



Otelo Burning

Film Study Guide

Director: Sara Blecher

2011 | Fiction | 95 Minutes | South Africa | English, Zulu | Unrated

<https://www.facebook.com/OteloBurningMovie>

Synopsis: In the tumultuous South Africa of the late 1980s, young Otelo looks for freedom wherever he can find it. When he and his friends are introduced to surfing, they swiftly take to the sport, a welcome reprieve from pressures both societal and parental. As the group rises in skill and fame, tensions and egos inevitably develop, further flamed by Otelo's romantic interest in his friend's sister and the escalating political conflicts around them.

Post-Screening Discussion Questions

1. Research the history of Apartheid in South Africa. How are the characters in *Otelo Burning* impacted by apartheid?
2. One of the characters in the film says "Freedom costs blood." Why does he say this, and how is it true for the characters in the film and throughout the history of South Africa?
3. Otelo finds a kind of freedom through surfing. What does freedom mean to you, and how is it achieved?
4. Mandla Grows jealous of Otelo. Why is he jealous, and how does he deal with his jealousy? What choices does Mandla make and what would you do differently in his situation?
5. How are the friendships portrayed in the film strengthened and tested?

6. Research and/or read the William Shakespeare play Othello. What similarities do you see between Otelo Burning and Othello?
7. The soundtrack is important to the film. How can music help create an emotion, feeling or point of view of a film?
8. Who was your favorite character in the film and why?
9. The director of the film worked with young South African actors who were not alive during Apartheid. How do you think being in the film influenced their perception of their history and the conflict in their home?
10. Otelo has a strong passion for surfing. What are you passionate about and how does it take you away from the problems, challenges and conflicts in your family, school or community?

Useful Link:

Information about Apartheid <http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheid/u/Apartheid.-4-D.htm>