

■ Anglais



Oliver Twist

Un film de Roman Polanski, 2005
DVD Pathé

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pour Zérodeconduite.net, décembre 2012.**

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auprès de l'Agence Cinéma Éducation, 3 rue Louis Loucheur 75017 Paris*

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INTRODUCTION

La somptueuse adaptation du célèbre roman de Charles Dickens (publié entre février 1837 et avril 1839 sous forme de feuilleton hebdomadaire) par le réalisateur polonais Roman Polanski (auteur de classiques comme Le Bal des Vampires, Rosemary's baby, Tess, Le Pianiste...), plonge immédiatement le spectateur dans une Angleterre victorienne sombre, et ambiguë.

Le parcours initiatique du jeune orphelin, qui le mène de l'enfer des workhouses jusqu'à la quiétude d'un foyer bourgeois, en passant par les bas-fonds londoniens, donnera ainsi aux collégiens et aux lycéens l'occasion, soit de découvrir une période totalement inconnue, soit d'affiner leurs connaissances et d'aller au-delà des clichés.

Le film permet notamment d'étudier notamment la condition enfantine au XIX^{ème} siècle en Angleterre ainsi que les subtilités d'une structure sociale plus complexe qu'il n'y paraît. Les choix esthétiques (éclairages, couleurs...) du réalisateur amèneront les élèves à réfléchir sur les intentions de l'artiste et à comprendre que l'œuvre de Dickens était, avant tout, une féroce satire sociale.

Enfin, l'étude de ce film pourra mener à un travail de lecture de l'œuvre de Dickens, autour des thématiques du programme de Littérature étrangère en langue étrangère (série L) suivantes : l'écrivain dans son siècle et voyage, parcours initiatique, exil.

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DANS LES PROGRAMMES

Enseignement	Niveau	Dans les programmes
■ Anglais	4 ^{ème} et 3 ^{ème} (palier 2)	L'ici et l'ailleurs. Ecole et société : société et exclusion : le multiculturalisme en Grande Bretagne
	Seconde	L'art de vivre ensemble : la société victorienne
	Cycle terminal Tronc commun	Lieux et formes de pouvoir : les classes sociales dans l'Angleterre victorienne
	Cycle terminal LELE (série L)	Voyage, parcours initiatique L'écrivain dans son siècle

FICHE TECHNIQUE DU DVD



Oliver Twist

Un film de Roman Polanski

Scénario : Ronald Harwood, d'après le roman éponyme de Charles Dickens

Avec : Ben Kingsley, Jamie Foreman, Harry Eden, Leanne Rowe, Barney Clark

Année : 2005

Langue : Anglais

Pays : Grande-Bretagne

Durée : 126 minutes

Editeur : Pathé

Bonus : - Bande-annonce et teasers ; « Les farces d'Oliver Twist » ; « Le film vu par le jeune acteur »

Synopsis : Angleterre, milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle. Oliver Twist, jeune orphelin constamment maltraité, s'enfuit de l'établissement où il a été placé comme apprenti et se rend à Londres où il est recueilli par une bande de jeunes voleurs qui travaille pour le sinistre Fagin. On découvre alors à travers les yeux du héros naïf les bas-fonds sordides et violents du Londres victorien et on suit ses aventures qui le mèneront finalement à un foyer où il pourra enfin être heureux.

CHAPITRAGE DU DVD

Chapitres DVD	Descriptif	Pistes pédagogiques
1. A l'orphelinat	Oliver est placé dans un orphelinat où les enfants sont exploités et affamés.	I, II, III
2. Apprenti - 5 £	Jugé trop frondeur par les responsables de l'orphelinat, Oliver est placé en apprentissage chez Mr Sowerberry, entrepreneur de pompes funèbres..	I, II, III/2
3. Un petit croque-mort	Nouvelles privations et mauvais traitements. Oliver se bat avec Noah Claypole (aussi apprenti de Sowerberry) qui insulte sa mère. Oliver est injustement battu à la suite de cet incident.	I, II, III/2
4. Sur le chemin de Londres	Oliver s'enfuit pour Londres.	I, II, III/2
5. Le repaire de Fagin	Arrivé à Londres, Oliver est recueilli par Fagin et sa bande de pickpockets.	I, II, III/2
6. L'école de la rue	Fagin enseigne l'art du vol à la tire à son jeune protégé.	I, II, III/2
7. « Au voleur ! »	Oliver est injustement arrêté pour un vol commis par son camarade « Artful Dodger ». Mr Brownlow décide de prendre Oliver sous sa protection.	I, II, III/2
8. Mr Brownlow	Oliver passe des jours heureux chez Mr Brownlow. Redoutant qu'Oliver puisse les dénoncer, Fagin et Sikes font tout pour le retrouver.	I, II, III/2
9. Kidnapping	Sikes et Nancy enlève Oliver alors qu'il faisait une commission pour Mr Brownlow qui croit alors que son protégé s'est enfuit avec l'argent.	I, II, III/2
10. Prisonnier	Oliver révèle malgré lui l'étendue de la richesse de son bienfaiteur à Fagin. Sikes complotte alors le cambriolage de la maison de Mr Brownlow.	I, II, III/2

CHAPITRAGE DU DVD

11. Le cambriolage	Sikes et son complice Crackit forcent Oliver à participer au cambriolage qui tourne mal : Oliver est blessé par balle. Sikes tombe dans une rivière alors qu'il tentait d'y précipiter Oliver.	I, II, III/2
12. Fièvre et délire	Crackit ramène Oliver chez Fagin qui le soigne. Sikes persuade Fagin qu'ils devront se débarrasser du jeune garçon car il risque de les dénoncer.	I, II, III/2
13. « Minuit – London Bridge »	Nancy entre en contact avec Mr Brownlow pour le prévenir du danger qui guette Oliver et lui donne rendez-vous à London Bridge.	I, II, III/2
14. La trahison de Nancy	Fagin fait suivre Nancy lors de son rendez-vous avec Mr Brownlow et découvrant tout, Sikes tue la jeune femme dans un accès de rage.	I, II, III/2
15. Recherché pour meurtre	Une amie de Nancy découvre son corps et en informe la police. L'avis de recherche contre Sikes est lancé.	I, II, III/2
16. Pris au piège	Sikes se réfugie chez Crackit où se trouvent déjà Fagin, ses compères et Oliver. Après bien des péripéties, cerné par la police, Sikes meurt et Oliver est libre.	I, II, III/2
17. Le pardon d'Oliver	Oliver vit à nouveau chez Mr Brownlow. Il rend une dernière visite en prison à Fagin juste avant son exécution.	I, II, III/2

ACTIVITÉ 1

CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Oliver Twist

Roman Polanski, 2005



I/ Oliver's career

1- Fill in the second column of the grid below with numbers from 1 to 6 to put the stages in Oliver's life in chronological order :

job / occupation	order
member of a gang of pickpockets	
nearly sold as an apprentice to a chimney sweep	
adopted by Mr Brownlow who decides to provide him with a good education	
picking oakum in old ropes for the navy in a workhouse	
burglar	
apprentice to a coffin-maker	
tramp	

ACTIVITÉ 1

CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Oliver Twist

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2- Then write a paragraph summing up the young orphan's career, using the elements of the 1- and some of the words and phrases given in the toolbox.

TOOLBOX

verbs : start, begin – meet, join – run away, flee, hide – end up + v-ing, achieve

adverbs : first, then, next, later, finally, eventually

grammar tips : => Use the simple past tense (V-ED) when you tell a story that happened in the past. Be careful, some verbs have irregular forms in the simple past tense.

=> Use the passive form when you want to describe an action from the point of view of the victim (e.g. *Oliver was arrested and brought to court to be judged.*)

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ACTIVITÉ 1

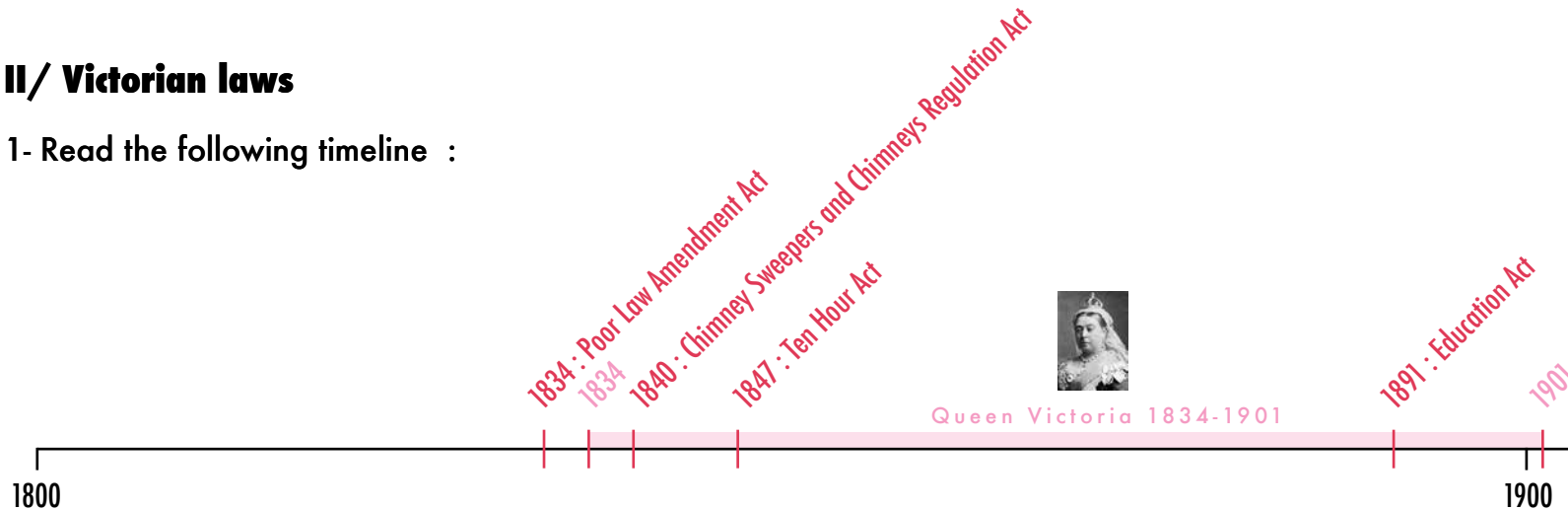
CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



II/ Victorian laws

1- Read the following timeline :



Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) : in order to receive help by the community, the poor had to stay in workhouses where living conditions were extremely hard to discourage people from asking for help.

Chimney Sweepers and Chimneys Regulation Act (1840) : this law aimed at stopping child labour. Boys as young as 6 were used as chimney sweeps.

Ten Hour Act (1847) : no child was to work more than 10 hours in a day

Education Act (1891) : free primary schools for all children

ACTIVITÉ 1

CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



2- Using the timeline above, can you define a precise period when the action is supposed to take place ? Explain your answer by connecting elements from the timeline to elements from activity 1/1- and using the words given in the toolbox.

TOOLBOX	- due to
	- since
	- that's why
	- so
	- therefore
	- consequently
	- as a consequence

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3- What does this timeline and the film reveal about children's living conditions in Victorian England ?

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ACTIVITÉ 2

A COMPLEX SOCIETY

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



I/ Who's who ?



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Name										
Job / function										

Names :

Mr Bumble – Mr Sowerberry – Mrs Sowerberry – Noah Claypole – Charlotte – the Artful Dodger – Fagin – Mr Brownlow – Nancy – Bill Sike

ACTIVITÉ 2

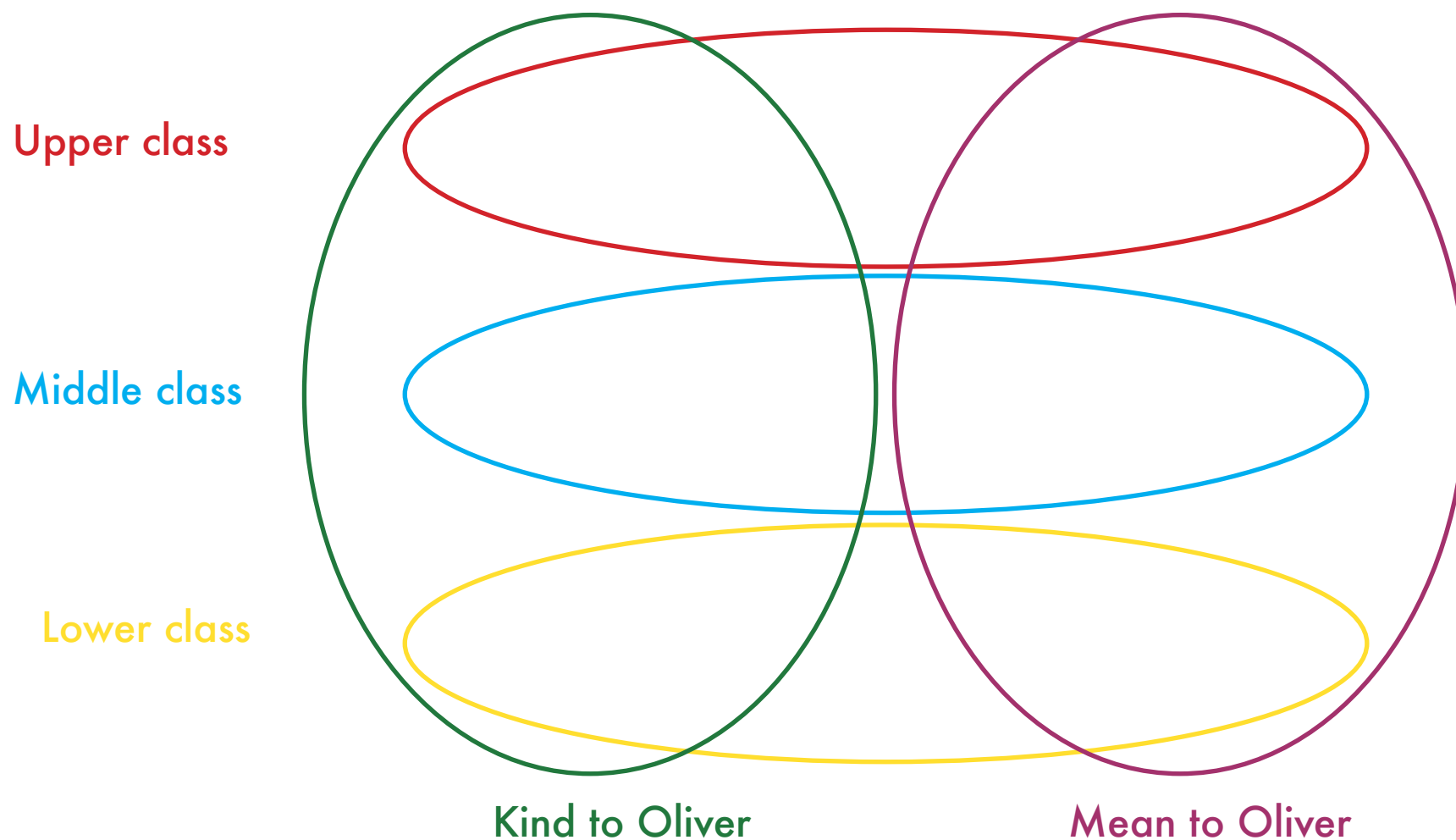
A COMPLEX SOCIETY

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



II/ Goodies or baddies ?

1- Put the names of the characters from the grid above into the following Venn diagram, then highlight the names of the characters who are outlaws.



ACTIVITÉ 2

A COMPLEX SOCIETY

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



2- Pair-work : discuss the following questions with your partner, then report about your opinions to the class :

- Do you think it was better for Oliver to be with Fagin and his boys or with Mr and Mrs Sowerberry ?
- Who is the worse villain of the two, Sikes or Fagin ?

3- Going further :

Are divisions between “good” characters (the goodies) and “bad” characters (the baddies) clear-cut ?

What does the movie show about Victorian society ?

Is Oliver Twist a real hero or rather a pretext to show something else ?

ACTIVITÉ 3

SOCIAL SATIRE

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



I/ Sharp contrasts

1- Watch the two meal scenes (from 07:04 to 08:31).

Classify the following words into the grid :

abundance, victuals, gruel, gaunt, plenty, clay bowls, drab, wealth, fat, pale, lack, obese, ruddy, wine, skinny, fleshy, starving, pasty, china dishes, nourishing, overweight, depressing, disgusting, thin, delight, fruit, silverware



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ACTIVITÉ 3

SOCIAL SATIRE

Oliver Twist

Roman Polanski, 2005



2- Use these elements and words from the toolbox to compare the two scenes.

TOOLBOX	- expressing contrast : on the one hand, ... on the other hand whereas while unlike a huge gap there is a sharp contrast between...	- comparing : the comparative form : LESS + adjective + THAN short adjective + -ER + THAN MORE + long adjective + THAN
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3- What is the effect of the juxtaposition of these two scenes ?

Can you find other scenes in the film that underline the gap between the rich and the poor ?

To go further : <http://www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/activities/deathdiet.html>

4- Pairwork : Student A is Mr Bumble and student B is a 21st-century journalist who wants to investigate life in the orphanage. Act out the interview. Keep in mind that Mr Bumble is convinced that he is a charitable person and that boys like Oliver Twist are ungrateful.



II/ Dickens's novel

The novel's subtitle is *The Parish Boy's Progress* which alludes to Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) and William Hogarth's caricature series entitled *A Rake's Progress* (1735) and *A Harlot's Progress* (1732).

Read the information box.

1- Can you draw a parallel between *Oliver Twist's* life and *Christian's* journey ?

What sort of world do the words *harlot* and *rake* evoke ?

=> Deduce Dickens's intentions from the subtitle he chose for his novel.

INFORMATION BOX	<p><i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> is an allegory of a Christian's journey (represented by a character named "Christian") from the « City of Destruction » to the « Celestial City ». Along the way he visits places such as the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Doubting Castle, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death.</p> <p>Definitions :</p> <p>rake : noun fashionable or wealthy man of dissolute habits.</p> <p>harlot : noun archaic a prostitute or promiscuous woman</p> <p>(Concise Oxford English Dictionary 2008 - O.U.P)</p>	<p>William Hogarth, <i>A Rake's Progress</i>, plate 6 (1735)</p>
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ACTIVITÉ 3

SOCIAL SATIRE

Oliver Twist Roman Polanski, 2005



2- Discuss whether the film respects the novelist's first intentions.

Tip : you should analyze the lighting (use of light and shade), the choice of colours, the settings (especially the London criminal underworld), the weather in the outdoor scenes, the film score (background music)...



III/ Satire : from text to film (Série L – LELE)

Read the following extract from Dickens's novel :

Mr. Bumble had re-counted the teaspoons, re-weighed the sugar-tongs, made a closer inspection of the milk-pot, and ascertained to a nicety the exact condition of the furniture, down to the very horse-hair seats of the chairs ; and had repeated each process full half a dozen times ; before he began to think that it was time for Mrs. Corney to return. Thinking begets thinking ; as there were no sounds of Mrs. Corney's approach, it occurred to Mr. Bumble that it would be an innocent and virtuous way of spending the time, if he were further to allay his curiosity by a cursory glance at the interior of Mrs. Corney's chest of drawers.

Having listened at the keyhole, to assure himself that nobody was approaching the chamber, Mr. Bumble, beginning at the bottom, proceeded to make himself acquainted with the contents of the three long drawers : which, being filled with various garments of good fashion and texture, carefully preserved between two layers of old newspapers, speckled with dried lavender : seemed to yield him exceeding satisfaction. Arriving, in course of time, at the right-hand corner drawer (in which was the key), and beholding therein a small padlocked box, which, being shaken, gave forth a pleasant sound, as of the chinking of coin, Mr. Bumble returned with a stately walk to the fireplace ; and, resuming his old attitude, said, with a grave and determined air, 'I'll do it!' He followed up this remarkable declaration, by shaking his head in a waggish manner for ten minutes, as though he were remonstrating with himself for being such a pleasant dog ; and then, he took a view of his legs in profile, with much seeming pleasure and interest.

He was still placidly engaged in this latter survey, when Mrs. Corney, hurrying into the room, threw herself, in a breathless state, on a chair by the fireside, and covering her eyes with one hand, placed the other over her heart, and gasped for breath.

'Mrs. Corney,' said Mr. Bumble, stooping over the matron, 'what is this, ma'am ? Has anything happened, ma'am ? Pray answer me : I'm on—on—' Mr. Bumble, in his alarm, could not immediately think of the word 'tenterhooks,' so he said 'broken bottles.'

'Oh, Mr. Bumble!' cried the lady, 'I have been so dreadfully put out!'

'Put out, ma'am!' exclaimed Mr. Bumble ; 'who has dared to— ? I know!' said Mr. Bumble, checking himself, with native majesty, 'this is them wicious paupers!'

'It's dreadful to think of!' said the lady, shuddering.

'Then don't think of it, ma'am,' rejoined Mr. Bumble.

'I can't help it,' whimpered the lady.

'Then take something, ma'am,' said Mr. Bumble soothingly. 'A little of the wine ?'

'Not for the world!' replied Mrs. Corney. 'I couldn't,—oh! The top shelf in the right-hand corner—oh!' Uttering these words, the good lady pointed, distractedly, to the cupboard, and underwent a convulsion from internal spasms. Mr. Bumble rushed to the closet ; and, snatching a pint green-glass bottle from the shelf thus incoherently indicated, filled a tea-cup with its contents, and held it to the lady's lips.

'I'm better now,' said Mrs. Corney, falling back, after drinking half of it.

Mr. Bumble raised his eyes piously to the ceiling in thankfulness ; and, bringing them down again to the brim of the cup, lifted it to his nose.

'Peppermint,' exclaimed Mrs. Corney, in a faint voice, smiling gently on the beadle as she spoke. 'Try it! There's a little—a little something else in it.'

Mr. Bumble tasted the medicine with a doubtful look ; smacked his lips ; took another taste ; and put the cup down empty.

ACTIVITÉ 3

SOCIAL SATIRE

Oliver Twist

Roman Polanski, 2005



'It's very comforting,' said Mrs. Corney.

'Very much so indeed, ma'am,' said the beadle. As he spoke, he drew a chair beside the matron, and tenderly inquired what had happened to distress her.

'Nothing,' replied Mrs. Corney. 'I am a foolish, excitable, weak creetur.'

'Not weak, ma'am,' retorted Mr. Bumble, drawing his chair a little closer. 'Are you a weak creetur, Mrs. Corney?'

'We are all weak creeturs,' said Mrs. Corney, laying down a general principle.

'So we are,' said the beadle.

Nothing was said on either side, for a minute or two afterwards. By the expiration of that time, Mr. Bumble had illustrated the position by removing his left arm from the back of Mrs. Corney's chair, where it had previously rested, to Mrs. Corney's apron-string, round which it gradually became entwined.

'We are all weak creeturs,' said Mr. Bumble.

Mrs. Corney sighed.

'Don't sigh, Mrs. Corney,' said Mr. Bumble.

'I can't help it,' said Mrs. Corney. And she sighed again.

'This is a very comfortable room, ma'am,' said Mr. Bumble looking round. 'Another room, and this, ma'am, would be a complete thing.'

'It would be too much for one,' murmured the lady.

'But not for two, ma'am,' rejoined Mr. Bumble, in soft accents. 'Eh, Mrs. Corney?'

ACTIVITÉ 3

SOCIAL SATIRE

Oliver Twist
Roman Polanski, 2005



1- Check that you understand the text :

What is Mr Bumble doing at the beginning of the extract ?

What is Mrs Corney's state of mind when she arrives ?

Who does Mr Bumble blame for it and what does he do to help her ?

What are Mr Bumble's intentions ?

What is the tone of the narrative voice here ?

2- Group work (4-5 students)

Rewrite this passage into the form of a script. To see an example taken from Polanski's film script, go to <http://www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/activities/scene.pdf>

Tips : your script will contain a lot less words than the extract from the novel ; you will not only have to cut most of the descriptions and sum them up into clear visual directions but the dialogues will have to be shortened too. You will therefore have to make choices : which parts of the dialogues are absolutely essential to convey the mood of the scene ? Which actions can produce an interesting effect on screen ?

Think of how you will communicate the mood, tone, etc. of the scene to the spectators : this will determine the way you want the scene to be shot. (to learn about basic shots go to : <http://www.mediacollege.com/video/shots/>)

Then construct your storyboard. (template available here <http://www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/activities/storyboard.pdf>)

Shoot the scene.

Watch the other groups' films. Explain your choices and comment on theirs (written or oral production activity).

POUR ALLER PLUS LOIN

Bibliographie

Oliver Twist or The Parish Boy's Progress, DICKENS Charles, 1838.

Le roman à l'origine du scénario du film.

The Portable Victorian Reader, HAIGHT Gordon S (ed.), Viking Portable Library, 1976

Une sélection de textes essentiels écrits pendant l'ère victorienne et groupés thématiquement :

Sitographie

Site pédagogique Film education (en anglais) :

<http://www.filmeducation.org/olivertwist/activities/index.html>

La base de données de référence sur l'ère victorienne sur Internet :

<http://www.victorianweb.org/>

Des exposés simples sans être simplistes et des activités pédagogiques sur l'ère victorienne à proposer aux élèves de collège :

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/victorian_britain/