

## **“Obama Anak Menteng” (Little Obama) - OFLC Requirements**

**Film Title** – “Obama Anak Menteng” (Little Obama)

**Director's Name** – John de Rantau, Damien Demantra

**Producer's Name** – Raam Punjabi

**Duration** – 92 minutes

**Genre** – Children’s/Family

**Language** – Indonesian (with some English)

### **Classifiable Elements:**

**Themes** – Friendship, Identity

**Violence** – Light (School boy scuffles)

**Sex** – None

**Language** – Light children innuendo

**Drug Use** - None

**Nudity** – None

This film contains classifiable elements approximately corresponding to G

### **Synopsis**

- Since Barack Obama’s rise to prominence at his keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in 2004 (as an Illinois Senator), many Indonesians have followed Obama’s career with great interest. His progress through the Democratic Primaries, to Presidential candidate, to eventual President caused extraordinary scenes of celebration in Indonesia. Many prominent foreigners have studied in Indonesia but usually at elite and expensive private and international schools. Barack Obama though lived and studied there as a local, and as such offers a credibility and authenticity to Indonesians beyond reproach. Indonesia claims Obama as one of their own. He enjoys and reciprocates the sentiment.
- “Obama Anak Menteng” is a retelling of Barack Obama’s childhood when he famously lived for four years in the part of Jakarta known as Menteng. He lived in the area among the locals with his mother, step father and baby step sister. The film focuses on his life trying settle in and relate to life in Indonesia, and his life at school, through his teachers, class mates, local bullies and a love interest...
- The film begins with a young Barack – or “Barry” as he was locally known, driving from the airport through his new neighbourhood to his new house. He and his family incur natural curiosity from locals – especially from taunting young boys who have never seen another boy of Barack’s skin colour before.
- He meets two boys around his own age who are the children of their house maid, and they soon become his first friends.
- In his time at his new school he quickly establishes himself as an exceptional mind to be recognized, and a generosity of spirit to be admired.
- He means to settle in and make new friends where he learns more about the culture and learns to play the local musical instruments, like the angklung.

- As a puppy love interest, he meets a young girl Rebecca and in a misunderstanding gets detention when she mistakenly thinks he is leering at her.
- Obama quickly makes friends with a young local boy named Damien Dematra, who eventually wrote the book from which this film is based.
- The local street kids remain his nemesis during his time there, which is not helped by the fact that he was escorted everyday to school by the exceptionally effeminate Turdi, who works for his family.
- His commitment to assimilate playing by football quickly builds his character, and leadership to stand up to all bullies, and define his determination in personality. He learns basic boxing to also build his strength of character, much to the concern of his pregnant mother.
- Fighting back and defeating a local bully during a football game elevates him to hero status, though at the behest of his mother he apologises to the bully Carut learning that violence is not the solution.
- Barry's life lessons continue with his step father encouraging him to save money, no matter how small to ensure that he will never be poor, and will become his own man.
- Barry's mother begins to receive pressure from her father to return to the US and have her baby there. Under duress she decides to stay and keep her family in Indonesia.
- The climax of the film concerns the local bully challenging Barry and his friends to a football match to finally square the deal. Barack trains hard and leads the modest local boys.
- His mother gives birth to her sister Maya which becomes a massive growth spurt for Barry, and his desires to provide, protect and lead.
- His mother helps nurture his growing spirit and teaches him about history's great leaders, including Martin Luther King Junior.
- Barry overcomes a leg injury in football training, and at a local medical clinic he is treated, but not before contracting fever.
- By the time the game day arrives, it has grown into somewhat of a local spectacle where locals are taking bets, part of which becomes prize money to make sure the boys play for real.
- Barry, still fighting some flu and an injured leg assumes the role of midfield general and his team triumph 3 – 2.
- Canut and his bully gang are reprimanded by the bookmakers, and soon his team begin turning on each other. Barry intervenes and offers the hand of friendship, with his team

discovering that Canut and his family are very poor and desperately need the prize money – which Barry insists on donating to him.

- After the match Barry returns home to explain that she and her husband were splitting, and her mother was taking him back to the US to have the education potential. She also reflects on the many milestone moments he has enjoyed during his time there.
- Barry is miserable having to leave all his friends – old and new, leaving his step father, but is comforted knowing of his contributions made. He reveals to his friends that he is leaving, but delays telling his closest friends.
- As his family get ready to drive to the airport, Barry tries to say goodbye to his closest friends only to find out they have already left for school. He does though while travelling see his closest friend, Slamet and they utter one last goodbye through an Islamic greeting.
- The film closes with real footage of Obama taking the Presidential oath during his inauguration and a post script of its symbolic impact and a reaction from Slamet as a grown man.
- "Little Obama" is an inspirational and adventurous children and family movie, exploring themes on friendship, and living in a diverse world. The story of "Little Obama" is to share the fact that even the most ordinary kid from a multicultural background can become a world leader.