ON SCREEN ◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼◼

The Hours
Directed by Stephen Daldry (2002) DVD

The film *The Hours* is based on the 1998 novel of the same name by Michael Cunningham. The novel became a bestseller and earned the writer the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1999. The story is based on Virginia Woolf's novel, *Mrs Dalloway*. The original title of Woolf's novel was, in fact, *The Hours*.

The story on screen so far...

Three women from different periods are linked in an extraordinary way: Virginia Woolf herself as she begins to write her novel *Mrs Dalloway* in 1923; Laura Brown, an unhappy housewife in Los Angeles in 1951; and Clarissa Vaughan, who is preparing a party for her writer friend, Richard. Just like Woolf's novel all the action takes place in one day.

Over to you

1 Watch the scene for the first time and focus your attention on the following observation questions.

1. Who is...? (Write correct initial V/L/C.)
   - ☐ sitting in front of a mirror
   - ☐ sitting in bed
   - ☐ standing in front of a mirror
2. Who has...? (Write correct initial V/L/C.)
   - ☐ a book by the bed
   - ☐ a bowl to wash herself
   - ☐ flowers in the room
3. At the beginning of the scene Virginia and Clarissa both do the same activities. What two things do they do?
4. What do you notice about Laura Brown's physical condition?
5. Did you notice the title of the book Laura Brown is reading? If not, can you guess?

2 Watch the scene again. Virginia Woolf begins to write the first line of her most famous novel, Clarissa Vaughan is beginning to prepare her party and Laura Brown begins to read her book. What connections can you find between the three women, their actions and the novel? Complete the following with the options below.

> *Mrs Dalloway*   preparing a party x2
> *the novel* Mrs Dalloway
> *she will buy the flowers herself x2*

1. In the first line of the novel Mrs Dalloway says...
2. In the novel, Mrs Dalloway is...
3. Laura Brown is reading...
4. Clarissa Vaughan says...
5. Clarissa Vaughan is...
6. Clarissa Vaughan shares her first name with...