

## *Winter's Bone*

<b>Author/ Director</b>	Debra Granik, Anne Rosellini
<b>Released in</b>	2010
<b>Price</b>	5,99 €
<b>Language</b>	(American) English
<b>Length</b>	100 minutes
<b>Summary</b>	The film <i>Winter's Bone</i> tells the story of Ree Dolly, the 17-years-old protagonist, who lives with her family in a remote area in the southwest of Missouri. Ree's father Jessup has repeatedly been accused of cooking meth and now has disappeared without a trace. Due to her father's absence, Ree cares for her mentally ill mother and her two younger siblings, her brother Sonny and her sister Ashlee. One day, the local sheriff visits them and tells Ree that there will be her father's trial in a week. If Jessup does not show up, his family will lose their house, because he has put their property up as part of the bail. Consequently, Ree decides to go in search of her father, but the neighbors and associates of her father maintain their silence. On top, they instruct her to keep out of his business and finally resort to violence when Ree ignores their warnings. Ree is sure that her father did not show up at trial because he is dead. Finally, Merab and her sisters bring Ree to the pond where the corpse of Jessup, Ree's father, lies, and cut the hands in order to be able to prove his death and keep the property.
<b>Structure</b>	Alternation between domestic scenes and encounters with persons involved in the story of Jessup's disappearance
<b>Characters</b>	
<b>Topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges of growing-up</li> <li>• Family relations</li> <li>• Poverty &amp; society</li> <li>• Cinematography/ Film analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Helpful Secondary Literature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albright, Rebecca. "Winter's Bone (2010)". <i>Journal of Religion &amp; Film</i>. Vol. 15: Iss. 2, Article 16 (2012).</li> <li>• Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. <i>Film des Monats. Ausgabe April 2011: Winter's Bone</i>.</li> <li>• Laverty, Christopher. "Winter's Bone: Rebecca Hofherr Interview". <i>Clothes on Film</i>. 12 Jan. 2012.</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b>	Although the characters have a certain dialect and the language contains a

	few sarcastic comment, the story line nevertheless is clear and understandable, since it does not contain long conversations that are hard to understand.
<b>Suitable Age</b>	Grades 9-12
<b>Activities</b>	<p><b>Literary aspects</b> of the film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plot, Characters, Motifs</li> </ul> <p><b>Film analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of technical terms (camera adjustments, editing, stylistic devices [metaphors, motifs, costumes, etc.])</li> <li>• Analysis of key scenes:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How is Ree depicted? Which problems does she have to face and how are they presented in terms of cinematography?</li> <li>○ Development of certain characters &amp; their emotional states of mind.</li> <li>○ How are hierarchical structures presented in terms of film technique?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Teachability Pros</b>	<p>+ film presents life of a teenager: pupils can possibly identify with Ree and reconsider their own image of the U.S.</p> <p>+ short conversations, concentration on film techniques</p> <p>+ offers various starting points for discussions (courage &amp; responsibility, influence of strong family bonds, gender roles, etc.)</p>
<b>Teachability Cons</b>	<p>- very serious film, students might expect a happy ending</p> <p>- length of film: 100 minutes → instead of watching the whole film at school, it might be useful to watch and discuss only a few scenes, and provide the students with a summary of the less relevant scenes</p>
<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	The film <i>Winter's Bone</i> is suitable for the classroom, since it offers an insight into American history, culture and society, apart from many "mainstream" productions that focus on presenting the positive sides of the U.S. The film can be explored in terms of film techniques and different topics that might be discussed critically.