



TUMBLEWEEDS FILM FESTIVAL FOR KIDS

FILMS • WORKSHOPS • CLUBHOUSE

2020

BINTI

Educator Study Guide



Media Education

ABOUT THE FILM

BINTI is a young Congolese immigrant living in Belgium. She dreams of being a famous YouTube star and regularly posts videos to her account, "Binti's Bubble." But when the authorities try to deport her and her father back to the Congo, her dreams of fame are threatened.



ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

FREDERIKE MIGOM was born in Antwerp, Belgium. She studied acting in NYC and then film in Paris. She worked in film production for Brussels before moving on to directing in 2013. *Binti* is the first feature film she has directed.

KEY THEMES

Parent-Child Relationships

Understanding Different Cultures

Immigration Laws

Family Dynamics

Activism

KEY TERMS

Belgium: A country in Western Europe. It is bordered by the Netherlands to the north, Germany to the east, and France to the south. It has a population of more than 11.5 million. The capital and largest city is Brussels. French, Dutch, and German are all official languages of Belgium.

The Democratic Republic of Congo:

Also known as DR Congo, the DRC, DROC, Congo-Kinshasa, or simply the Congo, is a country located in Central Africa. It was formerly called Zaire. It is a French speaking country and was a colony of Belgium in the late 1800s. It is the second largest country in Africa and the population today is over 84 million.

Vlogger: A vlog is a video blog or video log. Vlog entries often combine embedded video (or a video link) with supporting text, images, and other data. Entries can be recorded in one take or cut into multiple parts. In recent years vlogging has evolved into a giant community on social media where people can release any information that they want.

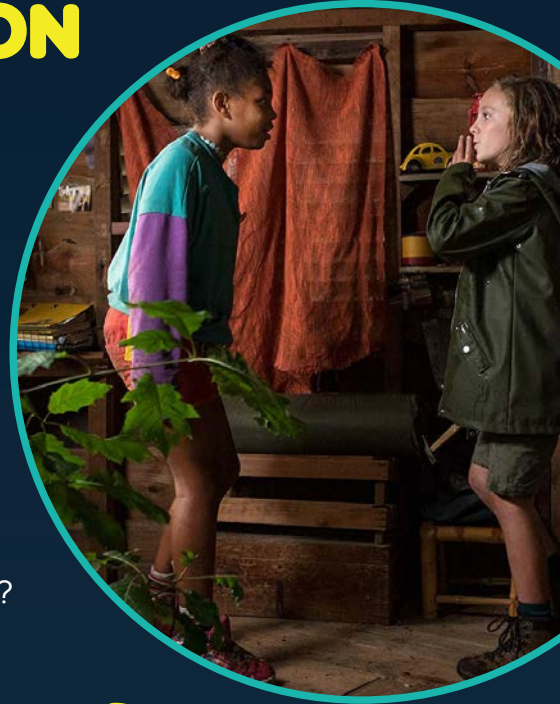
Binti's Bubble: The name of Binti's (the main character in the film) personal vlog.

Okapi: The okapi, also known as the forest giraffe, is a mammal native to the northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Central Africa. Although the okapi has striped markings reminiscent of zebras, it is most closely related to the giraffe. These creatures are very wary, and their highly developed hearing alerts them to run when they hear humans in the distance.



PRESCREENING DISCUSSION

1. What do you know about refugees? What stories have you heard in the news about the refugee crisis in the world right now?
2. What do you know about the Congo? How did the violent history of the place lead to the diaspora of the Congolese people?
3. How do you use your cell phone to communicate your story to the outside world? Have you ever done any vlogging?
4. Are there any famous YouTube stars that you follow? Why?



CREATING CRITICAL VIEWERS

You live in a media-saturated world, and you are constantly surrounded by an array of constructive messages. Media literacy skills (the who, how, and why behind media creation) are essential for us to be informed citizens – to navigate and make sense of our world successfully.

If you can be trained to view media through a more discerning lens, not only will you become a more productive community member, but you will also be more empowered as a consumer and critical thinker. Prefacing each screening with these questions will help create a more active viewing experience and result in enhanced media literacy.

Medium: How was this film constructed, and how was its story told? What did you see? What did you hear?

Purpose: What motivated the creation of this film? Do you think the purpose was achieved?

Subject: What information, values, ideas, and emotions are presented in this film?

Point of View (POV): Who created this film? What is their perspective?

Audience: Who is the target audience? How did this film make you feel? How do you think it made others feel?

CHARACTERS TO KNOW



BINTI:

12-year-old from the Congo who wants to be a famous YouTube star.



JOVIAL:

Binti's father, who is originally from the Congo.



ELIAS:

Friend to Binti and activist for the okapi species.

CHRISTINE:

Mother of Elias who works as a fashion designer.



FLORIS:

The boyfriend of Christine. He is disliked by Elias and Binti.

"I EXIST, I EXIST, I EXIST." - Binti



DECONSTRUCTING THE STORY

1. Why does Binti want to make a video with Tatyana?
2. Why does everyone scatter and hide when the police come to Binti's home?
3. What do you think Elias is feeling while video chatting with his dad? What are the pros and cons of this type of communication?
4. Binti and Elias are both trying to connect with their fathers at the same time in the film. How are their experiences different from one another?
5. After Jovial leaves Binti at Elias' house, he walks away crying. Why is he so sad at that moment?
6. Why did Farif (the police officer and fiancé to Elias's sister) have the immediate reaction to try and subdue Binti's dad?
7. What is the significance of the scene in which Jovial reads the poem about Binti's mom to Binti, Elias, and Christine?
8. Why is Elias upset with the plan Binti has for her Dad and his mom?
9. How did the characters of Binti and Elias transform by the end of the film? How did their hopes and dreams change or become realized?

REFLECTING ON THE PLOT

1. When Elias runs away he goes to his secret fort in the woods. Do you have a similar place you can go when things in life get difficult or you want to be alone?
2. Describe Binti's relationship with her phone. What does the phone provide for her? Is it problematic, or does this technology allow her a connection to a bigger world? What is your relationship to your phone?
3. What do Binti and Elias envy about each other's lives? How do they move from competitors to friends over the course of the film?
4. How is the "Save the Okapi" video that Binti and Elias make a metaphor for what other people might be experiencing who came to Belgium from the Congo?
5. What are some of the positive contributions that immigrants bring to new countries? How is this reflected in this film?
6. Describe how you felt when Binti and her father were taken by the police. How could the police have treated them more respectfully?
7. When Binti finally posts something real and authentic about her situation on social media, she gets a viral reaction. How does this differ from her previous posts? Why does this matter? What do our social media posts really say about us?



ACTIVITIES

TO DO

POST IT

Using Adobe Spark, make a short video about a cause that you care about. Post it to your social media and engage with your followers about the content.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Find someone at your school, in your neighborhood, or in your community that moved here from another country or state. Respectfully interview them about their transition to their new town and community. Write an article with quotes and images about the experiences they shared with you, or make it into a short documentary. Share this with your class.

DANCE PARTY

Research dance styles from Democratic Republic of the Congo and other places around the world that interest you. Choreograph a dance that you then teach to and perform with your class. Cite the research you did that inspired your choreography.

TO WATCH

Dear Habib is a true story of a young, unaccompanied child migrant called Habib, who co-produced the film. The animation brings to life the incredible challenges, and opportunities, that young unaccompanied child migrants face.
<https://vimeo.com/275386318>

Clouds Over Sidra is a virtual reality documentary film about the Syrian refugee crisis produced by the United Nations. The film features Sidra, a twelve-year-old girl, in the Za'atari camp in Jordan, home to over 80,000 Syrian refugees.
<https://www.with.in/watch/clouds-over-sidra/>

TAKE ACTION

Hold a fundraiser at your school to raise donations for the local chapter of the International Rescue Committee, an organization "dedicated to helping people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future."
<https://www.rescue.org>

Explore the work of the Okapi Conservation Project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Hold a fundraiser at your school to help the cause of the forest rangers protecting this species. \$250 buys a camera trap to capture photos of okapi in the forest.
<https://www.okapiconservation.org>



ALIGNED CURRICULUM STANDARDS

UTAH FINE ARTS STANDARDS – MEDIA ARTS

- **Respond**—Students will perceive and analyze artistic work and process. They will interpret intent and meaning, and apply criteria to evaluate artistic work and process.
- **Connect**—Students will synthesize and relate knowledge from personal and collaborative experience to make and receive art. They will relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

UTAH CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

SL4-12: Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically with pertinent descriptions, fact and details to accentuate main ideas or themes.

SL4-12: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-to-others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

- **Comprehension and Collaboration**
 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas, and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
 2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
 3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

UTAH CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

SS3-1: Describe the responsibilities and rights of individuals in a representative government as well as in the school and community.

SS4-3: Determine human rights and responsibilities in the world. Identify rights considered essential for all humans. Propose steps individual students can take to protect these rights (e.g. support for sister schools, energy and resource conservation, letter writing, career choices, fundraising efforts).

NATIONAL FILM STUDY STANDARDS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL BY THE FILM FOUNDATION

Standard 1.0—Film Language

Standard 2.0—Historical and Cultural Contexts

Standard 3.0—Production and Creative Expression

Standard 4.0—Viewers' Response and Aesthetic Valuing

Standard 5.0—Cross-Curricular Connections



Curated Film • Media Education • Artist Support

Utah Film Center utilizes the power of film to educate, inspire, and engage Utahns, transcending political, geographic, cultural, and religious boundaries to highlight human experiences from around the world.

Utah Film Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

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