Enrich your learning with movies and documentaries in conjunction with this DVD Learning Guide! Simply rent or purchase the media, then use this guide to teach this film’s topics!

Each DVD Learning Guide Includes:
- Vocabulary from the Film
- Discussion Questions based on Film Content
- Lesson Plans and Activities
- Related Books and Online Resources

Links to Netflix and Amazon included!

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James and the Giant Peach  (1996)
A Homeschool Learning Network® Learning Guide

Format: DVD
Age Levels: Elementary School, Middle School
Genre: Animation
Category: Entertainment
Rating: NR
Length: 79 minutes
Producer: Walt Disney Pictures
Warnings: This film contains some mild violence.

Summary

After the death of his parents, James Henry Trotter is forced to live with merciless aunts. His dreams seem to be a distant reality until he is given a bag of magic! The magic escapes and changes a centipede, a spider, a ladybug, a glowworm and a grasshopper into enormous insects. The magic also creates a giant peach and changes James too! Now James and his new friends must navigate the peach to New York City where the promise of a new life and happier times are waiting for them all!

Vocabulary (Grades 1-8)

Try the following activities with the vocabulary words to the right. Depending on the age and ability of your students, they may be able to complete assignments from multiple grade levels.

1-2: Ask your students to copy the following words in alphabetical order, and to describe each of the words verbally. Practice spelling.

3-5: Look up each word in a dictionary, and write down its definition. Write each word in a sentence, or write a paragraph using the words.

6-8: Write a description or review about this DVD using the vocabulary words. Above each vocabulary word, write N if it is a noun, V if it is a verb; ADJ if it is an adjective; ADV if it is an adverb.

6-8: Write down words you hear in the video you don’t understand. Break the words into parts and see if you can determine the meanings. Look up the meanings.

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Discussion Questions

Ask students to read through their questions carefully before watching the film. After watching it, ask students to write their answers to the following questions on a separate piece of paper.

Learning Styles: Auditory, Verbal
Intelligences: Verbal/Linguistic, Interpersonal

Elementary
1. Why did James have to live with his Aunts?
2. How did James know where the peach was going?
3. How did the peach get to New York City? Who had the idea to make the peach fly?
4. What did James do when he saw the rhinoceros?
5. What lesson did James learn from his trip in the peach?

Intermediate
1. What wish did James have? Where did he get the idea for his wish? How did his aunts react when they found out what James wanted? Why did the peach go to New York City?
2. Name each of the characters in the peach. What unique talent did each character have? How did it help them make the journey to New York City?
3. When the peach is blown off course what does the “crew” need to navigate with? Why does Mr. Centipede jump in to get it? What lesson does Ms. Spider learn when Mr. Centipede searches the ruined ship?
4. When James falls asleep and dreams, what does he dream he is? Who is chasing him? Why does James feel so small? What is it called when an action or idea represents something else? Is there any of this in James’ dream?
5. How did James confront his fear of the Rhino?
6. What were the lessons that James learned on his adventure?

Advanced
1. What kind of foreshadowing takes place in the scene on the beach with James and his parents?
2. How does James change over the course of the story? How is he changed by each of the characters?
4. What is the main theme of the story? What are the obstacles James faces and overcomes to reach his goal?
Lessons & Activities

Building Confidence Through Teamwork

Subjects: Arts, Language Arts, Character Education  
Grades: 3-12  
Style: Visual/Experiential/Kinesthetic

Concepts:  
You will learn about the importance of teamwork and overcoming obstacles.

Lesson:  
In the story James and Giant Peach, James must rely on and help his friends in order to get to New York City. Teamwork is a very important skill to learn.

Grades 3-8 Activities:

• Make a list of three obstacles that you have overcome and how you overcame them. (Example: I was afraid of dogs and I overcame my fear by asking my neighbor if I could help walk her dog.)

• Draw a picture of each of the bugs from the peach. Write a short description about how they helped the “team” get to New York City.

• Make a poster of one of the obstacles that James had to face on his journey. On the back make another poster of how the obstacle was overcome.

• Complete this quick Teamwork Lesson to examine how well you can work as a team without talking! http://www.lessonplanspage.com/SSLAOMDCommunityUnit-TeamworkL36.htm

• The earthworm had an extraordinary sense of hearing. Imagine that you are the earthworm. Have your partner blindfold you and then make noises with objects in the classroom. (For example a piece of paper crumpling) Try to identify from which direction the sound is coming from, and what the sound was. Was it easy or difficult?

• The Teamwork Unit at the following site incorporates all subjects as students learn about working together as a team! http://web.archive.org/web/20050908175447/http://www.michigan.gov/scope/0,1607,7-155-10710_10722_10726-40049--,00.html

• Work with your class on creating a game board. Using posterboard and cardboard, design a theme that matches your classroom work. Ask each student to design 1-3 squares to make a path around the board. When you are done, let the design dictate the rules of the game. As a class, brainstorm the “rules” of the game, making sure to incorporate sharing into the play!

Additional Activity: Make a list of two obstacles you want to overcome and how working with other people can help you overcome it.
Grades 9-12 Extension:

- Read the book *James and the Giant Peach* (by Roald Dahl  ISBN; 0375814248). Write a 5 paragraph essay on the differences between the movie and the book.

Learn More!  Books and Online Resources

**BOOKS**


**ONLINE RESOURCES**

*James and the Giant Peach lesson plan*
http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-1737.html
From teachervision.com comes this wonderful lesson plan with enrichment activities and a diverse collection of other Internet resources.

*Roald Dahl*
Investigate the life of the man who wrote *James and the Giant Peach* and discover the many interesting facts about his writing style.

*The Roald Dahl Book Talk*
This is a ThinkQuest entry that has quizzes, games and in-depth discussions about this celebrated children’s author.
James and the Giant Peach Teachers Guide and Student Activities
The site is a powerful combination of student activities and teaching resources. This is an excellent tool to use a companion to the book. Remember that the film is different!

Careful! Earthworms Underfoot.
http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids/soil/story2/goodworm.htm
Everything you always wanted to know about earthworms and what they do!

Ladybugs
http://www.uky.edu/Agriculture/Entomology/entfacts/fldcrops/ef105.htm
An excellent resource about the ladybug and their place in our world. The pictures are stunning on this site.

Ladybugs and Grasshoppers
A fun activity to make and identify bugs!

The Glow worm
Learn about the exciting life of the glow worm. Their biology and their habitat are covered here as well as some exciting research about them.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY:

Elementary
1. Because his parents died. (The Rhino)
2. He saw it on his travel book.
3. The peach was flown to New York with seagulls. It was James' idea to use them.
4. He confronted it and saved his friends.
5. He learned that it is better to face your fears than to run away from them. He also learned that teamwork is important. He learned that it is okay to "chase" your dreams even if they seem silly or impossible to others.

Intermediate
1. James wished that he could travel to New York City. He got the idea from a travel book his parents gave him. His aunts berated him for his dream. The peach went to New York City because James wanted to go there.
2. The spider (her web was used as a tool) the grasshopper (he knew how to use a compass and navigate) the ladybug (she attacked the shark) the centipede (he found the compass) the glow worm (she gave them light) the earthworm (he was the “bait” for the seagulls).
3. They need a compass. The centipede jumps in to get it because it is his fault that they were blown off course. (He said he could navigate but he didn’t really know how.) Mrs. Spider learns that she really likes the centipede and that it is brave and willing to sacrifice his own safety for the safety of his friends.
4. James dreams he is a caterpillar. His aunts are chasing him in the dream and he feels so small because his aunts do not let him speak, they tell him what to do, and they treat him badly. (He feels like a bug.) When one thing represents another thing it is called symbolism.
5. James confronts his fear of the Rhino by facing it and not running away from it. He does what his parents told him to do and he looked at the rhino another way.
6. There are many explanations to this question. Encourage students to think about what James learned about himself and about what the meaning of the word friend is. Think about how teamwork helped the “crew” of the peach make it across the ocean and how the obstacles they faced were overcome.

Advanced
1. James sees the Empire State Building; he eventually lands on the top of the building in the peach.
2. James changes in many ways. He learns about the meaning of friendship how to overcome obstacles. He also learns that he not as small as he originally thought. He has power and can make a difference in the world. He learns that he can dream and that dreams can come true.
4. The main theme of James and Giant Peach is that small things can make big differences in the world. Answers will vary on this question-- there many obstacles James faces. However, have students focus on how James was able to overcome his obstacles to finally reach his goal.
More CLASSICS DVD Learning Guides available at www.hlnfamily-estore.com:

- A Bug's Life
- Dumbo
- Ice Age
- James and the Giant Peach
- A Little Princess
- A Man for All Seasons
- A Walk to Remember
- Animal Farm
- Annie Get Your Gun
- Ben-Hur
- Chariots of Fire
- Citizen Kane
- Clash of the Titans
- Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb
- Driving Miss Daisy
- Emma
- Fiddler on the Roof
- Fly Away Home
- Guilty By Suspicion
- Lawrence of Arabia
- Mr. Smith Goes to Washington
- My Fair Lady
- Never Cry Wolf
- Old Yeller
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
- Perfect Storm
- Pride and Prejudice - Disc 1 & 2
- Pygmalion
- Return to Oz
- Stand and Deliver
- Swiss Family Robinson
- The Black Stallion
- The Black Stallion Returns
- The Parent Trap
- The Railway Children
- The Rookie
- The Sound of Music
- Walt Disney Treasures: Davy Crockett 1 & 2
- 12 Angry Men
- Anne Frank
- Bronte Country
- Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre
- David Copperfield
- Don Quixote
- Great Expectations
- King Lear
- Little House on the Prairie, Premiere Movie
- Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring
- Moby Dick
- National Geographic Beyond the Movie: Lord of the Ring: Fellowship of Ring
- Nicholas Nickleby - Disc 1 - 4
- Shakespeare Tragedies: Origins & Style
- Shakespeare Tragedies: Othello, Macbeth, King Lear
- Shakespeare Tragedies: Titus Andronicus, Romeo & Juliet, and Hamlet
- The Chronicles of Narnia - Disc 1 - 3
- The Great Gatsby
- William Shakespeare: Romeo & Juliet
- To Kill a Mockingbird