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AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

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EmpathyLab

MUHAMMAD KHAN WALK IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES



BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

GET IN THE ZONE!

In his film, Muhammad talks about how 'relationships are central to the plot in *Kick the Moon* and that 'these relationships can largely be categorised as good ones and bad ones.'

As a class, discuss whether it is always easy to define relationships as 'good' or 'bad'? Why is it important to recognise bad relationships?

Then, ask students to play a game of word association in pairs. The first topic is 'good relationships'. Spend a few minutes taking it in turns to come up with nouns, verbs, adjectives, and phrases that they associate with good relationships. Ask the class to feedback some

of their most interesting ideas. Ask students to then do the same for 'bad relationships'.

Go back to the two initial starter questions; can students elaborate more on how they categorise good and bad relationships and why this is important?

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

Taken from pages 47–49 of Kick the Moon (you can download the extract at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses/walk-in-someone-elses-shoes).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Muhammad use humour at the beginning of the extract? Give examples.
2. What do we learn about Shaista's character from her dialogue and body language on page 47?
3. What does 'haram' mean? Why would 'posting nudes' be deemed haram on page 47?
4. On page 48, how and why does Shaista use the situation to manipulate Ilyas and Amma?
5. How would you describe the relationship Ilyas has with his sister on pages 47–49?
6. Why can relationships with our siblings be particularly difficult sometimes?
7. What do we learn about Ilyas through his drawings on page 49? Highlight key words.
8. Why do you think he hasn't shown his comic to his friends since Year 9?

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: TOXIC MASCULINITY

Muhammad explains that Ilyas joins a gang hoping this will protect him – but this is a ‘big mistake’. Ilyas ends up being bullied more than ever and is pressured into doing things he doesn’t want to do.

- As a class, discuss what the term ‘toxic masculinity’ means? What examples of toxic masculinity does Muhammad give in the film?
- Sketch the outline of a young man and use arrows and speech bubbles to label and annotate your sketch with other examples of toxic masculinity. What pressures do young men feel in society? For example, you might note down that there is a lot of pressure on young men to be big and muscular. Or, inside the head of your outline, you might write ‘not showing emotion’ as an example of negative behaviour a young man might exhibit due to toxic masculinity.

ACTIVITY 2: FORBIDDEN RELATIONSHIPS

Muhammad explains that as well as his relationships with his mother and teacher, Ilyas has another ‘positive relationship’ with a girl called Kelly. She is part of a ‘clique of posh, rich girls’ who also bully her.

- Muhammad describes how Kelly is bullied about ‘her weight’, ‘her appearance’, and about ‘wanting to be a fantasy book author’. He also sees evidence of ‘subtle racism’ too. Get into pairs of one girl and one boy. Talk about the ways in which Kelly experiences a kind of toxic femininity. What parallels does this have with the toxic masculinity that Ilyas faces? Consider: why is their friendship forbidden?
- Then, swap genders in your pairs so that the boy plays Kelly and the girl, Ilyas. Roleplay a conversation at the end of a tough day at school in which you both confide in each other about how you’re feeling. Try to go into as much detail as possible and show empathy in your role.

ACTIVITY 3: MY DREAM

Muhammad explains that Ilyas ‘wants to be a comic book artist’; however, he faces many barriers to achieving his dream because everyone ‘seems to see him as a loser’ or tries to ‘manipulate him.’

- Write a reflection about your dream, or something you would like to do or become one day. How have the issues of good/bad relationships, toxic masculinity/femininity, bullying, empathy for others and your feelings shaped your identity and your dreams? Who or what has helped you? Who or what stands in your way? How can you overcome these barriers and challenges?
- In your writing, give examples of what you have learnt from Muhammad’s story and your work today. Also, consider what advice you would give to other young people who have their own dreams.

SHARE A STORY

What books have you read where the relationship between two characters is integral to the plot? What is your favourite fictional relationship and why? Describe your favourite fictional relationship to a friend or family member. Is it good or bad? How does the relationship develop? How does it resonate with you?

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU from Muhammad Khan...

Imagine that you walk into school and there is an image or video of you being passed around that is ‘super embarrassing’. Use this idea as inspiration for the start of your own story. Muhammad advises you to think about ‘the situation’ and ‘the picture’ and to expand on this. Share your ideas with your classmates.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more brilliant Masterclass films and resources featuring amazing authors and illustrators over at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses. Don’t miss out, download them today!