



#3635

MALCOLM X: MAKE IT PLAIN, PART II

Grade Levels: 9-13+

58 minutes

PBS VIDEO 1993

DESCRIPTION

Part II begins with the 1962 conflict between police and a Nation of Islam mosque in which men were killed. Malcolm began changing his focus from religion to black nationalism. Increased tensions between him and the leader of the Black Muslims led to his separation from the movement. Part II ends with rising animosity between the Muslims and Malcolm. Film clips and personal recollections of family and friends add flavor and impact.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: History

- ◆ Standard: Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns
 - Benchmark: Knows how to impose temporal structure on their historical narratives (e.g., working backward from some issue, problem, or event to explain its causes that arose from some beginning and developed through subsequent transformations over time)
 - Benchmark: Knows how to diagram the temporal structure of events in autobiographies, biographies, literary narratives, and historical narratives, and understands the differences between them
- ◆ Standard: Understands the historical perspective
 - Benchmark: Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history
 - Benchmark: Analyzes the influence specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history
 - Benchmark: Knows different types of primary and secondary sources and the motives, interests, and bias expressed in them (e.g., eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photographs; magazine articles, newspaper accounts, hearsay)

- Benchmark: Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history
- Benchmark: Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs
- ◆ Standard: Understands the struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties
 - Benchmark: Understands the development of the civil rights movement
 - Benchmark: Understands the involvement of diverse groups in the civil rights movement

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Introduce students to the civil rights movement and the times in which Malcolm X lived. Encourage students to share what they know about the philosophies and leadership of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. What is the source of this information? If possible, devote part of your classroom to books, pictures, and memorabilia related to Malcolm X and the civil rights movement.
2. Before viewing, discuss the concept of nationalism with your students. Ask them what the word nationalism means to them? Keeping that definition of nationalism in mind, what do they think Black Nationalism is?
3. While viewing, have students look for information that confirms or refutes what they think they know about Malcolm X. Also have them look for information about Malcolm's definition of Black Nationalism.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Who speaks for Malcolm in the film? Do you think the filmmaker allows him to speak for himself? Cite examples.
2. How was Malcolm influenced by the events of his childhood and the times in which he lived? What role did religion play in shaping Malcolm's view at different times during his life?
3. Malcolm pursued black civil liberties and black empowerment by "any means necessary." Noting that black men had been trained and used to fight violent wars abroad, Malcolm argued:



"If it is wrong to be violent defending black women and black children and black babies and black men, then it is wrong for America to draft us and make us violent abroad in defense of her. And if it is right for America to draft us, and teach us how to be violent in defense of her, then it is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country."

- a. What does this quote mean to you?
 - b. How does this quote make you feel? Why?
 - c. Who is promoting this message today?
 - d. Do you agree with this message?
4. Malcolm X promoted Black Nationalism rather than the integration of blacks into white America. Describing Black Nationalism, he explained:

"The political philosophy of Black Nationalism means that the black community should control the politics and the politicians in his own community. The economic philosophy of Black Nationalism is pure and simple. It means we should control the economy of our community. The social philosophy of Black Nationalism means that we have to get together and remove the evils, the vices, alcoholism, drug addiction, and other evils that are destroying the fiber of our community."

- a. What problems do you think Malcolm is trying to correct with this philosophy?
 - b. Do these problems still exist today?
 - c. What do you think his vision of Black Nationalism would look like?
 - d. Is this philosophy translatable to other communities? Why or why not?
5. Think about the separatist goal of Black Nationalists. Do you think it is a good idea to promote groups or organizations that exclude some in an effort to support and bolster others? (For example, schools for African American boys or all-women universities.) Study the groups within your school in the cafeteria during lunch or in the halls between classes. How and why are they formed? How are they identified? Who is helped and who is hurt by the separatism reflected in these groups? Have you ever wanted to break down the walls between these groups? Why or why not? How would you go about it? What would be the consequences?
6. What did Malcolm X accomplish while he was alive? What has his legacy and the renewed interest in him accomplished since his death?
7. Why do you think there is so much focus on Martin Luther King, Jr., in discussions of the civil rights movement and so little on Malcolm X or other Black Nationalists?



Applications and Activities

1. List the different primary sources used in the film (examples include family members, colleagues, news footage). Are all sources equally reliable? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each? Then read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Compare Malcolm's description of his life and philosophy with the perspective offered by family and friends in the film.
2. Imagine Malcolm X were speaking to the students in your school. What would he say about the conditions of your lives and your community? What would he urge you to do? In groups, write the speech you believe Malcolm X would give and present it to classmates. (If students are familiar with Martin Luther King, Jr., they could also write the speech they believe he would give and compare it with Malcolm's.)
3. James Baldwin believed individuals should take responsibility for righting the wrongs in their own lives and society. Write the following quote on the board:
"The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it—at no matter what the risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change."
4. Think about the community in which you live. In what ways would you like it to be different? In groups, choose one issue and develop an action plan to bring about change. Allow yourselves two weeks to implement at least one component of your plan. Keep a journal throughout this project in which you document your actions, record your feelings, and assess the results of your actions.

SUMMARY

More than anyone else in the 1960s, this Black Muslim leader expressed the anger, the struggle, and the insistence of black people on human dignity. But who was he?

Growing up in Omaha, he was Malcolm Little, the son of a minister who was an organizer for Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. As a young man in Roxbury and Harlem, he was known as "Detroit Red," a hustler, drug pusher, pimp, and thief. He emerged from prison Malcolm X, the fiery, eloquent spokesman for Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam. Finally, he became El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, who returned from Mecca with a broader understanding of the Muslim faith and a willingness to accept white allies.

In 1965, under attack from the Nation of Islam and under surveillance by the FBI, Malcolm X was assassinated while delivering a speech. This two-hour production is the definitive film biography of a complex man whose ideas continue to affect our society.

RELATED RESOURCES

Captioned Media Program

- From the Ku Klux Klan to the Black Panthers #2561
- Malcolm X #2311



- Malcolm X: Make It Plain, Part I #3634
- Malcolm X: Make It Plain, Part III #3636
- Rosa Parks: The Path to Freedom #3654
- We Shall Overcome: A History of the Civil Rights Movement #2695

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **BLACK HISTORY PAGE**

<http://members.aol.com/klove01/malcomsp.htm>

Multimedia presentation of photographs, speeches, and the eulogy of Malcolm. Visual presentation. Audio (.wav) files are not captioned.

- **OFFICIAL SITE FOR MALCOLM X**

<http://www.cmgww.com/historic/malcolm/index.html>

The official site for Malcolm X. Choose from "Biography," "Eulogy," "Quotes," and "Highlights" tabs. View the extensive bibliography for further research.

- **CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE AND ACTIVITIES OF MALCOLM X**

<http://www.brothermalcolm.net/mxtimeline.html#nineteen>

This comprehensive time line covers details in the life of Malcolm X from 1919 through 1966. Month, date, and year in chronological order. Explicit coverage.

- **THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X**

<http://www.datacomm.ch/mschilling/malcolm.html>

Nicely organized reflective writing from a Swiss student. Essay details Malcolm X's biography written by Alex Haley. Provides students with a strong example for project or personal research. Discussion includes the authors' intentions and themes, the structure and style of the writing itself, and more.

- **BIO SKETCH OF THE HONORABLE MINISTER LOUIS FARRAKHAN**

<http://www.noi.org/mlf-bio.html>

Biographical sketch of Louis Farrakhan, Nation of Islam leader and controversial figure in the opposition of Malcolm X in later years. Brief historical chronology. Beliefs. Ideology. Dedication to the cause. Current achievements and contributions. Address for contact.