

Veins of the World

A Discussion Guide

Movie Summary: As a child of the nomadic people of the Mongolian steppe, 11-year-old Amra helps his parents take care of their land and animals. When his work is finished, he watches YouTube videos with his friends, dreaming about being featured as a singer on *Mongolia's Got Talent*. Following a tragic accident, Amra must step up to become the defender of his family's and his people's legacy against constant threats from greedy mining companies.

Film Notes: Family Feature - Director Byambasuren Davaa | Germany/Mongolia 2020 | 97 min | Grades 5–12 | In Mongolian with English subtitles



Guiding Questions (before you watch):

- What are some of the ways this story is told? How does the director make use of images, sound, dialogue, silence, music to tell this story?
- What is life like for Amra and his family? How is it different from the kind of life the mining companies are pushing for? What are some of the impacts of changing priorities?
- What draws Amra to *Mongolia's Got Talent*? What does he want to experience?
- What are some of the qualities Amra's father displays, and how does Amra live into the example and legacy of his father?
- What is the meaning of the ribboned tree that Amra and his father visit?
- What is Amra's hope for the future?

Reflection Questions (after you watch):

- What threatens the landscape and way of life that Amra's parents are trying to protect? Is this a reality in Mongolia? Where else in the world are similar struggles happening?
- Why does Amra's mother want to give up the nomad life?
- What is the significance of the song "Gold Veins"?
- How do you think about the role of music, art, self-expression in advocacy; generally and specifically around environmental justice?
- What is Amra able to do as an 11-year old that adults in a similar position might not be able to do? What is it that young people are bringing to the movement for ecological restoration and environmental justice that is especially unique?
- How does this film illustrate the relationship between social and environmental justice? Who is thinking about the intersection of land degradation and community health at the present time in the world? What does it mean to be a "frontline community"?
- What consumption patterns lead to the kind of mining that causes environmental harm?
- How are people advocating for accountability for actions that damage natural systems and contribute to the pollution of water, land and air? What can young people do to support these efforts? Are there policies that could be changed/put in place?
- What is the relationship between climate change and access to education around the world? In what ways can access to education impact environmental healing?