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MEDIA LITERACY PROJECT | LABS

Educational Kit

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



“ LOUIS' SHOES ”

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt16287242/reference/>

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Louis' shoes are more than just shoes. They are a way of seeing the world in an orderly fashion and giving meaning to what he doesn't understand or sees differently. **This is a film that gives space to the story of a boy with autism, where small gestures mean a lot.**

TITLE

LOUIS' SHOES (Les Chaussures de Louis)

COUNTRY

France 2020

TYPE OF MOVIE

Animation, 3D animation, Drama, Children's film

ISSUES

Friendship - Education - Disability - Autism - Real inclusion - Self-determination - Free choice
Fundamental rights - Happy - School - Daily life - Solidarity - Child - Diversity - Portrait - Teaching

RUNTIME

5' 16"

LANGUAGE

French with English subtitles

RECOMMENDED AGES

Ages 8-14 years

Production: Anne Brotot - [MoPA - The School of 3D](#) **International Sales :** [Yummy Films](#)

Screenplay: [Marion Philippe](#) **Director :** Jean-Geraud Blanc Théo Jasmin Kayu Leung Marion

Phillippe **Music:** Lolita Del Pino **Montage :** Theo Jasmin **Starring:** [Ronan Guilloux](#)

Synopsis

Louis, an eight and a half years old autistic kid arrives in his new school and he is about to introduce himself by presenting one day of his old school life.

Trailer



FILM ANALYSIS

The Inspiration For the Script

The story starts and ends with Louis' self presentation in front of the class. This is inspired by [Josef Schovanec](#)' response -a renowned autistic philosopher in France- in an interview. Regarding what we can do to **integrate an autistic child in the classroom** , **he suggested that maybe we should just simply ask the child to present her/himself to everyone so the relationship can start by offering them chance to open her/himself up instead of being excluded from her/him right away.**

The scenes are inspired by the interviews and testimonies taken from people with autism by the creators of the movie. What motivated them to produce this film was autistic people' s extraordinary way of seeing the world, which makes us ask questions back to what we have accepted in daily life without any second thought. Just like most of our social conventions , if we ever take some time to reflect on it, we might easily find some absurdities (eg, when does waving hands mean greeting?) We believe the best way to illustrate this paradox is to present this world of everyday life directly and literally from the vision of Louis.

The shoes have a very specific place in the story. They serve as the centerpiece of each plot and a thread that links all events to one another. **For Louis, his shoes are his bearings of the world.** He has all his specific daily rituals with his shoes so as to feel more at ease. This ritual is also inspired by interviews , the fact that people with autism could have more self-stimulation behaviors. Self-stimulation behaviors simply mean any repetitive body or object movement, e.g. hand-flapping, rocking, and jumping. It is generally believed that the behaviors are repeated because they offer the child a gratifying sensory input so these are not specific to autistic people. But these behaviors are more frequent to autistic people because it helps them to regulate their energy and endure the sensory environment (the noise, the smell, the crowd).

The directors also adore the symbolism of this ritual of shoes. The shoes represent walking, a path to go through, **a journey that Louis wants to share by putting us into his shoes.** This film only captured a fragment of Louis' life. **He will have plenty of challenges to overcome after the film ends but Louis' shoes are always going to be there for him...**



"The issue is specific but the struggle is global. When the audience sees how Luis overcomes his difficulties with courage and honesty we hope that this can resonate with people ... even those without autism to have the courage to accept and understand" the four co-directors point out.



Here is an excerpt from the original script:

Les Chaussures de Louis

Séquence 1: DANS LA NOUVELLE ECOLE DE LOUIS - INT MATIN PRINTEMPS:

(...)

LOUIS intimidé, se redresse, une feuille de papier devant sa bouche. Son regard est dirigé vers le sol de la classe.
Sous leurs bureaux, les pieds des enfants remuent dans leurs chaussures.

LOUIS (Voix Off):
J'ai un rituel spécifique avec mes chaussures J'enlève ma chaussure droite,
puis la gauche et les pose bien parallèle à côté de moi.
Grâce à cela mes chaussures s'abiment 1,6 fois moins vite!

Il parait tout petit au milieu de cette salle de classe. Ses traits sont crispés par la concentration.

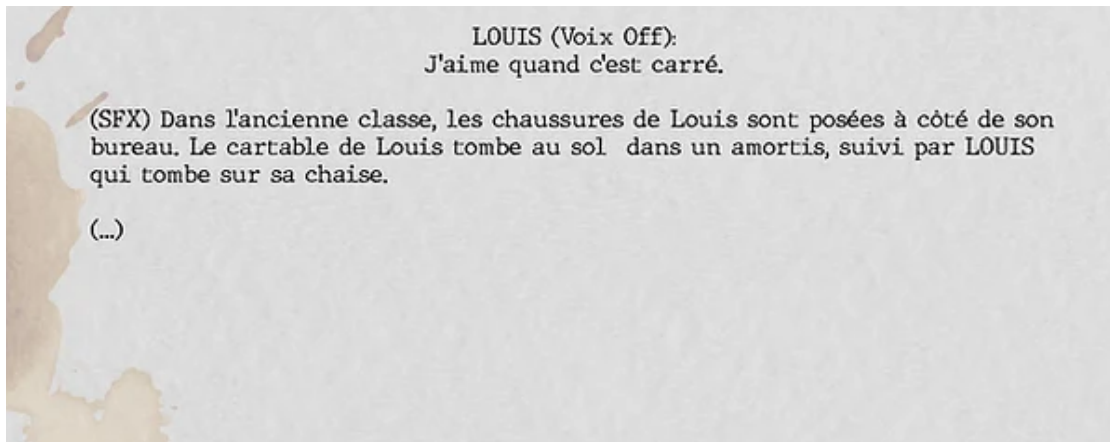
LOUIS (Voix Off):
Mais surtout, elles sont toujours là pour me remettre sur pied.
Enfin, c'est ce que je croyais...

(SFX) pendant qu'il parle, Dans une salle vide (Nous sommes dans le palais mental de Louis). LOUIS est allongé au sol, vêtu d'un uniforme. Il est entouré de ses affaires méticuleusement disposées autour de lui dont ses CHAUSSURES qui sont dans un espace prévu à leur effet. Elles quittent la salle.

LOUIS (voix off) :
Je change souvent d'école mais pas de chaussures. Dans mon ancienne école je portais déjà mes chaussures.

Séquence 2: DANS L'ANCIENNE ÉCOLE DE LOUIS - INT MATIN HIVER (Flashback):

(SFX) Dans le palais mental de Louis, les affaires de Louis se rangent dans son sac. La surface sur laquelle il est allongé pivote, faisant glisser LOUIS avec son sac.



Voice-over

TERMINOLOGY: Voice-over is a production technique where a voice - which is not part of the narration - is used in a radio, television, film, theater or other presentation.

WHY VOICE_OVER ?

The directors when began writing, **had been pondering the possibility of voice-over since the source of inspiration came mainly from the interviews.** The vocal transfer of their experiences had intrigued them immensely. However, they chose to start writing the first version of the script that would work even without the voice-over.

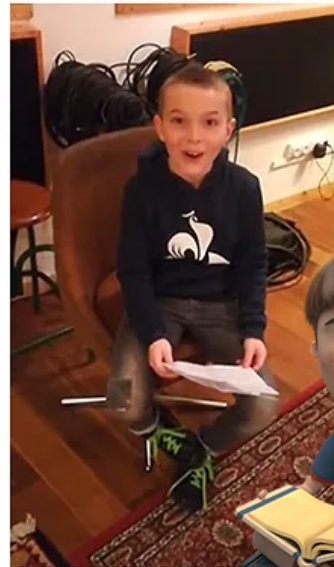
At first, they wanted the spikaz to serve as a complement or to add different narrative layers to the image rather than just describe the image. **As soon as they recorded the structure of the story, they carefully began writing the voice-over.** The gist was to write of Louis' presentation, sometimes even paradoxical to the image on screen, **so as to illustrate his inner thought which gives the scenes a new interpretation ..**

ADULTS / CHILDREN

Finding the right voice actor for Luis was really difficult for them.

Actually at the very beginning the voice-over actor was an adult !! They liked the nostalgic feel of an adult reliving his childhood. It just introduced unnecessary confusion of time and story structure,

Finally they decided on a **child's voice.** This choice added a greater **empathetic connection to Luis** in a sense that he is recalling something that just recently happened in his life. The decision has just been made we "just" need to find the kid.... ..which is easier said than done..



FINDING LOUIS

After weeks of stress and endless search, we came to a revelation during christmas holiday, when Théo went to see his family. He just tested the script out with one cute member of his family: **Ronan** Immediately he sent us the recording. When the directors listened Ronan playing Louis' presentation for the very first time ... they all emotionallly said, "**That's Louis! That's our Louis talking!**"

DIRECTING WITH THE VOICE OF LOUIS

They started recording in a professional sound studio. Co-directing with the child was also something that the new animators had to learn!! To facilitate the process they spent hours recording their own voices for the entire script and directing themselves on how to perform. This process essentially created a new dynamic in the script. **Sometimes we may like the wording on paper, but after performing it out loud and hearing it we go back to refine the script again.** There's a lot of back and forth between the writing room and the recording room to test the tonality of the script. It helps to fix the timing of **animatic (editing draft for animation film)** relatively early because in the end all that is needed is just to replace the adult voice with Ronan's voice. This is Ronan 's very first time as a voice actor too! Being alone in the cabinet of the recording room in front of the mic, he didn't even get cold feet!



Storyboard

TERMINOLOGY : A storyboard is a graphic organizer consisting of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a film, animation, motion picture, or interactive media.

REALITY ! & IMAGINATION!:

litterally sewing our brainstorm all together like a couturier



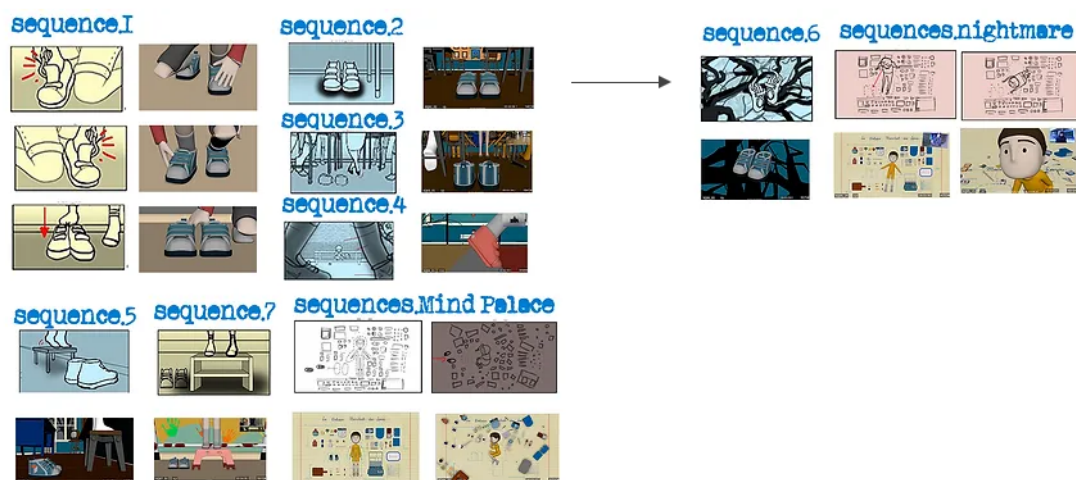
STORYBOARD GRAMMAR IN FILM

To convey a story within five minutes is definitely a challenging task, **given that Louis is such a structural and self aware narrator of the story.** We have to set up a few visual rules of the story, so every scene is composited solely to serve the theme of the story.

1. Every sequence opens with his shoes

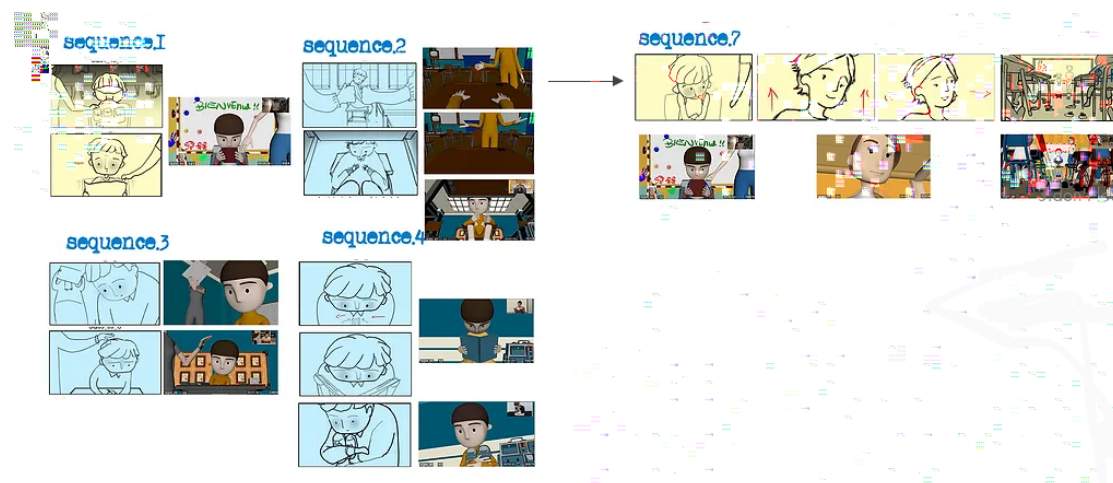
TERMINOLOGY: A **sequence** is a scene or usually a series of scenes in a film or television work that introduce a thematic unit * A sequence is the corresponding "chapter" of a literary work, where the action "closes" and at the same time develops or remains stagnant to proceed to the next ones sequences or scenes

He shoes is the bearing for Louis to navigate his life, every sequence open with his shoes



2. Louis never looks at people's eyes .

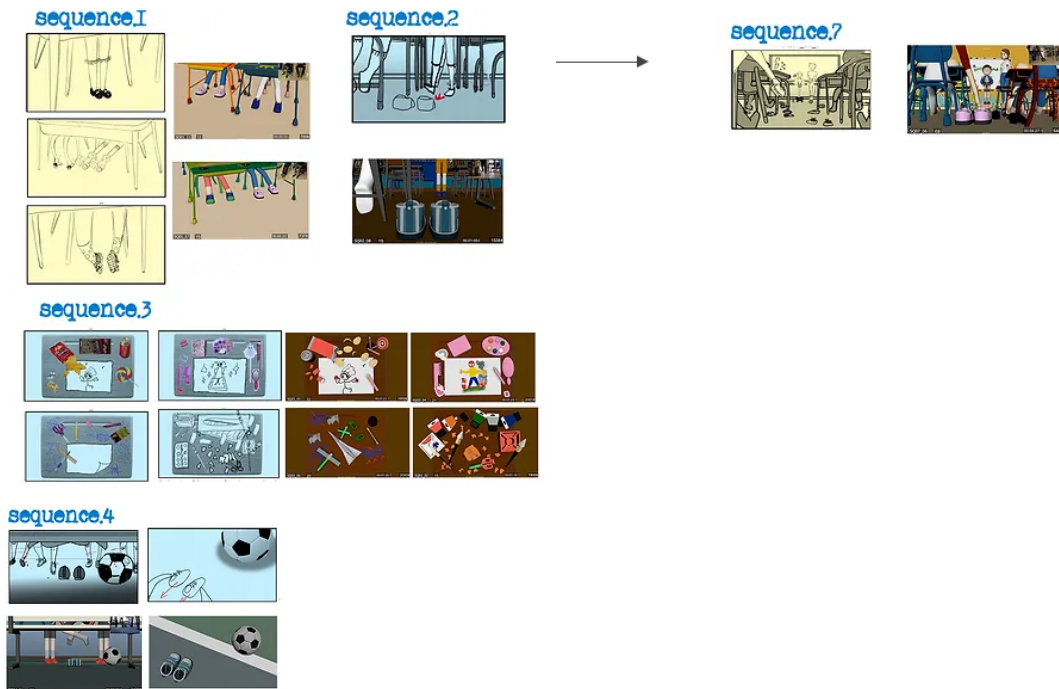
Since the story is told from Louis' perspective, directors included this character trait directly on the screen. It also constructs an odd surreal composition to look at these daily moments, **which is also Louis' angle.**



3. Louis is not a kid who looks, but observes

But how can we show his surroundings and other classmates personalities?

Just like a lot of us, **we observe the belongings and gestures** of the others to construct our ideas of those people.

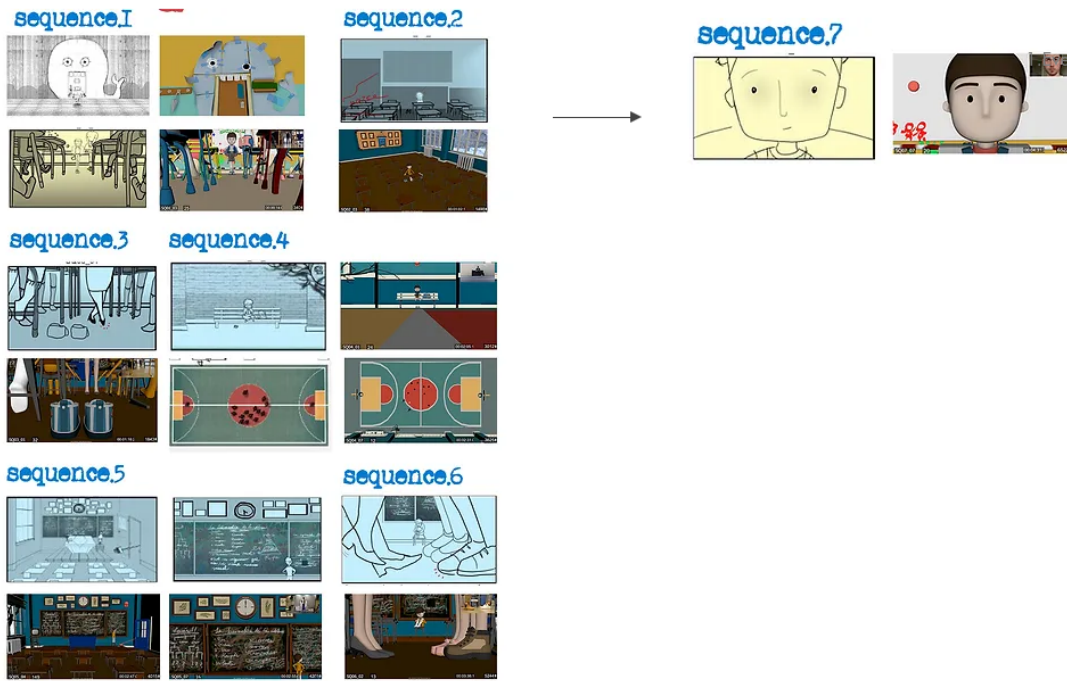


4. Environment VS the characters

Environment is oddly and unproportionally immersive to the characters, sometimes they are even like tiny chess pieces. In our story, there are some mischievous kids, or bureaucracy, but there are **no villains**.

Since our story is about social code, no matter children or adults, they are only living under the social structures, as we all are, in a way helpless under the circumstances. The directors want to present the world to allow audience observe this social theater under a microscope.

... which is the most important aspect of our story.



SOURCES – FURTHER READING:

- (1) Interview Josef Schovanec https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP3yNXKZjFE&ab_channel=AutismePyr%C3%A9n%C3%A9es
- (2) UNIFRANCE - all the accents of creativity <https://www.unifrance.org/film/51790/les-chaussures-de-louis>
- (3) Official page of the film <https://chaussures-de-louis.wixsite.com/louis-shoes/inspiration-to-screenplay>
- (4) [Short of the Week](#)
- (5) Autism <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>
- (6) Voice- Over <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voice-over>
- (7) storyboard <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storyboard>
- (8) <https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%BA%CE%AC%CE%BD%CF%82>
- (9) Free Online Creator Storyboard <https://www.canva.com/create/storyboards/>
- (10) [Handicap.fr](#)
- (11) [lextracourt.com](#)
- (12) Louis' Shoes Making of <https://vimeo.com/user127272356>
- (13) Les Chaussures de Louis - New school Breakdown <https://vimeo.com/556838865>
- (14) Les Chaussures de Louis - Constellation Breakdown <https://vimeo.com/user127272356>

Recognition

The film was screened at several festivals such as the Clermont-Ferrand Festival, DOK Leipzig and won awards in 2021 at the Stuttgart International Trickfilm Festival Student Academy Awards (Oscars) and a Gold Medal in the Best Animation International category.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

INITIAL ACTIVITY

WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE

1. Appreciating others

Ask the class for a quick list of things they appreciate in other people.

You could include:

- their hobbies
- talents or skills
- their personality traits (humor, honesty)
- positive interactions with others.

2. We celebrate what makes us unique

You will need : Find the blank balloon template activity sheet on page 19

This is your opportunity to reflect and recognize individuals for the positive contributions they make to your classroom.

- Have students tape the balloon to their back or you can tape it to their desk if the class is socially distanced
- Guide students to move around the class by writing on others' models positive and unique things they admire about others. You can refer back to your previous list to help generate ideas if necessary. If you wish, you can set specific criteria, such as personality traits or skills.

3. What do others admire about you?

Was there anything that surprised you?

What similarities do you share with your classmates?

What characteristics do you have that make you different?

4. "Meet Luis" Questions

What kinds of things does Luis do?

How does he behave? What is his own perception of the world: testimonies and their daily experiences "in real life". Think of a time when you met a new friend. How did you feel?

5. Knowing Luis inside and out

Apart from the outward appearance of Luis' figure - write what people who may not know Luis might say and think.

ACTIVITY II

THE HISTORY

Learning purpose: In this activity students will explore the theme of the film and learn to critically analyze the film's narrative.

Discussion map

• *Listen to others and wait until they finish their thought.* • *Wait until you are given the opportunity to speak.* • *Never mock and respect others' words: there are no right or wrong answers.* • *Think about what you want to say before asking to speak.* • *We have the right to disagree but express it calmly.* • *Feel free to ask questions if you don't understand something*

Films are a valuable vehicle for literacy development for use in the classroom, in a school film club etc. Every element of an audiovisual text can be meaningful and films can be 'read' like any traditional text. **Understanding autism from a child's perspective is the challenge brilliantly and sensitively realized by the short film 'Louis' Shoes'.** Therefore, the screening of "Louis's shoes" can be **an opportunity to organize a discussion about the acceptance of diversity.**

"Being different from others is no more strange than fitting into a mould" explains Luis and furthermore "molds are good but only for waffles".

Through his childish words and his (already) great maturity, Luis brings his students and more broadly the viewer into his universe - through his unique perception of the world.

We will then allow a discussion to emerge as **free, spontaneous and unprejudiced as possible.**

We discuss:

- How did the filmmaker grab your attention in the first place and if so how?
- What happens at the beginning, middle, and end of the story?
- Was the ending of the film expected or a surprise?
- How did you feel about the ending of the movie?
- What kind of story is it? (action? comedy? social? science fiction etc)
- How long does the story take in "real" time?
- What do you think happened before the story started?
- What can happen next after the story ends?
- Does this story remind you of other stories?
- Is there a scene you remember vividly?
- Is there a main character? Is the story really about this character or someone else? How does the main character speak and act?
- Why is the story set in a certain place? Does the space affect the character and the way he behaves?

ACTIVITY III

THE POSTER

Learning purpose: The development of critical thinking through the analysis of the poster. In this activity students will learn how posters are designed to convey messages.

Ask students to observe the poster. They should be able to identify the following: the title of the film, the names of the directors, the producers. We discuss:

- > What visual elements stand out in the poster?
- > What is the choice of color palette? Why was it used?
- > Why was this shot chosen for the poster?

Purpose: To work on written expression and artistic visual expression.

We divide the students into groups. **We prepare a list of important words of the movie.** We adapt the terminology based on the interests of the students in relation to “Louis Shoes” the environment where the school is located, the current social situation, the level of the students, unique events of the school year, annual events related to the film .

We give different sub-lists (with some words starting with the same letter) to each group.

Ask each group to create a poster from the words.

Students choose images, create drawings, make collages. Each poster should be inspired by the words used by the students and describe the message they want to convey. The message will not be visible on the poster.

The teacher collects all the posters and distributes them to the class.

Students alone or together describe in a sentence the message or messages they think is hidden in each poster not designed by them. The class discusses and analyzes the posters and messages.

ACTIVITY IV

THE GRAMMAR OF THE STORYBOARD

IN THE MOVIE

Learning purpose: Students will understand how different elements complement each other in the telling of a story.

TERMINOLOGY: A storyboard is a graphic organizer consisting of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a film, animation, motion picture, or interactive media.

Conveying a story in a few minutes is definitely a challenge. **Since Luis is such a structured and self-aware narrator of the story some visual rules need to be set in the story.** Thus each scene is designed exclusively to serve the theme of the story.

Watch the film again and identify the sequences as defined by the creators to structure their story and character.

- 1. Each sequence opens with his shoes.**
- 2. Luis never looks people in the eye.**
- 3. Luis is not a looking child but an observing child.**
- 4. Environment VS the character**

In the film, the immersion in the protagonist surprises you and takes you on a journey. Success lies in presenting images and sounds of the child's so-called "mental palace" universe while still being very entertaining. Humor and emotion are mixed to highlight Luis's uniqueness and strength. **Colors keep stress at bay** - even when the threat of the unexpected looms.

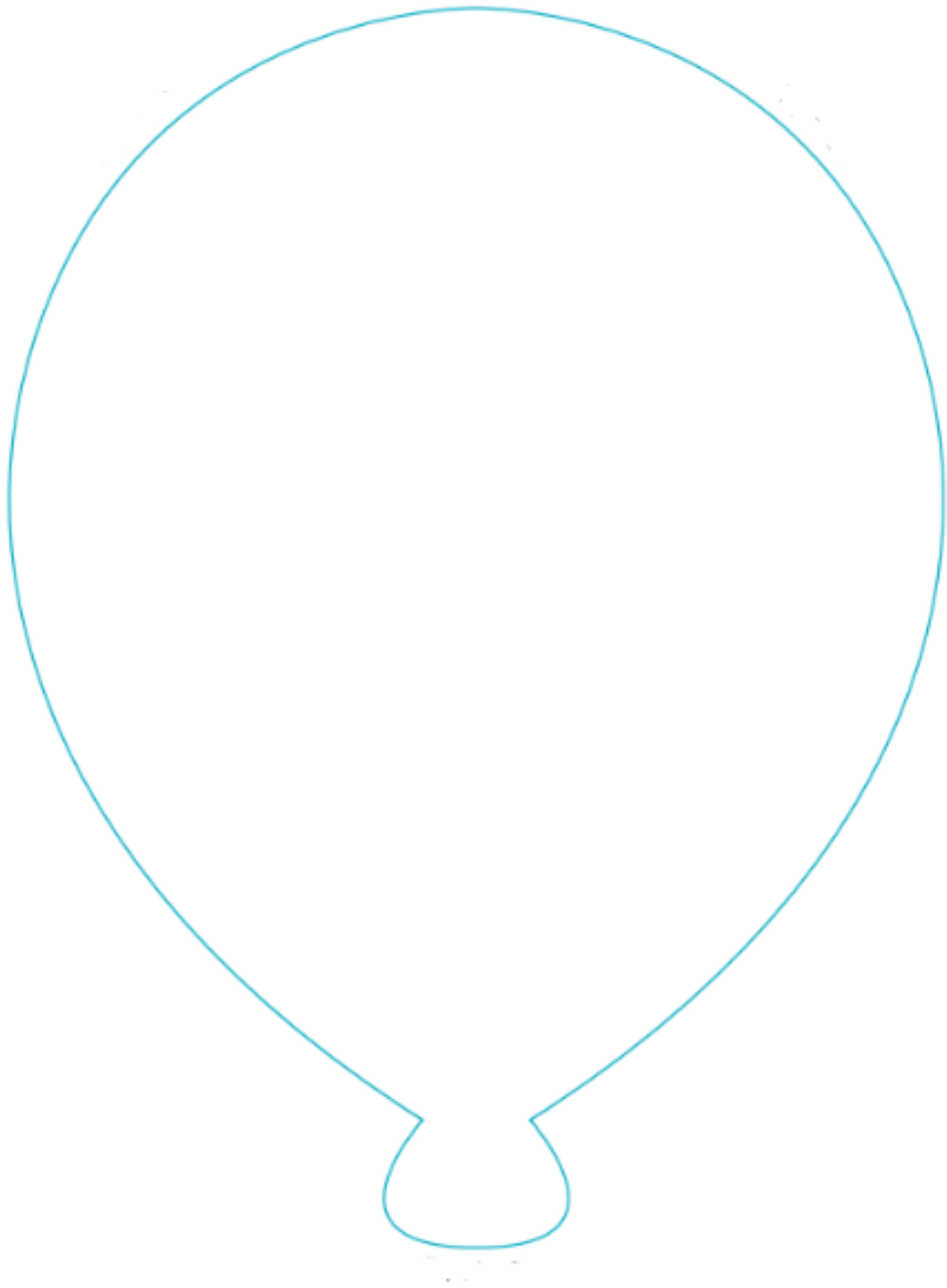
Create your own STORYBOARD of your most popular poster.

You can find the **guidelines and materials** in the psaroloco training kit
" ANIMATION IN TEACHING " Lesson Plan: <https://www.psaroloco.org/animation>

For younger children:

Identify the NARRATIVE STRUCTURE of the movie Luis's Shoes.

Lesson Plan: <https://el.psaroloco.org/structure-narrative>



This training kit is published as part of the Psaroloco Media Literacy Project's free educational resources.

The recommended age group is 8+. You should watch the movie and related clips before delivering activities to the classroom to make sure the content is suitable for your students.

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TRANSLATION EDITING : Katerina Fahouri

PUBLIC: October 2023

GOT SOME FEEDBACK

We like to hear how teachers have used our resources.

Contact us at psaroloco.project@gmail.com

Find more lesson plans at

[www. psaroloco.org](http://www.psaroloco.org)



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