

# DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

16 October – 3 November 2010



## Teacher's Resource - Neukölln Unlimited

Created by Secondary Teacher Martin Gibbons  
Curriculum for Excellence, S5-6 Social Studies (Modern Studies)

Scotland's International Film Festival for Young Audiences  
[discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk](http://discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk)

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## Neukölln Unlimited

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Prepared for Discovery Film Festival 2010 by Martin Gibbons, August 2010

Using the *Neukölln Unlimited* documentary to introduce Social Studies experiences and key citizenship themes and concepts to Modern Studies pupils.





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## Neukölln Unlimited

### Synopsis

Hassan (18), Lial (19) and Maradona (14) live with their mother in the Berlin suburb of Neukölln. The family, who were originally from Lebanon, have lived in Germany for 18 years, yet despite this they have already been deported once and have failed to receive a residency permit for the family.

The documentary filmmakers Agostino Imondi and Dietmar Ratsch follow them as they struggle with their fight to stay in Germany and battle the psychological effects of their uncertain future and the constant threat of deportation.

In the absence of his father, Hassan takes on the responsibility to provide for the family, and despite still being in school he works to support the family as a dance teacher and professional dancer. Whilst undertaking an apprenticeship Lial uses music and dance to make a contribution to the family income required to ensure their residency, and also to express her emotions and feelings about the situation they find themselves in.

Maradona is the problem child. He is regularly suspended from school and the challenges and issues the family face lead to him becoming torn between working hard to win a 'SuperTalent' competition to raise funds to support his family and accepting a future where he fails to achieve success in school and becomes involved in gangs and crime.



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## Film Info

Length: 96 minutes

Language: German/English audio with English Subtitles

Country: Germany

Directors: Agostino Imondi and Dietmar Ratsch

Parental/Teachers Guide: Suitable for S4-S6 pupils (approx 15+)

Some strong/sexual language used. However it is used in context by the young people in the movie to express their attitudes and emotions towards the challenges they face.

## Curriculum Links

This documentary can be linked to many experiences and outcomes within the Social Studies curriculum area of Curriculum for Excellence. Many of the experiences and outcomes highlighted below could be introduced through discussion of the key issues in the discussion points (Section 3) or by completing the follow up exercises (Section 4) Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes in Literacy can also be addressed through the activities laid out in this guide.

## People in Society, Economy and Business

*I can explain why a group I have identified might experience inequality and can suggest ways in which this inequality might be addressed.*

**SOC 3-16a**

*I can contribute to a discussion on the extent to which people's needs should be met by the state or the individual.*

**SOC 4-16a**

*I can analyse the factors contributing to the development of a multicultural society and can express an informed view on issues associated with this.*

**SOC 4-16c**

*I have compared the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Scotland with a contrasting society and can describe and begin to understand reasons for differences.*

**SOC 3-17a**

*I can discuss the extent to which my choices and decisions are influenced by the ways in which I am informed.*

**SOC 3-17b**

*I can evaluate the impact which decision making bodies have on the lives of people in Scotland or elsewhere.*

**SOC 4-18a**

## **Citizenship Themes**

This documentary can also be used to promote awareness of some of the key citizenship themes in Modern Studies as highlighted by Learning and Teaching Scotland:

- **Appreciation of Diversity**
- **Equalities**
- **Global Citizenship**

(<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/citizenship/creativeteaching/subjects/modernstudies/themes.asp>)





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## Pre-Viewing Lesson

Prior to viewing the documentary, a short introductory “lesson starter” discussion could be undertaken using the film’s trailer. The trailer is available on the *Neukölln Unlimited* website.

(<http://www.neukoelln-unlimited.de/>)

## Learning Intentions

1. To introduce the students to the documentary subject matter and themes.
2. To prepare students for a ‘focused’ viewing of the documentary.

## Activity

**Watch the trailer with your students – 2 minutes**

**Group discussion – 5 minutes**

Once all the young people have viewed the trailer split them into groups of around four to six pupils. Ask them to discuss their initial thoughts about what they think the film might be about. Suggest that they think about the following questions.

Where is the movie set?

Who are the main characters/individuals we will be following?

What are your first impressions about the individual personalities of the individuals in the documentary?

What problem do the individuals face?

How do you think they might try and solve this problem?

### **Class Discussion – 5-10 minutes**

Following the class discussion allow the groups to feedback their opinions and views on the trailer to the class as a whole.

### **Watch the trailer again. Discussion – 15 minutes**

During the second viewing stop the trailer at significant points to highlight important points/themes being shown. Reinforce the key points already discussed by the students and pick up any areas they may not have discussed.

Eg. “Potato Party” – stereotype of German obsession with potatoes.  
Introducing characters, music and break dancing.  
Introducing the Citizenship problem. Refusal from Senator for Interior.  
If they can self finance they can stay.  
Hassan and Lial taking responsibility for the family.  
Hassan explaining why it is dangerous to return to Lebanon.  
Maradona in pro-Palestine rally.  
Maradona and Hassan discussing responsibilities.  
Tensions and effect of problem on relationships.  
“It’s like a trauma. You don’t want to lose everything at once.”

Give the students a copy of the statements page from the *Neukölln Unlimited* Press Kit.  
(Page 6)

Ask them to discuss these quotations with a partner.

What do they think they mean?

Do they give us any further information about the individual characters introduced in the trailer?

Give the students a copy of the synopsis page from the *Neukölln Unlimited* Press Kit (page 4).

Read through the synopsis in preparation for watching the documentary.

Prepare the students for their viewing by highlighting the three key stages in the documentary:

**Stage 1. “Introducing”.** The characters and issues are introduced to the viewer and the initial problems/conflicts are identified.

**Stage 2. “The Struggle”.** The characters work to overcome the problem. How do they try and overcome the problems they face? Do they take responsibility? Who do they blame for the situation they are in? What do they do about it?

**Stage 3. “The Solution?”** The characters come up with their solution and it remains to be seen during the viewing if they will be successful.

Have the students in each group decide which of the three characters they will take notes on during the viewing of the film. (e.g 6 students in a group would allow 2 students per character.)

They should ensure that their notes include information about their character's views and attitudes about these themes/issues.

### **Immigration Issues**

The reasons for immigration

The problems the family must overcome

The threat of deportation and the affect this has on the family members

### **Identity and Nationality**

What is meant by homeland?

Language barriers

Integration issues

### **Socio-economic issues**

Living on a low income

Living conditions

Meeting the needs of the family

## **Activity to be Carried Out While Viewing**

### **Learning Intentions:**

1. To view the documentary *Neukölln Unlimited*.
2. To develop note-taking skills and the ability to summarise information from a moving image resource.
3. To develop knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by immigrant families in Germany/the EU.

### **Activity**

Each pupil should be given one of the worksheets about their chosen character before the film.

After watching the documentary they should note down the key information regarding their chosen individual and comment on the attitudes and opinions expressed by the protagonist.



## Neukölln Unlimited Viewing Activity Sheet One: Hassan

**Name:**

**Age:**

**Relatives/Siblings:**



**Immigration Status:**

**Occupation and Pastimes:**

**Describe this characters personality and their opinions and attitudes with regards to the key themes of the documentary.  
(Do they change as the film progresses?)**

**What role does this character play in trying to solve their immigration problem?**

**To what extent does this character achieve success in their goals?**

**Other information:**

**Be prepared to share your notes with your class**

## Neukölln Unlimited Viewing Activity Sheet Two: Lial

**Name:**

**Age:**

**Relatives/Siblings:**



**Immigration Status:**

**Occupation and Pastimes:**

**Describe this characters personality and their opinions and attitudes with regards to the key themes of the documentary.  
(Do they change as the film progresses?)**

**What role does this character play in trying to solve their immigration problem?**

**To what extent does this character achieve success in their goals?**

**Other information:**

**Be prepared to share your notes with your class**



## Neukölln Unlimited Viewing Activity Sheet Three: Maradona

**Name:**

**Age:**

**Relatives/Siblings:**



**Immigration Status:**

**Occupation and Pastimes:**

**Describe this characters personality and their opinions and attitudes with regards to the key themes of the documentary.  
(Do they change as the film progresses?)**

**What role does this character play in trying to solve their immigration problem?**

**To what extent does this character achieve success in their goals?**

**Other information:**

**Be prepared to share your notes with your class**

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## Post-Viewing Activities

### Learning Intentions

1. To share information and notes with peers.
2. To participate in a discussion about the key themes and issues raised by the film *Neukölln Unlimited*.
3. To develop your knowledge and understanding of the problems faced by immigrant families in Germany and the European Union and the issues that arise as a result.

### Suggested Activities

If the aim is to discuss the issues and themes in depth then all the activities could be attempted over a number of lessons once the students have returned to the classroom. If the scenes from the film that are selected below are available to prompt discussion then they can be used effectively to stimulate discussion and debate on the issues they raise.

### Activity One: Note-Sharing

In groups the students should discuss the information and notes they have taken about the individual they chose to follow in the film.

They can either do this by bringing together all the students who looked at one particular individual and then as a group presenting their information about the character to the class as a whole for the other students to complete their worksheet.

or

Groups could be the same as in the pre-viewing activities and each student could be given the other two worksheets to complete during this discussion.

Once every student has a full set of information then class discussions could be led by the teacher/or individual pupils.

### Activity Two: Discussion Points

This documentary film tackles a number of challenging issues and themes related to immigration, nationality and the integration of groups within Germany and the European Union. It also touches on a wide number of other issues including the Middle East and religious fundamentalism.

## Possible Discussion Prompts

### Sterotyping

German Citizenship – Potato Party

What is a stereotype?

Lebanese? Middle Eastern? German? Scottish? British?



### Living Conditions

Living on a low income?

Compare conditions to your own.

What issues and problems might arise from overcrowding?



### Being Deported Part 1

Aim for empathy.

What would it be like to be forced to leave your home?

What psychological affects could this have?



### The Reading of the Letter

What is the problem facing the family?

Who takes responsibility for it?

Who is responsible in your family?

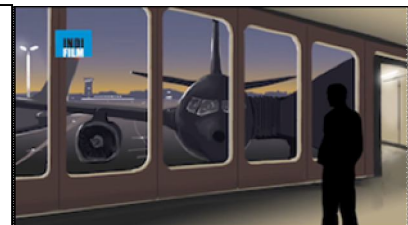
What would you do?



### Being Deported Part 2

How would you feel being flown out of your country?

How would you feel if you had lost everything or could do at a moments notice?



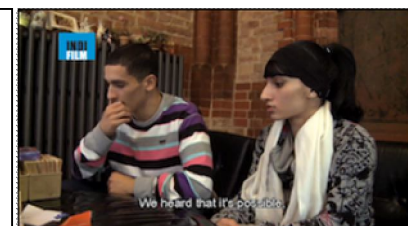
### Asylum Counselling

What is the possible solution?

Who is taking responsibility for the family?

Who do you think should be responsible for the family?

Individual? Government?



### Confronting the Senator

What are the arguments put forward by Hassan and the Senator?

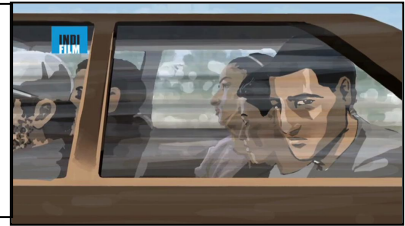
What are your views on immigration? When is it right to allow immigrants to stay? When might it be right to deport?





### What is Home? Angry Hassan!

What nationality do you consider yourself to be? Why?  
Do you expect to be deported? Why not?  
Why is Hassan so angry? Would you be?



### Budgeting

Who is responsible for the bills in your home?  
What are their living costs compared to the UK? Could you manage?



### Maradona and the Gang

What causes Maradona to become more involved with the gang?  
Why do young people behave like this?  
Do you think this happens often? Why?



### Pressure Starts to Show

Why do the family members begin arguing?  
Is this to be expected?



### Palestine Protest (PAGE 17)

"I'm Muslim Don't Panik"  
Discuss this slogan in class.  
(See page 17 for further details and sources of information for discussing this topic)



### Brotherly Debate

Maradona has a choice to make?  
Does anyone have similar decisions to make?  
Who is responsible for Maradona's issues?  
Who should try to change the situation?



### A Solution?

How successful have the family been?  
How would you tackle the problem if you were facing something similar?



## Palestine Protest - Teaching the Middle East crisis

This is a very complex area to teach if you are not confident in your own knowledge and understanding of the situation.

The BBC website has an excellent Middle East section including country profiles and special reports about conflicts and events in recent years.

([http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle\\_east/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle_east/))

The American Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) website provides an excellent in depth site for researching this topic with numerous video clips which are suitable for use in class.

(<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/index.html>)

In particular this site covers some of the stereotypes that might crop up when discussing this topic with students in a classroom situation.

(<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/questions/index.html>)

Lesson Plans are available on line to give students a basic grounding in the tensions and conflicts in the Middle East region. Some of the best are found at the following websites:

WORLDPEACE

([http://worldpeace.org.au/peace\\_in\\_the\\_middle\\_east.asp](http://worldpeace.org.au/peace_in_the_middle_east.asp))

The CIA World Factbook is a very good place to start for basic information about the countries involved. Lebanon is available at this link.

(<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html>)

Discussion points that could be used with the class include:

- “I’m Muslim Don’t Panik” What is meant by this slogan? Why does Maradona choose to wear it?
- Why are there Palestinian protests against Israel?
- What drives people towards becoming militant in their protests against what they perceive to be injustices?
- What are the reasons for Hassan’s anger towards Israel and the German government?
- Why does he compare his experiences and those of the Lebanese people to the Holocaust?
- What is anti-Semitism? Is Hassan being anti-Semitic or is he justified in his anger towards Israelis?