

Film review: Malcolm X

Anti-racist religious education



RE TODAY AND NATRE WORKING WITH THE FREE CHURCHES GROUP
AND METHODIST SCHOOLS



Malcolm X

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What is this film about?

Biopic of Malik El Shabazz

What age group and RE topic does it link to?

Although the film is a 15 for some graphic scenes – the scene where his letter from Hajj is read is suitable for pupils 11-18.

Some of the language used needs explanation for a mixed ability classroom. But the letter is widely available in text form.

What did you love about it?

It shows a complex picture of religion as relevant in today's world.

If you could only show a clip, which clip would you use?

The scene that reads the letter from Hajj (often available on YouTube – though not sure about copyright).

Why does this film have great potential for anti-racist RE?

It directly portrays racism of different kinds. It portrays a positive role model of a Muslim – a religion racialised as non-white and 'harmful'.

Are there any warnings or issues for particular age groups?

There is violent content in the full film – but BBFC classification is sound.

Two or three RE activities to set when pupils have seen the film/clip:

1. Read the letter from Hajj – pupils explain what Muslim beliefs and experiences of Hajj lead Malcolm X to suggest Islam as a solution to Global racism.
2. Answers such as racial harmony in Hajj, belief in one God (not - 'the Christian God', 'the Muslim God' - etc etc), one origin of humanity, Christian, Jewish & Muslim cooperation & love since the times of Muhammad pbuh, egalitarian clothing on Hajj, pride (feeling of superiority) of Devil on creation of Adam, racism as a sin, Muhammad pbuh's final sermon ("a White has no superiority over a Black nor a Black has any superiority over a White except by piety and good action.") etc.
3. Evaluation of this solution- the benefits & limitations.