

Teaching matters

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

FÍS – developing key skills through filmmaking

The FÍS film project for primary schools celebrated its 13th year at the FÍS Film Festival held at the Helix in DCU in mid-November.

Some 900 pupils and their teachers attended the gala event which was staged to resemble a major movie awards night, like the Oscars or the BAFTAs.

MA students in Broadcast Production for Film, TV and Radio produced the event and they also streamed the awards live on the Internet. It all made for one very memorable day for the pupils and the schools.

Schools entering FÍS submit their films for adjudication by the last day of the school year and from these a select number make it to the Festival in the Helix.

Developing curricular skills

The FÍS Film Project is all about getting children to learn about, and get practical hands-on experience in, the techniques involved in storytelling through film – a five minute film. The kind of areas in which pupils develop skills include planning, scripting, storyboarding, filming, music making, set design, costume fitting

and acting. But the whole process is totally cross-curricular so that while engaging in the process the pupils are developing other key skills in communicating, working in a team, taking responsibility, making decisions and problem solving.

FÍS is a great way to teach a particular curricular strand or strand unit, while integrating a variety of subject areas. It also presents an opportunity to go beyond the school and into the wider local community.

This year's festival included awards in four new specific curricular categories that were designed to further embed the project into the curriculum. These covered the areas of geography, history,

science and social issues. The 2016 event had a specific award strand for the commemoration of 1916.

Teacher support

For many teachers the thought of producing a five minute film with their pupils may seem daunting. However, IADT provide support to teachers through a suite of structured lesson plans covering: scripting, storyboarding, the elements of film, using smart devices, lighting, editing and creating a soundtrack. There are also a number of short video tutorials that cover some of these areas.

PDST Technology in Education run two short courses on FÍS and FÍS Animation through the education centre network.

While these normally take place during the summer they can also be run during term time should demand exist.

Check out www.fisfilmproject.ie

The FÍS Film Festival is a joint collaboration between PDST Technology in Education and IADT Dún Laoghaire.

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2017 categories and winners

Film of the year 2017	The Gooseberry Fair	Ardfert NS	Direction	Emigrant Spirits	Milford National School
Art direction	Ads from the Archives	Scoil Raifteirí	Documentary	Dig It: A School Garden Documentary	St Patrick's NS, Skibbereen
Best junior film	Where Do Butterflies Come From?	Scoil San Phroinsias	Editing	Monkey Madness	Ladyswell NS
Best newcomer	Ní Banphrionsa Mé	Scariff Central NS	Horror	The Spooky School of Gardiner Street	Gardiner Street Primary School
Cinematography	The Last Laugh	Sacred Heart, Mulhuddart	Original music	Tom Crean: Fear Cróga Fear Gealgháireach	Scoil na mBráithre
Comedy	My Fellow Saint Hughians	Saint Hugh's NS	Original storytelling	Frozen Fortune	Sacred Heart, Mulhuddart
Costume	Magic Moments	Carrig National School	Originality	The New Boy	St Patrick's BNS, Portarlinton
Curriculum relevance: geography	An Féileacan Óiche	Gaelscoil Riabhach	Production design	The Gooseberry Fair	Ardfert NS
Curriculum relevance: history	Scientific Superhero: The Curie Cure	St Peter's BNS, Monasterevin	Science fiction	The Time Tube	St Peter's NS, Dungourney
Curriculum relevance: science	Kinetic Kids	Carn National School	Soundtrack	In Memoriam	St Aiden's NS
Curriculum relevance: social issues	RESPECT	Presentation Listowel	Special effects	School of Super Heroes	Sundays Well BNS
			Storyboarding	Boo!	Behy NS