



A story-based approach to video

YU MING IS AINM DOM



About this activity

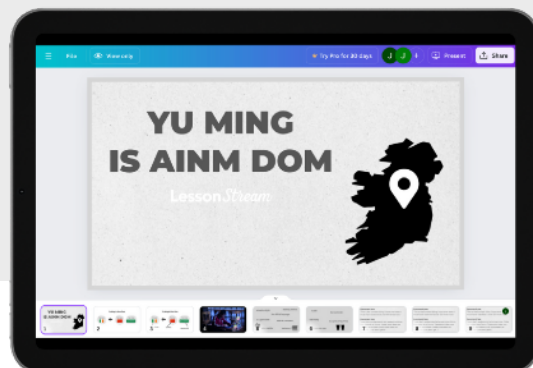
A short film about a young Chinese man who decides to go on a trip.

! WARNING: The short film in this activity contains scenes involving alcohol. This is a taboo subject in some cultures and might be a sensitive issue for some students. Consider discussing it beforehand.

- ▶ **Language level:** B1 upwards
- ▶ **Age of learner:** Secondary; adults
- ▶ **Duration of activity:** 60 minutes
- ▶ **Activities:** Telling a story from video
- ▶ **Topics:** Ireland; language; work; travel
- ▶ **Aims:** Language for conversational storytelling

For this activity, you will need the following:

- A short film (see below)
- A Canva slideshow



The short film

Yu Ming Is Ainm Dom is a 2003 Irish short film directed by Daniel O'Hara. It tells the story of a young Chinese man who decides to visit Ireland after studying Irish, only to find that the island is largely Anglophonic.

Back to the screen

For this activity, you are going to put students into AB pairs, where A students can see a screen and B students cannot. This creates an information gap, requiring A students to describe the video narrative to B students. Afterwards, roles are reversed.

Instead of using the entire 13-minute film, the activity focuses on just two short excerpts.

Excerpt one: the setup

Yu Ming's life in China and his decision to travel
00:17 to 02:57 (2 minutes, 40 seconds)

Excerpt two: the conflict

Yu Ming's arrival in Dublin and his realisation that very few people speak Irish
08:04 to 10:24 (2 minutes, 20 seconds)

Activity outline

1. On the board or screen, write the following:

Yu Ming is ainm dom

2. Ask students:

- Can identify the language?
- Any ideas what it means?

Tip: Unless anyone knows for sure that it means *My name is Yu Ming* in Irish, don't confirm at this stage.

3. Tell students that "Yu Ming is Ainm Dom" is the title of a short film and show the story structure slide which is included in the accompanying Canva slideshow. Find out if anyone has seen the film before and, if so, ask them to keep quiet for the moment. Ask students to guess what the story is about.



Tip: The three parts of the story represent the **setup**, **conflict** and **resolution**. You can mention this to your students but it isn't necessary.



4. Put students into pairs or “story partners”. Make sure they are sitting together. Tell students the following:

“ I am going to play two clips from the short film.
The first clip is from part one and the second clip is from part two.
In your pairs, one person will watch the first clip and then tell their partner that part of the story.
After that, you will swap roles and do the same for the second clip.
Any questions?

Now, decide who will be the part one storyteller and who will be the part two storyteller.
[Let students do this]
Put up your hand if you are a part one storyteller.
Put up your hand if you are a part two storyteller.
Part two storytellers: please turn around so that you can't see the screen.
Although you won't see the screen, you will hear the audio.
So listen carefully and try to imagine what is happening.
Part one storytellers – you can see screen and hear the audio.
Are you ready?

5. Play except one of the short film (00:17 to 02:57) and then display slide six of the Canva slideshow which includes some useful phrases for part one storytellers. Tell students:

“ Part two storytellers – you can turn around now.
Part one storytellers – in a moment, you will tell the story of what you saw.
I am going to give you two minutes to prepare.
Think carefully about how you are going to tell the story.
For example, what information is important and what is not?
Here are some words and phrases that might be useful. [Refer to slide six.]

Part two storytellers – you heard the video clip but you didn't see it.
So you will probably have some questions.
I want you to write three questions about the video clip.
For example, you could ask about where the story takes place, or who was talking at the beginning.
Any questions?

6. Once students have done this, continue as follows:

- “ *Part one storytellers – tell your partner the story about what you saw.
Part two storytellers – you are going listen carefully.
When your partner has finished speaking, look at the three questions that you wrote.
Find out if you got answers to all of them.
If not, ask your partner the remaining questions.*

7. Once students have done this, ask for two or three part one storytellers to volunteer to tell the story of what they saw. In each case, provide feedback as necessary.

Part one – sample script

The story is about a young Chinese man named Yu Ming.

He's feeling bored with his life.

He's stuck in a dead-end job at a supermarket where he's overworked and underpaid.

Every day, he stacks shelves, deals with difficult customers, and puts up with a boss who always gives him a hard time.

One day, Yu Ming decides that it's time for a change.

He wants to travel but isn't sure where to go.

So he decides to choose a country at random.

At the library, he spins a globe and stops it with his finger.

It lands on an island called Ireland.

He finds out about this mystery destination and learns that the official language is called Irish Gaelic.

He borrows some books and begins to learn this new language.

8. Play the first clip a second time – this time for everyone to see. Invite students to guess what happens next.

9. It's now time for students to reverse roles and repeat the process.

- “ *Part two storytellers – it's your turn to watch the second clip
Part one storytellers – it's your turn to turn around so you can't see the screen.*

10. Play part two of the video (08:04 to 10:24) and then repeat the process exactly as before. While part two storytellers prepare to tell the story, part one storytellers write down three questions. Before the storytelling, you can display slide eight which has some useful words and phrases.

Tip: The end of the second clip contains a great punchline. The confused bartender says to his colleague, “Here – did you know that Old Paddy could speak Chinese?” The first time you play this clip, you can choose to stop it just before this funny moment (at 10:15). This will give students a surprise when you play the clip a second time until the end (at 10:24).

11. Ask for two or three part two storytellers to volunteer to tell the story of what they saw. In each case, provide feedback as necessary.

Part two – sample script

So, Yu Ming walks into a pub.

It's daytime and it's quiet.

He walks up to the bar and, in his best Irish, tells the young bartender that he is looking for work.

The bartender stares at him blankly, not understanding a word.

Yu Ming repeats himself, but the bartender just looks more confused.

He assumes that Yu Ming is asking for a drink.

Yu Ming looks down, frustrated because he thinks his Irish isn't good enough.

At the end of the bar, there is an elderly man named Old Paddy.

Old Paddy speaks Irish and can't believe what he has seen and heard.

He invites Yu Ming over for a drink, and they start chatting in Irish.

Yu Ming tells Old Paddy that he is sad because no one seems to understand his Irish.

Old Paddy reassures Yu Ming that there is nothing wrong with his Irish – that he speaks it better Irish than most people in Ireland.

He explains that English is the dominant language in Ireland and that Irish is only spoken in a few areas.

The bartender is confused and says to a colleague, "Did you know that Old Paddy could speak Chinese?"

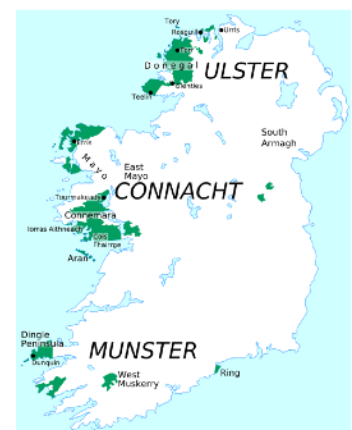
12. Play the second clip a second time – this time for everyone to see.

13. In their pairs, ask students to guess what happens next: how does the story end?

14. Listen to students' ideas and then direct them to the short film, which they can watch at home or in their own time.

Gaeltacht

At the end of the film, we see Yu Ming entering a Gaeltacht (An Gaeltacht in Irish). This is a region where Irish Gaelic is the predominant spoken language. These areas are officially recognized by the government and are known for their efforts to preserve and promote the Irish language and culture.



Follow up

Ask students to compile questions for an Ireland quiz which they can then do in teams.

Here are some possible questions that you can add:

- i. At the end of the film, Yu Ming enters a Gaeltacht. What is a Gaeltacht?
- ii. There are two official currencies on the island of Ireland. What are they and why are there two?
- iii. Name three cities in Ireland.
- iv. Ireland is the third largest island in Europe. Which island is the largest in Europe and which is the second largest?
- v. [After writing "Lough Neagh" on the board] This is the largest what in Ireland and how do you pronounce it?

Answers:

- i. See previous page
- ii. There are two currencies: the euro (the Republic of Ireland) and the pound sterling (in Northern Ireland which is a part of the United Kingdom).
- iii. Possibilities include: Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford.
- iv. Great Britain is the largest island in Europe and Iceland is the second largest.
- v. Lough Neagh is Ireland's largest lake. It is in Northern Ireland and is also the largest lake in the United Kingdom. Lough is pronounced like the Scottish word 'loch' (/lɒx/ as in Loch Ness) and Neagh is pronounced /nei/.

