

Roots & Wings

A Letter to Educators Committed to Diversity

In this global environment the need for students to understand and appreciate diversity is a new challenge that educators face. Thus, it is my pleasure to introduce *Roots & Wings*, a 30 minute award-winning documentary on the struggles and spirit of young Sikhs in America to your school. The film questions the notion of forced assimilation into the American “melting pot.” It explores the idea of whether one has to cut off one’s roots in order to soar high on one’s wings. Angad Singh, the teenage director reveals how Sikh youth face challenges on account of their unique identity that is widely misunderstood in the U.S.A.

This film speaks to anybody who faces challenges on account of being “different,” whether visibly or ideologically. The film persuades students to expand their horizons and think beyond stereotypes.

The Lesson Plan: Ms. Shelby Steinhauer, a French teacher in Atlanta, GA built a 3-hour curriculum around the documentary. Spread over three to five days, she achieved tremendous success in engaging her students in a constructive dialogue around “*What does being an American mean in today’s multicultural society?*”

Feedback from the students revealed that 99% of them felt that their school system does not do enough to promote multicultural diversity. Letters from students following the curriculum revealed that a tremendous shift in their thinking had taken place. The students seemed more open and compassionate to others from different cultures and to individuals of different mindsets.

Ms. Steinhauer’s lesson plan is included. This plan can be customized and can be applied: in the context of bullying, cultural exchange, foreign language study, world history, social sciences, world religions or other areas of relevance.

I request the educators to please share their experience of this film with the world community. Photographs of the screening, letters to the filmmaker, individual and collective responses will inspire other schools to take a step in this direction.

For more information please visit the *Educators* section at www.onelight-films.com

Sincerely,
Inni Kaur

Sikh Education & Cultural Foundation

*"An honest thought-provoking documentary by a teenager
– A must for educators committed to diversity"*
Inni Kaur
Sikh Education & Cultural Foundation

*"Provides educators the opportunity to begin a much needed
discussion on what it means to be an American in today's
multicultural society"*
Shelby Steinhauer
French Teacher, Alpharetta, GA

*"Meet a gifted, young filmmaker and agent for change, creating a
kinder, more compassionate world through filmmaking"*
Dr. Mary Gervase
Sun Valley Spiritual Film Festival

For class room screening and lesson plan please contact:
rootsandwingsthemovie@gmail.com

Directed and Produced by: Angad Singh www.onelight-films.com

IFFF
INTERNATIONAL FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL
WINNER

Official Selection
BRECKENRIDGE
FESTIVAL OF FILM

International Youth Film Festival
SELECTION

OFFICIAL SELECTION
NIFTY 09
NATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2008 New York National Film Festival

Roots & Wings
A Sikh-American Teen's Quest

Does one have to cut off their roots in order to soar high on their wings?

By the award-winning director of *One Light*

Best Educational Student Film 2009

Designed by Jasmeen Rekhi | www.jasmeenrekhi.com

Some student comments from Root & Wings workshop at Milton High School, GA include:

- *"Roots & Wings really opened my eyes to the other people out there. It made me think about how hard they have to work to make other people accept them, and treat them like 'normal' people. I think your movie will help me think about how I think of other people who may look different, but are really not so different on the inside."*
- *"Your documentary really got me thinking about how I, myself, and others do not realize that discrimination is not just happening on a larger scale, like with war and genocide, but on a smaller scale with things like name-calling."*
- *"I love how real the kids were [in the movie] and how relevant not only the questions, but the answers were to everyday life."*
- *"I was not raised to judge by appearances, but your film has opened my eyes even more."*
- *"It's extremely important that they're to be more education in terms of culture and religion because much of our prejudices and stereotypes are a result of ignorance. Teachers especially should be made aware, since they have so much influence on students."*
- *"Your documentary really helped open my eyes to how others treat who they believe are 'outsiders.' I learned about Sikhs and about their religion and I will no longer feel unsafe around people like the Sikhs and I will not mistake them for terrorists."*
- *"This video was really cool and taught me a lot. It really made me want to learn as much as I can about different religions."*

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