

Film Title and Release Date: *Boy* (2010)

Film Length in Minutes: 88 minutes

Film Genre: Comedy

Reviewer Name and Grade: Prisha S. 11th Grade

Date Reviewed: July 27, 2020

This film is narrated by the main character, Boy. It takes place in New Zealand in 1984. Boy is a teenager who lives with several sisters and a brother named Rocky. Their mom died in 1977 at the age of 22, and their father was jailed for robbery many years ago, but managed to escape. Boy is a fanatic of Michael Jackson's music and dance, who he idolizes. Boy deals with bullying and taunting at school, but the school year ends at the beginning of the movie. His paternal grandmother, who lives with the children, leaves for a few days to attend a funeral, so Boy and his siblings are left alone at the house.

One night, a car pulls up to Boy's home with three older men inside. We learn that it's Boy's father named Alamein and his two friends. Together, they form a "gang" called The Crazy Horses. Alamein has substance abuse problems which cause sudden fits of anger. When he stays with the children, he prioritizes his "gang" and not caring for the kids. He tries to make Boy a smaller version of him. Alamein gives Boy a haircut to look like Michael Jackson. Boy soon realizes that his father has an uncanny resemblance to Jackson with his hair, physical features, dancing, and confidence. Boy then looks up to his father. After learning more about him, Boy sees the problems his father faces and how he is not the true Michael Jackson role model he appeared to be. Boy matures and stands up against Alamein. He realizes his true worth and ability to take care of his siblings without the help of his irresponsible father.

How did you find the film on Kanopy?

I found this film by casual browsing on Kanopy.

Did the plot keep you interested?

No, the plot was very hard to follow as the main purpose of the film seemed to vary.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of the film was too slow. The plot did not develop in many places throughout the film.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

This film is appropriate for grades 9 and 10.

Rating: 2 stars: I did not like this film but somebody else might.

I enjoyed the ending to the film where the father and children bond over the loss of their wife/mother, respectively, and how they can relate to each others' grief. However, I did not enjoy the main events of the story. Many parts were unnecessary and confused the main purpose of the movie. It was also very slow at times.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Kylee K., 9th grade

Date Reviewed: July 5, 2022

The film features a 11 years old boy from New Zealand called Alamein but is often referred to as “Boy”. It starts with him doing a presentation and it’s also where the audience learns about the basics of this character: Boy and his little brother, Rocky lives with his aunt and cousins. His best friends are Dallas and her sister Dynasty. And his dad is an amazing person and also “(...) a master carver, deep-sea treasure diver, the captain of the rugby team, and (...) holds the record for lunching out the most people with one hand”. It’s when he sat back down that the audience learns the father is really in jail and has been there for so long that he has never met Boy’s little brother. Later, it’s shown that his mother dies giving birth to Rocky. That night, his dad finally came back and though Boy tells Rocky of how he’s a war hero and how great he is, Rocky fails to see him that way. Throughout the next few days, Boy follows his dad around and starts becoming distant from his cousins and friends while his dad does a number of questionable things including threatening Boy’s bully with violence, giving Boy alcohol, and telling him to call him ”shogun” instead of dad. All of which didn’t bother Boy. He got the first glimpse of how bad his dad really is when he became violence with him for wearing his jacket but later decides to forgive him. This is followed by his dad hitting and killing Boy’s beloved goat, Leaf, with his car. Boy then went to visit his mother’s grave and after, almost drowns himself when he jumped off a bridge. When he went back home, he attacked his dad, telling him that he was never there for him, for any of his family. The next day, Boy wakes up thinking that his dad left when he finds his dad’s gang patch that was on his jacket has now been ripped off and that he glued eyes on a wood carving Boy did of him. The film ends with Boy finding his dad sitting by his mom’s grave.

How did you find the film on Kanopy (by title search, subject search, casual browsing, etc.)?

I found the film by casually browsing in the “coming of age stories” section in the Kanopy app.

Did the plot (for fictional movie) or presentation of information (for documentary) keep you interested?

Yes. I found the plot very interesting and I think the film did a great job incorporating comedy with the plot.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of the film was just right. It was able to effectively capture what it was trying to say and how the relationship between Boy and his father developed throughout the story.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

This film is appropriate for grade levels 6 and up. This is because it contains inappropriate language and potentially triggering scenes.

4 stars: I enjoyed this film and found it worthwhile to watch.

I found this movie to be very good. It was able to establish some pretty solid characters and present a very interesting plot while also having great comedic scenes. The relationship between Boy and his father is depicted fantastically and it’s development at the end of the film was amazingly captured.