



Welcome

Synopsis



Bilal, a young 17-year-old Kurdish boy, has traveled through the Middle East and Europe to join his girlfriend, who recently immigrated to England. His journey comes to an abrupt end when he is stopped on the French side of the Channel. Having decided to swim across the Channel, Bilal goes to the local swimming pool to train. There he meets Simon, a swimming instructor in the midst of a divorce. To impress his wife and win back her heart, Simon decides to risk everything by taking Bilal under his wing.

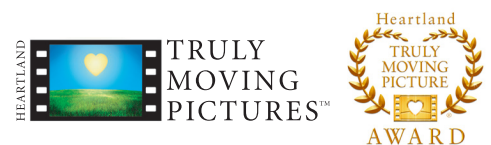
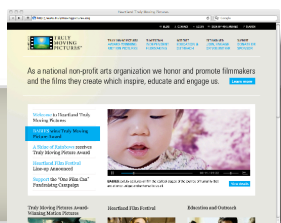
Discussion Questions

- *Welcome* is a film that explores the impact of French immigration laws on refugees and French citizens alike. How did the subject matter of this film impact you? Did it open your eyes to an issue about which you were not already aware?
- Think of both Bilal and Simon, a refugee and a French citizen respectively. How did these immigration laws impact each person individually?
- More than just a story about immigration, *Welcome* is a film that explores two love stories. How did the love stories help move the story forward and help act as a way of exposing the true impact of the immigration laws?
- The love stories in *Welcome* are powerful and tragic. How did these stories speak to you personally? Have you ever known love in the way that either Simon or Bilal experienced it?
- Bilal was up against more than immigration laws as he sought to get closer to his girlfriend. He was also fighting the boundaries her family set up around her. How would this film have been different if Bilal's girlfriend's family had been accepting of Bilal?



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Do Your Research

- To get a better sense of the setting of the story and to fully comprehend what both Simon and Bilal were up against, research French immigration laws. You can start with L622-1 to get started.
- Bilal attempts to swim across the English Channel from France to Great Britain. Research people who have crossed it in the past, whether as refugees or record setters. After researching the distance, the temperature of the water and the overall difficulty of the feat, do you have a different appreciation of the story told in *Welcome*?

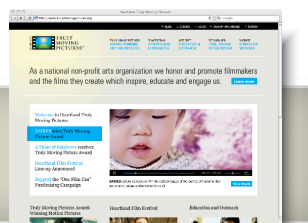
Get Involved

- At first Simon sees Bilal as someone whom he can help in order to demonstrate to his ex-wife that he is not as selfish and preoccupied with his own life as he seemed. Throughout the course of the film, though, this relationship with Bilal becomes real and Simon comes to truly care for him. Simon demonstrates the importance of mentorship and friendship, however rocky the relationship first begins. How can you be a mentor and have positive impact in someone's life? Visiting Mentoring.org to get started.
- If you were impacted by the immigration laws in this film, consider being an advocate for change. Whether in France or in the place that most directly impacts you, write your politicians and research other ways to impact legislation.



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