



Cinema/Chicago Education Program Screening : *My Good Enemy*

Director : Oliver Ussing

90 minutes

In Danish with subtitles. Not rated

**Please use the below synopsis, study ideas and questions, and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students in the audience are required to respond to the screening with a one page essay that is sent to Cinema/Chicago. \***

### **Synopsis**

Sensitive 12-year-old Alf is the low man on his class's totem pole, and he's sick of it. Forming a secret alliance with another student who has also grown weary of being bullied, he hatches a plan to throw a wrench into the well-oiled gears of the school social order. Everything seems to go according to plan, until Alf discovers that turning the tables on his tormentors has its own dire consequences.

### **Study Ideas/Questions**

1. In the beginning of the film Alf's foot is injured by a group of kids from school. Why do you think Alf chooses not to tell his mother what happened when she asks how he was hurt?
2. How are students bullied in the film? Discuss the acts of bullying portrayed in the film (verbal, physical, emotional). How do you feel about these acts? What type of bullying acts do you see in your community?
3. How does Alf relate to the graphic novel, *Niccolo*? What does Alf take from story and apply to his own life? Do you have anything you relate to your life? - Perhaps books, music, film, or other forms of art? How does having something to relate to help you in your life?
4. What do Alf and Toke sacrifice/give up to get the bullies off their back?
5. How are the popular students portrayed in the film? How do you define popularity or being cool? Why do think the negative behavior of the students in the film rewards them with popularity? Do you think the other students really like them? Do you think they also fear them? Why or why not? Why do you think people bully others?
6. Have you ever witnessed or been a victim of bullying? How would you handle being bullied?
7. Why do you think the kids in the film don't go to their parents or teachers for help? Do you think the parents and teachers are to blame for not noticing what is going on with the kids? What are the reactions and actions of adults in your community of school regarding violence?
8. "Gather an army" is one of the club rules enforced in the film based on the graphic novel the boys use as their guide. How do Alf and Toke do this? How does this notion go wrong?
9. Black wristbands are worn by new the group of bullies. Why do they wear them? What does this symbol mean to those outside of the group?
10. Discuss your own answers to the question that Alf proposed to Toke – "What would you do with the last minute of your life?" What was Toke's answer? How does his answer change by the end of the film?

11. How does Alf and Toke's relationship begin? What becomes of their relationship by the end of the film? How have your friendships changed over time? Discuss what types of things you have noticed that have changed people in your life (family changes, moving, changes in jobs, sports, religion).
12. If Alf and Toke didn't start the club, what do you think would have happened? What should they have done instead? How does someone stop bullying? Research anti-bullying/gang groups in your community and/or Chicago. Does your school have resources for those being bullied?
13. Alf has a friend, Tilde. He wants to pursue a friendship with her, but is stopped by Toke. Discuss how you feel about this. Would you stop being friends with someone because another friend told you to? Explain.

### **Useful websites**

<http://tigger.uic.edu/~schewepa/SUN.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niccol%C3%B2\\_Machiavelli](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niccol%C3%B2_Machiavelli)

<http://www.cinemachicago.org/education/>

\*Teachers who do not facilitate the completion of this requirement will not be invited to attend future Education Program Screenings