

Ayiti Images Production

*La Belle Vie:*  
**THE GOOD LIFE**  
BY RACHELLE SALNAVE



MODULE 6TH-8TH GRADE STUDENTS

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For this curriculum module, students will engage in a comprehensive exploration of the film ***La Belle Vie: The Good Life*** over 3-4 class sessions, each lasting 45-60 minutes.

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# ABOUT THE FILM



**Logline:**

When one filmmaker comes to terms with her own Haitian identity, she discovers a new generation rediscovering their roots in the midst of the rebuilding of a nation.

**Synopsis**

**La Belle Vie: The Good Life** is a story of self-discovery as Haitian-American filmmaker; Rachelle Salnave ventures to confront the grace, and simultaneously the unseemliness, of her native ideologies. Born in New York City, but raised by an upper class patriotic Haitian family, forced to flee their island nation in adulthood, Rachelle comes of age in the midst of crossfire between two distinct cultures. The beliefs of her nurturing parents, the products of noble family histories, juxtaposed with the truth of her humble working class reality in Harlem USA, set the stage for an inner conflict that ultimately compels her to search for her own truth. With the proliferation of political turmoil, poverty, and the 5th year anniversary of the Earthquake that shattered the nation; this film in the end documents the filmmaker's burning desire to find a collective of people who manage to share similar identity issues but who turn love for their country as motivation to create change.



# Session 1: Introduction and Viewing

**Start with a story | Duration: 3-4 class sessions  
(45-60 minutes each)**

- Viewing: Watch the entire documentary
- Discussion: Basic comprehension questions (10 minutes):
  - What is the main idea of the film?
  - How did the filmmaker show different parts of Haiti?
- Activity: Divide students into small groups and assign each group a theme (e.g., Identity, Culture, Diaspora). Have them discuss and brainstorm specific examples from the film that relate to their assigned theme. Each group will present their findings to the class.

# Session 2: Deep Dive Discussion

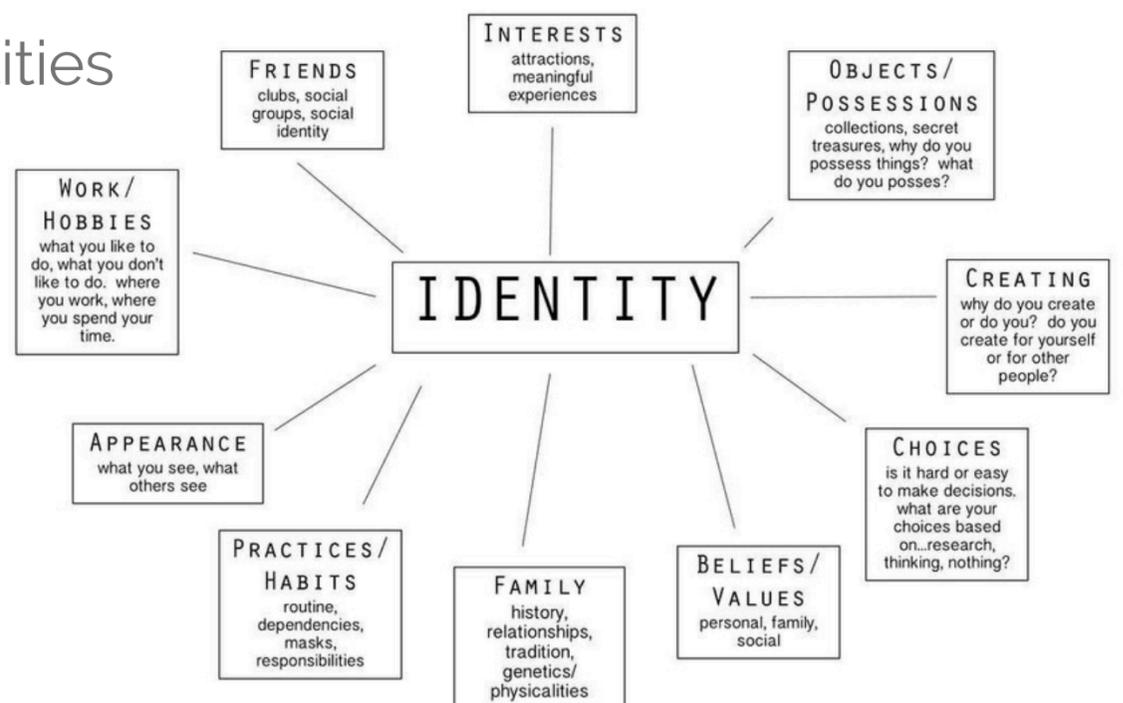
## Discussion Questions (30 minutes):

- How does where you live affect who you are?
- Do you think people who move to new countries still belong to their home countries?



## Activity: (15 minutes)

In small groups, create a mind map of "Identity" and discuss what shapes our identities





# Session 3: Media and Interview Activity

## Record Interviews

- Activity: Working in pairs, students develop questions about heritage and identity (15 minutes).
- Interview Project: Students interview each other and record the interviews on a smartphone or tablet (30 minutes).
- Homework: Edit and prepare the interviews for presentation in the next class.

# Session 4: Presentation and Reflection

## Activity (15 minutes).

- Screen the interviews in class and have a reflective discussion on what was learned (30 minutes).
- Reflection Essay: Write a one-page essay on what students learned about their own identity and others.

## Assessment:

- Quality and thoughtfulness of the interview project and reflection essay.



### **Benefit 1- Encourages Cultural Awareness**

This unit helps students understand and appreciate diverse cultures by exploring themes of identity and diaspora, fostering empathy and respect for different backgrounds.

### **Benefit 2- Promotes Self-Reflection and Identity Exploration:**

Through creative activities and discussions, students are encouraged to reflect on their own heritage and identity, which supports personal growth and a deeper sense of self-awareness.

# What are the benefits of this Curriculum Module?



### **Benefit 3- Enhances Critical Thinking and Communication Skills:**

The module's interactive mind mapping and group discussions improve students' ability to think critically about complex themes and articulate their thoughts clearly with peers.



# About the Director

Rachelle Salnave is a seasoned filmmaker and cultural leader with over 20 years of experience focusing on Black Global stories. Rachelle's career highlights include documenting diverse subjects such as the gentrification of Harlem, the Haitian Guantanamo Bay experience, and Macadamia Nut planting experiments in Guatemala. She was part of the inaugural class of Sundance Institute Screenwriters Intensive Fellows in Miami (2015) and received the "Beacon of Hope and Achievement" award from the General Consulate of the Republic of Haiti. Her second feature documentary, *LA BELLE VIE: THE GOOD LIFE*, earned her an Emmy nomination in 2016. Recognized as a "Knight Arts Champion" by the Knight Foundation in 2017, she is celebrated for her impactful cinematic programming with Ayiti Images and Black Lounge Films. Currently, Rachelle's documentary *MADAME PIPI* is airing on PBS' *REEL SOUTH* season 7.

She served as the Artists Institute Executive Director in Haiti, spearheading impactful initiatives and creating content for high-profile clients to revitalize the institute and empower Jacmel's artistic community. At the Miami Film Festival, she served as a Special Programmer, curating films about the Global African Diaspora focusing on diverse narratives and cultural representation. She recently completed *ART: By Any Means Necessary* as part of the inaugural cohort of the Third Horizon Film Festival and is in post-production on her third feature documentary, *DUAL CITIZEN*.

# *La Belle Vie:* **THE GOOD LIFE** BY RACHELLE SALNAVE

La Belle Vie: The Good Life has been officially nominated as the 2016 Best Cultural Documentary.



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South Florida PBS

**Nominations** The 40th Annual Suncoast Regional Emmy® Awards (2016)

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#### **Awards**

- Beacon of Hope Award – General Consulate of the Republic of Haiti
- Best Content in a Documentary Award-- Boston International Film Festival
- Special Recognition for Directing Award – BlackStar Film Festival
- President of the Jurors – Montreal Black Film Festival
- Best Director Award-- REEL Sisters Film Festival

#### **Film Festivals**

- 23rd Pan African Film Festival (Los Angeles, CA) 2015
- Toronto Black Film Festival 2015
- Africa World Documentary Tour (Nigeria, Barbados, South Africa, Jamaica, Philadelphia) 2015
- Haiti Film Festival | Brooklyn, NY | 2015
- Women's International Film Festival 2015
- BlackStar Film Festival | 2015
- Montreal International Black Film Festival |2015



**2016 EMMY NOMINATED  
DOCUMENTARY**

*La Belle Vie:*  
**THE GOOD LIFE**  
DIRECTED BY RACHELLE SALNAVE



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