

## Contents and Sample Activities

# once

~ the movie ~

A modern-day musical about a busker and an immigrant and their eventful week in Dublin, as they write, rehearse and record songs that tell their love story.

*"A little movie called Once gave me enough inspiration to last the rest of the year."*  
Steven Spielberg

# Tune into English

[www.tuneintoenglish.com](http://www.tuneintoenglish.com)

Directed by John Carney, 2006

Starring Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová

Released by Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2007

"ONCE may well be the best music film of our generation"

Michael Phillips, Chicago Tribune

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## **While-Watching Activities**

### **Individual scenes**

(numbers refer to the Shooting Script)

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 5. Scene 6, 7, 8 – Police Report        | Intermediate     |
| 6. Scene 12 – The Guy and The Girl Meet | Pre-Intermediate |
| 7. Scene 17 - Order the Shots           | Elementary       |
| 8. Scene 23 - Meet the Folks            | Pre-Intermediate |
| 9. Scene 38 - Negotiation – Role Play   | Elementary       |
| 10. Scene 53 – What did you say?        | Pre-Intermediate |

### **Complete film**

- |                                       |              |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 11. Order the Songs                   | Elementary   |
| 12. Characters in order of appearance | Elementary   |
| 13. Visual Treasure Hunt              | Elementary   |
| 14. Script changes                    | Intermediate |

## **Post-Watching Activities**

- |                                       |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| 15. Describe the characters           | Elementary       |
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| 17. Favourite scenes                  | Pre-Intermediate |
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| 22. Press Conference                  | Intermediate     |



## 2. Trivia



Read the articles below and match the heading to each one.

- A. A cultural misunderstanding
- B. How not to break the budget
- C. An international embarrassment
- D. To act or not to act?
- E. Was the onscreen chemistry real?

1) Although Hansard and Irglová were not romantically involved at the time of filming they became a couple while on a promotional tour across North America. Hansard told *Entertainment Weekly*: "I had been falling in love with her for a long time, but I kept telling myself she's just a kid." The relationship did not last, although the couple remain good friends. In 2011 Irglová moved to the U.S.A. and married guitarist Tim Iseler – they perform music together under the name Iron and Wine.

2) Hansard and Irglová are both professional musicians with little ambition to continue making movies. Although he appeared in the 1991 film *The Commitments*, Hansard was reluctant to take a role in this film – director John Carney initially approached Cork-born Cillian Murphy, but Murphy didn't feel comfortable with the role. Hansard agreed to play The Guy only if he could be personally involved in the filmmaking process. Hansard and Irglová continued to work together as musicians in the band The Swell Season, playing themselves in an episode of *The Simpsons*.

3) In the scene where they first meet Hansard tells Irglová that he repairs Hoovers – she does not know what these are. A Hoover is a brand of vacuum cleaner, extremely popular in Ireland – in fact many people think this is the name of the object rather than a brand name! Wikipedia states: "In the UK and Australia the term "hoover" (properly spelled in all lower case like any ordinary word) has long been colloquially synonymous with "vacuum cleaner" and the verb "to vacuum" (e.g. "you were hoovering the carpet"), owing to the Hoover Company's dominance there in the first half of the 20th century. Although the company is no longer the top seller of vacuum cleaners in the UK, the term "hoover" has remained as a general term."

4) The film received enthusiastic reviews – Steven Spielberg claimed it was an inspiration and Bob Dylan enjoyed it so much he asked the duo to tour with him. The song *Falling Slowly* won an Oscar in 2007 for Best Original Song. At the 2008 ceremony the award was presented to the duo by John Travolta – after Hansard made his acceptance speech Irglová stepped up to the microphone, but was cut off by the producers. After a commercial break she was invited back on stage, where she used her speech to encourage anybody with a dream not to give up. Irglová became the first Czech woman to win an Academy Award and, at 19, the youngest person to win an Oscar in the music category. You can watch the Oscars clip at <http://www.slashfilm.com/marketa-irglovas-oscar-speech/>

5) The film was shot in 17 days, and cost just € 130,000 to make. About 75% of this was funded by Bord Scannán na hÉireann (The Irish Film Board), the rest by the director. The filmmakers saved money by using natural light and shooting at friends' houses – the party is at Glen Hansard's flat, with real life friends – the female singer is his mother! The film went on to gross over € 15 million worldwide, winning the 2007 Independent Spirit Award for best foreign film.



## 10. What did you say?



In the scene in Howth, by the sea (52'06" – 54'04") the guy discovers that the girl is married. Here are the answers to the questions in the scene. Write the questions.

_____	He's back in the Czech Republic.
_____	I don't know what I'm going to do.
_____	I said "you're going to teach me how to ride the bike now".
_____	The Czech for "do you love him?" is <i>Miluješ ho.</i>
_____	<i>Miluju tebe.</i>
_____	The Czech for "ocean" is oceàn.
_____	Two years ago.
_____	Yes, I'm alright.
_____	Yes, it surprises me.

In what order do you think these questions appear in the scene? Make a guess, then watch the scene and check both the questions and the order.

Note that the guy does not use the question form to ask if the girl is alright – he uses rising intonation

↗  
"You alright?"

Rewrite the other Yes/No question as a statement with rising intonation.

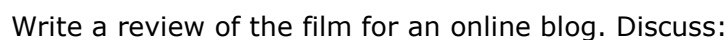
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Note the pronunciation of the final question: Whatcha say? /wɒtʃə seɪ/

Spoken English often shortens "What do you (did you)..." and "What are you..." questions using the cha /tʃə/ sound.

Practise saying these questions using the cha /tʃə/ sound:

What are you doing?  
What do you think?  
What did you buy?



- the plot
- the setting
- the characters
- the quality of the acting
- the music
- your opinion of the film
- the ending
- who this film is suitable for
- your rating (e.g. how many stars)
- your recommendation to friends

[illegible]

When you have finished compare your review with those at the following urls (you can download a text-only pdf file of the four reviews at [www.tuneintoenglish.com/oncereviews.pdf](http://www.tuneintoenglish.com/oncereviews.pdf)):

1. <http://www.film4.com/reviews/2006/once>
2. <http://www.chud.com/10229/review-once/>
3. <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071224/REVIEWS/237678516>
4. <http://chicago.metromix.com/movies/review/movie-review-once/163467/content>


Which review do you think is the best?

## Teachers' Notes and Keys

	<b>Trivia</b>	
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**Key:**

- |       |       |
|-------|-------|
| A. 3) | D. 2) |
| B. 5) | E. 1) |
| C. 4) |       |

	<b>What did you say?</b>	
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This scene practises questions.

You can point out that all questions, apart from the first, are asked by the guy.  
The translation of *Miluju tebe* is "It is you that I love".

Note that the correct questions will give those used in the film script while the answers have been modified for the activity. As an optional extra activity you can ask the students to note the answers used in the script.

**Key:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Does it surprise you?                    | Yes, it surprises me.                                       |
| 2. When?                                    | Two years ago.  |
| 3. Where is he?                             | He's back in the Czech Republic.                            |
| 4. Are you alright?                         | Yes, I'm alright.   |
| 5. What's the Czech for "ocean"?            | The Czech for ocean is oceàn.                               |
| 6. What are you going to do?                | I don't know what I'm going to do.                          |
| 7. What's the Czech for "do you love him?"? | The Czech for "do you love him?" is <i>Miluješ ho</i> .     |
| 8. <i>Miluješ ho?</i>                       | <i>Miluju tebe</i> .  |
| 9. What did you say?                        | I said "you're going to teach me how to ride the bike now". |

Rising intonation

That surprises you? ↗

Note: Glen Hansard told "E! Online" that Irglovà ad-libbed her line in Czech, so he didn't actually know what she'd said, just like his character.

	<b>Write a Review</b>	
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There is a Compare the Reviews activity in the Pre-Watching section.