



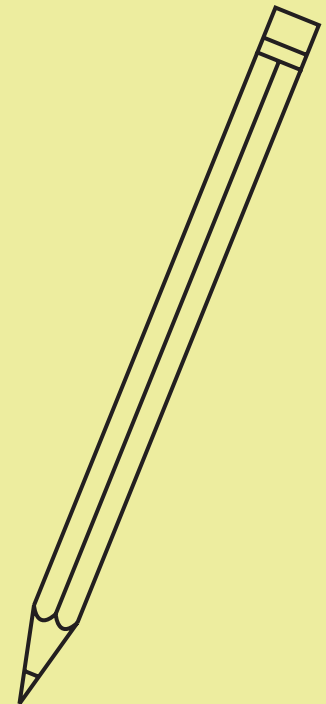
# City of Ghosts

## STUDY GUIDE

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All SFFILM Education materials are developed in alignment with California educational standards for media literacy. SFFILM Education welcomes feedback and questions on all printed study materials.



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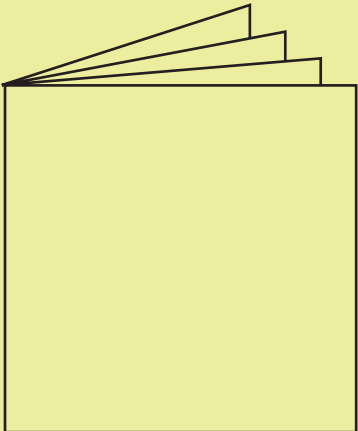






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## About the Episodes

City of Ghosts, an innovative new animated series from Netflix follows the Ghost Club, a group of curious young adventures who explore the city of Los Angeles interviewing ghosts, solving problems and learning about their city's diverse culture, neighborhoods, and history. The program will include two episodes of the series, screened in advance, and a behind-the-scenes presentation with showrunner and creator Elizabeth Ito and members of her creative team. Students will have the opportunity to send in questions and follow along with a hands-on creative activity..

### "Leimert Park"

DIRECTOR

**Bob Logan**

(USA 2021) English, 18 mins

### "Bob & Nancy"

DIRECTORS

**Elizabeth Ito &  
Pendleton Ward**

(USA 2021) English, 18 mins

On Netflix

## Teaching the Episodes

Join a team of kids, the Ghost Club, as they help explore the community and share past stories and current events together. In **City of Ghosts**—a translated term from Spanish settlers who called the land Los Angeles— this wonderful mix of kids teach about the long history of the city and the land it sits on through deep consideration and empathy of the people that call the place home. These stories tell much about what is happening now, and also reflect on personal and geographical sites throughout the surrounding area. They find that this connects them to the knowledge that where we are can teach us about who we are at the same time.

This guide can be used as discussion points to delve into that history, and modern day reflections on personal connection. This guide is intended to flexibly support educators and families alike with creative hands-on activities to share with students. Please feel free to adapt and abridge the content as necessary to meet your unique learning objectives and circumstances.

Recommended for ages 7 and up.

## Subject Areas

- **African American Studies**
- **Art/Media**
- **Asian American Studies**
- **English Language Arts**
- **History**
- **Peer/Youth Issues**
- **Social Emotional Learning**
- **Social Justice**
- **Social Studies**





## Presenter Bio



Elizabeth Ito is a 15 year veteran of the animation industry and the creator of the Cartoon Network short, *Welcome to My Life*. She recently finished making her first series, *City of Ghosts*, at Netflix Animation. Currently, she is living in Los Angeles, staying home with her family, and coming up with new ideas for fun projects to make.



# Discussion Questions

## “Leimert Park” - City of Ghosts Season 1, Episode 3

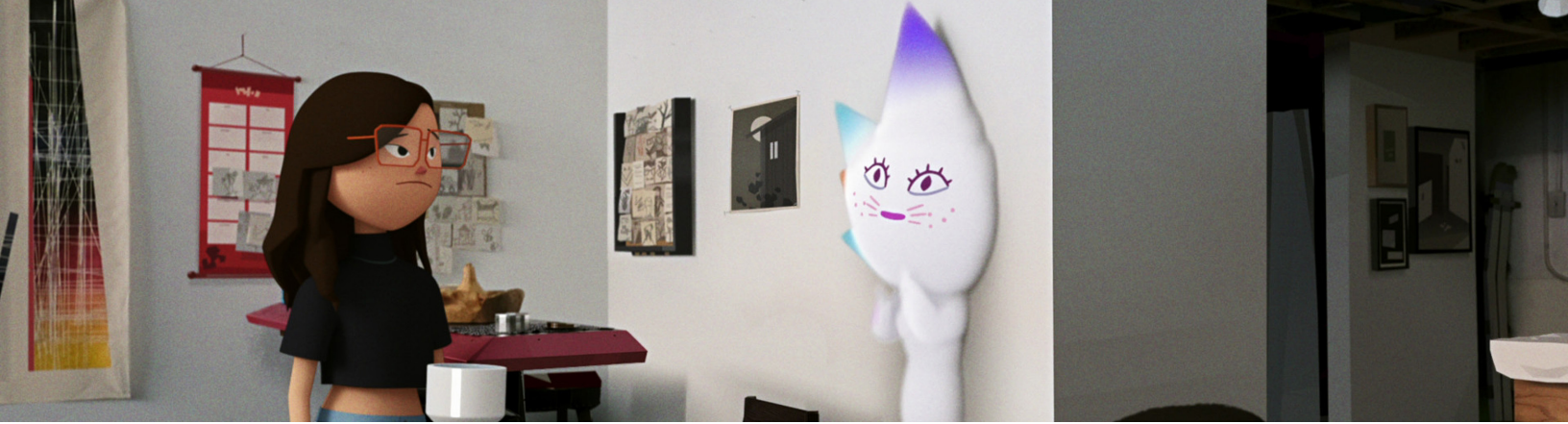
1. What does Sonya teach the kids at her cafe?
2. Is poetry a way of performing? Why? What does poetry have to do with music? How can poetry help you with your studies?
3. Why is Steve having trouble sleeping?
4. What is happening in Sonya’s cafe with the Ghost?
5. Why aren’t people in the park anymore? Why is Leimert Park important to the characters? Is there a special park or outdoor space that makes you happy? Describe what you see there, hear, feel and think while you are there.
6. What is important about having spaces for people in communities to gather?
7. What are some activities you do at a park? Name 5 things that you consider fun activities you can do there?
8. Research a favorite park in your town or city. What is it named and why? When was it established? What community activities are hosted there through the city?

## “Bob & Nancy” - City of Ghosts Season 1, Episode 5

1. Describe Zen’s Mom in 3 sentences.
2. Why did they call it the Atomic Cafe?
3. When Nancy calls herself “J.A”, she is referring to her nationality as Japanese American. In the 1940’s, Japanese Americans were held in camps against their will, like jail. During this time it Japanese Americans were treated unfairly. **Research** and find out: What are internment camps?
4. Why did Nancy feel at home at the cafe? What is a jukebox?
5. Why did Zen call the ghost club to help her?

“

Is there a special park or outdoor space that makes you happy? Describe what you see there, hear, feel and think while you are there.



# Activities

## “Leimert Park” - City of Ghosts Season 1, Episode 3

**Create a poem** describing something that looks like it could make a sound like a drum if you drummed on it. Try to rhyme the ending words of each line, and use the words to describe the object.

**Perform your poem** and invite a few friends to do the same, and then perform for each other on your own open mic night! Or you can play a slow drum beat in the background as you perform all together. Find a slow beat online to play while you read! Choose one topic, invite your friends to all write their own poetry about it, and then perform together using the same beat as your backdrop!

“

Every ghost looks different and reflects the person and place they embody.

## “Bob & Nancy” - City of Ghosts Season 1, Episode 5

**What is a marionette?** Do research on marionettes, and write down 5 fun facts about them.

**Draw a marionette**, and create a story for it!

**Make your own puppet show!** Get socks to create the characters bodies, and use markers to create a mouth, eyes, eyelashes and a nose. Use your hand inside to create the actions of the puppets. You can write a script for the characters, and invite friends to create a story with you. Or use a story you already know, and act it out! You can also create a stage by standing behind a box with the puppets on top, or on a table and act out your puppet show. If you use a camera to record it, you can watch it after! In class, students can perform in small groups and provide complimentary comments to each other after.

**Draw a ghost of yourself** in City of Ghosts. Every ghost looks different and reflects the person and place they embody. If you were a ghost, what would you look like and where would you be? Draw yourself as a ghost that includes some of your signature style and where you call home. Create the body, hair (if any), and also 5 things around it that relate to YOUR story with items floating around you that are important to you.





# What is Animation?

Animation is a process used to create motion pictures through the combination of still images (e.g., digital graphics, photographs of drawings, photographs of objects, etc.) which, when played in sequence, create the illusion of movement. All television cartoons, for example, are animations, and are made up of thousands of still images (drawn by hand or on a computer) that are played sequentially, along with a soundtrack, to tell a story.

## TYPES OF ANIMATION

- Classic animation  
(e.g., Disney's **The Lion King**, most TV cartoons)
- Rotoscope  
(e.g., **Star Wars** lightsabers)
- Flip books
- 3D animation  
(e.g., Pixar's **Toy Story**, **Wall-E**, **Up**)
- Stereoscopic 3D  
(e.g., **Avatar**)
- Cut-out / Silhouette animation  
(e.g., **South Park**)
- Claymation  
(e.g., Nick Park's **Wallace and Gromit**)
- Puppet animation  
(e.g., Tim Burton's **The Nightmare Before Christmas**, **Coraline**)

# History of Animation

The world's most famous animator, Walt Disney, began making short animated cartoons based on children's stories in 1923. In 1928 he introduced Mickey Mouse in the first animated sound cartoon, **Steamboat Willie**, which became an immediate sensation. Throughout the next decade, Disney would add such elements as carefully synchronized music (**The Skeleton Dance**, 1929), Technicolor (**Flowers and Trees**, 1932), and the illusion of depth with his multi-plane camera (**The Old Mill**, 1937), a device that allowed for animated cells to be photographed against a three-dimensional background. Although not the first animated feature, **Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** (1937) was the first to use up-to-the-minute techniques and the first to receive widespread release. The film's success can be attributed in part to Disney's willingness to use animation to create a profound dramatic experience. He strove for photographic realism in films such as **Pinocchio** (1940), **Dumbo** (1941) and **Bambi** (1942). The success of television cartoons led to the virtual disappearance of animated shorts produced for theatrical release. Animated featurelength films, however, flourished, especially after the release of Disney's **The Little Mermaid** (1989), regarded by many as the studio's best animated feature in decades. Other Disney blockbusters followed, including **Beauty and the Beast** (1991), **Aladdin** (1992), **The Lion King** (1994) and **Lilo & Stitch** (2002). The development of computer animation was another great advancement in the form and resulted in feature films of astounding visual sumptuousness. In 1995, **Toy Story** was the first film to use only computer generated imagery (CGI). In 2001 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences added a new Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film. The first recipient of the award was **Shrek** (2001).





# Common Core Standards

## Standard Grades 3-8

### COMPREHENSION AND COLLABORATION

Standards grades 3–8  
Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1  
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.2  
Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2  
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A  
Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

## 4th Grade Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B  
Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3  
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.A  
Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.B  
Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3  
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.B  
Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D  
Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3  
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.



# Common Core Standards

## 4th Grade Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.A

Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.B

Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.





# Media Literacy Resources: Screening with Meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. Every projected image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the medium, through the language of the device. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Most students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive. Analysis of a media message—or any piece of mass media content—can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

1. **Medium:** the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered
2. **Author:** the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination
3. **Content:** the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys
4. **Audience:** the target audience to whom it is delivered
5. **Purpose:** the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS

### MEDIUM

#### All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

### AUTHOR

#### All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?
- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

### CONTENT

#### Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the viewer and evoke a response?
- To what extent did the content meet your expectations, given the format/author?

### AUDIENCE

#### All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?

### PURPOSE

#### All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?