

REEL CANADA

Do-it-Yourself (DIY) Film Festival

Welcome, teachers!

Thank you for your interest in creating a REEL CANADA Film Festival at your school. This step-by-step guide will aid you in producing your school's own customized REEL CANADA Film Festival.

Fellow teachers have designed this resource with you in mind. We've broken down all the steps, so that you can successfully set up your own festival, the way you want it.

We've created this resource to provide you with support, models, a timeline checklist, and tips to help guide you.

Also, you're not alone. At REEL CANADA we aim to reach as many students and work with as many schools as possible. So please call or visit www.reelcanada.com to see how we can support you in creating your own REEL CANADA Film Festival.

Enjoy and we'll see you at the movies!



WHAT IS REEL CANADA?

REEL CANADA's aim is to expose Canadian high school students to Canadian film in a dynamic and participatory way in order to nurture a sense of Canadian identity through culture.

It is endorsed and supported by our National Honourary Patron, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, a Board of Directors and an Advisory Committee that includes some of our country's most prominent filmmakers and producers. Atom Egoyan, David Cronenberg, Norman Jewison, Robert Lantos, Don McKellar, Sarah Polley, Jean-Marc Vallée and many others have all given their personal endorsement to this vital project.

Each REEL CANADA Film Festival includes films chosen by students from our collection of features, documentaries, animated programs and shorts.

WHAT IS THE DO-IT-YOURSELF (DIY) PROGRAM?

We have created this DIY Program to help you **produce and host your own REEL CANADA Film Festival at your school**. This resource provides you with a plan and connects you with the support to make it happen.

Organizing a REEL CANADA festival will be a fun opportunity to enjoy Canadian films, but it can also be used to open up a dialogue about Canadian culture and identity with students. We hope the experience is rewarding and memorable for students and teachers alike.

WHAT IS A REEL CANADA FILM FESTIVAL?

A REEL CANADA film festival is more than just showing films in a classroom. We recommend that two class periods be booked for each screening, so that an entire feature length film can be shown without interruption, leaving time at the end of the presentation for a discussion, workshop or other live engagement with the participating students.

The REEL CANADA film festival should be treated like an in-class field trip. For example, if you are screening two films in a day, your student participants can either be excused from classes for the entire day in order to see two films, or you can have two different participant groups each of whom misses a half-day of classes and see a single film either in the morning or after lunch.



Support for your REEL CANADA Film Festival

If you're interested in organizing a DIY Film Festival, get in touch. We are here to help. Contact us online at www.reelcanada.com or by phone at 416.642.5796

ALL DIY FILM FESTIVALS WILL RECEIVE

- A magazine-style catalogue that lists and describes all REEL CANADA films, for each participating student
- DVDs of all requested films
- Programming advice and short film pairings to complement your feature film choices
- Posters to help promote your festival
- REEL CANADA badges for student volunteers
- Guidance / assistance in the planning process
- A detailed festival day schedule
- Facilitator's script for introducing films and hosting Q&A sessions.



Use the catalogue to select films for your festival. You can order copies or download a PDF version at www.reelcanada.com.

The website also features clips and trailers for all our films.

REEL CANADA CAN SOMETIMES PROVIDE

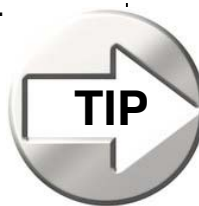
- Trained facilitators to introduce films / lead Q&A discussions
- Special film industry guests, in person or via webcam, when available
- Technical assistance
- Specially printed REEL CANADA admission tickets

COST TO YOU

REEL CANADA provides our services free of charge.

However:

- Your school or school board must have a screening license from ACF or Criterion (most schools already have this)
- A deposit is required for all DVDs, *FULLY REFUNDABLE* upon return (prices vary but are \$25 per DVD on average)



REEL CANADA has developed a Canadian Film Unit available to all teachers across Canada.

You can use this unit to integrate the REEL CANADA Film Festival into your classroom activities.

Lesson plans are geared to curriculum for grades 9 through 12.

Visit www.reelcanada.com

Considerations for planning a REEL CANADA DIY Film Festival

HOW MANY STUDENTS?

Your film festival can be as large or small as you want – we've done events from 60 students to over 1,000. It depends on the amount of time and resources you have at your disposal. Deciding on who participates is something you can do in consultation with us and with your Principal, VP or other colleagues.

You can invite classes based on grade level or subject area, or open the event up to other teachers to sign their classes up on a first come, first served basis. You can also determine the maximum number of participants based on the seating capacity of your screening venues.

SELECTING THE FILMS

Once you are in touch with REEL CANADA, we'll send you catalogues that contain a full, curated list of films we offer. **The catalogues are also available at www.reelcanada.com, along with clips and trailers from the films.**

You can assemble a "student programming committee" to help select the films you will screen. This will increase their sense of engagement with the event.

For maximum flexibility, when selecting films, be sure to include one or two back-up titles. We will work with you to create the final screening schedule.

CONTENT

Not all films in our catalogue are appropriate for all communities or grade levels. REEL CANADA provides a detailed Content Advisory for every film in our catalogue. For certain films, we will request that your Principal or VP sign off on content.



VENUES

You will require at least one screening venue for the festival. Each venue requires a projector, a DVD player, a screen, and a sound system. You may mount a festival in a single venue (such as an auditorium, large lecture hall or drama room) or in multiple venues. You can choose venues based on size, availability of equipment, and ease of setup. Multiple venues can add to the “festival feel” of the event by giving students more choice and allowing more students to participate. However, they also require more resources, equipment and planning.

You can make the festival day feel special by adding extra details in your screening rooms such as posters or other decorations.

Things to consider when selecting a venue:

- How many students do you need to accommodate?
- Does the venue have seating built in or will you need to bring in chairs?
- Is equipment easy to set up in the venue?
- Are there any natural light sources that are difficult to block out, or is there a noise issue which will compromise the quality of the screening?
- Can bells and announcements be turned off in the venue?
- Will classes that normally take place in this venue have to be moved or cancelled, or can they be included in your group of participants?

SCHEDULE

Regardless of which model of film festival you choose, a formal schedule is an indispensable tool, for participants, senior administration and your teacher colleagues. We have provided a sample schedule at the end of this document.

FACILITATORS AND GUESTS

In some cases, REEL CANADA may be able to help you find a guest speaker for your event.

1) Facilitators

A facilitator is in charge of welcoming students at the beginning of a screening and introducing the film. After the screening, they may lead a discussion with students about what they saw, run a workshop with students, or moderate a question and answer period with another special guest.



If a teacher from your school is going to be facilitating a screening, we can provide notes, trivia, “fun facts” and discussion topics about the film.

A facilitator can be a teacher from the school, or in some cases, REEL CANADA may be able to send a representative to facilitate.

2) Film Industry Guests

In some cases, depending on availability, scheduling, and the location of your school, REEL CANADA may be able to send a professional guest to your school to speak after a screening. This might be:

- An actor or director
- A person who works behind the scenes in the film industry such as an editor, set designer or producer
- An issue expert who can speak about topics raised in a documentary

3) Guests from your community

You may also consider inviting guests from your community to add excitement to the event. These may include:

- Local politicians such as the Mayor or a City Councillor
- Local filmmakers or representatives from local film festivals, film societies or other cinema groups
- Local issue experts who can speak about the topics raised in a documentary
- Other “local celebrities” such as TV personalities, radio DJs, etc.

BOX OFFICE

REEL CANADA can set up an online Box Office and provide printed tickets for your event. These tickets will include the titles of the films that are playing at your school, as well as the names of the venues where they will be screened. These can be handed out to students in advance of the festival.

Additionally, running a Box Office at the school can increase the “festival feel” of your event.

On the festival day, the Box Office can be the central information area for the REEL CANADA Film Festival. This should be in a visible location to generate excitement. Students can come to the Box Office to pick up tickets, get directions to their screenings, or ask questions about the festival.



INVITATIONS

A great way to incorporate the entire school is to invite school support staff to attend a screening. We have found that when administrative and custodial staff are invited to participate, they are much more supportive of the event.

STUDENT ROLES

Your team of student volunteers will be the face of your festival and should be prepared and coached in a few meetings before the festival happens. In your pre-festival meetings, emphasize the attributes of a film festival volunteer (professional, courteous, knowledgeable, welcoming). REEL CANADA can provide you with volunteer badges for anyone helping out with the festival.

Students can help out in any of the following capacities, or others that your team comes up with:

- Greeters/Ushers – these volunteers can direct students to the screening venues, take tickets and welcome guests
- Screening hosts – hosts can welcome students to the festival, say a few words on behalf of the school at the start of a screening, and be responsible for thanking any special guests who may be present
- Box Office – if your school decides to print individual tickets for all festival attendees, some students can be responsible for setting up a Box Office table near screening venues, and handing out tickets
- Journalists/Photographers – students who wish to document the festival should be encouraged to do so (for class, the school paper, or an independent project). Interviews can be arranged with any REEL CANADA representatives or guests who visit the school. Encourage students to share interviews, videos, photos and memories of the day by posting them on our website, Facebook page or blog.
- Projectionist/Tech – students can also be in charge of running the DVD players, sound systems and/or microphones in your venues.

EVALUATION

After the REEL CANADA festival day has come to a close, we will send you feedback forms to have students complete, and then return to us. The survey takes about five minutes to fill out, and we will rely on you to manage this as a classroom activity. It is best to fill these out as soon after the event as possible, while impressions and memories are fresh.



The Different Types of REEL CANADA DIY Film Festivals

We have developed three models to help you produce a REEL CANADA Film Festival at your school. These models are flexible and should be adapted to your needs.

Choose the right REEL CANADA Film Festival for you:

1. ONE DAY Film Festival

In this model, students watch Canadian films on one festival day.

2. MULTI-DAY Film Festival

It may be easier to schedule several screenings over a number of days. This model offers the most flexibility and avoids the need for a full day of programming. You may screen one or more new films each day for as many days as makes sense for you. This could involve two or more consecutive or non-consecutive screening days.

3. Film Festival Incorporated into a Special Event

Incorporate the REEL CANADA Film Festival into an existing or upcoming school event.

In this model, you produce a REEL CANADA Film Festival as part of a school event like a carnival day or school spirit day. Screening Canadian films at your event is a way to make the event more memorable. This could be a full day, half day, or after school.

Questions to consider when choosing the right model for you:

- How many films would you like to show in your festival?
- Will you be able to recruit other staff and students to help plan and host the festival?
- Will your school allow you to plan a full day of activity for students?
- How many venues are available and could be used for simultaneous screenings?
- How many students will you involve in the screenings?
- Are there student groups that might be interested in a particular film or genre?
- Are there classes that may benefit from a film (animation/documentary/history/dance)?
- Is there a school passion (hockey, diversity, the environment) that could be addressed through film?



Checklist for producing a REEL CANADA Film Festival

- Contact REEL CANADA for support
- GET PERMISSION: set a film festival date and have it approved by your department and administration
- SECURE THE SPACE: decide on the venues for the screenings
- ASSEMBLE A TEAM OF SUPPORT STAFF & STUDENT VOLUNTEERS
- LICENSE: make sure your school has an ACF or Criterion license to screen films.
- ORDER CATALOGUES: Decide on the number of student participants and order the appropriate number of catalogues from REEL CANADA.
- TECHNOLOGY: ensure the availability of projector, DVD players, speakers, microphones, and chairs in each venue.
- FILMS: select the films you wish to screen from the catalogue, with a team of student programmers.
- ADMIN SIGN OFF: make sure your Principal or VP “signs off” on any films that have been selected
- ORDER DVDs: contact REEL CANADA to reserve your films and pay your deposit, which is fully refunded upon return of discs.
- GUEST SPEAKERS: connect with and secure guests speakers for Q&A on the films, if possible. (REEL CANADA can help - see pages 5 & 6)
- PUBLICITY: if your school has a student newspaper, we encourage student reporters to write an article about the festival in advance.
- TICKETS: if you want REEL CANADA to help with ticketing or setting up a box office, get in touch.

Please remember: we are here to help. If you need assistance or advice at any point during the planning process, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at 416-642-5796 or email our Production Coordinator Mark Meeks at mark@reelcanada.com



REEL CANADA

Sample Schedule

FROM	TO	ACTIVITY
8:30	8:40	Morning anthem & announcements
8:40	8:55	Attendance is taken, students travel down to venue(s) and get seated
8:55	9:00	Introduction with REEL CANADA Facilitator
9:00	9:15	SHORT FILM is screened
9:15	9:25	Brief discussion with facilitator or special guest about SHORT FILM (10 mins)
9:25	10:55	FEATURE FILM is screened
10:55	11:15	Discussion with facilitator and/or special guest about FEATURE FILM (20 mins)
11:15	12:15	LUNCH
12:15	12:25	Students go to class for attendance
12:25	12:35	Students travel to venue(s) and get seated
12:35	12:40	Introduction with REEL CANADA Facilitator
12:40	2:30	FEATURE FILM is screened
2:30	2:55	Discussion with facilitator or special guest about FEATURE FILM (20 mins)
2:55	3:00	Cineplex Ticket giveaway (REEL CANADA Facilitator gives movie passes to audience members who can answer trivia questions about Canadian film and culture)
3:00		END OF DAY – students are dismissed

Note: start and end times for the day will depend on your school's schedule, as well as the lengths of films selected. We will work with you to create a schedule for your Film Festival.

