

## Using the Wizard of Oz to Teach ESL/EFL

One research study found that the W of O is the U.S. “folktale” which is most often alluded to in sources like the media. In 1998, the American Film Institute named it the 6<sup>th</sup> best U.S. made movie of the 1900’s. It provides especially rich material for:

- discussing symbolism,
- predicting what will happen next (discussions, role plays, writing)
- learning lines or “catch phrases” which are often used as is or slightly modified in other sources.

Before watching (in no particular order):

- Show a map of Kansas and discuss – it is flat, agricultural and has lots of tornadoes
- Brainstorm what these things often symbolize or symbolize for you:  
water, the color green, the color red
- Brainstorm adjectives to describe lions
- Learn the characters’ names:  
Miss Elmira Gulch, Dorothy, Toto, Auntie Em, Uncle Henry, the workhands  
(Later talk about Glinda, the witch of the North, Munchkins, the Scarecrow/Lion/Tinman)

Lines/images to listen for and discuss the meaning of as you watch:

- “Somewhere over the rainbow...”
- “Dorothy! Dorothy!”
- The music while Miss Gulch is on her bike
- “I have a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.”
- Ruby slippers
- “Follow the yellow brick road.”
- “We’re off to see the Wizard.”
- “Lions and tigers and bears! Oh my!”
- “I’ll get you my pretty, and your little dog too!”
- Emerald City
- “I’m melting!”
- “Ding, dong, the witch is dead!”
- Clicking your heels together
- “There’s no place like home.”

Some topics related to the items above to think about with the movie and discuss: freedom, friendship, journey, pursuit of a dream, courage, brain, heart, the significance of the name “Miss Gulch”, the Land of Oz, the significance of and treatment of pets, what in life is worth great risk, what would you think about in the final moments of life, what character qualities are helpful in life, etc.