



***Hummingbirds* Education Screening | Grades 9-12**

To Teachers & Educators,

We are excited that you are including *Hummingbirds*, directed by Silvia Del Carmen Castaños and Estefanía "Beba" Contreras, in your curriculum! Silvia and Estefanía, both genderqueer members of Gen Z, turn the cameras on themselves to remember this time in their lives when they are navigating coming of age alongside racism, immigration, and abortion. The film also explores how they use different art forms to cope, express themselves and heal. While this film deals with many timely topics and issues that folks of all ages face, it is also a beautiful portrait of friendship and hope for the future. The lessons included in this packet will help students think more deeply about the film, think about what issues are important to them, give them different opportunities to express themselves, and build a deeper connection with their peers. I have personally led some of the creative activities with students at the high school, college and even post-college level. Ensuring students feel safe to express themselves and share with one another is key. What I have found in many instances is that my classroom becomes a tighter knit community, students find commonalities and friendships much like the ones seen in *Hummingbirds*, and that these activities help create deeper, more meaningful conversations in future discussions and lesson plans.

We hope the film and curriculum sparks creativity and engaging conversation among you and your students!

Katie Avila Loughmiller
Interdisciplinary Artist & Educator
Co-founder & Director of [LUNA](#)



A Note from Milwaukee Film Education:

As we continue to sustain this year-round program, we would love for your class to complete at least one activity in conjunction with the screening of *Hummingbirds*. Your participation ensures that we are able to continue applying for funding to bring in these films and offer them to you (and literally thousands of students) at such a low cost. Please feel free to send evidence of the work you did to integrate the film into your classroom electronically or by mail. This could include: links to online photos or videos, Google Drive folders, scanned material, photocopied or original student work concerning the film/film-going experience or even your own anecdotal, narrative accounts. All of what you send us will help us write and fulfill the grants that allow us to bring these films to you and your students. We may also post some of the best work on our website (with students' first names and school only) later in the semester (if you would prefer we not share your students' work publicly, please let us know).

Send student work or evidence via email to marielle@mkefilm.org or by mail to:

Milwaukee Film
Attn: Marielle Allschwang, Education Manager
1037 W McKinley Ave #200
Milwaukee, WI 53205



***Hummingbirds* Curriculum At-A-Glance | Grades 9-12**

Documentary vs. Narrative Fiction Films

This activity is to help students understand and be able to articulate the difference between documentary and narrative fiction films. Students will also observe what elements of traditional narrative fiction films can be used in documentaries to help tell the story.

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ELA Wisconsin Standards: W.9-10.1, W.11-12.1, L.9-10.2, SL.9-10.1, SL.11-12.1, L.9-10.1, L.11-12.1

Media Arts: MA:Re7.1, MA:Re8.1, MA:Re9.1, MA:Cn10.1

Teacher Resource from pediaa.com

Activism & Art

One major theme throughout *Hummingbirds* is activism. Silvia and Estefanía are seen throughout the film talking about political issues, protesting and even partaking in some guerilla style activism. This activity engages students to think about the issues that are important to them.

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Wisconsin Social & Emotional Learning Standards: Emotional Development 1-2,4-6; Social competence: 12-18

Exploring Identity: *Inside/Outside Boxes*

This activity guides students to identify and explore unique and specific aspects, like talents and abilities, to help build self-awareness and positive self-image, examine participants' self-esteem and understand the importance of a positive self-image, and foster awareness of and respect for others' differences.

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Express Yourself - Through Poetry!

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Discussion questions before watching the film:

1. What elements help move a story along in any movie/TV show that you've watched (think about animated, short films, documentary, narrative fiction film, etc.)?
2. What words come to mind when you hear "documentary film"?
3. What differentiates a documentary from a narrative fiction film?
4. Are there any elements of movies you watch that you do not think happen in documentary films?
5. What purpose(s) does a documentary film have versus a narrative fiction film?

Discussion questions after watching the film:

1. Were there elements of *Hummingbirds* that were on the list we created that we were surprised to see in a documentary film?
2. What else surprised you about watching *Hummingbirds*?
3. Does anyone think the story being told would have been stronger if it was fictionalized and turned into a narrative fiction film?

Once students have shared their thoughts, discuss certain aspects:

1. What did you think of the animation at the beginning of the film?
 - a. Did the animation inform what you thought of these characters? If so, what?
2. What did you think about including poetry, music, and dance throughout the film?
 - a. Did seeing these forms of art help move the story along? Why or why not?
 - b. What did seeing these forms of art help you learn about the characters?
3. In what situation would a narrative fiction film be more effective than a documentary?
4. When would a documentary be more effective than a narrative fiction film?

Optional Activity:

In small groups, have the students create a storyboard for *Hummingbirds* as if they were tasked to create a fiction film. Have them include details for the following sections and let them know they can use creative license to add any details from their imagination to add to the story:



Exposition: The introduction to a story, including the primary characters' names, setting, mood, and time.

Conflict: The primary problem that drives the plot of the story, often a main goal for the protagonist(s) to achieve or overcome.

Rising Action: The action pushes the plot along, building tension to keep us invested in the story as it moves forward.

Climax: The point in the narrative where the tension, excitement, or stakes reach the highest level

Falling Action: What takes place immediately after the climax.

Resolution: The end of the story.

Have students present their storyboards when they are finished. Discussions questions:

1. What similarities and differences are there between the different groups' storyboards?
2. What was easy about this activity? What was hard?
3. What fictional elements did you have to add to your storyboard to make sure you had a full story, to make sure you had each element of the story arc?

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Teacher Resource from pediaa.com



EDUCATION SCREENINGS

Presented in Partnership with:

Herzfeld
Foundation

Additional Support From: Cory & Michelle Nettles,
Gene & Ruth Posner Foundation, Inc.

DOCUMENTARY VERSUS FEATURE FILM

Documentary is an accurate representation of real events, people and situations

Feature Film is a film that tells a fictional story, event or narrative

Aims to educate, inform, instruct and inspire the audience

Aims to entertain the audience

Deals with reality

Deals with fiction

Usually have a low budget

Usually have a high budget than documentaries

May have recorded actions

Always have scripted dialogues and actions

May use real people and real locations

May use actors and sets

Pediaa.com

Teacher Resource from Pediaa.com

Education Screenings are presented by Herzfeld Foundation with additional support from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation Mary L. Nohl Fund and the Gene & Ruth Posner Foundation.



Activism & Art

Materials Needed: Items to create “poles” (can be actual poles if you have a way to stabilize them, chairs, hooks, or something else creative – yarn needs to be wrapped around the “pole”), markers, yarn, hooks, paper, index card and tape.

One major theme throughout *Hummingbirds* is activism. Silvia and Estefanía are seen throughout the film talking about political issues, protesting, and even partaking in some guerilla style activism. This activity engages students to think about the issues that are important to them.

Silvia and Estefanía were 18 and 21 when they started filming. Issues that are clearly important are immigration rights and access to abortion.

1. **Individual Exercise:** What issues do you care about? On a piece of paper write down what you would like to see change in your community. Think about community on both a local level (school, neighborhood, city) and larger level (state, country).
2. **As a group:** Depending on the size of the group, you can do this as one big group or split the class into smaller groups. Share your lists. What are common threads between the lists? Consolidate to have one list of multiple issues.

Once you have your master lists, show [the video for the UNITY project](#) to learn about creating space through an interactive installation art. Each issue from your master list will become a pole (you may need to consolidate the list even further depending on what type of space you are working in). You can add prompts as well “I am or I know someone that....” Place physical “poles” around the room and make sure to have one in the center. Starting in the center, have students wrap their yarn/string around the center pole and then wrap it around the pole with issues, prompts they relate to. They can wrap around a pole that resonates with them more than once. Once everyone feels they are done, have the students sit in the new space so that they can see what issues/prompts have been wrapped with yarn more than others.

Guiding Questions:

- What were the most popular issues?
- How do we connect to each other through the UNITY project?
- How can we connect to our community about our chosen social justice issue?



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Exploring Identity: *Inside/Outside Boxes*

This activity guides students to identify and explore unique and specific aspects, like talents and abilities, to help build self-awareness and positive self-image, examine participants' self-esteem and understand the importance of a positive self-image, and foster awareness of and respect for others' differences.

Preparation: Prior to the workshop, ask participants to bring in objects, drawings or photos that describe and represent themselves, as well as represent the things they are good at.

Materials: Shoe boxes (one per participant) and craft materials (markers, paint, collage materials, glue, leaves, fabric, photos, beads, etc.)

Facilitation Tips: Since participants are asked to share something about themselves with the rest of the group, you can help the group maintain trust and respect by creating ground rules/group agreement or go over one that you have previously established.

Part 1: Creating Inside/Outside Boxes

1. Ask participants to put together a box that represents who they are.
2. Tell participants to decorate the box however they would like, however, the items **INSIDE** the box best describe or symbolize how they see themselves and the items **OUTSIDE** the box best describe or symbolize how they would like to be seen by others.
3. Remind participants that they should create the box while keeping in mind their talents, achievement, hobbies, dislikes, likes, etc.
4. Once they have completed their boxes, tell participants that they will share them with the rest of the group. Tell them that they only have to present what they are comfortable with sharing and that they should prepare a statement or briefly think of ideas for: How to present their box. And what they would like to present to their peers.

Part 2: Show and Tell

1. Each participant briefly shares their inside/outside box with the rest of the group. Remind them to share something that they are proud of, whether it be a photograph, a story about something they did, an achievement, etc.



2. Debrief - questions to ask the group:

- a. Do you feel that this activity helped you to get to know each other more?
- b. How did you feel about sharing this personal information about yourself with everyone?

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Throughout the film, Silvia and Estefanía share poetry to express themselves and the experiences they've been through. These activities will lead students through different poetry prompts that they write, together and on their own, to express themselves and get to know their classmates better.

Preparation for the class prior to watching the film: Ensure students have a writing utensil and notebook paper. Tell them as they watch the film to write down any words or quotes from the film that particularly stand out for them or resonate with them.

Post-film Poetry Exercises: These are three separate activities.

Poetry Activity 1: Word Bank Group Poetry

Materials needed: post-its or index cards, large sticky-note pads or pieces of paper, tape if needed.

Give each student 5-8 post-its or index cards. Ask students to look over what they wrote down and think about what other words they could add that reflects their experience of watching the film and what personal connections they made to the characters and themes. Have them transfer as many of those words onto the post-its.

Once everyone has their words/short phrases on post-its, split the class into small groups of no more than 6 students each. In groups, they will look at all the words they have as a group. This is now their word bank that they will be able to use to create a group poem (almost like a reverse Mad Lib). They will use the bigger sheet of paper to write out the full sentences/phrases of their poem, but be sure they either use the actual post-its with their words on it or have them circle the post-it words so that when they share, the class knows what words they started with. Challenge the groups to use all or as many of their words as possible. They should make note of duplicate words but only need to use that word once (they can use it more than once if they'd like!).

Once each group has written their poems, have them present them to the class.

Debrief questions:

1. Describe what you experienced during this activity.
2. What made writing a poem with a group challenging/easy?
3. What other feelings came up for you during this activity?



Poetry Activity 2: "I Am" Poetry (resource: [National Gallery of Art](#))

An "I Am" poem is a way to study the subject of a self-portrait by putting yourself in the artist's head.

You can encourage students to get creative by completing a poem that starts with, "I am," but if they are feeling stuck or need a format, they can complete the following template:

- I am...(your name) _____
- I am.. (two special traits or physical characteristics) _____
- I wonder..(something to be curious about) _____
- I hear...(an imaginary sound) _____
- I see... (an imaginary sight) _____
- I want...(an actual desire) _____
- I am...(the first line of the poem repeated) _____
- I pretend....(something to imagine) _____
- I feel...(a feeling about something imaginary) _____
- I touch...(an imaginary touch) _____
- I worry.... (something that is bothersome) _____
- I cry.... (something that is very sad) _____
- I am... the first line of the poem repeated) _____
- I understand...(something that is positively true) _____
- I say...(something to believe in) _____
- I dream....(something to dream about) _____
- I try... (something to make an effort about) _____
- I hope... (something to hope for) _____
- I am...(the first line of the poem repeated) _____



Poetry Activity 3: Haiku Self-Portrait Postcards

Workshop designed by Adam White Ossers & Katie Avila Loughmiller

Materials needed: Depending on time/resources, ability to print photos of students or asking students to bring in a photo of themselves; postcard size paper (cardstock or a mixed media paper that is durable enough to collage items onto); supplies for collaging such as glue, sticky tape, magazines, scrap colored paper, etc.

A portrait is simply an artistic representation of a person. If we dive a bit deeper, it's also a representation of a person at a particular moment in time. This workshop guides participants in creating self-portraits in the form of postcards to their future selves. In the act of creating a portrait postcard, individuals will reflect on who they are right in this very moment as an act to remember, later on, who they are and where they've been.

Step One: If possible, each student will get/bring in a photo of themselves or a photo that they feel represents themselves.

Step Two: Each student will get a postcard-size piece of paper that they will attach the photo to. They will then add drawings, designs and/or collage materials to further individualize their postcards.

Step Three: Writing a haiku to your future self. The haiku is a Japanese poetic form that consists of three lines, with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second, and 5 in the third.

Haiku examples that double as instructions:

Haikus can be fun.
Once you get the hang of it.
Keep trying, you'll see!

Today's haiku prompt:
A letter to future you,
To remember now.

Encourage students to use at least one haiku on their postcard.



MILWAUKEE FILM
EDUCATION

EDUCATION SCREENINGS
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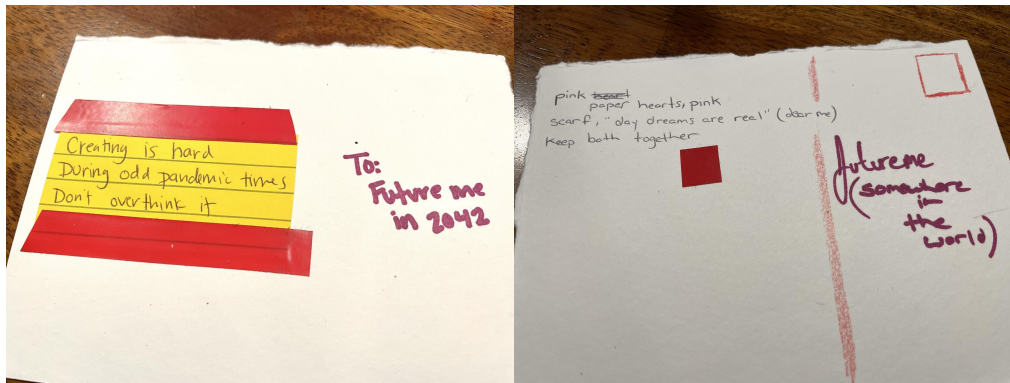
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Examples of postcards:

Front:



Back:



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