



SCHOOL PROGRAM

Grades 7-8 Lesson Plan

by

Regent Park Film Festival

The Regent Park Film Festival's School Program provides media-literacy programming to students in Grades 1-12 across the GTA. Our programming creates a dialogue surrounding social issues affecting Toronto's diverse student population.

Program Description

Each of the films presented centre around youth confronting the prejudice and negative stereotypes they face. The subjects and characters of these films acknowledge the difficulty it takes to face the world as themselves, but are resilient and understand the value that comes from knowing their self-worth.

We will use these films to engage in topics of microaggressions, racism, anti-black racism, marginalization, homophobia, Islamophobia, privilege, bias, queerness, stereotypes and trauma. Definitions for these words will be provided at the end of this lesson plan as some of the discussion questions will make reference to these words.

Definitions To Consider

MICROAGGRESSIONS - Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

(Psychology Today

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/microaggressions-in-everyday-life/201011/microaggressions-more-just-race>)

RACISM - Racism is an ideology that either directly or indirectly asserts that one group is inherently superior to others. It can be openly displayed in racial jokes and slurs or hate crimes but it can be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values, stereotypical beliefs and institutions.

ANTI-BLACK RACISM - Anti-Black Racism is defined here as policies and practices rooted in Canadian institutions such as, education, health care, and justice systems that mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent.

(Black Health Alliance

<http://blackhealthalliance.ca/home/antiblack-racism/>)

MARGINALIZATION - Marginalization is the process of pushing a particular group or groups of people to the edge of society by

not allowing them an active voice, identity, or place in it. Through both direct and indirect processes, marginalized groups may be relegated to a secondary position or made to feel as if they are less important than those who hold more power or privilege in society. (Syracuse University <http://counselingcenter.syr.edu/social-justice/impact-of-marginalization.html>)

HOMOPHOBIA - Any negative attitudes that may lead to the rejection and discrimination, directly or indirectly, of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or of anyone whose appearance or behavior does not conform to the stereotypes of masculinity or femininity. (<http://www.homophobia.org/en/most-canadians-underestimate-the-problems-lgbt-people-face-around-the-world/>)

ISLAMOPHOBIA - The word "Islamophobia" is used in Canada to describe the irrational fear or hatred of Muslims that leads to discrimination or acts of harassment or violence. (National Council of Canadian Muslims)

PRIVILEGE - People can be privileged in some ways, while disadvantaged in other ways. There are many different types of privilege that shape how we move through the world. These are typically things we are born into, not things we have earned, that afford us opportunities and advantages that others may not enjoy.

BIAS - An opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgements. (TDSB Enhancing Equity Task Force <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/community/docs/EETFReportPdfVersion.pdf>)

QUEER - Formerly a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBT people. Some members of the LGBT community have embraced and reinvented this term as a positive and proud political identifier when speaking among and about themselves. (The 519 Glossary of Terms <http://www.the519.org/education-training/glossary>)

STEREOTYPE - A false or generalized, and usually negative, conception of a group of people that results in the unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences. (TDSB Enhancing Equity Task Force)

TRAUMA - Trauma is the lasting emotional response that often lives through a distressing event. Experiencing a traumatic event can harm a person's sense of safety, sense of self, and ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships. (CAMH

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/trauma>)

FADE IN:

INT. BEFORE THE FESTIVAL - DAY

Sometimes it is hard to recognise racism, especially if you're not the target. Racism may be direct or indirect, individual or institutional.

Begin by asking students to define racism and to share examples of racism. Next, have students write their own stories on the topic of racism by reflecting on these writing prompts:

- a. What is your earliest experience dealing with race and/or racism? It can be a situation that you were directly involved in, witnessed, or heard of.
- b. How did you or those around you feel about this experience, during and after?

INT. AT THE FESTIVAL - BE A FILM CRITIC!

Print out the *Be A Film Critic* sheet attached, and bring it to the festival to review the films you see! Rate each film from 1-5 stars.

EXT. AFTER THE FESTIVAL - NIGHT

1. Reflections:

Which film spoke to you the most and why?

How have the films that you saw at the festival differ from the regular media you engage with?

Have any of these films changed your outlook on a particular topic or issue? Why or why not?

2. Questions:

This section will provide critical discussion questions based on the content of the films. It will allow students to reflect on various social issues, and provide their own interpretations of film content. The last two pages contain pictures from films to help you remember them.

FILM: ERIN'S GUIDE TO KISSING

1. Director and writer Julianna Notten wanted this film to portray a strong, queer female protagonist. How does she accomplish this in the film?

2. You are a new writer for the film. What adventure would you write next for Erin? Would she attend the superhero movie screening and meet one of the stars? Would a more intimate relationship develop between her and Liz? Use your imagination.

Resources

SOY- Supporting Our Youth is an organization based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, which runs programs and events geared to supporting the special needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and intersex youth.

[\(http://soytoronto.org/\)](http://soytoronto.org/)

The LGBT Youth Line is a toll-free Ontario-wide peer-support phone line for lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, queer and questioning young people.

[\(http://www.youthline.ca/\)](http://www.youthline.ca/)

FILM: FREEDOM SUMMER

1. How have your perceptions changed, if at all, about the work that Black Lives Matter Toronto engages in?
2. Review the definition of Anti-Black Racism. Why do you think it is important for Black children to have a safe, welcoming school space?
3. Do you ever feel lost or ignored at school? What changes could be made to make your own voice heard?

FILM: NOUR

1. Nour decides to stand up to her bully by giving her a note based on a negative stereotype a classmate made about her hair and also showcases her strength by giving her drawing of herself wearing a hijab as a superhero. Draw yourself as a superhero, featuring an aspect of yourself or your culture that you want to help challenge how people perceive/ OR write

a small note confronting a stereotype you often hear about a marginalized group in society.

2. Use the link from the CBC website and have a class "Reading Response" to the following article on Islamophobia:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/islamophobia-ontario-mps-vote-motion-1.3994396>

Use the headings of *Retell* (summarize), *Relate* (make connections), and *Reflect* (ask questions or draw conclusions) to help guide this exercise.

FILM: RIDE FOR PROMISE

1. Confronting the issue of bias, stereotypes, and racism is something important to Curtis' ride across the country. Do you think he was successful in shifting the perspectives of the people he met? Why or why not?

2. In April of 2018, 2 Black men were arrested for waiting for a business partner in a Starbucks in Philadelphia. Listen to the discussion from the CBC, reflect on watching the documentary and then develop a Venn diagram to explore the themes you recognize in both stories.

<http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1253747267987>

FILM: THE HAIRCUT

1. Based on what you have learned about Marvin's early life in Ottawa, how is it possible that a haircut could be seen as something traumatic?

2. Marvin now gets haircuts when he feels ready and on his own terms. Have you ever found strength in making your own personal decisions? How so?

FILMS

ERIN'S GUIDE TO KISSING GIRLS



Synopsis: Erin, a quirky and determined 12 year old, enlists the help of her comic-book loving best friend to try and impress the coolest girl in school.

FREEDOM SUMMER



Synopsis: At Black Lives Matter's Freedom School, young Black kids are taught what it means to love the skin that they're in, through learning about themselves and the community around them.

NOUR



Synopsis: Feeling self-conscious about wearing the hijab to her new school, Nour learns what it means to challenge the stereotypes her fellow students have about her and be her own superhero.

RIDE FOR PROMISE



Synopsis: Curtis Carmichael, a young man and athlete who grew up in Toronto Community Housing, embarks on a mission to cycle across Canada in order to challenge people in different communities on how they perceive racialized youth from marginalized communities.

THE HAIRCUT



Synopsis: Marvin immigrated from Jamaica to Ottawa in the 1950s, when Black immigrants were rare and often unwelcome. With no Black barbers in the city, Marvin suffered through many painful haircuts. The trauma from this period still lingers with him today.

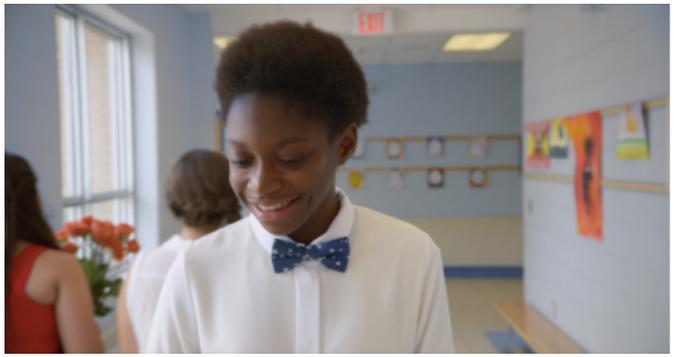


16TH ANNUAL REGENT PARK FILM FESTIVAL

SCHOOL PROGRAM GRADES 7-8

BE A FILM CRITIC!

5 ☆ = HIGHEST



ERIN'S GUIDE TO KISSING GIRLS

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RIDE FOR PROMISE

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FREEDOM SUMMER

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THE HAIRCUT

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NOUR

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