

Brief synopsis of the film

Volver (Pedro Almodóvar, 2006) tells the story of Raimunda, a young unemployed mother with a husband and a daughter in mid-adolescence. Since childhood she has kept a dark secret.

All the characters in this story are women who struggle to survive, even the grandmother's ghost.

A rural story, which takes Almodóvar back to his childhood, to his people, to La Mancha, and especially its humble, brave and strong women.

Almodóvar wrote Volver as "the story of three generations who survive the east wind (el viento Solano), fire, insanity, superstition and even death by means of goodness, lies and boundless vitality". It seems that death is highlighted throughout in Volver. Death is assumed with great normality, expected and it even seems to be longed for. However, the film presents different points of view about it. Throughout the film there are up to five different plots, all revolving around the theme of death.

	Description of activity and suggested uses	Skills covered
Activity 1	For the purposes of brevity and practical reasons the on-screen themes comprise only a small number of words. It is vital therefore to exploit this exercise fully, by having a class discussion once completed "on screen". Such discussion could take a theme and students have to justify why they chose it and why the director included it (e.g. – what is the author trying to tell the spectator about family relationships? Why is there a degree of conflict in Irene's family? Is it just something that is a normal part of life in any family or are there external factors?	This activity is a matching activity. Students match up key words or expressions to the video clips containing important themes of the film. However, there is an added challenge as this activity has a time limit.

Activity 2	<p>A possible starter activity with the teacher modelling and the translation completed as a whole class activity before individual students go on to translate other film reviews based on their chosen film. Students can work individually or in pairs and then can compare their completed versions to show that in translation there are often different possible versions. There is also a pop up suggested solution.</p>	<p>This is an activity designed to practise translation skills (Spanish into English). The exercise is to translate a slightly adapted but original film review. The review contains key thematic content.</p>
Activity 3	<p>Before writing their own review, teachers should prepare students carefully. Initially, that might involve reading and thoroughly understanding and analysing the two model reviews. Students could then discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the reviews. At the teacher's discretion, students could then write their own, which they could subsequently present to the class or print to hand in for teacher feedback.</p>	<p>For this activity, students have to read two different film reviews on the novel, with a view to writing their own. This activity develops reading and writing skills.</p>