

Fandom **Smarty**

Being a fan can be a wonderful and rewarding experience. Being part of a fandom - even more so. Together with one's fellow "partners-in-fan", one can appreciate and admire, cheer and cherish, and generally belong to a group that shares her or his love. In this Smarty we will have some fan fun and learn about the relationship between fans and the subject of their adoration.



Smarties are inspirational guides for educational activities. Click on the **red** button below to know more about them.

Smarties are complemented by our **Smart Spin** online encyclopedia. Click on the **green** button below to explore it.

**SMART SPIN****WHAT'S A SMARTY?****MORE SMARTIES**



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What's it like having fans? Your learner is invited to wonder.

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Being a fan need not be a passive experience. Your learner will involve her or himself by making something that celebrates their fandom.

4. Fan Film

These days, we all have access to a camera. Why not make use of it to pay tribute to the films you love? Suggest it to your learner with our guidelines.

5. Think About

Your learner may want to wonder about these questions as she or he spins through the collection.

6. Recommendations

We have some great recommendations based on the collection's topics.



1. Being a Fan



SOMETHING TO DISCUSS

Discuss these questions with your learner, or use them for an assignment (e.g. essay).

- **Are you a fan? What are you a fan of?**
- Is it a person, a team or band, an organization? Is it a place or a time? Is it a sport or activity? Is it a work of fiction, a creation, a piece of art? Is it a style, a movement, a genre?
- How popular is it? Are there many others who are also fans (fan base)? Are you part of a fandom, community or [Fan Club](#), if there is one? Are you proud of being a fan? Do you have friends who are also fans?
- How passionate are you about it? Do you consider yourself a true fan or do you think you're more of a [Bandwagon Fan](#)? How much time and thought do you spend on being a fan and related activities? How much do you know about the subject? How many related things do you own (or what is the rarest or most precious thing)?
- What activities do you do as part of being a fan? Do you do it with other fans? Do you create something, such as [Fan Art](#) or [Fan Fiction](#)? Do you attend [Fan Conventions](#) or go to shows or games?
- What is the thing you'd most like to do, related to something you're a fan of? It can be visiting it (e.g. a place), seeing it in person (e.g. a show), contributing to it (e.g. an art movement). If you're a fan of a person, team or band - what would you like to say or ask them if you meet them? (If you have, what did you say?)
- Who is YOUR biggest fan? (Yep, it can also be your mom or dad.)



RELATED TOPICS

★ [Fan](#)

★ [Fandom](#)

★ [Fan Base](#)

★ [Fan Loyalty](#)



2. Having Fans



You learner may wonder, or discuss, or write about the experience of having fans.

What is it like to have a fan base?

- What would you like people to admire, respect or support you for, or be enthusiastic about you or something you do? It might be something you're already doing or good at, or something you're working towards or wish to be in the future. For example, it might be your singing voice or your literary voice. It can be your artwork or your charitable work. It could be your baking skills or skateboard skillz.
- Let's imagine you were a famous figure (are you already?!), in any field (such as being a scientists, an artist or musician, an athlete, or an activist). What would you do for your fanbase and how would you communicate with your fans? For example, you might be a scientist with a social media account, posting about recent scientific discoveries to let your followers know about progress in your research. You might be a human rights activist and hold public awareness events that may include fundraising. You may be an actor or actress who encourages his or her fans to dress up like the characters you portray in movies.
- How would you imagine your fandom? Would you like it to be focused on online or real world activities? Would you like it to be a very large community of casual fans or a small group of very devoted fans? Would fans try to imitate you or replicate what you're doing (for example, filming themselves trying to do what you do, or writing fan fiction)?
- How would you use your stardom for good? For example, would you try to make the world a better place by promoting charities and raising awareness of global issues, or make people happy by visiting them (such as in hospitals and disaster zones)? Would you donate, perform, partner with others...?



3. Get Creative



As a creative exercise, have your learner create something related to anything or anyone they are a fan of. Any of the following guidelines can be included.

Choose

- You may choose anything you're a fan of, whether it is a celebrity or a superhero, a movie franchise or series of books, a historical period or modern phenomenon.
- It doesn't necessarily have to be something or someone you're already a fan of. It could be a tribute to something new and surprising.
- One way to approach this activity is to choose to be a fan of something or someone in your life. Something you like a lot, but you might not have considered yourself a fan of. It can be a friend, your pet or your doctor. It can be dad's cooking or mom's job. It can be a holiday destination you go to every year. It can be the view from your bedroom window. Anything is allowed and your imagination is the only limit.
- A fun exercise might be deliberately choosing something or someone you're not a fan of, but a friend or family member is, just to see what you can come up with (siblings, friends or classmates can be instructed to choose each other's).

Create

- You may choose any form of creation. The related topics below may give you some ideas and directions on what to create.
- You may create something that celebrates or demonstrates what (or whom) you're a fan of. It can be a tribute drawing of a celebrity or a montage of clips from a movie. It can be a piece of music inspired by your feelings or a social media account where you post about your thoughts.



- You may create something that tries to imitate or replicate what you're a fan of, or something you can learn from. It can be writing jokes in the style of your favorite comedian, or practicing the drumming style of your favorite drummer, or the shooting techniques of your favorite basketball player. It can be fabricating a costume, or building your own version of an item, that is associated with a fictional character you like. It can be memorizing the lyrics to all the songs of your favorite band, or all the little details in the fictional universe of your favorite series.
- You may create something as participation in the fandom or contribution to it. It can be organizing an event for fans, or a show to get new people to become fans. It can be spending time in message groups and forums to create content, help moderate and answer questions (you may even want to build a fansite). It may be competing with other fans, such as in a quiz to see who knows more about the subject.

Beyond

- Try to get as many people as you can involved in your creation, whether it is people you know or other fans. Share it with as many people as you'd like.
- Consider joining or getting involved in other people's efforts and creative activities, by helping them with their own projects, or doing your own version.
- You may continue being active, and using what you have created, to become more involved in the fandom of your choice.

RELATED TOPICS

- ★ [Fan Labor](#)
- ★ [Fan Art](#)
- ★ [Fan Fiction](#)
- ★ [Fansite](#)
- ★ [Vidding](#)

- ★ [Fan Activism](#)
- ★ [Fan Film](#)
- ★ [Fangame](#)
- ★ [Filk Music](#)
- ★ [Cosplay](#)



4. Fan Film



SOMETHING TO MAKE

[Be Kind Rewind](#): This charming 2008 movie, by Michel Gondry, introduced the concept of “sweded films”: Abridged and extreme-low-budget versions of movies made by fans. It inspired a phenomenon of amateur fans around the world creating their own sweded films and, of course, sharing them online. We highly recommend the movie, as well as looking for some of these wonderful home-made videos (search “sweded” and “sweded film” on YouTube).

Whether they watch the film or not, engage your learner in this activity to shoot a film.

- Why not try and make your own sweded film?* Pick any one of your favorite movies.** The best challenge would be to choose one with a very expensive production (elaborate sets, extreme special effects, complicated shots, renowned actors) and try to recreate scenes from it with as little as possible (hand-crafted items, locations around the neighborhood, phone camera, friends and family as cast members).
- Think about how you can make the most with what you’ve got. You might be surprised at how simple objects can make a big impression when filmed in the right way and using clever tricks. Use the camera to your advantage rather than as a limitation.
- It is a good idea to prepare the section of the script for the scenes you want to shoot (many films have their scripts available online). You may also want to create a storyboard to help you visualize the scenes.
- Get creative, enjoy the process. Remember, this is about the love we have for good movies. It’s about celebrating the movies you like most by producing a tribute to them, not trying to perfectly recreate them.



→ Check out [this web-series](#) by Michel Gondry about how he made an acclaimed short film using just an iPhone. In [this clip](#), Jack Black (who star in the movie) and Gondry (who directed it) discuss how to make a sweded film.

* Instead of creating a sweded film, you may prefer trying this exercise for creating a trailer for your favorite movie(s), or even “deleted scenes” (you can try to imagine and then shoot scenes that didn’t make it to the final edit of the film) or sequel.

** Instead of movies, you may prefer trying this exercise for creating a film based on a favorite book, show or play. You may choose a specific chapter, episode or act to adapt and “swede”. You can even choose anything else you’re a fan of, such as a sports team or a rock band, and make up a screenplay that’s related to it.



★ [Fan Film](#)

5. Think About



The following questions can accompany the discovery of new topics, as your learner spins through this fandom collection.

- What does it take to become a fan? When does someone turn from loving something or someone to being a fan of it? What are the different levels of “fanhood”? How can you recognize a fan?
- What makes someone become a fan? Is it interest in what they love? Wanting to be part of a community? An outlet for creative energy? All of it equally? What are the best parts of being a fan? Are there any negative aspects to it?
- How do fandoms form? What activities, products and events are most popular for fan bases to be involved in? Which of these do you appreciate most?



6. Recommendations

Cosplay



If your learner is interested in Cosplay, there have been many documentaries (and shows) made about the phenomenon. Here are our recommendations:

- **Cosplay Encyclopedia:** a 1996 film about Japanese cosplay.
- **Cosplay Complex:** a 2002 anime miniseries.
- **Otaku Unite!:** a 2004 film about otaku subculture, features extensive footage of cosplayers.
- **Animania: The Documentary** is a 2007 film that explores the cosplay cultural phenomenon in North America, following four cosplayers from various ethnicities as they prepare to compete at Anime North, Canada's largest anime convention.
- **Conventional Dress:** is a short documentary about cosplay at Dragoncon made by Celia Pearce and her students in 2008.
- **Cosplayers: The Movie**, released in 2009 by Martell Brothers Studios for free viewing on YouTube and Crunchyroll, explores the anime subculture in North America with footage from anime conventions and interviews with fans, voice actors and artists.
- **"I'm a Fanboy":** a 2009 episode of the MTV series True Life, focusing on fandom and cosplay.
- **Fanboy Confessional:** a 2011 Space Channel series that featured an episode on cosplay and cosplayers from the perspective of an insider.
- **Comic-Con Episode IV: A Fan's Hope**, a 2011 film about four attendees of the San Diego Comic-Con, including a cosplayer.
- **America's Greatest Otaku:** a 2011 TV series where contenders included cosplayers.



- **Cosplayers UK: The Movie**, a 2011 film following a small selection of cosplayers at the London MCM Expo.
- **My Other Me: A Film About Cosplayers**: chronicling a year in the life of three different cosplayers: a veteran cosplayer who launched a career from cosplay, a young 14-year-old first-timer, and a transgender man who found himself through cosplay. It was released in 2013 and was a featured segment on The Electric Playground.
- **Heroes of Cosplay**: a reality show on cosplay that premiered in 2013 on the Syfy network. It follows nine cosplayers as they create their costumes, travel to conventions and compete in contests.
- **"24 Hours With A Comic Con Character"**: a segment from CNNMoney following around a known cosplayer while she prepared for and attended New York Comic Con.
- **Cosplay Melee**: a competition reality show on cosplay that premiered in 2017 on the Syfy network.
- **Cosplay Culture**: a 90 minutes documentary that follows cosplayers during preparation and conventions in Canada, Japan and Romania. Includes a visit of Akihabara (Japan), a geek Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans and a historic overview explaining the origin of cosplay.



★ [Cosplay](#)

Following the Fans



Trekkies

- Star Trek has one of the largest fan bases, one of the most extensive fandoms and some of the most devoted fans ever - trekkies!



→ We recommend the following documentaries about this incredible subculture around one of the most successful science fiction franchises ever, and the people who loves it:

◆ [Trekkies \(1997\)](#)

◆ [Trekkies 2 \(2004\)](#)

RELATED TOPICS

★ [Trekkie](#)

Browncoats

→ Firefly was a science fiction show with not many viewers. However, the ones who did watch it were so in love with it and so committed to it that they campaign to bring it back after it was cancelled. It never did return, but a Firefly film (“Serenity”) was produced and released due their efforts.

→ Follow the journey of the Firefly fans (“Browncoats”) in this documentary:

◆ [Done the Impossible \(2006\)](#)

→ And learn more about Fan Activism in this documentary:

◆ [United We Fan \(2018\)](#)

RELATED TOPICS

★ [Firefly Fandom](#)

★ [Fan Activism](#)

Science Fiction Fandom

→ If you’re interested in science fiction fandom in general, we recommend this non-fiction book: “The Immortal Storm: A History of Science Fiction Fandom”, by Sam Moskowitz.





RELATED TOPICS

- ★ [Science Fiction Fandom](#)

Ringers

- Tolkien fans are also some of the most engaged fans of fiction. They are sometimes called “ringers” because of J. R. R. Tolkien’s most popular and celebrated books - the Lord of the Rings trilogy.
- Follow these fans in this excellent documentary:
 - ◆ [Ringers: Lord of the Fans \(2005\)](#)



RELATED TOPICS

- [Tolkien Fandom](#)
- [Fantasy Fandom](#)

Pottermania

- The Harry Potter book series captured the imagination of millions of children and adults alike (you as well?), many of which became enchanted fans of anything Potter and wizardry.
- For some fans, this mania is expressed in music (“Wizard rock”) and was documented in these recommended films:
 - ◆ [We Are Wizards \(2008\)](#)
 - ◆ [The Wizard Rockumentary: A Movie About Rocking and Rowling \(2008\)](#)



RELATED TOPICS

- ★ [Harry Potter Fandom](#)
- ★ [Filk Music](#)



Bronies

- My Little Pony defied expectations for a target audience for an animated show about cute and cuddly female unicorns. Many adult men became die-hard fans of the bright and colorful cast of characters, and their charming tales.
- Meet these “bronies” and explore the unusual phenomenon:
 - ◆ [A Brony Tale \(2014\)](#)
 - ◆ [Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony \(2012\)](#)
- To discuss: Do you think there’s such a thing as an “appropriate fan”? Do you think that for certain people there are things that are more appropriate for them to be fans of? What demographics do you think you belong to? Are you a fan of something or someone that might come as a surprise to some people (such as being out of character or outside of your demographics)? Do you know anyone else who is?

RELATED TOPICS

★ [Bronies](#)

Fan Fiction



- [FanFiction.net](#) is the largest archive of fan fiction on the web. Check out some great fiction written by fans, or submit your own!

RELATED TOPICS

★ [Fan Fiction](#)



Fan Art



→ Check out [this short documentary](#) about Fan Art, produced by Off Book for PBS.



★ [Fan Art](#)

Sports Fans



→ ESPN has a great documentary - “We Are Fans” - about the experience of being a loyal sports fan. The film has an immersive [online storytelling experience](#) which you should also check out.



★ [Sports Fan](#)

★ [Fan Loyalty](#)

