering the competition. PDST Technology in Education issued a grant to your local education centre to purchase film-making

lesson-plans/

Teachers can also avail of the FÍS interactive online course or approach your local education centre and ask if any face-to-face support sessions are taking place. If you know of other teachers in your school who are interested in FÍS, PDST Technology in Education, through the education centre network, can fund a tutor to deliver a whole school ICT training session (minimum 10 participants).

Log on to www.fisfilmproject.ie for more information and to view details of all the winners, including their films.

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