

**Film guide**

**Bridge of Spies**

US | 2015 | Cert. 12 | 135 mins  
Director: Steven Spielberg

During the Cold War, Soviet spy Rudolf Abel was arrested in New York and put on trial. Keen to give the appearance of due process, insurance lawyer James Donovan was recruited as his representative in court. Several years later, an American pilot captured in Soviet Russia brought Donovan and Abel into the centre of extremely tense political negotiations, and a divided Berlin under transformation.



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**You will like this film if you liked**

To Kill A Mockingbird (1962, PG)



Universal © (1962) All rights reserved.

**Watch next**

The Lives of Others (2006, 15)



Buena Vista © (2006) All rights reserved.

**Talk about it (before the film)**

What do you know about life in Germany during the Cold War? Have you heard of Checkpoint Charlie and do you know why it was a significant place?

Does everybody have a right to a defence and a fair trial? Why?

**Talk about it (after the film)**

- How would you describe the performance of Tom Hanks? Why do you think Steven Spielberg chose to cast him in this role?
- How would you describe the colour scheme of this film? In what ways does it complement the overall mood?
- Why was Donovan chosen to lead negotiations with the Soviets instead of a more senior political figure? Does Donovan comply with his government's wishes throughout?
- Why do you think the filmmakers chose to dwell so much on the fact that Donovan was suffering with a cold whilst in Berlin?
- What is the significance of Donovan witnessing citizens being attacked from his window on a Berlin train? How do the filmmakers remind the audience of this moment later on in the film?
- Do you think this is a patriotic film?

**Write about it**

Bring your ideas together in a review and share it on our Into Film clubs' website. You could include a summary of the story, mention other films that it's similar to, describe what you particularly liked or disliked and give it your star rating.

**Extension Activities**

Write an additional scene for the film showing what might have happened to either Abel or Powers after they had been exchanged and reunited with their families. How would their situations have been similar and different?