



# To the surface

EDUCATIONAL SHEET



# PRESENTATION

## TEACHER NOTES

This short film is part of a collaboration **project** between **Cinescuola** and the language program of the **Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje SENA**, with the aim of creating film cycles used within the framework of bilingualism training.

**To the surface** allows raising awareness about the impact of the pandemic from a particular case, showing the urgency of transmitting the wisdom and perspectives of local fishermen, in this historical moment.

## SUBJECTS

Civic education, Languages and Humanities, Natural sciences

## KEYWORDS

Bilingualism, Fishing, Sea, Social struggle, COVID-19, Biosecurity, Social distancing, Crisis

## SYNOPSIS

Like most things, Covid-19 wreaked havoc on the Rhode Island seafood industry. This short film explores this topic to raise awareness to the struggles and try to find some common sense solutions to the challenges, while being mindful of safety and social distancing.

## TECHNICAL SHEET

- \* Genre: Documentary
- \* Written and directed by Gnarly Bay
- \* Director of Photography - Tyler Murgo
- \* Sound - Jared Blizzard
- \* Post-production - Jack Ieronimo & Jordan Ingram
- \* Producers - Aaron Schurman, Dana Saint, Dan Riordan

# PRESENTATION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Gnarly Bay* is a creative filmmaking duo from Westerly, RI., created 20 years ago by *Dana Saint* and *Dan Riordan*. Today the two travel the world making impactful, artistic work for brands big and small.

**To the surface** is one of these projects, carried out in the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RELATED FILMS

**Alamar** 2009  
Directed by *Pedro González-Rubio*

**Cayito el Nino pescador** 2018  
Directed by *Ernesto Díaz Ruiz*

**Aislados** 2015  
Directed by *Marcela Lizcano*



# FILM

## WHAT IS THE STORY?

### Feeding instead of eating

Due to a series of government measures, Rhode Island fishermen are prohibited from selling fish directly to residents. Instead, they must sell it to intermediaries who transport the fish thousands of miles, where it is handled, packaged and frozen, losing not only its quality but even creating a detraction of its nutritional properties and leaving a significant trail of contamination.

**To The Surface** is a short documentary film that shows how the crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic reveals the problems that a Rhode Island fishing community has been enduring for a long time. By following his family and other Rhode Island fishermen, *Tyler Murgos*, the cameraman, shows us the importance of food sovereignty and the need to have a closer relationship (literally) with the food we eat.

*Murgos's* approach to the Rhode Island fishing problem allows us to identify similar situations in our communities. The documentary does not conclude with the fishing issue on the East Coast of the United States but takes it as an excuse to reflect on our relationship with food.

## ACTIVITIES

- What are the main difficulties expressed by Rhode Island fishermen?
- What is the distribution model proposed by fishermen?
- What event shows the need to rethink the intermediary model?
- Make a diagram showing the cold chain and the logistics required to move the fish from its origin to its final destination. Consider the video excerpt above.



In the short film a diagram shows the handling of fish by intermediaries and how this is detrimental to the food supply.

# FILM

## HOW IS TOLD?

### Family history is the history of a people

At the beginning of the documentary, we understand that *Tyler Murgo* has lived all his life in the fishing context. His father and brothers fish, and the cameraman has portrayed family relationships on the boat from his passion for image. He builds the documentary with pictures of this family history that, in the cameraman's words, "seems a timeless practice and yet seems to be coming to an end".

From fishermen's testimonies, the compilation of intimate images and a clear explanation of the fishing problem in Rhode Island, we understand that the COVID-19 pandemic brings to light a long-standing problem. Due to regulations and laws that seek to benefit third parties, the concept of food sovereignty disappears and returns to the basic need for food, dependent on market dynamics.

The explanation of a large-scale situation through the intimate testimonies of fishermen humanizes the fishing problem in Rhode Island. It leads us to reflect on the need to assume food consumption from local markets and offers, as the protagonists are not abstract corporations but people who play a daily role.

## ACTIVITIES

- What do the interviewees think about the fishing problem in Rhode Island?
- Why did the director decide to make the documentary about the fishing problem in Rhode Island?
- What visual resources does the director use to show the fishing problem?
- Prepare a poster presenting the conclusions suggested by the documentary to improve the situation of fishermen in Rhode Island.



We briefly see how the cameraman seeks to portray the problem of food sovereignty from his family history.

# FILM

## WHO ARE THE CHARACTERS?

### Testimony of one, the testimony of many

When food is viewed primarily from an industry perspective, the voices of the people who make access to food possible would seem to be irrelevant. However, at the juncture of the pandemic, as large-scale industrial processes in which profitability predominates are dismantled, the needs and voices of both consumers and small-scale producers emerge.

The testimonies of a handful of Rhode Island fishermen, including the cameraman's family, appear as a need to circumvent not only what is necessary for the context of COVID-19 but to promote a new model in which food quality and accessibility is a priority.

The main narration by the director, *Gnarly Bay*, is interspersed with the testimonies of other fishermen Tyler Murgo, the cameraman, interviews. The director's narration provides a general context about the subject matter. The location and the fact the film is made with part of the collective experience and the testimonies of one of Murgo's brothers with another fisherman contextualize the viewer around how the fish distribution model works. Through Murgo's interviews with his fellow fishermen, we learn about a more human relationship with food in a way that explores the traditions of the regions, the care of the environment and the quality of the food consumed.

## ACTIVITIES

- What is the fishermen's proposal to rethink the fish distribution model?
- Why are fishermen's testimonies relevant in the context of the pandemic?
- How would you describe the fishermen?
- Identify who the narrator of this documentary is.
- Who are the main characters, what they do, and their contribution to the documentary?



The testimonies of one of Murgo's brothers and another fisherman contextualize the viewer on how the fish distribution model works.

# FILM

## VOCABULARY

### Testimony:

A statement made by a person to demonstrate or assure the truth of a fact by having witnessed it. In the documentary, *Murgo's* family and the other fishermen give their testimony to build the story about the fishing problem in Rhode Island.

### Audiovisual Reporting:

Audiovisual reports are based on recounting events that take place anywhere in the world. They seek to educate on specific topics and include personal opinions seeking a position at the level of thought.

### Infographics:

An infographic is a simple and attractive graphic representation of an idea. Its purpose is to facilitate the understanding of a subject.

### Interview:

An interview is a dialogue between two or more people. The interviewer asks questions, and the interviewee answers them. An interview is a dialogue with interests and expectations on both the interviewer and the interviewee.

## ACTIVITIES

Make a list in English of words mentioned in the short film. In front of each word write its translation in Spanish.



Discover in this section basic cinematographic concepts, a sample of the vocabulary used on cinema, with definitions and examples related to the short film **To the surface**.

# CONTEXT

## RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

### Responsible consumption and its impact with Covid 19

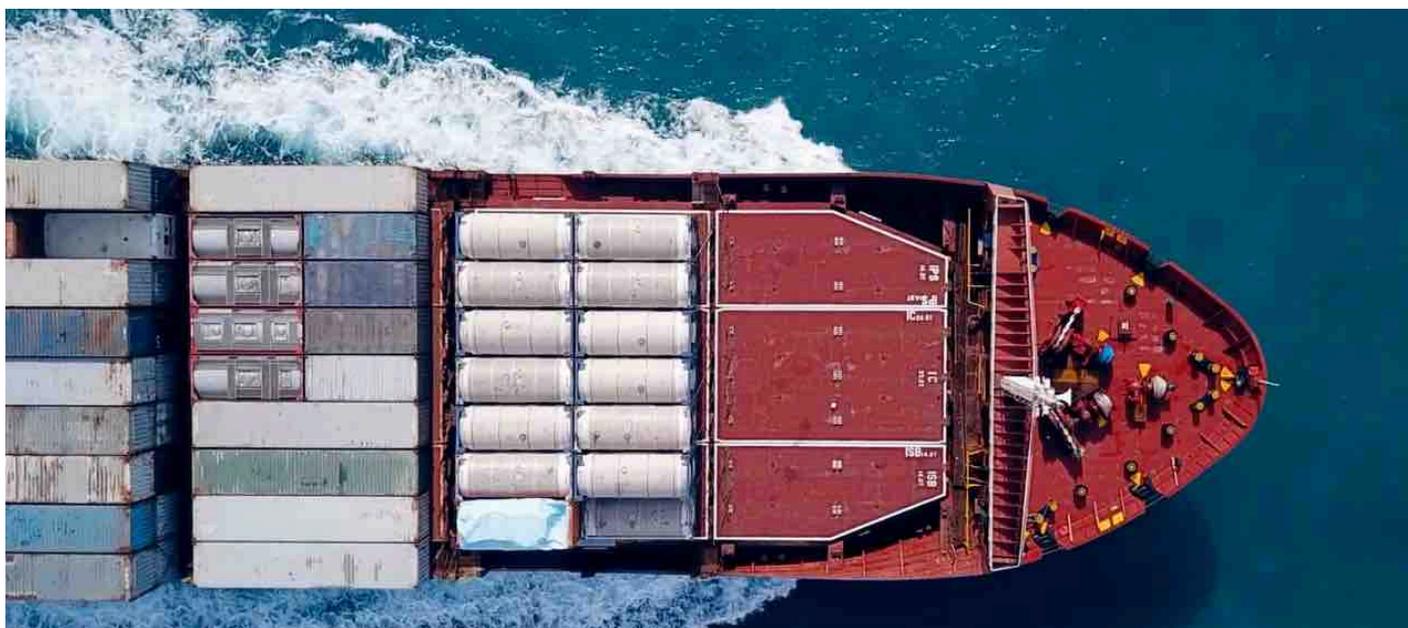
Have you ever wondered where the products you consume come from? Nowadays it is easy to have access to all kinds of food. If you have enough money to buy them, they arrive in supermarket chains in great quantity and variety. The purchasing process has become so easy that we ignore information such as who, how and where these foods have been grown, or rarely ask ourselves why bananas, rice or fish have to travel thousands and thousands of kilometres before reaching our pantry. These are all questions that a responsible consumer should ask himself before deciding what to buy. We buy products in principle to satisfy a need or a desire. Still, at the same time, this activates a whole series of negative economic, social and environmental processes. Therefore, a conscious and critical consumer must consider how ethical, ecological, healthy, sustainable, solidary and socially fair are the products he buys.

The arrival of the pandemic has meant significant changes in consumption patterns around the world, mainly due to mobility restrictions, health concerns, reduced incomes and increased unemployment. All these variables have created new consumption patterns with greater awareness of cost and expenditure and greater responsibility for what is purchased and the impact that the product generates on the planet.

New behaviors are beginning to resonate in society. They include conscious consumption concerned about the origin of products, critical consumption that reflects on natural desires while it proposes a reduction of consumerism. Finally, transformative consumption prioritizes products and services from companies committed to a social and solidarity economy, i.e., prioritizing environmental sustainability, gender equity, labor conditions and fair prices.

## ACTIVITIES

- Do you know where the food consumed in your home comes from?
- Do you consider yourself a responsible consumer?
- With the arrival of the pandemic, did you notice any changes in your household consumption patterns? Which ones?
- List the reasons why selling fresh fish to middlemen is harmful to consumers.



A diagram shows middlemen handling fish and how this is detrimental to the food supply.

# CONTEXT

## IMPACT

### Impact of Covid 19 on the film industry

Cinema, being a craft performed mainly by a human team on the same film set and being an art that is also mostly enjoyed and admired by going to a movie theater, has been massively affected by the global pandemic of Covid 19. The impossibility of interaction and permanence in the same space-time with other people for art so dependent on human relationships has impacted the industry ineluctably.

Countless movie theaters have closed their doors worldwide, festivals have been postponed or cancelled, and film premieres and shoots have been postponed indefinitely and cancelled in the worst cases. **To the surface** was a short film shot during the health emergency, which is why *Gnarly Bay*, the duo of directors, from its pre-production, had to challenge himself to reinvent its modes of production and reflect on how to interact with real people safely and effectively.

They created a care guide that can serve any audiovisual production whose filming takes place during the pandemic. First of all, it is recommended to continue with all biosecurity measures dictated by the WHO, i.e., the social distancing of at least 2 meters, frequent hand washing, strict use of masks, daily temperature measurement. Also, disinfection of surfaces and objects on and off the set.

Also, minimum work teams are suggested with the help of combined roles and remote and virtual collaboration of those members of the team who do not need to be present during filming. Finally, the sound team is advised, as far as possible, to use a boom microphone instead of a lavalier. Suppose the use of the latter is strictly necessary. In that case, the microphone will be disinfected before and after use. The interviewee will wire himself following the instructions of the sound engineer in question.

## ACTIVITIES

- What has been the impact of the pandemic on your daily, educational and professional activity?
- What biosecurity measures did you have to introduce to continue studying or working?
- Did you feel safe with the security measures? Did you think that it radically changed your activity? Why?
- Which industries do you think have been highly affected by Covid 19?
- Make a poster in which you present the biosecurity measures and all the precautions taken to perform the documentary so that it is easy to understand.



**To the surface** was a documentary that was filmed during the health emergency by Covid 19.

# CONTEXT

## CRISIS AND SOFT SKILLS

No family or individual is exempt from experiencing an economic crisis at some point in their lives. The economy of the capitalist system is so fluctuating and unstable that it would be absurd to assume that abundance or scarcity will be lasting conditions. A crisis is defined as an important change in developing a process that gives rise to instability. It usually leads to a situation of despair, anguish or hopelessness for those who suffer from it. Given that the pandemic has generated death, unemployment, business closures, stress, distress, panic attacks, depression, anxiety, and fear, it is necessary to face it with a cognitive, emotional, and behavioral commitment to cope with the current crisis.

A crisis is also defined as a situation, i.e., a disposition or state that can arrive and disappear at any moment, ending its cycle of time and permanence. This unexpected health emergency presents us with numerous challenges that we can face using and developing our soft skills.

For example, it is essential to put emotional intelligence into practice. Intrapersonal skills include understanding our emotions and complete comprehension of the impact we have on others. These skills are promoted through self-esteem, self-actualization, and emotional expression. Likewise, it is an excellent time to develop our interpersonal skills by generating trust and meaningful relationships with our close core to recognize, understand, and appreciate how others feel and thus promote the common good.

Additionally, a great tool can be our ability to adapt to changes, even though these may be difficult and uncomfortable at times. By experiencing them, we will develop adaptability, and once we deal with them, we will have achieved a growth mindset. Stress management, tolerance, impulse control, and thinking before acting are fundamental tools that will help us go through this crisis successfully.

## ACTIVITIES

- Have you, or anyone in your close circle, experienced a crisis during the pandemic? Have you been able to recover, or have you helped those close to you to recover? What strategies have you used? Do you think they worked?
- Do you know of any other soft skills? If so, which others do you think could be practical in combating pandemic crises?
- Do you consider yourself emotionally intelligent? Why?
- What vocabulary terms can you identify to talk about a crisis. Please make a list of ten sentences in which you recreate a crisis or how you responded to it, using one of the terms identified previously.



*Jason Jarvis is a Rhode Island commercial fisherman who has been fighting for change for more than twenty years.*

# CONTEXT

## GLOSSARY OF ENGLISH TERMS

**Clams:** /klæm/ n. [countable]

A soft-bodied shellfish with two shells that close tight around it.

**Fast forward:** /fɑ:st'fɔ:rwərd/ vb(transitive)

To wind (a video or tape) forward using the accelerating control.  
To deal with speedily.

**Craft:** /kræft/ n. [countable]

An art or trade requiring special skill, especially of the hands.

**Showcase:** /'ʃɔ:kɛɪs/ n. [countable]

1. A glass case for the display of articles.
2. An exhibit or display, usually of an ideal of something.

**In the wake of:**

1. As a result of.
2. Succeeding; following.

**Screech:** /skri:tʃ/ v.

To make a harsh, shrill cry or sound.

**Halt:** /hɔ:lt/ v. To (cause to) stop, cease moving, or operating.

**Reel back:**

1. To stagger, fall back, or be thrown off balance (from some physical blow or impact).
2. To be shocked, bemused, or unable to think clearly (due to an intense emotional reaction to something).

**Paycheck:** (pə' chek') n.

1. A bank check given as salary or wages.
2. Salary or wages.

**Quota:** /'kwɔ:tə/ n. [countable]

The share or part of a total that is required from, allowed to, or that belongs to a particular district, group, etc.

**Thaw:** /θɔ:/ v.

To change from a frozen to a liquid state.

**Awaken:** /ə'veɪkən/ v. To awake, to waken.

**Exhaustion:** (ɪg zɔ:s' chən) n.

1. The act or process of exhausting.
2. The state of being exhausted.
3. Extreme weakness or fatigue.

**Comaraderie:** /,kəm'rædəri, -'rædə-, ,kæmə-/ n. [uncountable]

A feeling of good-fellowship.

**Endurance:** /ɛn'dʊərəns, -'dʊər-/ n. [uncountable]

The ability to continue or last, esp. despite fatigue, stress, etc.

**Harvest:** /'hɑ:vɪst/ n. [countable]

1. The gathering of crops.
2. The season when ripened crops are gathered.
3. A crop or yield of one growing season. the result of any act, process, or event.

**Fall apart:** vb (intr, adverb)

1. To break owing to long use or poor construction: the chassis is falling apart.
2. To become disorganized and ineffective: since you resigned, the office has fallen apart.

**Stumble upon:** Literally, to trip on someone or something with one's foot. To find, discover, or happen upon someone or something casually or by chance.

**Flag down:** To wave one's arms to attract someone's attention, usually to get them to stop moving.

## ACTIVITIES

- Read the words and expressions in the glossary and look for their definition in Spanish.
- Listen and read the links proposed in the **Culture and Society** section.



Discover in this section a glossary of terms in English used in the short film **To the surface**.

# CULTURE & SOCIETY

The following links offer online resources related to the themes of the **CONTEXT** section.

## GLOSSARY 01

-  Showcase  
<https://youtu.be/QtK37dFeeUM>
-  Craft  
<https://youtu.be/YJXycoYdWoA>
-  Fast forward  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000k99h>
-  Clams  
<https://youtu.be/Homsk-ZokMw>



## GLOSSARY 02

-  Reel back  
<https://youtu.be/UYuB-2MjQck>
-  Halt  
<http://www.worldwidewords.org/weirdwords/ww-hal2.htm>
-  Screech  
<http://earbirding.com/blog/archives/2365>
-  In the wake of  
<https://youtu.be/RP72GgQG7v8>

## GLOSSARY 03

-  Game-changer  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02rssm5>
-  Thaw  
<https://www.bonappetit.com/story/how-to-safely-thaw-frozen-fish>
-  Quota  
<https://youtu.be/GP6XTcGcuXY>
-  Paycheck  
<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-is-a-paycheck-1918222>



# CULTURE & SOCIETY

The following links offer online resources related to the themes of the **CONTEXT** section.



## GLOSSARY 04



Endurance

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/moofgdk>



Camaraderie

<https://youtu.be/wWaF63c5RC8>



Exhaustion

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/mooblxd>



Awaken

[https://youtu.be/frbYL5\\_obdA](https://youtu.be/frbYL5_obdA)

## GLOSSARY 05



Flag down

<https://youtu.be/G2E6xBOOAg4>



Stumble upon

<https://youtu.be/7MisHxRGcmM>



Fall apart

[https://youtu.be/V2Jl5OA\\_y3o](https://youtu.be/V2Jl5OA_y3o)



Harvest

<https://librivox.org/end-of-harvest-by-william-bell-scott/>



# PEDAGOGICAL ROUTE

## PRESENTATION OF TO THE SURFACE

Reading of the synopsis and the technical sheet.



## VISUALIZATION OF TO THE SURFACE

To watch the film.

## CINEMATOGRAPHIC LANGUAGE OF TO THE SURFACE

Analysis of the cinematographic language of the film: what, how, who tells, the point of view.



## CONTEXT OF TO THE SURFACE

Analysis of the context of the film.

## CULTURE AND SOCIETY O. TO THE SURFACE

Additional resources related to the context of the film.



You will also find this sheet  
in the following link

<https://www.cinescuola.org/pedagogicos/es/presentacion/to-the-surface-223092>