

Level: CLB 1–4

Topic: Film Lesson for Elementary Level Students

Film: The Chinese Violin (2002). 8 min, 21 sec. (Animated Short)

Summary: The theme is about adjusting to a new culture. A young girl and her father move from China to Canada bringing only their Chinese violin along for the journey. As they face the challenge of adapting to their new environment, the music of the violin connects them to the life they left behind. In the end, the girl plays her violin for a concert and they find a place in their new community.

NFB website http://www.nfb.ca/film/chinese_violin/

A. Previewing Activities

Introduce or review vocabulary associated with the theme of immigration and adapting to a new culture. Prepare a series of questions to encourage discussion about what it is like to leave your native country and start a new life in Canada. Draw a mind map or create a chart outlining the expectations and challenges of moving to a new country.

B. Viewing Activities

Students watch the film once to get the main idea. Ask some general comprehension questions such as: Where do the father and child come from? Where are they going? How do they feel? What happens?

Show segments of the film and ask more specific questions to elicit more details and have students describe what they see.

Students complete a cloze copy of the script. Pause the film for them to fill in key words.

C. Post-Viewing Activities

Students retell the story in their own words orally to a partner. This oral exercise provides them with practice in using verbs in the past tense and reported speech. Review sequence words, like *first, then, next, finally*. After re-telling the story orally, students write a paragraph about the story.

Students predict what happens next — first orally and later in writing. Practice writing sentences using the future tense.

Different countries are associated with different musical instruments. (e.g. Indian sitar). Students provide examples of other musical instruments from around the world. They create a similar story based on another musical instrument.

Students role play a scene from the film (e.g. the girl's father asking for a job).

Students write in their journal what it was like for them adapting to life in Canada.