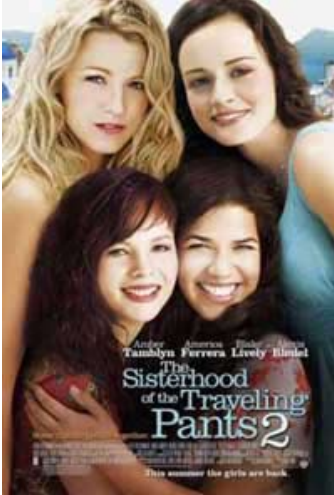


# Study Guide

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## The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2



Feature movies are a medium, an art and a business. Each of these elements plays a role. As a medium, movies represent ideas through the codes and conventions of sound and moving image. As art, they make personal and cultural statements to their audiences. As businesses, they create work for their creators and profits for their investors.

This guide, which extends the ideas presented in *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* episode of *Beyond the Screen*, may be used by teachers as they support their students, by parents who want to discuss the movie with their children, or by serious viewers who want to think beyond the screen.

**Plot synopsis:** The four members of the Sisterhood spend their summers in different places, facing different challenges. Tibby meets a life crisis while completing a course at NYU. Carmen struggles with self-esteem at a Vermont theatre camp. Bridget comes to terms with her mother's death, and Lena learns more about male-female relationships.

### A. Cinematography

Cinematography is used very purposefully in *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*.

#### 1. Movement

The cinematographer moved the camera often. When the women renew their vows to the sisterhood at the beginning of the movie, the camera constantly revolves around the foursome as they speak. When Ian and Carmen rehearse in the park, the camera tracks right as they share their love of Shakespeare's language.

How do these camera moves add to the visual interest of the movie?

How else might the moving camera influence the way the audience thinks about these scenes?

What other uses of camera movement do you notice?

How do they influence your response to the movie?

#### 2. Colour Shift

Cinematographers often shift the colour balance to help audiences understand the differences in location or a scene's emotional tones.

Even though Bridget's archeological adventure was set in Turkey, the scenes were shot in Greece (the same country as the Santorini scenes).

How would you describe the colour tones in the Santorini scenes?

How would you describe the colour tones in the Turkish scenes?

How did the cinematographer shift the colour balance between Santorini and the dig to help audiences feel they were in different places?

Where else did you notice changes in colour or cinematographic styles?

## B. Editing

### 1. Parallel editing

*The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* presents the stories of each of four women. Sometimes the women are together, but mostly they are apart. The movie uses parallel editing, a technique that presents moments from each story intercut with one another, so that we see only a few minutes of any one story before moving to scenes from another story. Parallel editing suggests to the audience that the stories are occurring simultaneously, i.e., Lena's experiences in Rhode Island are happening at the same time as Bridget's in Turkey.

Parallel editing can also juxtapose key scenes from one story with scenes from another, so that one story contrasts with or comments on another story. For example, Leo and Lena meet in a scene that occurs just before the scene where Ian and Carmen meet.

How might audiences respond to seeing the two women meeting men at the same time?

Might they expect each relationship to develop the same way?

How might audiences' awareness of Lena's break up with Kostos and Carmen's relationship with her father influence their expectations of each relationship?

### 2. Transitions

The transitions from New York to Turkey to Rhode Island to Vermont happen very often, and there is a possibility of confusing the audience. The transitions might also be used to propel the story.

In one instance, Bridget tells her father that she is going upstairs to unpack and leaves the scene. We see a woman's legs upstairs in the next shot, but it is Carmen, not Bridget. We have moved from one Bethesda house to another in a cut.

How might this juxtaposition confuse audiences?

How might this juxtaposition help the audience realize that the women are having similar experiences?

The editor used a direct cut between the scenes, but she could have used a dissolve, wipe, or fade.

Do you think she made a good choice? Why?

Where else do you notice a cut between the women's stories that might confuse or compel the audience?

### 3. The 180 Degree Rule

When Brian and Tibby are talking on Tibby's daybed, they are photographed in soft front light. Tibby shakes her head and there is a cut to the other side of the bed (the wall side) and they are seen backlit.

A common rule for editors is to avoid crossing the 180 degree line because it changes the actors' positions and can confuse audiences. Brian is on top of rather than beside Tibby at this moment, so side-by-side-switching confusion might not occur. However, the camera does completely cross to the other side, and the light shifts from front to back.

How might audiences interpret this sudden change in point of view?

What has happened in the scene that would explain the sudden shift in point of view?

## 4. Jump Cuts

Jump cuts occur when frames are removed from a scene and the action seems to ‘jump’ rather than proceed smoothly through all the actions. Jump cuts occur in the scene where Tibby puts on the pants and asks them for a miracle. She goes through a series of actions that are juxtaposed in jump cuts, or discontinuous action.

What is the effect of seeing Tibby’s actions in jump cuts?

How does the use of jump cuts support the mood of the scene?

Did you find the jump cuts distracting, or did they add to the scene?

## C. Music

### 1. Setting Location

Music is used very purposefully in *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*. Sometimes it helps to set the location of a scene. Sometimes it provides an emotional backdrop. An obvious example of using music to set the location of a scene is the Middle Eastern music that plays as Bridget buses to the archeological dig.

Where else did you notice music used to help establish a location?

What kind of music did you hear when Bridget first met Greta?

### 2. Setting Emotional Tone

Another use of music is to set the emotional tone of a scene. Strings and woodwinds can be used to help audiences understand and appreciate characters’ feelings. When Ian forces Carmen to audition, her lines are accompanied by whimsical strings. When Bridget reads her grandmother’s letters, her grandmother’s voice is accompanied by a high woodwind that moves into a full orchestra.

How do these uses of music support the moods of each scene?

How might audiences interpret hearing Greek music during Lena and Leo’s rooftop dinner date?

## D. Journeys

Each character spends the summer having unique experiences. As in the first *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* movie, Tibby is ‘trapped’ into a job, this time in New York while completing an NYU course. Her ‘malfunction’ with Brian leads her to new crises and life experiences. Carmen spends the summer feeling safe and inadequate in Julia’s shadow until Ian intercedes. Bridget seeks excitement and distraction from her feelings of abandonment until an archeological find reminds her of her dead mother. Lena explores her love with Leo after feeling betrayed by Kostos.

What challenges did each character face in her journey?

How well did she meet her challenges?

Which of the characters made a mistake in judgment?

Which of the characters met her challenge best? Why?

What might you or your friends learn from the sisters?

Which of these characters' experiences speak most directly to you?

Do you have a sisterhood of your own?

Why is a sisterhood important?

## E. Backstories

Each of the four principal actors may be well-known to audiences beyond the first *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*. As well as movie exposure, each has had a significant television presence. Amber Tamblyn starred in *Joan of Arcadia*. Blake Lively starred in *Gossip Girl*. America Ferrera starred in *Ugly Betty*. Alexis Bledel starred in *Gilmore Girls*. There is an excellent chance that *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* audiences will have seen these actors in their other roles.

How might audiences' other media experiences influence their perceptions of *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*?

How might the television characters be seen as extensions of the actors' *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* characters?

How might some audience members even see the actors as playing the same kinds of characters that they played in their television shows? I.e., how does Joan connect to Tibby, how does Selena connect to Bridget, how does Betty connect to Carmen, and how does Rory connect to Lena?

How might audiences compare the actors' performances in *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* to their television performances?

How might audiences' knowledge of the actors' television characters make them more compelling to watch?

How might their television appearances help to promote interest in *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*?

How might *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* promote interest in their television appearances?

An audience member who has seen the television shows will have difficulty pretending that *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* characters are real rather than actors. Why might this be OK and pleasurable?

## F. The Best of the Sisterhood

The original idea for *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* was Carmen's. She gave the reason for sharing the pants and the pledge that each sister would help the others in times of need.

How well did Carmen fulfill her pledge to the sisterhood?

How might she have been a better sister?

Why do you think she was not always a good sister?

Which of the sisters did the best job of supporting others? Why?

How have you been a good friend to someone in need?

## G. The Brotherhood of the Traveling Pants?

Some movies are characterized as chick flicks, while others are guy pics.

What are the qualities that make *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* a chick flick?

How do you think a male audience would react to *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*? Why?

What might males learn from *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*?

How might watching *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* help a male be a better person?

How might watching *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2* help a male be a better boyfriend, brother or father?

Can you imagine a male version of *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*?

If there were a male version of *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*, would the brotherhood share a pair of pants, or another object?

Might male characters be haunted by feelings of inadequacy?

What kinds of inadequacy? Might they be the same as Carmen and Bridget's challenges?

Might male characters struggle with their relationships?

How might they use a brotherhood to improve their relationships?

Are there already movies that might qualify as male versions of *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*? Which ones?

For more information on *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*, visit <http://sisterhoodofthetravelingpants2.warnerbros.com/>