

# THIS IS ENGLAND

2025

Festival du court-métrage  
britannique de Rouen

## DOSSIER PÉDAGOGIQUE



# PLUNGE

Réalisé par : Ellie Land

FRONT COVER

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# Topics and Issues

## Collège

### Classe de sixième

#### Repères culturels

- Axe 1. Personnes et personnages
- Axe 2. Le quotidien : vivre, jouer, apprendre
- Axe 3. Pays et paysages
- Axe 4. Imaginaire, contes et légendes
- Axe 5. Arts et expression des sentiments

### Classe de cinquième

#### Repères culturels

- Axe 1. Portrait, autoportrait
- Axe 2. Le quotidien : lieux, rythmes, saisons
- Axe 3. Le réel et l'imaginaire
- Axe 4. École et loisirs
- Axe 5. Des langues, des lieux, des histoires
- Axe 6. Le Royaume-Uni

### Classe de quatrième

#### Repères culturels

- Axe 1. Sport et société
- Axe 2. Voyages et explorations
- Axe 3. Villes, villages, quartiers
- Axe 4. Inventer, innover, créer
- Axe 5. Langages et messages artistiques
- Axe 6. L'Irlande

### Classe de troisième

#### Repères culturels

- Axe 1. À la rencontre de l'autre
- Axe 2. Travailler hier, aujourd'hui, demain
- Axe 3. Voyages et migrations
- Axe 4. Langages et médias
- Axe 5. Formes de l'engagement
- Axe 6. Les États-Unis

## Lycée

### Classe de seconde

#### Repères culturels – LVA, LVB et LVC

- Axe 1. Représentation de soi et rapport à autrui**
- Axe 2. Vivre entre générations
- Axe 3. Le passé dans le présent
- Axe 4. Défis et transitions**
- Axe 5. Créer et recréer
- Axe 6. Les pays du *Commonwealth* : héritages, unité, diversité

### Classe de première

#### Repères culturels – LVA, LVB et LVC

- Axe 1. Identités et échanges
- Axe 2. Diversité et inclusion**
- Axe 3. Art et pouvoir**
- Axe 4. Innovations scientifiques et responsabilité
- Axe 5. L'être humain et la nature**
- Axe 6. Les aires anglophones américaines

### Classe terminale

#### Repères culturels – LVA, LVB et LVC

- Axe 1. Espace privé et espace public
- Axe 2. Territoire et mémoire
- Axe 3. Fictions et réalités**
- Axe 4. Enjeux et formes de la communication**
- Axe 5. Citoyenneté et mondes virtuels
- Axe 6. Le Royaume-Uni et ses nations

## About the film

*Katie Wotton's incredible journey to regain control of her life through reconnecting to nature and the sea.*

### Synopsis:

Plunge tells the story of Katie who found empowerment, friendship, and healing by plunging into frigid waters of the sea. As her voice relates to us the physical and mental struggles that have plagued her for decades, her animated form darts confidently through kelp forests on the ocean floor. She tells us about her strong community and the tremendous physical benefits of cold-water swimming. Through Katie's story this beautiful, animated film addresses themes of isolation, connection, mental health & wellbeing and empowerment.

### (Not Full) Cast & Crew

Ellie Land	Director
Rebecca Mark-Lawson	Producer
Daria Nitsche	Producer
Hannah Brewerton	Lead animator
James McAleer	Director of photography
Alice Powel	Editor
David Arthur	Editor
Marina Elderton	Music composer
Kathleen Wotton	Key cast

## About the director



Ellie Land is an internationally renowned, award-winning Animation Director and Researcher working in animation, whose practice has become increasingly collaborative and research-informed, most recently extending into immersive technologies. Her body of work investigates themes such as the failing systems supporting women's health and well-being, placemaking and identity, and climate health through an ecofeminist lens, utilizing storytelling, person-centered narratives, and co-creation methods of production. She draws from and applies practices from animation, documentary, immersive 360 and VR, and illustration.

Her award-winning animated documentary films screen internationally at film festivals and exhibitions. Ellie is the long-term collaborator on MENOPAUSE REALITY, a series of VR films funded by Innovate UK and Digital Catapult.

Her current short BFI-funded animated documentary PLUNGE is produced by TYKE films and has its world premiere at Edinburgh Film Festival 2024. PLUNGE VR was selected for IDFA Forum 2022.

Her contributions to the feature film IRENE'S GHOST were nominated for a BIFA Award in 2018 and was cited as one of the best films of 2019 by The Guardian. BATHROOM PRIVILEGES, co-directed with Rupert Williams for the BFI, won the AHRC Research in Film (Animation) Award 2020.

Her current projects include GLACIES and Arts Council-funded ANTICIPATION OF BLISS, immersive site-specific installations made in collaboration with artist Lucy Wheeler.

### **Director Statement:**

*“This is the first time I have made a film whereby I can explicitly link the experience of the subject to my own experience and I am excited to use this common ground to expand the visual language that I use in animation narrative storytelling. I have insight into Katie’s experiences that may be hard to verbalise. My goal as a film maker is to gently expose and represent untold stories, I am mostly passionate about working with women. I incorporate feminist research methods, and collaborative practices into the documentary process. I am developing my voice as a director to expand across VR\*, AR\*\* and linear narrative forms including feature documentaries.*

*I am excited to see how animated documentary can employ fantastical elements, moving into a hybrid documentary approach. I am enthusiastic about the film community that is part of the film making process and like to incorporate participatory and co design methods.”*

\* virtual reality

\*\* augmented reality

Your notes:

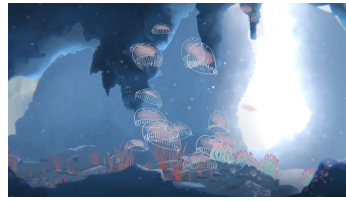
## Screenshots



1



2



3



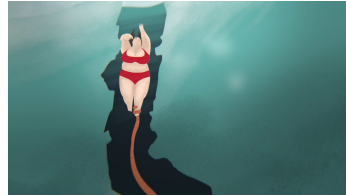
4



5



6



7



8



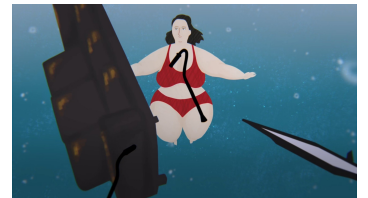
9



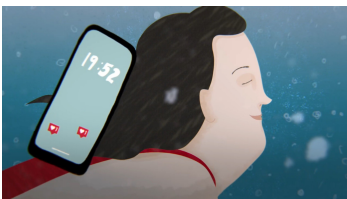
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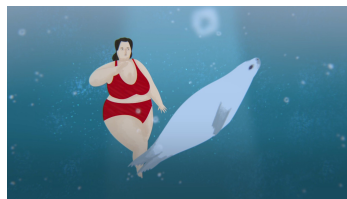
11



12



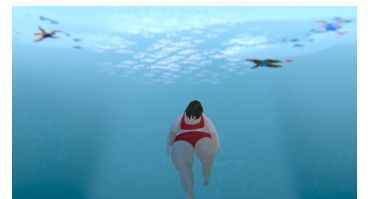
13



14



15



16

### **ACTIVITIES:**

1- Answer the following questions:

- Describe what you can see in pictures 1, 2, 12, 13 and 15.
- What looks different between 1 and 12? Can you account for it?
- What looks different between 2 and 13? Can you account for it?
- From 13 to 16, there is a positive dynamics. What accounts for a darker 15?
- What is picture 3 the symbol of?
- What is the dominant hue in 4 and 5? What feeling does it convey?
- What is the dominant hue in 6, 7 and 8? What feeling does it convey?
- What is different between 9 and 10? What feeling does it convey?

2- project the image of the screenshots on the board:

- Circle picture 11 and ask your students what seems different from the other screenshots.
- Ask them to choose from the 15 remaining pictures those which might explain her mood.

## About Kathleen Wotton

Three articles and **two videos** from ITV Tyne Tees News

### 'It's changed my life': County Durham mum loses 20 stone sea swimming

| Friday 31 December 2021

*A mum from County Durham has lost more than twenty stone by sea swimming regularly.*

Kathleen Wotton has a condition called Lipodema which causes abnormal fat build-up.

Her story has been an inspiration for many and the now blogger and motivational speaker shares inspirational bikini pictures to raise awareness of her condition.

She claims that sea swimming is a hobby that has changed her life and regularly meets with Seaham Sea Swimmers group.

Tyne Tees first met Kathleen last Autumn - she like many had taken up cold water swimming during lockdown.

She had hoped swimming would help with the pain caused by her condition - now fifteen months on she's twenty stone lighter.

Kathleen said: "I didn't think I'd live, I didn't think I'd be here now.

"I thought my heart wouldn't take the strain of the weight and everything else, I didn't think I had a year left"

It's changed my life, I feel like I'm finding who I should be

Kathleen Wotton

Her sister, Christine Wiseman said: "We all thought she's never going to

change, she's just putting herself in an early grave"

She made that change and she'll be fighting fit for years now

Christine Wiseman

Kathleen shares her love of the water in blogs on social media and she's also began doing motivational speaking at Sunderland College.

She said: "The best part about it, is helping other people.

"I've been blogging online, Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, wherever, because I think if you can help one other person, I'm happy"

**Article to be found here:** <https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2020-12-02/meet-the-north-east-woman-with-new-sense-of-purpose-thanks-to-sea-swimming>

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### 'I'm alive!' County Durham woman who lost 20 stone celebrates 50th birthday with Seaham sea swimmers

| Monday 13 February 2023

Kathleen Wotton, from County Durham, has a condition called Lipodema which causes abnormal fat build-up.

She began sea swimming during lockdown and has since lost 10 dress sizes and changed her life.

Ms Wotton said: "My grandchildren are one of the reasons I wanted to live, and my children.

"My children were constantly saying 'mam you've got to do something' but I just didn't have anything there to do it, to push me.

"I cried, I slept, I cried, I slept, I could barely stand up. I struggled getting to the toilet in time. It was just really bad.

"In the last couple of years, I've lost 10 dress sizes. I can stand with my sticks longer than three seconds, I can get up to bed upstairs, I've travelled, I swim as much as I can.

"When I get in I feel alive, the dark thoughts drift away. I'm pain free, I'm able bodied so I feel like a child again almost, and it just makes me smile.

"The fact that I'm alive and I'm going to hit my 50th is just the best."

Ms Wotton now regularly meets with Seaham Sea Swimmers group and some of the people she has met through taking up the sport joined her for a dip to celebrate her birthday on Sunday 12 February.

Her sister Christine said she has seen a massive change in her since getting into the water for the first time.

She said: "She really struggled walking down the beach because she was a lot bigger then and she struggled with her health. When she got in the water it was just crazy because she was just like a little kid.

"I've noticed a massive difference, obviously her health and her weight,

the very obvious ones - but also her mental attitude and her zest for life, that's all come back.

"She wasn't really doing much and having much of a life but this has brought it back."

Ms Wotton is also now an ambassador for Blue Tonic, a charity that encourages people to spend time around "blue spaces" or areas near water to improve their physical and mental health.

She is inspiring others to take up the hobby that changed her life and writes a blog.

She said: "Just keep on going. The more people I can help the happier I feel.

"I'm reaching out to other people and maybe they can find that little bit of hope or strength from me."

**Article & video to be found here:** <https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2023-02-13/im-alive-woman-who-lost-20-stone-by-sea-swimming-celebrates-50th-birthday>

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A woman who believes Seaham beach and the North Sea saved her life has inspired an animation film to give hope to others.

Kathleen Wotton began swimming four years ago during lockdown, to help her lipodema - a painful condition which causes an abnormal build up of fat.

Now Ellie Land has led a team of animators to create a film based on Kathleen, which has been funded by the British Film Institute.

The animator approached the County Durham swimmer after reading her online blog, which documents her journey.

After seeing the animation- named Plunge - Kathleen said: "I kind of felt

like I was listening to it as another person.

"It really choked me up. I was like, that's me who said that, that's my story, and I didn't realise how powerful it could be."

She added: "Life's hard and when you're at your lowest never give up, because at that last moment you might just find your sport like I did."

Since she started swimming she has lost a staggering 20 stone, and celebrated her 50th birthday, something she did not think she would see.

She credits the activity with saving her life, saying: "I feel alive when I'm here...

It means everything to me, it's a new

lifeline. If I didn't come back and see my sister swimming here (Seaham Beach), I wouldn't be here, so it's everything."

Plunge will get its premiere in Edinburgh on Saturday 17 August, and international festivals are already showing interest.

Ellie said: "Kathleen's story and Kathleen's approach to life is really courageous. I've known her for about two years and I've really seen her go through lots of ups and downs.

"I've always seen her bounce back, get back in the water, and I think her resilience and courage is really inspiring."

Article & video to be found here: <https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2024-08-16/the-sea-saved-me-now-my-story-has-been-turned-into-a-film-to-inspire-others>

Your notes:	
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# Let's talk about health

## What is physical health?

Physical health is how well your organs and body systems function. Each person's version of physical health is different. Someone can achieve their own definition of physical health, despite a disease, a disability, or their age.

## What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act as we cope with life. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

## What is social health?

Social health can be defined as our ability to interact and form meaningful relationships with others. It also relates to how comfortably we can adapt in social situations. Social relationships have an impact on our mental health, physical health and mortality risk.

### **ACTIVITY:**

Here are five words or phrases from PLUNGE. Which column do you think they fit in?

bulimic (bulimia nervosa)    fibromyalgia (nerve pain)    lipoedema    osteoarthritis    pain in my knees

### Expected answers:

Physical health	Mental health	Social health
fibromyalgia (nerve pain) lipoedema osteoarthritis pain in my knees	bulimic (bulimia nervosa)	

Your notes:	
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**ACTIVITY:**

Here are a few phrases from PLUNGE. Which column do you think they fit in? .....✂.....

I got so low I couldn't get off the sofa barely.	I started letting go of what other people wanted us to be.	I became hard on myself.	I wasn't good enough.
My relationship with men haven't been great.	When I got in that water, I just felt a sense of relief.	« <i>You take our taxes cos you can't work</i> »	I can move. Like, without being in so much pain.
I've always suppressed the unhappy things.	The only way out I thought was to give up.	The time I'm in that sea I'm free from all my burdens.	I've had to learn to deal with them since swimming in the sea, because everything just surfaced.
I wanted to go to sleep and never wake up.	I've had a lot of derogatory comments.	My body was working.	« <i>It's your fault cos your fat.</i> »
I felt like I released that inner child that I have suppressed to please people.	Despite the lipoedema and the way I look nobody was bothered.	When I go meet swimmers I'm at home and I feel easy.	And I felt like a huge fog that had been weighing us down just drifted off.
	First time I felt like I've been accepted for being just who I am.		Now, I'm me. Take it or leave it.

Among other things:

*You can play the film first and ask the students to put the slips of paper in the right order before they place them in the right column.*

*You can ask the students to link the various slips of paper to one or more of the 16 screenshots and to justify their choice.*

Your notes:	
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Expected answers: *multiple answers are highlighted*

Physical health	Mental health	Social health
<p>When I got in that water, I just felt a sense of relief.</p> <p>I can move. Like, without being in so much pain.</p> <p>My body was working.</p> <p>The time I'm in that sea I'm free from all my burdens.</p>	<p>I got so low I couldn't get off the sofa barely.</p> <p>I became hard on myself.</p> <p>I wasn't good enough.</p> <p>The only way out I thought was to give up.</p> <p>I wanted to go to sleep and never wake up.</p> <p>The time I'm in that sea I'm free from all my burdens.</p> <p>I've always suppressed the unhappy things.</p> <p>I've had to learn to deal with them since swimming in the sea, because everything just surfaced.</p> <p>And I felt like a huge fog that had been weighing us down just drifted off.</p> <p>I felt like I released that inner child that I have suppressed to please people.</p> <p>When I go meet swimmers I'm at home and I feel easy.</p> <p>Now, I'm me. Take it or leave it.</p>	<p>My relationship with men haven't been great.</p> <p>I've had a lot of derogatory comments. « You take our taxes cos you can't work »</p> <p>« It's your fault cos your fat. »</p> <p>The time I'm in that sea I'm free from all my burdens.</p> <p>I started letting go of what other people wanted us to be.</p> <p>I felt like I released that inner child that I have suppressed to please people.</p> <p>When I go meet swimmers I'm at home and I feel easy.</p> <p>Despite the lipoedema and the way I look nobody was bothered.</p> <p>First time I felt like I've been accepted for being just who I am.</p> <p>Now, I'm me. Take it or leave it.</p>

Your notes:	
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## Food for thought (to finish with)

Quite a few short and easy-to-read articles to provide useful information, words and knowledge about this issue.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/how-improve-your-mental-health-using-physical-activity>

This Mental Health Foundation website is great to trigger debates.

Introductory article on their homepage below

### **How to improve your mental health using physical activity:**

Physical activity has lots of benefits for your mental health. It can help you manage stress, feel more confident and boost your mood. It can also ease symptoms of mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression. Still, being physically active can be difficult. In fact, up to 45% of adults and 30% of children aren't meeting the government recommendations for physical activity - and this is understandable.

There are many barriers that can stop you from being physically active. This guide explores the mental health benefits of physical activity and small strategies to help you add physical activity to your daily routine.

Your notes: