



# Colorado Book Club Resource

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X AS TOLD TO ALEX HALEY BY MALCOLM X

1. Having read his autobiography, how do you personally feel about Malcolm X and his philosophies about the plight of African Americans. Be sensitive to the fact that there may be a number of members in your group who disagree with his approaches. Keep in mind, too, that many African Americans were opposed to Malcolm X's philosophy.
2. Discuss the role that Ella played in Malcolm's life. Describe her as a person. How was she a positive influence?
3. How did Malcolm get "off track" as a young person? How could he have handled his early years differently?
4. Discuss the role of the welfare workers in the Little family after the death of the father. Were they effective? What would have been some other alternatives that might have been more appropriate for the family?
5. How is hair an expression of oneself? Ask each student to write an essay that expresses why he or she has chosen to wear his or her hair in its current fashion.
6. Many of the people Malcolm X preached to about the Nation of Islam were turned off by the strict code of discipline. How is strict discipline an advantage in developing moral character and fortitude? How is strict discipline a disadvantage?
7. Explain how travel helps a person become more well-rounded.
8. Why are many young people drawn into criminal lifestyles?
9. Compare and contrast Civil Rights as a movement in the 1960s and 1990s. Identify specific situations and events that have shaped civil rights in both time periods.
10. What are the characteristics of a leader? How would you rate Malcolm X as a leader and why?
11. Malcolm X was disappointed by the actions of Elijah Muhammad that were inconsistent with their Muslim principles. How would you have handled your disappointment with this situation?
12. Malcolm X, the father and husband, presented a number of challenges. What were they? What are the risks associated with being the spouse of a public figure? Is the risk the same or different when the public figure is a woman and the spouse is a man?

***Questions issued by the publisher.***



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