



The 8½ Foundation

The 8½ Foundation is a Scottish not-for-profit organisation dedicated to introducing world cinema to children. The 8½ Foundation celebrates the power of cinema to expand children's horizons, and welcomes children into the wider world of movies, beyond what is normally available to them at the multiplex or on their TV screens.

The aim of the 8½ Foundation is to inspire children, families, schools and everyone else to think of a child's 8½ birthday as their Movie Birthday. Our website www.eightandahalf.org is full of ideas of films for children and families to watch. The films we list are entertaining adventures, forgotten gems, poetic stories... They hail from familiar countries and from parts of the world whose movies we don't usually see.

Gifts galore!

Thanks to Creative Scotland's National Lottery Inspiring Communities Fund we are giving YOUR pupils the chance to receive a wonderful gift for their 8½ birthday: the gift of cinema.

We have thousands of DVDs to give away and have been working with schools across Scotland to reach children far and wide. Why not get involved?



What's in it for the children in your class?

Each child will receive a beautifully wrapped, individually addressed box of up to three DVDs – their 8½ birthday present – to embark on their very own cinema journey. All absolutely free!

Joining in is very simple. We're inviting P4 teachers across Scotland to get in touch with us *as soon as possible*. We'll send you a magic password to a secret website, where the children in your group will be able to view short clips of 8 great films. Once the children have watched these clips, either in class or at home, they should send us a hand-written letter to tell us which three titles they'd most like to receive.



How much work will this involve?

We know that teachers' time is precious and that the curriculum sets its own priorities, which is why we've made sure that participation in 8½ is as easy as it is rewarding.

The key tasks involved for teachers are as follows:

- Introduce the children to the project and website, and ask them some simple questions about their perception of cinema, from a questionnaire we will provide
- Give each child the time and space to make his/her selection from the secret website
- Support the children in writing their request letters (stories and pictures very welcome!)
- Collect and post the letters to us (some schools make special 8½ post boxes)
- Once the films have been delivered (either to homes or to the school as preferred) encourage children to write us another letter letting us know what they thought of their choices.

Many teachers have encouraged children to discuss their responses to the films, or have screened the films in class; some have celebrated a child's 8½ birthday! Teachers have found many ways to integrate the 8½ project within existing class activity.

At the close of the project, we will also ask you to complete a short feedback questionnaire.

External Support

We will conduct brief induction sessions for participating teachers to demonstrate the website and talk through the project. We are also on hand to offer ongoing support throughout the duration of the project, and at the project's conclusion we will provide advice on further opportunities and ways of developing interest from children and parents.

We have set up an 8½ GLOW group through which we aim to share examples of how schools have engaged with the process and created class projects around the subject of film. We are also planning a series of exciting GLOW meets, open to all schools.

Background

The 8½ project was dreamt up by the Oscar winning actress Tilda Swinton and the film historian Mark Cousins. With funding from the National Lottery Inspiring Communities Fund via Creative Scotland, Tilda and Mark piloted their idea at Millbank Primary School in Nairn, giving 80 children the gift of a DVD for their 8½ birthday. The pilot was an overwhelming success. The kids LOVED the movies, many of them viewing black and white or subtitled films for the first time. Their favourite was a Chinese film called *King of Masks*.

The Films

Thanks to great industry support, we have secured eight titles from across the world. They include *The White Balloon*, a beautifully poetic film from Iran; the classic British film *The Red Shoes*; Laurel and Hardy in *Our Relations*; the great German fantasy film *The Singing Ringing Tree*; Jacques Tati's hilarious *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*; *The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun*, a lovely film from Senegal; *Mandy*, a moving British film about a little deaf girl; and *King of Masks* by Wu Tiang-ming, about a little boy with a big secret!

How do I sign up?

For more information about the project, please visit our website, or get in touch with us directly at the email or postal address below. We are keen to involve as many schools as possible in 2011-12, so don't delay!

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