

The Legend of BURNOUT BARRY



TEACHING TOOLKIT

ABOUT THE FILM

Josh 'Wheely' Wilson and his best mates, siblings Shay & Brent, are an unlikely combination. Yet the three make for an inseparable trio of teenagers, all hell bent on having a good time and pushing the limits of what's possible.

So, when speed demon and proud record holder Wheely learns that there's someone in town faster than him, he immediately sets about finding the elusive and legendary speedster called Burnout Barry to challenge him to a race.

But when Shay and Brent refuse to be part of his latest record attempt, feeling undervalued, Wheely must face his nemesis alone. What he soon discovers, is that friendship and teamwork are far more important than any shiny new record...and that a scary old recluse is maybe not so scary after all.



USING THIS RESOURCE

In *The Legend of Burnout Barry*, teenage friends Wheely, Brent and Shay are tightly bound by their shared and insatiable appetite for adventure. But when Wheely's obsession with being the town record holder becomes more important than his friends, he risks losing more than just the title.

The discussion starters and learning tasks outlined in *The Legend of Burnout Barry Teaching Toolkit* provide ideas for Years 5 – 8 students to engage with this entertaining short film. Tasks will develop students' storytelling understandings and skills, with relevant Australian Curriculum links noted for English.

While not the focus of this resource, teachers could also link the film's themes of friendship and teamwork to Health and Physical Education and Personal and Social Capability curriculum content.





LEARNING TASKS

TASK 1

Before viewing, ask the class to consider and discuss the film's title: *The Legend of Burnout Barry*. Which legends have students heard, read or viewed before? What do these narratives have in common? For example, legends usually tell the historical story of a main character's impressive journey or accomplishments.

Ask students to make predictions about the film's characters and plot based on its title. The class could revisit these predictions after viewing and discuss. Which aspects of the story were consistent or inconsistent with the legend text type?

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELA1504: Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality
Year 6	ACELA1518: Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effect
Year 7	ACELT1620: Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view
Year 8	ACELT1627: Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts



TASK 2

Clip: 02:11 – 04:06

The 'Quarry Hill Dash' is memorialised in a prominent painting at the Lims' fish and chip shop. Wheely, Shay and Brent gain different perspectives on this historical community event by speaking with both Henry and Burnout Barry.

Working in pairs, have students reflect on any famous (or infamous) stories they know from their own local community or school. What makes these stories memorable? How are the stories shared within the community?

Ask students to jot down the key characters, settings and events from one local story, then have pairs share their work with the class. In subsequent lessons, students could research the details of these local stories and/or collaboratively write narratives based on their events.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1612: Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced
Year 6	ACELT1618: Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways
Year 7	ACELT1625: Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts, for example, narrative viewpoint, structure of stanzas, contrast and juxtaposition
Year 8	ACELT1632: Create literary texts that draw upon text structures and language features of other texts for particular purposes and effects



TASK 3

Clip: 09:40 – 10:52

Wheely and Brent arrive at Burnout Barry's rundown house to challenge him to a race. As ominous music plays, Brent warns Wheely: 'This is Old Man McWimple's house. They say he never leaves his shack. They say he eats seagulls...and kids. My cousin tells me he's tiny, but his arms are so long that they hit the floor – perfect for scooping up his 'meals'.'

In a class discussion, ask students to identify and examine the techniques that filmmakers used to develop Barry's mysterious character in this scene. This could include Brent's description, Barry's appearance and gestures, the way that other characters relate to him, and other visual, audio and symbolic elements. How does Barry compare to mysterious or reclusive characters in other texts? How does the setting – Barry's 'shack' – help to develop his character?

If time permits or in a subsequent class, students could draw on these understandings to creatively write their own mysterious character for film or television.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1608: Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts
Year 6	ACELT1614: Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots
Year 7	ACELT1619: Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts
Year 8	ACELY1735: Explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts, and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener





TASK 4

Clip: 11:50 – 16:59

Seeing an old photo of himself and Henry prompts Barry to retell the story of the Quarry Hill Dash. Reflecting on the race, he tells Wheely that his narrowmindedness almost cost him his best friend. Wheely’s mum shares a similar sentiment when she emphasises the importance of reciprocity: she tells Wheely that he has to be a good friend in return if he wants people to stick around.

Divide the class into small groups and have students brainstorm practical ways to be a good friend. This might include behaviours, gestures, words or shared activities. Have groups share their list with the wider class. Did everyone make similar suggestions? If not, what could explain this?

As a follow up activity, invite students to bring a meaningful photo of themselves with a friend to class. Students could briefly write the story behind their images then display the photos and accompanying stories in a classroom ‘gallery walk’. Ask students to consider the similarities and differences in the shared stories, then respectfully discuss what the display communicates about friendship.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELY1699: Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students’ own experiences and present and justify a point of view
Year 6	ACELY1709: Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions
Year 7	ACELY1804: Use interaction skills when discussing and presenting ideas and information, selecting body language, voice qualities and other elements, (for example music and sound) to add interest and meaning
Year 8	ACELY1808: Use interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, selecting vocabulary, modulating voice and using elements such as music, images and sound for specific effects





TASK 5

Clip: 19:08 – 22:50

Barry agrees to race Wheely after he is invited to ‘rewrite history’: ‘One race, two contestants, to see who’s the fastest kid in town’. Burnout Barry is later crowned the winner after Wheely deliberately slows down during the race.

Watch the above clip as a class, or the entire film if you have time. In an independent writing task, have students write a news report about the exciting final race from the perspective of a reporter on the scene. Before writing, explore the following questions as a class:

- How would a news report about the event differ from a narrative?
- Viewers have access to different information than a hypothetical reporter would: what should be included and what should be left out? (For example, a reporter may not realise that Wheely let Barry win the race, or his motivations for doing so.)

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1612: Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced
Year 6	ACELT1618: Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways
Year 7	ACELT1625: Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts, for example, narrative viewpoint, structure of stanzas, contrast and juxtaposition
Year 8	ACELY1736: Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate



TASK 6

Clip: 22:00 – 22:56

The film ends with a short siren burst, indicating that Wheely’s mum – a police officer in town – has learnt about the prohibited race. In a collaborative writing task, have pairs of students draw on their prior knowledge of the film’s characters, settings and events to collaboratively plan a short scene of dialogue to follow the above clip.

Have volunteers share their work in a class reflection and discuss the different ideas that were explored. Students could draft and publish their scripts in subsequent lessons if time permits.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELY1704: Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience
Year 6	ACELY1714: Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience
Year 7	ACELY1725: Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas
Year 8	ACELY1736: Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate





TASK 7

Wheely is the protagonist in *The Legend of Burnout Barry* – the central character who drives the plot, pursues the story’s main goal, and grows as a person throughout the film. In a class discussion, ask students to consider whether Wheely is also the hero in the story. What are the typical characteristics of a hero? Does Wheely (or another character) meet these criteria?

In an independent persuasive writing task, ask students to argue for or against Wheely being a hero in the film. Students should draw on examples from the film to justify their position.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1609: Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others
Year 6	ACELT1614: Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots
Year 7	ACELT1620: Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view
Year 8	ACELT1627: Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts





TASK 8

In his director's statement, Isaac Elliott explains that *Wheely* is held back by 'a selfish desire to be the best without thinking about how it affects others'. After viewing the film, have students discuss the following in small groups and later share their thinking with the class:

- How successful were the filmmakers in conveying *Wheely*'s single-minded determination?
- Identify and discuss examples that support this statement by the director.
- Does ambition always involve some degree of selfishness?



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1608: Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts
Year 6	ACELT1613: Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts
Year 7	ACELT1621: Compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts
Year 8	ACELT1627: Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts



TASK 9

The Legend of Burnout Barry was one of three short children's films commissioned to premiere in the DisRupted series on the 2019 International Day of People with Disability. The three films were led by emerging Australian creatives with disability, including *The Legend of Burnout Barry* director Isaac Elliott.

Reflecting on the project, Isaac said, 'Josh aka 'Wheely' is a disabled character, but like my own life, it's important that this is not his defining feature. Wheely looks at the world through the possibilities it holds and not what's there to hold him back. In *The Legend of Burnout Barry*, the wheelchair is a way to explore the world and not something that's holding him back.'

After viewing the film, have students consider and discuss the importance of accurate and balanced portrayals of disability in the media. How might media representations impact the way that people with disability feel and the way they are perceived in society? Did the filmmakers achieve their purpose? Did *The Legend of Burnout Barry* challenge any preconceptions you might have held about disability?

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1610: Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses
Year 6	ACELY1708: Compare texts including media texts that represent ideas and events in different ways, explaining the effects of the different approaches
Year 7	ACELT1622: Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches
Year 8	ACELT1626: Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups

TASK 10

One or more of the following statements about media representation could be explored in class discussions, a research project, or incorporated into a film review.

- Seeing relatable characters on screen is affirming and empowering for all people.
- Disability is under-represented on screen when compared to the Australian population.
- The media can influence personal attitudes, beliefs, decisions and behaviours.
- By representing disability as a part of everyday life, the media can play a role in dispelling negative stereotypes and misconceptions.
- Storytellers with disability bring unique and authentic perspectives to their work.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Year 5	ACELT1795: Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features on particular audiences
Year 6	ACELY1708: Compare texts including media texts that represent ideas and events in different ways, explaining the effects of the different approaches
Year 7	ACELT1803: Discuss aspects of texts, for example their aesthetic and social value, using relevant and appropriate metalanguage
Year 8	ACELT1628: Understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT BY ISAAC ELLIOTT

In *The Legend of Burnout Barry*, Josh and his two best friends, adopted siblings Shay and Brent, spend their holidays searching for adventure. Set in a small Australian country town, the film draws from my own personal experiences. I grew up in Alice Springs where my parents were the caretakers of the local motocross club. I spent my weekends building BMX jumps, creating water slides, and having the occasional car race in junkyard cars (I'm pretty sure it's still on YouTube). There's something magical about having the freedom to explore the world and test your limits.

In 2007, I was in a motorcycle accident which left me paralysed.

Much to my Mum's dismay, I was back on the same bike six months later. A wheelchair will stop you walking but it rarely stops that thirst for adventure and the thrill we get from pushing our limits. It was important to me to tell a story that embodies this experience.

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Often disabled stories fall into one of two types, either hero worship (for doing something an able-bodied person could easily do) or a pity party (where disability is the main source of emotional upheaval). That's not my experience. Obviously, there are hardships, but it doesn't define how I see the world.

Josh aka 'Wheely' is a disabled character, but like my own life,

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources and organisations can provide teachers with further relevant information.

International Day of People with a Disability:
www.idpwd.com.au

People with Disability Australia – Language Guide:
pwd.org.au/resources/disability-info/language-guide/

United Nations on Disability and the Media:
www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/resources/disability-and-the-media.html

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it's important that this is not his defining feature. Wheely looks at the world through the possibilities it holds and not what's there to hold him back. In *The Legend of Burnout Barry*, the wheelchair is a way to explore the world and not something that's holding him back.

What does hold Wheely back is a selfish desire to be the best without thinking about how it affects others, and the lesson learnt here is universal. Friendship, helping each other out and working together is important regardless of someone's ability. *The Legend of Burnout Barry* is as important as it is entertaining and opens up a world of possibility and adventure.

The Legend of Burnout Barry is the first of many small town tales these three kids will hopefully uncover.

