

# Example by StudyDriver

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## Malcolm X Autobiography Example

### The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Originally written and published in 1965, The Autobiography of Malcolm X sheds light on the lives of journalist Alex Haley and human rights activist Malcolm X. It is a spiritual conversation narrative that consists of different aspects or themes regarding Malcolm's philosophy of pan-Africanism, Black Nationalism, and black pride (X 12). Though Alex Haley co-wrote the book and contributed a lot to its global success, he chose to keep his tone down and stayed mute throughout the text in order to create the effect that Malcolm X is directly speaking to his readers; this is why modern scholars and critics do not consider Alex Haley a ghostwriter but an essential collaborator.

Born in 1925, Malcolm's original name was Malcolm Little, who took a little time to realize that the only way to gain popularity is by becoming a human rights activist. Starting with his mother's pregnancy, this book talks about Malcolm X's childhood especially the days he spent in Michigan (X 14). In the next chapters, we can read how the death of his father took place and how his mother's deteriorating mental condition led to her commitment to a

psychiatric hospital. Since his childhood, Malcolm had seen various ups and downs in life, and this distracted his attention from his studies. Eventually, his involvement in organized crimes increased, and he was arrested and sentenced to ten-year prison. However, he served only six years, starting from 1946 and ending in 1952. Then this book highlights how he felt about the Nation of Islam and what were his opinions about Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm X emerged as a human rights spokesperson when he grew up and understood the ugly truths of life. The book has documented his disillusionment along with his departure from Islam. He spent some years in Makkah and was a true follower of the religion of Islam (X 57). However, things did not go as he had expected and Malcolm was forced to quit on his religious and moral values. Afterward, he went to Africa and spent the rest of his life there. Before the book ends, journalist Alex Haley has beautifully summarized how the last days of his Malcolm's life had been. The most important things that are discussed in this part of the book are what made him become a human rights activist and how his conversation with the believers of Sunni Islam changed his mind during his stay in Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

After reading the book, I have learned that Malcolm X had to struggle a lot for his survival. However, the fact is that the religion of Islam is not as bad as is portrayed in The Autobiography of Malcolm X. In fact, it is one of the most powerful, beautiful and famous religions in the world. Whatsoever Malcolm's conversations with the believers of Sunni Islam had been in the past, this should have never affected his religious and moral values since the believers of Sunni Islam constitute only 35 percent of the total population of Muslims!

Malcolm was born and raised in a religious environment, so he was better to have a firm faith in God, but this could not happen. Instead, he chose to say goodbye to this religion and emerged as a human rights activist. Personally, I think that becoming a human rights activist is a good thing since Malcolm X was provided with plenty of chances of serving humanity. However, his departure from the Nation of Islam makes no sense to me. If he had some personal opinions, ideas or thoughts regarding a particular topic, he should have told it openly. Alex Haley, whose interview with Malcolm X helped him to write such a marvelous book, has done a masterful job of rewording, editing and formatting the transcripts. Still, I think that it was better for him to add some personal

opinions too. For instance, he could have shared whether he agrees with Malcolm X's decision of quitting on Islam or not. Throughout the book, I could not read even a single line depicting his own thoughts or beliefs.

I later decided to take up Maya Angelou, Walter Mosley, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Paul Laurence Dunbar and found that none of those authors and activists did things like Alex Haley and Malcolm X. I am not here criticizing Alex for the quality of content. In fact, I am criticizing him for not sharing his personal opinions. As far as Malcolm's personality is concerned, he was an abrupt person because he changed his mind all of a sudden, quit on a beautiful religion like Islam, and did things his parents would have never allowed him to do. In conclusion, I can say that *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* is an interesting book, but I do not agree with most of the things Malcolm did in his life as well as with Alex Haley for being quiet throughout the book. This could have been a better and more informative work if Alex had shared his thoughts somewhere, even in the last chapter, but he did not do so.