

# Making a booktrailer

An in-depth guide to studying a book and creating a trailer



Based on a photo by Kratka Photography

---

# Contents

---

- 2 Scottish Children’s Book Awards (SCBA) – Booktrailer competition
- 3 Frequently asked questions about booktrailers
- 4 What tools, software and ICT skills are needed?
- 4 Lesson 1 – What is a booktrailer?
- 6 Lesson 2 – what makes a good trailer?
- 10 Lesson 3 – Gathering content
- 11 Lesson 4 – Planning a Booktrailer
- 14 Pupil peer feedback
- 15 Teacher assessment grid
- 16 For teachers – Guidance on using the Teacher Assessment Grid
- 17 Useful links
- 18 Exemplar trailers on the web
- 19 What else can I do with booktrailers?
- 20 List of CFE outcomes linked to booktrailers

---

## Introduction to booktrailers

---

Educators are consistently looking for tools which will help encourage their pupils to read. Booktrailers are a great way to engage pupils with reading in the digital realm with which they are so familiar, and they are a fabulous way to combine a number of different skills across the curriculum.

A booktrailer is just like a movie trailer, giving a ‘taster’ of a book for its potential audience, designed to leave them wanting to read the book. Because trailers are so keenly focused on purpose and audience, creating them requires a lot of critical decision making; and because they need to capture the essence of a book’s characters, setting, plot and atmosphere, they encourage pupils to read a book critically so they have a strong idea of what their trailer needs to convey.

This resource pack will take you through the full process of creating a booktrailer. The pack includes worksheets for pupils, and assessment templates, useful links and other supporting resources for teachers. The pack has been designed to follow the structure of our Booktrailer Masterclass videos, but you can modify the order and structure of activities depending on your own needs. The videos can be found at [www.scottishbooktrust.com/booktrailer-masterclass](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/booktrailer-masterclass).

---

## Scottish Children's Book Awards (SCBA) – Booktrailer competition

---

Every year thousands of Scottish schoolchildren vote for their favourite shortlisted book in the Scottish Children's Book Awards:

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/scba](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/scba)

2013 will be the first year SBT will run a booktrailer competition for the awards, with a fabulous prize of £250 in book tokens from Waterstones; why not get your pupils to produce a trailer for one of the shortlisted books? The competition is open to all ages (see below for more advice about getting younger pupils involved). All details can be found by clicking on the link for the SCBA homepage above.

The deadline for entries to the competition is 7 February 2014

---

## Frequently asked questions about booktrailers

---

### **WHERE CAN I SEE SOME EXAMPLE TRAILERS?**

---

There are lots of example trailers on YouTube and publishers' websites: we've compiled a selection of useful example trailers on page 19 of this resource.

### **WHICH YEAR GROUPS ARE BOOKTRAILERS SUITABLE FOR?**

---

Generally booktrailers have been used with secondary pupils. However, any pupil working within Level 3 should be able to tackle a booktrailer – have a look at the tasks in this resource pack and see if they would suit your learners. You could even get older and younger pupils to work on trailers together!

### **HOW SHOULD I APPROACH BOOKTRAILERS?**

---

In SBT's work with teachers on booktrailers, we've seen all manner of different approaches. Some teachers have allowed pupils to create trailers on a book of their choice. Other teachers have asked their class to create trailers on a set text. Some have asked their pupils to work in groups, some in pairs, and some individually. Liaison with the library (especially if pupils are choosing their own books) is recommended!

### **HOW CAN BOOKTRAILERS HELP ME DELIVER CFE, NATIONAL 4/5 AND HIGHER?**

---

A whole range of reading and writing skills (as well as others across the curriculum) are tested in the creation of a trailer. On page 20 of this resource you'll find a list of CFE outcomes which a booktrailer project will deliver.

At National 5 and Higher, creating a booktrailer can be a great way into critical writing, and also a helpful revision tool, with emphasis on thinking about key scenes and aspects of setting/character/style.

#### HOW MUCH TIME DO I NEED TO DO A BOOKTRAILER PROJECT?

---

The production of a trailer is not usually done in isolation – it is usually part of a wider unit of work where there are a number of outcomes – critical essays, imaginative responses, etc.

Broadly speaking, you should be able to dedicate at least one lesson to familiarising pupils with exemplar trailers, at least one lesson where they plan their trailers by writing a script or storyboard.

If pupils are creating their trailers with pre-existing images and sounds from the internet, you should allow one period for this – they can always find more later on while editing. If they are creating original content (filming drama scenes, creating music or artwork) then the timescale will obviously be a little longer.

You should allow at least two periods for editing trailers on a computer or other device.

**In summary, you will need a minimum of five periods to create a booktrailer, which doesn't include filming or reading of the book(s).**

---

## What tools, software and ICT skills are needed?

---

Don't worry if you're not so confident or don't know where to get started. SBT's Booktrailer Masterclass video series gives a comprehensive introduction to trailers: in particular, Lesson 3 and Lesson 5 will help get you familiarised with websites and software:

Booktrailer Masterclass Lesson 3 – Finding content:

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/podcasts/video/booktrailer-masterclass-series-lesson-3](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/podcasts/video/booktrailer-masterclass-series-lesson-3)

Booktrailer Masterclass Lesson 5 – editing a trailer:

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/podcasts/video/booktrailer-masterclass-series-lesson-5](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/podcasts/video/booktrailer-masterclass-series-lesson-5)

There are also plenty of online guides to using Windows Movie Maker, iMovie, and other types of editing software – and if your machines don't have any installed, there are free online editing sites too. Check out the collection of useful links on page 18 for more information.

---

## Lesson 1 – What is a booktrailer?

---

### TASK 1: *WHITE CROW* BOOKTRAILER

---

Under each heading below, write down what you liked and disliked about the *White Crow* booktrailer.

Looks	Sounds
Content	Other

**TASK 2: *THE BREACH* BOOKTRAILER**

---

Under each heading below, write down what you liked and disliked about the booktrailer for Patrick Lee's *The Breach*.

Looks	Sounds
Content	Other

## Lesson 2 – what makes a good trailer?

### TASK 1 – WHAT MAKES A GOOD TRAILER?

It is very important that you have a clear opinion about what, for you, makes a good booktrailer.

In groups or with a partner, discuss the following questions:

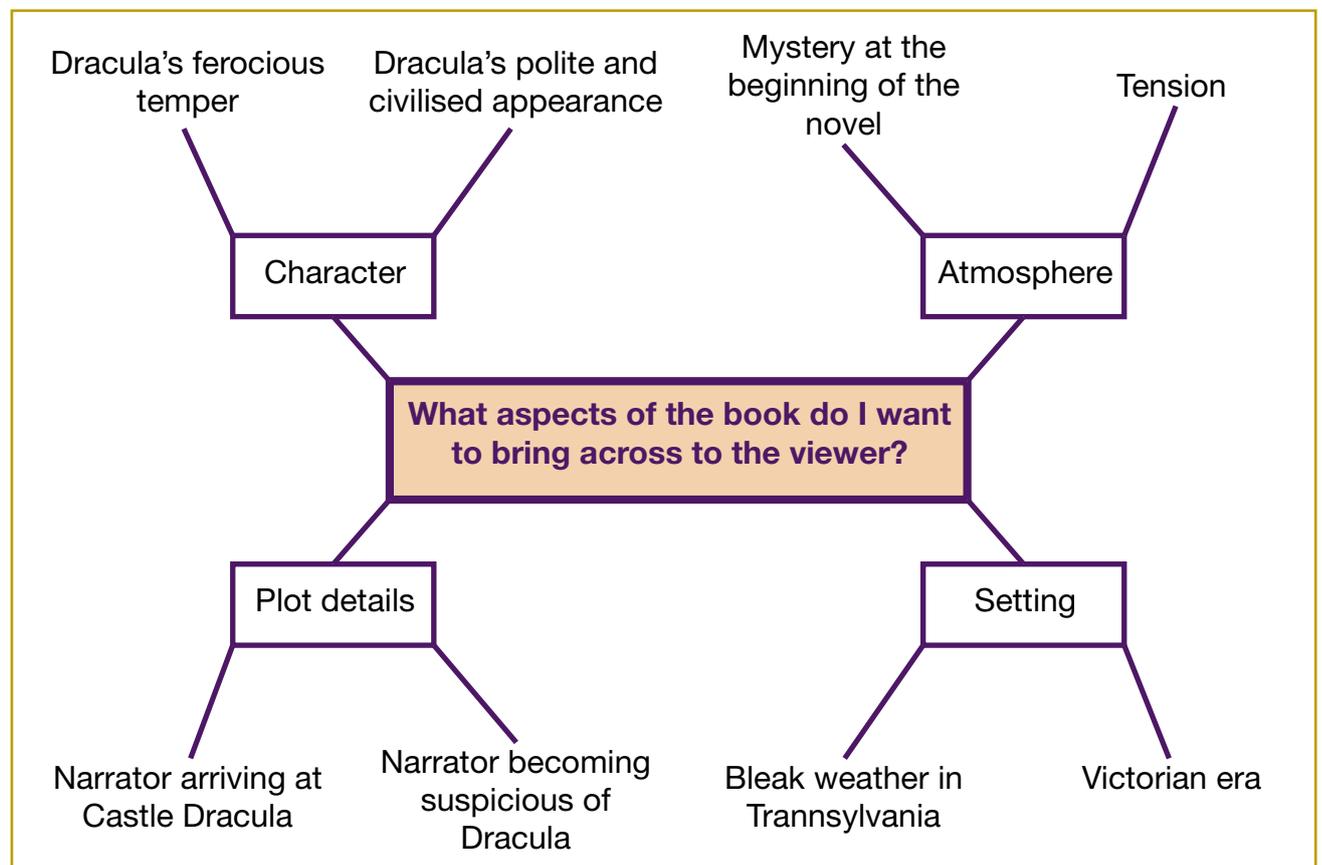
- What do you think is the main purpose of a booktrailer?
- How long do you think a good booktrailer should be?
- What kind of things would you want to know about a book before you bought it?

Next, come up with a list of five things that you think a good booktrailer should have in it.

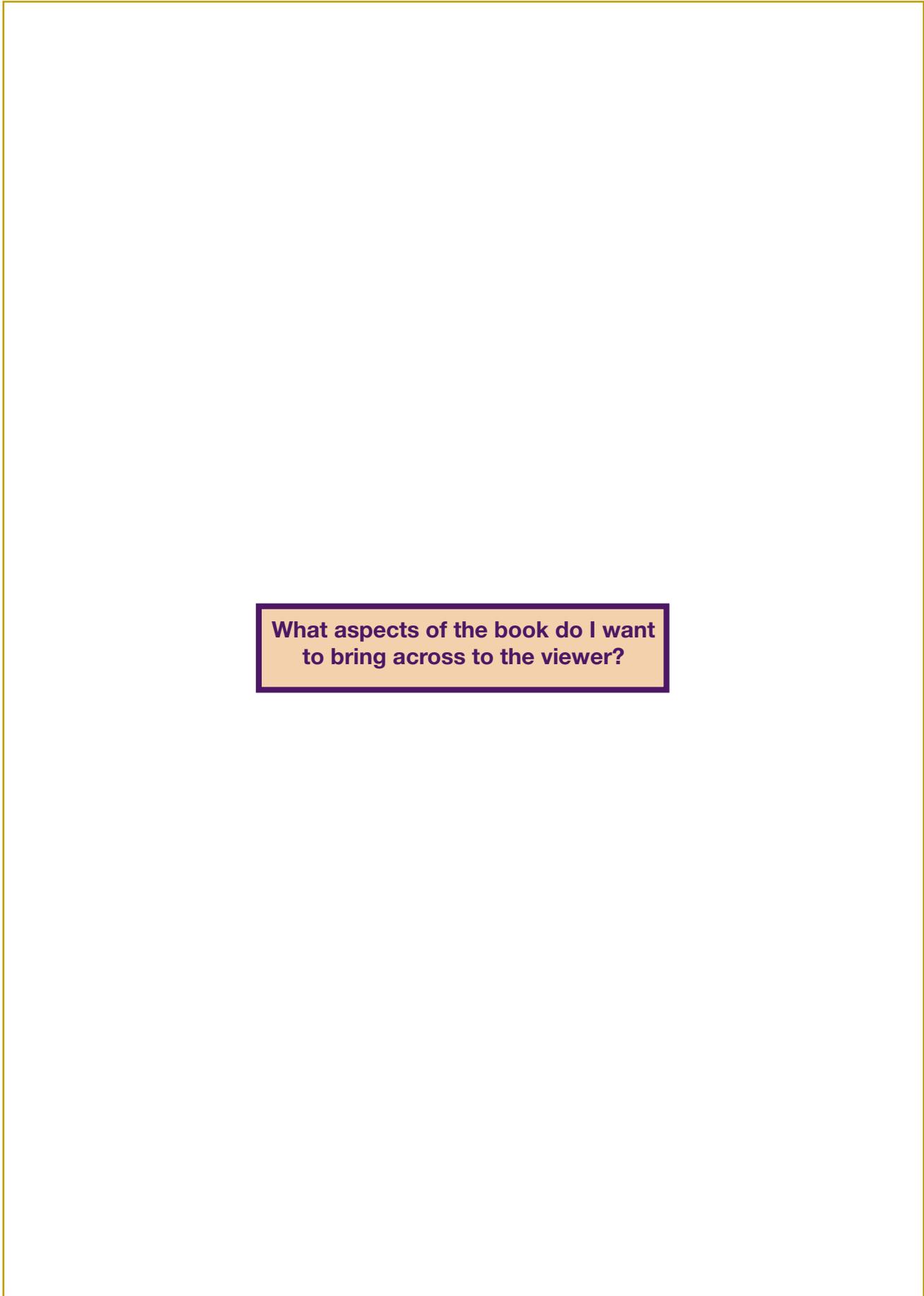
### TASK 2 - BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT WHAT YOUR TRAILER WILL BE LIKE

Next, think about the book you have chosen to produce a trailer for.

Think about what aspects of the book you want to bring across to the viewer. For an example, look at the mind map below. It has been completed by someone who has read Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. The mind map is only partly complete, and you may wish to put more information in when you do your own mind map:



Now, complete the mind map below for your own book trailer:



**What aspects of the book do I want to bring across to the viewer?**

### TASK 3 – DECIDING WHAT TO PUT IN

---

Discuss the following questions with your teacher or classmates:

- How do you think a studio chooses which scenes to put in a trailer?
- Do you need a mixture of different types of scenes in a trailer?
- How much of the plot should you reveal to the audience in a trailer?

When a studio is making a trailer for a movie, they have to decide which scenes to put in the trailer, and which ones to leave out.

Think of a movie that you know quite well. Next, go to [www.traileraddict.com](http://www.traileraddict.com) and see if you can find a trailer for the movie.

Once you have watched the trailer, think about the scenes which the film director has chosen to include in it. In the table below, write down three of the scenes that have been included, and write down all the reasons why you think the director has chosen to include them in the trailer.

Scene	Why I think it was included

#### TASK 4 – SCENES IN YOUR OWN TRAILER

---

Your final task for this lesson is to note down some scenes from your book which you feel you would like to include in your booktrailer. Use the space below to do this.

---

## Lesson 3 – Gathering content

---

### TASK 1 – FIND IMAGES AND SOUNDS ON THE NET TCH 3-04A, LIT 3-14A

---

When you are gathering images and sounds, you need to remember that when you include them in your booktrailer, you will need to put in a slide at the end which gives credit to the owner of the image or sound.

This task will help you to get used to noting down the correct details when you are downloading images and sounds.

Look at the table below. In the left hand column, you will find instructions telling you to look for an image or sound. Look through [Flickr](#), [mp3.com](#) and [Soundbible](#) to find images and sounds. When you have found something suitable for each instruction, write down the username and website in the columns next to it.

An example has been done for you.

Instruction	Username of person who owns the image/sound	Website
Find an image of an old castle	Dave Stokes	Flickr
Find a sound effect of a bomb exploding		
Find a sound effect of a crowd cheering		
Find some dramatic music		

---

## Lesson 4 – Planning a Booktrailer

---

There are two options available to you when you are writing a script for your booktrailer:

- Write a full script
- Draw a storyboard

Most people either prefer to do a storyboard or a script: it is your choice which approach you take to planning your trailer. Therefore, you should not do both Task 1 and Task 2: pick the one which you feel will help you most.

### OPTION 1: WRITE A SCRIPT

---

A script is quite detailed. It describes each shot of the booktrailer, including some or all of the following details:

- Images;
- Music and sound effects;
- Transitions (the way each shot moves into the next – does it cut? Fade out? Wipe? Etc.);
- Voiceovers;
- Text on screen;
- Visual effects.

You will find an example of the first part of a script below.

### TASK 1 – KNOWING WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A SCRIPT

---

Below is an example of a script for a booktrailer on Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. All the different elements listed on the previous page are included.

After you've had a look over this, you can go ahead and begin writing a script for your trailer.

#### **Dracula booktrailer – script**

SHOT 1: image of stormy landscape, storm sound effects

SHOT 2: cut to black screen with grey text saying, "In 1897 I was sent to Castle Dracula in Transylvania on routine business."

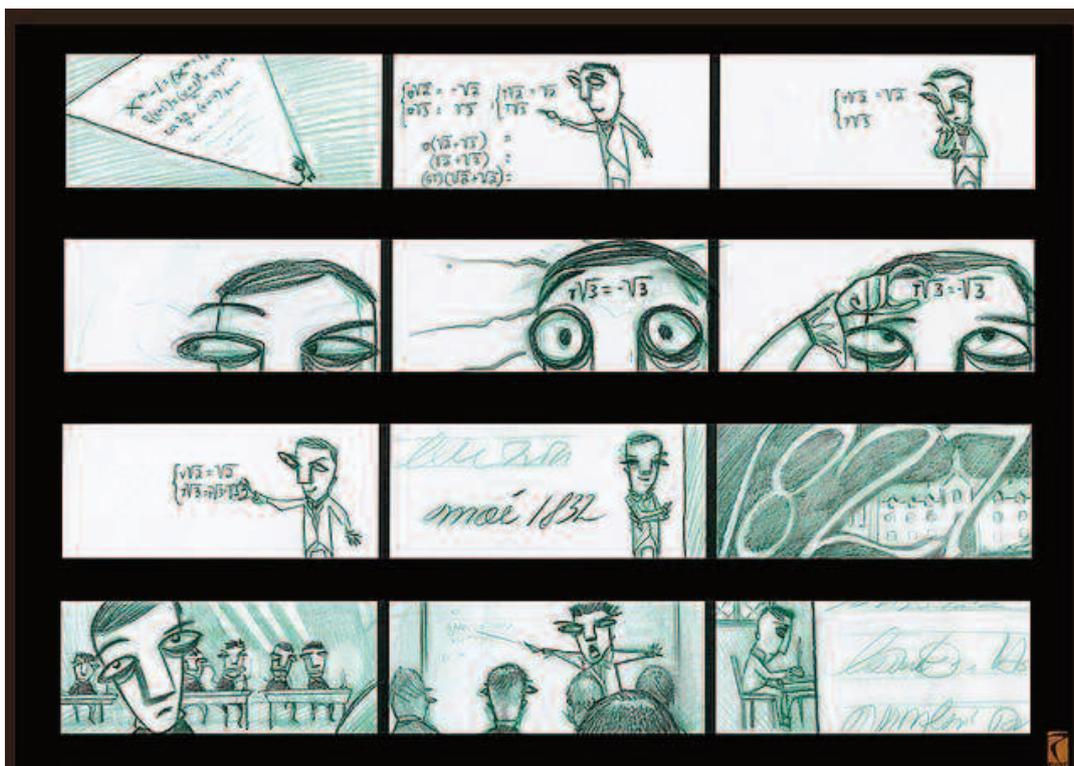
SHOT 3: Quick fade to a close up shot of vampire staring straight at the camera

SHOT 4: Quick fade to a wide shot of an old castle, black and white visual effect, voiceover of Count Dracula welcoming the narrator into his castle.

## TASK 2 – CREATING A STORYBOARD

Storyboards are used all the time by filmmakers. A storyboard is a series of sketches which show what the scenes of the film will look like.

You can use a storyboard to plan what your trailer will look like. On the next page, you will find a few examples of storyboards. On page 14, you will find a blank storyboard to begin planning your trailer.



**Blank Storyboard**

Fill in the storyboard with the scenes from your trailer.


---

## Pupil peer feedback

---

How has the trailer given an impression of what the main character is like?	
How has the trailer given an impression of what the setting is like?	
How has the trailer captured the mood/tone of the book?	
How does the trailer make its audience want to read the book?	
What did you particularly like about the trailer?	
What would you change, or add in, or take away?	

---

## Teacher assessment grid

---

Characters, setting, atmosphere	
Layout and structure	
Use of images, sounds and text	

What did you do well this time?

--

What can you work on for next time?

--

---

## For teachers – Guidance on using the Teacher Assessment Grid

---

Booktrailers are a great example of ‘the wider text’ espoused by Curriculum for Excellence guidelines.

Booktrailer activities demand the same kind of critical reading skills which are used when writing a critical essay: pupils must demonstrate an understanding of plot but also character, setting, atmosphere and genre.

Writing skills are also assessed: booktrailers make sparing use of text, so pupils have to be concise and careful with their expression so as to have maximum impact on their audience. Careful decisions also need to be made about structure and layout of the trailer.

With these points in mind, here are some questions to consider when writing comments on the Teacher Feedback sheet:

Characters, setting, atmosphere	Does the trailer demonstrate an understanding of the central concerns of the text? Does it demonstrate an understanding of the main characters and how they are characterised in the book? Does the trailer give a strong impression of the setting an atmosphere of the book?
Layout and structure	Is the length of the trailer appropriate (2 mins max)? Has the pupil ordered the images, sounds and text in a way that creates impact?
Use of images, sounds and text	Does the trailer demonstrate an ability to use language to achieve particular effects? Is the use of sounds, images and/or footage apt for purpose?

---

## Useful links

---

Scottish Book Trust website

[www.scottishbooktrust.com](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com)

Scottish Book Trust's Booktrailer Masterclass videos

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/cpd/toolkits/booktrailer-masterclass](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/cpd/toolkits/booktrailer-masterclass)

Video of the pupils and teachers taking part in ReadIT:

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/node/100660](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/node/100660)

Google's WeVideo free video editor (excellent tool!):

[www.wevideo.com/](http://www.wevideo.com/)

Ten other free online video editing tools

[http://webseasoning.com/technology/10-best-and-free-online-video-editing-software/1066/#.UJKnZm\\_hKSo](http://webseasoning.com/technology/10-best-and-free-online-video-editing-software/1066/#.UJKnZm_hKSo)

30+ Places to Find Creative Commons Photos and sounds

[www.sitepoint.com/30-creative-commons-sources/](http://www.sitepoint.com/30-creative-commons-sources/)

Free online photo editor

<http://pixlr.com/editor/>

Download Audacity, a free audio editor

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

Audacity online manual is available here:

[http://manual.audacityteam.org/man/Quick\\_Help](http://manual.audacityteam.org/man/Quick_Help)

There is also a video tutorial series on YouTube here:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7BuceavV-Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7BuceavV-Y)

Guide to using YouTube's video editor

<http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=183851>

## Exemplar trailers on the web

It's important to show pupils a few different trailers of varying styles and quality. With that in mind, here is a list of trailers which showcase different target age groups, different genres and different stylistic devices.

Book	Age	Link and comment
<i>Out of the Depths</i> by Cathy MacPhail	8-12	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o9EbmBUrII">www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o9EbmBUrII</a> A trailer by a pupil, created from original footage rather than pre-existing content.
<i>Code Name Verity</i> by Elizabeth Wein	12-16	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVbZOwbVazU">www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVbZOwbVazU</a> An innovative trailer in terms of design and content. Good example of effective choice of sound.
<i>Boy Nobody</i> by Allen Zadoff	16 +	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clJ25uwl8">www.youtube.com/watch?v=clJ25uwl8</a> A very slick official trailer with clever use of narrative voice. Be warned: there is some content only appropriate for older pupils.
<i>The Paper Dolls</i> by Julia Donaldson	3-7	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYoVq1LfDIs">www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYoVq1LfDIs</a> A trailer made using stop motion animation. Good for discussing appropriate atmosphere/tones.
<i>Lost and Found</i> by Oliver Jeffers	3-7	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkJiPxFeZgs">www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkJiPxFeZgs</a> A good example of effective structuring, and raising questions in an audience's mind, as the resolution of the book is left to the imagination.
<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> by Lewis Carroll	9-12	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0cPTGPIEbQ">www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0cPTGPIEbQ</a> A basic booktrailer using still images.
<i>Matilda</i> by Roald Dahl	8-12	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zot8bp2UjdE">www.youtube.com/watch?v=zot8bp2UjdE</a> A nice trailer which suffers a little from a lack of variation and too much content. Can lead to discussions about showing, not telling, appropriate trailer length, and trimming/editing.

---

## What else can I do with booktrailers?

---

Booktrailers can be used in a wide variety of ways, both in the English classroom and right across the curriculum.

Booktrailers are part of a wider genre called Digital Storytelling: in essence, this simply means the presentation of a narrative using digital technologies. This can be used right across the curriculum to put teaching concepts into a narrative. See 'Across the Curriculum' below for some examples of this.

### IN ENGLISH

---

- An alternative to the traditional 'book review' as part of library induction;
- Pupils can make trailers for short stories they have written;
- A great revision tool for all stages (the visual and creative aspect can really help aid recall, and the need to think about key scenes, character and atmosphere relates strongly to critical essay writing at National 5 and Higher).
- Booktrailers are as much an exercise in writing as they are in reading: skills such as showing, not telling, using stylistic devices, structuring a narrative, and taking account of purpose and audience are all part of creating a trailer.

### ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

---

- Pupils can film scenes for a trailer in Drama or Media Studies classes;
- They can also create original artwork for a trailer in Art and Design, and record a soundtrack in Music;
- Pupils can create a digital story to help learn about historical events: for instance, a digital story from the perspective of prisoners at Auschwitz, or a digital story exploring the growth of the British Empire;
- Another option would be to create a trailer for a non-fiction narrative book, perhaps an autobiography relating to a topic being taught.

### PROMOTING BOOKS ACROSS THE SCHOOL

---

- If you have large screens around the school, pupils' trailers can be shown on these (or at assemblies) to help inform others about new books;
- As a transition project, S1 pupils can create trailers for their favourite books in the library for upcoming P7 pupils to watch;
- You could run a booktrailer competition in your school;
- You could run a digital storytelling elective.

---

## List of CFE outcomes linked to booktrailers

---

### WATCHING EXEMPLAR TRAILERS AND DISCUSSING THEM

---

Lit 4-01a – I regularly watch or listen to texts for enjoyment, and can express how well they meet my needs, giving reasons, with evidence, for my personal response.

Lit 4-04 a – I can identify the main concerns of a text, and compare and contrast different texts.

Lit 4-07a – I can show my understanding by commenting on the content and form of texts.

### READING NOVELS AND DECIDING WHAT TO PUT IN A TRAILER

---

Lit 4-11a – I regularly select and read texts for enjoyment and interest.

Lit 4-16a – I can clearly state the main concerns of a text and use supporting detail

Eng 4-19a – covers all critical reading tasks

Lit 4-25a - I can use notes and other types of writing to generate and develop ideas, retain and recall information, explore problems, make decisions, or create original text.

### CONSTRUCTING AND EDITING TRAILERS

---

Lit 4-01a - I can regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to create texts of my choice, and am developing my own style.

Lit 4-23a – I can review and edit my writing to ensure it meets its purpose and communicates meaning clearly at a first reading.

Lit 4-24a - I can justify my choice and use of layout and presentation in terms of the intended impact on my reader.

Eng 4-27a - I can engage and/or influence readers through my use of language, style and tone as appropriate to genre.

Eng 4-31a - I can create texts in different genres by integrating the conventions of my chosen genre successfully and/or using convincing and appropriate structures.

Tch 4-04a – Throughout my learning, I can make effective use of a computer system to process and organise information.

Exa 4-14a - Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts.