



FilmEd Classroom
Films to Engage Students in
Meaningful Conversation

FILM GUIDE

PERFECT HOUSEGUEST

GRADES K-2

Max Porter & Ru Kuwahata | United States

Short Film | Fiction | Animation | 1:35 Minutes | 2015

Subtheme: Perseverance, Stereotypes, Assumptions, Differences, Predictions, Inclusion

PART IV

BEHIND THE SCENES

LEARN ABOUT THE FILMMAKER & FILMMAKING PROCESS

In this section we'll learn about the filmmakers and the filmmaking process, encouraging students to understand that everything they saw and heard in the film was created by the filmmakers.

MAKING A FILM

The questions below will help students see some of the choices that were made to tell the story in **PERFECT HOUSEGUEST**.

- Pause the film at different moments and ask students: Do you think it might be morning time or night time? How can you tell?
- How would you describe the **setting** of this film? Where does it take place?
- An important part of creating a film is choosing the music. Often, music is created specially for a film! How did the sounds and music included in the film make you feel?
- Try playing the film with the volume down to see how it is different without any sound, or even play a different song to see how it might make the film feel different.

THE FILMMAKERS' CHOICES

- This film was created by two filmmakers, Ru Kuwahata and Max Porter.
- Why do you think the filmmakers might have chosen to tell this story using animation instead of live action (real people or animals)?
- The filmmakers chose to name this film PERFECT HOUSEGUEST. What does this title make you think of?
- Do you think the Mouse is a perfect houseguest? Why or why not?

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS: MAX PORTER & RU KUWAHATA

Ru Kuwahata & Max Porter work as a team called “Tiny Inventions” to create animated films. They are also a married couple! Ru is from Japan and Max is from the USA. They currently live in Providence, Rhode Island. They like to mix different styles together in their films. They mix computer animation with handmade miniatures and drawings to tell their stories.

Q&A WITH THE FILMMAKERS

Let students know that while the filmmaker might have had a message or idea in mind, we are all welcome to interpret the film in our own way.

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Why did you decide to tell a story about a mouse?

When we were making our previous film, **BETWEEN TIMES**, we had mice problems in our studio and some of our miniature sets got ruined. We were so upset and Max said, “Wouldn’t it be great if they could help us out with those small hands instead of making a mess?” That’s how we came up with the idea of a little mouse being helpful.

How did you become interested in filmmaking?

Max was interested in photography growing up, but in college, he became more interested in filmmaking.

Ru was interested in crafting and drawing growing up. When she went to college, she realized that in animation, everything she loved could be combined.

How did you go about becoming a filmmaker?

We both studied filmmaking in art school, but we also consider ourselves “students forever.” We always try to take classes, participate in workshops or labs to continue studying filmmaking. There’s so much to learn and that excites us.

We see the character take on a project that's so much bigger than them, can you relate to that?

Absolutely! With animation, even the smallest task takes so much time and effort; we can totally relate to the mouse. Whenever we finish a project, we realize how big of a challenge it was along the way. At the beginning, our curiosity will lead to an idea, and our passion will carry on the project. Once the project gets going, all we want to do is to work on the project and see the final version. Then when we complete it, we always say, “Wow, that was hard...”

What is some advice you would give to young students interested in filmmaking?

Be curious and pay attention to what you see, hear, touch, smell, taste, and feel. Remember to document those small moments. All of your experiences—no matter how big or small—will somehow find their way into the films you make.

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