

THE WORLD'S FASTEST *Indian*



New Zealand Film Study Guide

The following activities are based on the achievement objectives in the New Zealand English curriculum. They may provide a starting point for teachers wishing to design a unit based on the film.

OLCRIGHTS ENTERTAINMENT TANLAY AG THE NEW ZEALAND FILM PRODUCTION FUND
AND THE NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION IN ASSOCIATION WITH 3 DOGS & A PONY PRESENT
A ROGER DONALDSON/GARY HANNAM PRODUCTION OF A ROGER DONALDSON FILM
ANTHONY HOPKINS "THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN" DAVID LADD PAUL RODRIGUEZ AARON MURPHY
CASTING BY DIANNE CRITTENDEN DIANA ROWAN PRODUCTION DESIGNER JENNIS WASHINGTON ROB GILLIES EDITED BY JOHN GILBERT
MUSIC BY J PETER ROBINSON DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID GIBBLE LINE PRODUCERS DONALD SHAIN MURRAY FRANCES CO-PRODUCED BY JOHN J KENLY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MASAHARU INABA CHARLES HANNAH MEGUMI FUKASAWA SATORU IKENI BARRIE MOSBORNE
PRODUCERS ROGER DONALDSON GARY HANNAM WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ROGER DONALDSON

TANLAY AG

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CORPORATION

dog
pony

NEW ZEALAND FILM
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film fund

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www.worldsfastestindian.com

Poetic Writing

- 1 Write what you think might have been in Burt Munro's final school report, showing aspects of his personality.
- 2 Write a series of diary entries as one of the characters in the film.
- 3 Write a diary entry as Tom, 10 years on.
- 4 Brainstorm words associated with the film, then write a poem using them.
- 5 Translate Burt's "journey" into a flow diagram. Translate those events to write a children's story.
- 6 Write a letter from Burt in Utah to Fran, after he has broken the record.
- 7 Write the conversation Burt and Tom might have had about his adventures, after Burt's return from Utah.
- 8 Interior monologue – after choosing a scene from the film, write an interior monologue showing what a character might have been thinking at that time.
- 9 Rewrite your favourite scene as a piece of prose from an imaginary novel.
- 10 Imagine that this film was a book. Write the blurb for it.
- 11 Allocate students roles as minor characters. Have students write a paragraph about how they met Burt, and their view of him, then have students read out their work so that others can identify their character. Design a character web wall display using this work.
- 12 Write an alternative ending to the film.



Anthony Hopkins and Kate Sullivan



"Offerings to the God of speed"

Expressive Writing

- 1 Have students keep a journal recording their personal response to the film at various points in its progression.
- 2 Have students write responses to statements/questions starters.

Sample statements/questions starters

- I learned something from watching this film.
- I was amazed when/that ...
- Do you think that this film would make a good documentary? Why/why not?
- Is there one pivotal scene in this film? Explain.
- 'He has taken the life force of Burt and put it up on the screen' (Roger Donaldson on Anthony Hopkins). Discuss.
- 'It's a fine script that he wrote' (Anthony Hopkins on Roger Donaldson). Discuss.
- How is "The World's Fastest Indian" like other films such as "Rocky", "Billy Elliot" and "Chariots of Fire"?
- Explain this film's censor's rating.
- If the bike could talk, what would it say? Whose voice would you use to say it?
- This film is visually impressive. Discuss.
- Choose one word you think describes this film (eg charming, electrifying, nostalgic, satisfying, thought-provoking) and explain why you have chosen this word.
- The ending of this film is satisfying. Discuss.
- What do you think music adds to this film?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future?
- Are Roger Donaldson and Burt Munro alike?

Transactional Writing

1 **Precis/Paraphrase/Summarise**

Write a 1 minute plot summary to be read aloud at a school assembly to promote the lunchtime showing of this film. Try reducing your plot summary to 30 seconds, then 20, then 10.

- 2 After studying the language of reviews, write a review of this film for a teenage magazine.
- 3 After studying the language of newspaper writing, write two newspaper articles, one that might have appeared in an Invercargill paper and one that might have appeared in a Utah newspaper after Burt Munro broke the 1967 speed record.
- 4 Write down between 5 and 10 quotes from the film. Explain how your chosen quotes help your understanding of a character or theme or situation.
- 5 Write a series of character cards describing aspects of a character's personality. Swap them with someone else and practise identifying the character based on the description.
- 6 Individually or in pairs or groups, write (or design a diagram) a character study of a main character. Start by brainstorming a list of words to describe the character. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to improve your list. Choose what you see as the best words. Find examples from the film to back up your choices.

- 7 Design and write a booklet (including bullet pointed quotes) entitled "My Philosophy on Life" by Burt Munro.
- 8 Write down some important questions that you would like to ask the director of this film. Explain why each of your questions is important.
- 9 Write a treatment for a documentary on the subject of this film. If possible, watch Roger Donaldson's 1972 documentary "Offerings to the God of Speed". Comment on the differences.
- 10 Decide on a certain number of important plot points then write them in a flow diagram. Change one major event in the diagram, then rewrite it after that point.
- 11 Use a Vocabulary Chart as a pre or post-test, or as a vocabulary exercise. Students fill in their own definitions, then revise it after appropriate study.

Example:

Word	My First Definition	My Final Definition
Director		
Producer		
Cinematographer		



Speed racers on the Bonneville Salt flats, Utah, USA



12 Dot-Jot Note-making

Teacher reads aloud about one aspect of the film. Students bullet point and jot single lines as material is read, then combine jots to make a paragraph summary.

13 Clines

Give students 2 “extreme” words related to the film. Students then (possibly with the help of each other, a dictionary or a thesaurus) fill in the middle with words that fit on a continuum between these poles, being prepared to justify their choices.

Sample Words:

eccentric *normal*
passionate *passionless*
hopeful *hopeless*

14 Cloze Exercises

Use cloze exercises to check knowledge and language. Provide a word list for less able students. Example (text from promotional material).

In the film, “The World’s Fastest Indian”, Anthony Hopkins _____ as Burt Munro, _____ man who _____ let the dreams of youth _____. _____ a _____ of perfecting his classic Indian _____, Burt set _____ from the _____ of the _____ to _____ his bike at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah. _____ the odds against him, he set a new _____ record and _____ the spirit of his times. Burt Munro’s 1967 world record remains _____ and his legend lives on today.

Word List

unbroken, captured, stars, after, never, motorcycle, test, world off, lifetime, with, fade, a, bottom, speed

15 Genre Change

To focus on comprehension, have students translate transactional writing about an aspect of the film into a different genre eg an advertising poster, a leaflet for distribution at a cinema, a children’s book, an encyclopaedia entry.

16 Use the KWL format to quickly research a topic related to the film.

Example: KWL Research format

What I Know	What I Want To Know	What I Learned

Possible Topics Roger Donaldson, Anthony Hopkins, Utah, Indian, Burt Munro, salt, Roger Donaldson films, Anthony Hopkins films, Donald Campbell, New Zealand film.

Personal Reading

Read/review other stories/films about people who have pursued their dreams.

Speaking and Listening (Interpersonal and Using Text)

- 1 Give the short speech you think Burt Munro might have given a school assembly at his old school, or a speech Tom might have given at school about Burt, or a speech about pursuing your dreams.
- 2 In pairs or groups, script and present an interview with a character, exploring their motivation.
- 3 Write down quotes on separate cards. Swap them with someone else and practise identifying the character who said it, what was happening at the time, what happened before and after the words were uttered.
- 4 Before watching the film listen as your teacher plays you part of the soundtrack. Write a piece based on the feelings you get from the music.
- 5 As one of the film's characters, write and present a monologue in which you give your views on life, your views/emotions about things that happened to you and the people in your life, how you changed / did not change over the course of the film.



Anthony Hopkins as Burt Munro



Director: Roger Donaldson

- 6 Have each student write down five questions for main characters, allocate roles then hold a press conference.
- 7 **Narrative Structure**
As a class, write down between 5 and 10 main events that seem to lead to the end of the story. Change or delete one event. Discuss how the story might change as a result.
- 8 Script and present a talk show episode with characters from the film as guests.
- 9 **Character**
In groups, on a large sheet of paper draw around a group member to create an outline of a major character. Brainstorm and write down inside the body all the words you can think of to describe that character's personality. Brainstorm and write down inside and around the head area all the words you can think of to describe that character's feelings. Brainstorm and write down outside the body all the external influences on that character. Pin your sheet to the wall for others to read and comment on.
- 10 **Continuum**
Teacher reads out a series of statements one by one. Students physically place themselves on a continuum from strongly agree through neutral to strongly disagree, then discuss viewpoints.

Sample Statements
 - People shouldn't do dangerous things because they could be hurt.
 - I felt emotional at times during this film.
 - Anthony Hopkins is a great actor.
 - The scene when ... was the best part of this film.
 - This appeal of this film is universal.
 - I would strongly recommend this film.



Anthony Hopkins

11 Panel

Have students write “viewer” questions for major characters or someone involved in making the film. Decide on a show host and a panel. Hold a panel discussion based on the questions.

12 Read or act your alternative ending to the film.

13 Just A Minute

After studying the film, have students attempt to speak impromptu for 1 minute without irrelevancies or repetition on a subject related to the film. Example. Topics – Burt Munro, Roger Donaldson, Anthony Hopkins, setting, theme, film techniques, beginning, ending, climax, plot, courage, determination, hope.

14 Play It Forward

One student makes a statement about some aspect (determined by the teacher) of the film eg plot, theme. Next student repeats that statement, then adds on their own. Process continues for as long as possible.

15 Inside – Outside Circles

Students stand in two circles facing each other. Teacher poses a question or makes a statement. Students discuss with their partner for a set time (eg 1 minute), then rotate to a new partner for the next question.

Sample Questions:

- What was your favourite part of the film?
- How did the film start and what did you think of the start of the film?
- How did the film end and what did you think of the end of the film?

- Who was your favourite character? Why?
- What did you think were the most exciting parts of the film?
- What did you think were the most moving parts of the film?
- What were you feeling when the film ended?
- What sort of man was Burt Munro?

16 Jeopardy Teacher gives an answer, then students (individually or in pairs or groups) write the question.

Sample Answers

Utah, Invercargill, Anthony Hopkins, Roger Donaldson, passion, determination, 1967, Indian, number eight wire mentality, you’re a long time dead.

17 Picture Dictation – Have students draw a series of frames as the teacher reads about some aspect of the film, for example, a plot summary. Students then attempt to “read” their picture summary to a partner.

18 Collocation Exercise – Have students group words (each written on a slip of paper), then justify their groupings.

Sample Words:

director, producer, cinematographer, writer, hope, spirit, dream, passion, Utah, USA, Invercargill, New Zealand, eccentric, loveable, determined, charming



Director Roger Donaldson on set in Invercargill, NZ, 2005

19 Consensus

Give a list of statements, then have individual students arrange them in order of importance. Students form groups and try to come to a consensus. Class tries to come to a consensus.

Sample Statements:

- The most important thing in a good film is the script.
- The most important thing in a good film is the director.
- The most important thing in a good film is the acting.
- The most important thing in a good film is the cinematographer.
- The most important things in a good film are the special effects.

20 Response Grid

Group students. Give each group member a colour. Calls out a grid reference and a colour, eg "blue B2". Student responds to their group according to the grid.

Example:

A	B
Sound effect, why were you used?	Film shot, why you were used?
Anthony Hopkins, why did you accept this role?	Roger Donaldson, why did you make this film?
Exciting scene, what are you about?	Opening, what do you teach the viewer?
Word exciting, are you relevant?	Word moving, are you relevant?
C	D
Theme, explain yourself.	Setting, explain your relevance.
Minor character, why are you relevant?	Indian motorcycle, why are you in the title?
Closing scene, why are you effective?	Why are you a scene that could have been left out?
Word courageous, are you relevant?	Word uplifting, are you relevant?

21 Anonymous Letterbox

What ideas did this film highlight for you? Students scribble answers to a question such as this on slips of paper which are boxed and pulled out to be discussed (in pairs, groups or as a class).

22 Three Level Guide

Use three level guides to promote discussion and comprehension. In groups, students tick statements they believe to be true, discussing to prepare a justification for their choices. Example.



Burt Munro's 1920's indian

Reading On The Lines

Tick the statements which show what the film maker shows in this film. Be ready to give your reasons.

- 1 Burt Munro was an American living in New Zealand.
- 2 Fran loved Burt.
- 3 Tom learned a good deal from Burt.
- 4 Burt was a proud New Zealander.
- 5 Invercargill people didn't like Burt because he was different.

Reading Between the Lines

Tick statements which you think mean what the film maker meant in this film. Be ready to give your reasons.

- 1 Invercargill is an odd place to find a character like Burt Munro.
- 2 The Utah Salt Flats were an ideal place to race.
- 3 Burt Munro couldn't have achieved what he did on his own.
- 4 It is important to follow your dreams.
- 5 Eccentric people can cause trouble in a community.

Reading Beyond The Lines

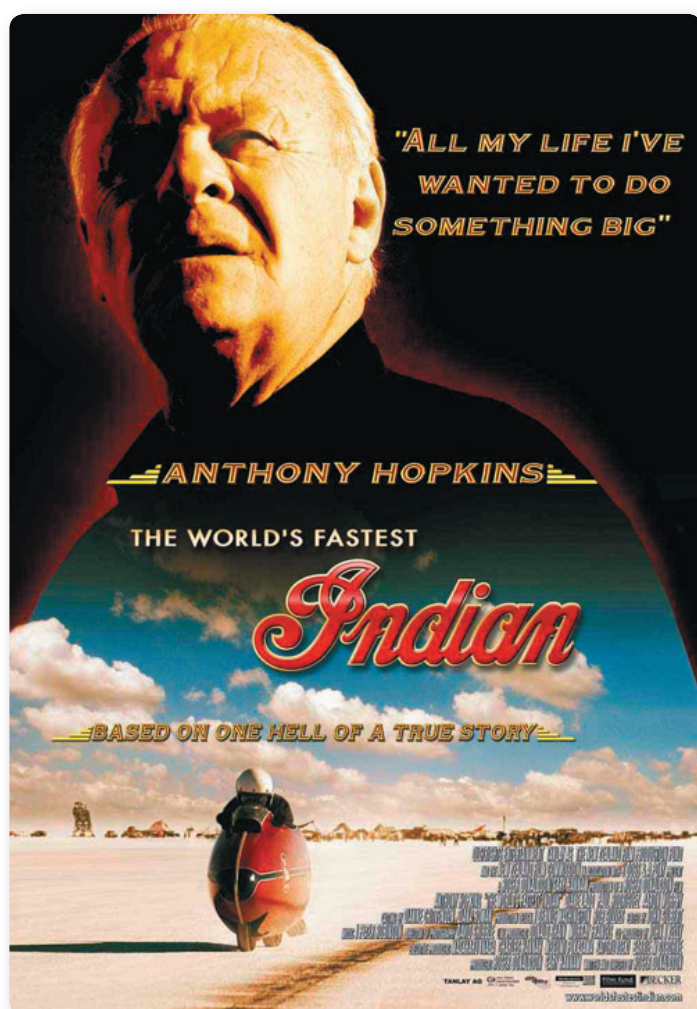
Tick the statements which you think the film maker would support. Be ready to give your reasons.

- 1 Courageous people are to be admired.
- 2 Courageous people are foolhardy.
- 3 There are some stories that just have to be told.
- 4 In some ways Burt Munro was a typical New Zealander.
- 5 They don't make them like Burt anymore.

Presenting

1 After studying static images:

- design a poster advertising the film.
- design a collage based on an important idea in the film.
- design a poster symbolising Burt's "journey".
- design a tourist brochure for one of the areas in which this film is set.
- design a symbol for one of the main characters. Be prepared to explain it.
- design two different "doodles" as two different characters, then see if others can identify which characters drew them.
- design a card / board game based on the film.
- design a static image using only two colours, any number of shapes or symbols, and one of the following quotes to highlight an important idea in the film. On the back, write why you have chosen the quote, colours and shapes that you have, and explain what and why you would have included in your image had you been given greater choice.



New Zealand "campaign" poster

Quotes:

- 'All my life I've wanted to do something big ... something bigger and better than all the other jokers' (Burt Munro).
 - 'I think this is what the spirit of this film is about - the great passion of life that some people have' (Anthony Hopkins).
 - 'I wanted to make an entertaining film without any compromises - an uplifting and inspirational story in the spirit of such films as Rocky, Billy Elliot and Chariots of Fire' (Roger Donaldson).
 - 'a man who never let the dreams of youth fade' (promotional material on Burt Munro).
 - 'Burt Munro's 1967 world record remains unbroken and his legend lives on today' (promotional material).
 - 'If it's hard, work harder; if it's impossible, work harder still. Give it whatever it takes, but do it' (Burt Munro).
 - 'he said that you can live more in 5 minutes on a motorbike going high speed than you can in your whole lifetime' (Anthony Hopkins on Burt Munro).
 - 'there are obviously people who flirt with mortality ... you're taking a huge challenge, a courageous challenge to risk your life' (Anthony Hopkins).
 - 'When you're dead you're a long time dead' (Burt Munro).
 - 'to overcome fear is the greatest virtuous challenge' (Anthony Hopkins).
- 2 Storyboard a promotional preview for "The World's Fastest Indian".
 - 3 Draw and label a plot graph which shows important events and climaxes in the film.

Viewing

- 1 Following teacher instructions, re-view and storyboard an important scene.
- 2 Before viewing the film, watch the opening sequence without the sound. Discuss what is happening and what would be appropriate sound. Watch the sequence with sound. Discuss what sound adds to the film.
- 3 View a sequence then discuss the design and its importance to your understanding of the film.
- 4 Choose a shot and freeze it. Explain what and how information is conveyed.
- 5 View a scene from the film. View it again with the sound off. Write alternative dialogue (which you think will change the way people interpret it) for the scene.
- 6 **Sequencing**
in groups, write a series of important plot incidents on cards. Practise putting them in order. Practise putting the cards of other groups in order. Decide on, and justify your choice of, the five most important points.
- 7 **Opening sequence**
Brainstorm a list of all the things you learn from the opening sequence.
- 8 **Prediction**
Stop the film at pre-chosen points. Predict what you think will happen next. Justify.

9 Closing sequence

Re-watch the end of the film. Discuss what makes the ending satisfying.

- 10 Watch other inspirational films such as “Rocky”, “Billy Elliot” and “Chariots of Fire”, then discuss and compare.

11 Jigsaw Film Reading

Divide students into “expert” groups. All students record information relevant to their topic as they watch a scene of the film then discuss it as a group. Groups re-form with the news groups including a member of each of the original groups. Experts “teach” their group about their topic.

Example:

View the sequence when Burt races the bikers on the beach, or the sequence when Burt breaks the world record, or the sequence when Burt drives on American roads for the first time.

- What does sound contribute to this sequence?
- What is the effect of the use of certain shots in this sequence?
- What is the tone/atmosphere of this sequence? How is it created?
- Describe the setting.
- How does this sequence contribute to character development?
- What important ideas are highlighted in this sequence?

Further information

For press kits, trailer and further information on the film visit our website: www.worldsfastestindian.com

The World’s Fastest Indian is released in cinemas around New Zealand from Oct 13, 2006 and Australia from April, 2006.

The World’s Fastest Indian is distributed by Becker Entertainment – for further details of the cinema release, school group bookings and dvd release details contact Becker Entertainment at www.beckerentertainment.com.au

This guide was written for New Zealand Film by Cynthia Thomas, who has 23 years teaching experience.

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NEW ZEALAND FILM

TE TUMU WHAKAATA TAONGA