

[*Home Is Where You Find It*](#), a BYKids film, directed by Alcides Soares

Rationale:

Home Is Where You Find It

Two renowned filmmakers, Chris Zalla (2007 Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner) and Neal Baer (Executive Producer of *Law & Order: SVU*), went to Maputo, Mozambique in August 2007, to help a child who had lost both parents to AIDS make a film about his life. With Chris and Neal, 16-year-old Alcides Soares learned the art of filmmaking and was able to tell his story as a boy living alone in the world. Alcides' life reflects that of an entire generation of Mozambican children — over 500,000 of them having lost their parents to AIDS.

Chris and Neal spent two weeks teaching Alcides the basics of filmmaking – how to use the camera, a Canon XHA1, and the sound equipment as well as techniques for conducting interviews, shooting scenes and computer editing with Final Cut Pro. The end result is a 27-minute documentary film that reveals the courage of a boy whose faith and ingenuity have enabled him to pull together a home and a sense of family.

Key Concepts

- The human immunodeficiency virus (**HIV**) is the virus that causes HIV infection. If untreated, HIV may cause acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (**AIDS**), the most advanced stage of HIV infection ([NIH](#)).
- People with HIV who are not on medication and do not have consistent control of their HIV can transmit HIV through vaginal or anal sex, sharing of needles, pregnancy, and/or breastfeeding. If HIV is controlled, the risk of transmission is close to zero ([NIH](#)).
- Mozambique has the eighth highest HIV prevalence in the world, with **12.6** percent of adults living with HIV, and one of the highest HIV mortality rates. The country has made strides in testing people for HIV and providing treatment. But a high proportion of HIV-positive individuals discontinue treatment due to systemic challenges: long distances to access health facilities, long wait times in facilities, stigma and ineffective delivery of information about the importance of staying on treatment ([ABT Global](#)).

Featured Individuals

- **Alcides Soares:** director of *Home Is Where You Find It*
- **Voh Voh:** a woman Alcides calls grandmother, though she is not related to him

- **Irenio:** a young man who was orphaned to AIDS who is in charge of his five younger siblings
- **Jeremias Cossa:** a 13 year old who was orphaned to AIDS
- **Alex:** Alcides' younger brother
- **Victoria:** Alcides' sister
- **Alcides' Stepmother**
- **Alcides' Grandparents**

Discussion Questions

1. How did viewing his world through a camera change the way Alcides viewed his neighborhood?
2. Despite losing both his mother and father to AIDS in the last six years, Irenio works hard to provide for his five siblings. What do you admire about this young man?
3. Alcides, Irenio, Jeremias, and other unnamed young people tell heartfelt stories of losing their parents to AIDS. What stands out to you about these stories? What will stick with you?
4. When Alcides asks Victoria what she would like more than anything else, how does she respond?
5. Alcides consoles many of his female relatives, cares for his sick relative, and endures horrors and traumas that are far beyond what a 16-year-old should have to experience. Does he
6. What does Alcides say he would tell his father if he were still alive?
7. Alcides reconnects with his grandparents and his brother, Alex. What stands out to you about this reunion?
8. Photography: Who takes pictures? In this story, who gets to be 'in the frame'? How did both taking photographs and beholding photographs empower and instill hope in these individuals?
9. Irenio is in jail for stealing cell phones: does this seem just or fair? Why might Irenio have stolen cell phones?
10. **Consider the factors that cause the AIDS epidemic to be so prevalent in Mozambique:**

- a. An ongoing armed conflict in Cabo Delgado has ravished the country since 2017 and displaced more than 800k people
- b. Limited access to health care and shortages of antiretroviral (ARV) medications
- c. Shame related to the stigma of being HIV positive causes individuals to discontinue treatment or never seek care ([Doctors Without Borders](#))

Brainstorm: what will it take to address these issues? What could be done to mitigate the spread of HIV, but also to reduce the mortality rate in those who contract the virus?