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!

1. RENT
2. WATCH
3. LEARN!

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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The Perfect Storm (2000)
A Homeschool Learning Network® Learning Guide

Format: DVD
Age Levels: Middle School, High School
Genre: Drama, Adventure
Category: Entertainment
Rating: PG-13
Length: 130 minutes
Producer: Warner Brothers
Warnings: This DVD contains some adult language and content.

Summary

It is October 1991, and three raging weather fronts converge to form one of the greatest storms in recorded history. At the same time, a sword fishing vessel, the Andrea Gail, sets sail on a fishing voyage from Gloucester, Massachusetts. In this movie based on a true story, you will witness a crew with deep passion for fishing, and a deep passion for survival and heroism as they journey out to sea to fish in late autumn. Later, they must try to get back home through this cataclysmic storm. Paralleling this storyline, you will watch the harrowing rescue attempts of other boats caught in this storm system, and the family of the Andrea Gail crew as they wait desperately for news about the missing ship.

Vocabulary (Grades 1-12)

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.

6-12: Copy the vocabulary words onto a sheet of paper. What do you think each word means? Write down what you think the words mean from your own knowledge. Now, look up each word in a dictionary, and compare definitions. How close were you? Write each word in a sentence, or write a paragraph or DVD summary using the words.

9-12: 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.

Vocabulary

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Discussion Questions

Ask students to read through their questions carefully before watching the film, and take notes during 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

**Intermediate**

1. What instigated the Captain, Billy, to go back out again on another fishing run on the Andrea Gail?
2. Describe the personalities of Bugsy, Bobby, Sully, Murphy, Skip (Billy), and how those personalities interact through the movie to create tension and storyline.
3. Did each of those fishermen return on the voyage because they wanted to, out of obligation, or both?
4. What qualities do you think it takes to become a commercial fisherman?
5. Explain the use of navigational and communication equipment throughout the movie. Do you think that it aided in the situation for the Andrea Gail?

**Advanced**

1. What does Bobby’s girlfriend, Christina, dream about in the opening scene of the movie, and how does it act as foreshadowing for what is to come? How does it relate to the very end of the movie, both from Bobby’s perspective and the Christina’s?
2. Describe the relationship between the two boat captains, Linda and Billy. How do their paths (future and past) converge and separate throughout the movie?
3. Billy decides to sail the Andrea Gail to the Flemish Cap. What is it, and why is it so dangerous? What are the implications of this decision on the outcome of the movie?
4. Do you think that the crew of the Andrea Gail relied more on the navigational/communication equipment or on common sense? What about the other boats in the movie? Compare and contrast.
5. Coast Guards and rescue helicopters attempt to rescue the boats during this storm. If you were in charge, how do you think you would balance the risk of your rescue workers with the danger to those you are trying to rescue?
6. Nobody really knows the exact events that took place on the Andrea Gail. Events like Murphy’s accident and the shark attack were added to the storyline. How do the events that take place onboard affect your viewing experience and feelings and lead to the outcome of the movie?
Lessons & Activities

Storm Safety Announcements

Subjects: Arts, Science, Health
Grades: 6-12
Style: Visual/Auditory/Experiential/Kinesthetic

Concepts:
You will learn about creating ads and public service announcements about storm safety.

Lesson:
How could the crew of the Andrea Gail have been more aware of weather safety? How can you get the word out about storm safety? Study the following resources on storm safety. Older children can research additional resources.

- Severe Weather Safety Guide
- Hurricane!
- Weather Safety: Hurricanes
  http://www.weather.com/safeside/tropical/

Complete one or more of the following projects.

Create a Storm Safety Ad
Discuss the meaning of the words ad and advertisement. Cut out ads from newspapers and magazines. Discuss the images and content on the ads. Talk about: "What information is included in each ad? What kind of image illustrates the ad?"

Create ads for storm safety using construction paper, poster board, markers, crayons, paint and other materials that you choose.

Make a Storm Safety Poster
Discuss posters that you have seen or that you may own. Study the images of the posters for hurricane safety http://www.fema.gov/kids/bnconteste.htm. Talk about: "What do the posters show? What words are on the posters? Why do you think the people who created the posters chose those pictures and words?"

Create a storm safety poster. Brainstorm ideas and use poster board, markers, paint and other materials you choose to create your posters.

Create a Storm Safety Public Service Announcement
If you have a camcorder or have access to one, create a 30 to 60 second public service announcement about storm safety.
Discuss the meaning of the term *public service announcement* (PSA). Talk about the difference between a PSA and an ad or commercial that appears on television.

Create an original PSA about storm safety following these steps:

- View an example of a PSA for helmet safety [http://web.archive.org/web/20031204115516/http://www.braininjurymn.org/Media/Media.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/20031204115516/http://www.braininjurymn.org/Media/Media.htm). View or videotape a television ad and a PSA. Discuss the similarities and differences between each one. Talk about: "How do people create a PSA that appears on television?"

- Brainstorm ideas for a PSA about storm safety. List your ideas on a sheet of paper. Work together to write the script and cast the roles. If you decide to have costumes, scenery and props, work together to create those items.

- Create a list of shots for the PSA.

- Practice the PSA without the camera. Make sure you learn how to handle the video equipment correctly.

- Film your PSA. Review and edit the film to the desired time limit. Ask your parents or other adults for help if needed.

- Present and discuss your completed project!

**Additional Resources:**


**Learn More! Books and Online Resources**

**BOOKS**


**ONLINE RESOURCES**

**The Perfect Storm**  
http://perfectstorm.warnerbros.com/  
This is the official Web site of the movie. The site provides a wealth of information about the movie, but also about Gloucester, the storm, the timeline and much more.

**The Storm**  
This Discovery.com site provides a flash documentary that takes you through the story of the Andrea Gail.

**USA Today: Ingredients for a real 'perfect storm'**  
http://www.usatoday.com/weather/movies/ps/perfectstorm.htm  
USATODAY.com meteorologists James West and Chris Vaccaro look day-by-day at a meteorological bomb that seemed so complete it was dubbed the "perfect storm."

**The Weather Channel**  
http://www.weather.com/  
An excellent resource for everything you want to know about weather and storms.

**Kidstorm**  
http://skydiary.com/kids/  
Learn a wealth of information about severe storms in this site geared for children.

**National Weather Service**  
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/  
Web site from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) containing current information about the weather plus statistics, reports, publications and numerous links.

**The Weather Room**  
http://www.nssl.noaa.gov/edu/  
Educational Web resource from the National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) with information, lesson and links about storms geared for parents, teachers and children.

**Weather and Seasons**  
Find links to a wealth of resources about storms and weather prepared for children.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY:

Intermediate

1. He had a bad run on his last trip, and decided to go back after instigation from the boat owner in Gloucester. However, it is late in the season, and more dangerous on the seas.

2. Answers will vary and are open to interpretation. However, Billy is a determined, stubborn captain who loves the sea and takes risks to meet his goals. Murphy and Sully fight throughout the beginning of the movie, and become friendlier to each other after Sully saved Murphy. Bobby loves the sea, loves Christina, and is levelheaded. Though different personalities, the variety of personalities carry the viewer through the film, and creates an intimacy and an emotional level that helps the viewer relate to the real drama that was experienced.

3. Answers will vary and are open to interpretation. However, most go out of obligation—either an obligation to Billy or an obligation to make money for their families.

4. Bravery, strength, determination are just a few qualities. It is inferred in this movie that you really need to be “married to the sea”, because being a commercial fisherman away at sea so often is a difficult thing when trying to maintain a relationship back home.

5. Answers will vary.

6. In this film, radar, radio contact, and faxes are used to navigate, communicate and warn the boats about weather conditions. The radio contact with Linda is an important link in this movie, however Billy is stubborn and makes his own decisions, even knowing the storms are converging. When the equipment is lost, he feels lost and blind in the middle of the storm.

Advanced

1. She has a dream that there is a storm that Bobby is caught in—and she is calling to him. At the end as he is in the water, he talks to Christina, and tells her how much he loves her. After the services for the crew of the Andrea Gail, Christina admits to Bobby’s mother that she hears Bobby’s voice in her dreams, saying the words that we heard Bobby actually say in the water before he died. This acts as a means to honor the spirit of those who died and as a means to show their connection with their loved ones.

2. Linda and Billy each respect each other for their abilities as Captains. Linda dreams of something more, and they both seem interested in developing a relationship further. However, Billy is “married to the sea” and his job. Throughout the movie, Linda acts as a symbol of warning, and as a symbolic emotional connection to those outside the ship who are worried for the Andrea Gail’s crew.

3. The Flemish Cap is a fishing spot that is nearly ‘off the maps’. Billy takes the crew there in order to have a successful fishing trip. It is dangerous because it is so far away, leaving a long and dangerous journey home.

4. On the Andrea Gail, Billy did not rely heavily on the navigational and communication equipment, and their warnings, outside of normal directional usage. He made his own decisions about when and where to fish, and when to return home. He also checked in with the crew to give them choices about it. On the sailboat, the women wanted to act on the warnings presented, but the boat owner did not want to.

5. Answers will vary.

6. Answers will vary.