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!
Swiss Family Robinson  
(1960)
A Homeschool Learning Network® Learning Guide

Format: DVD
Age Levels: Elementary School, Middle School
Genre: Family, Adventure
Category: Literature
Rating: G
Length: 126 minutes
Producer: Disney Enterprises
Warnings: This DVD contains some mild violence.

Summary
In this classic family Disney adventure, the Robinson family—mom, dad and three boys, set off from their homeland to begin a new life in a colony on New Guinea. When their ship is damaged by a storm and lay in ruins on the reef of a beautiful island, the resourceful family begins life anew there, while waiting to be rescued. They create an ingenious home in the trees, filled with fascinating inventions. Between the farm animals aboard ship and the myriad of species found on the island, the story has many comical, and sometimes dangerous, encounters with animals. When the two older sons set sail around the island to try to find rescue, they encounter and nearly escape pirates. In the end, the adventure escalates, and the family is faced with the choice of staying on their island paradise, or returning to civilization.

Vocabulary (Grades 1-12)

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.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunpowder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plough</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iliad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bubonic Plaque</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

Elementary

1. Where were the Robinsons going when they got shipwrecked?
2. Did the mother like living on the island at the beginning of the movie? At the end?
3. How did the two brothers get a boat to sail around the island in?
4. Name three animals that the Robinsons brought to the island from their ship.
5. Name five animals that they encountered on the island.
6. Why do you think most of the Robinsons decided to stay on the island at the end of the movie?

Intermediate

1. What items did the family bring to the shore the first time? Why were they important? What did they leave behind?
2. Name three farm animals that the Robinsons brought back from the ship, and what value they could have to the family to help them survive.
3. Name three wild animals encountered by the Robinsons, and what value they could have to the family.
4. Why does father say “I’m sorry things didn’t work out the way I wanted them to, and it would have been so much better if we would have just stayed in Bern,” and what was mother’s response?
5. Why did they leave Bern?
6. What is mother worried about in terms of her sons that results in her letting them go on an exploration trip around the island?
7. Why did the pirates capture the grandfather and “cabin boy”? What was the cabin boy’s disguise and why?
8. Why did the two older boys have a fight on the journey back from their excursion?
9. What wildlife did they encounter on their journey home? How did they help or hinder the journey?
10. What was mother’s very special Christmas present?
11. Name five mechanisms of defense that the Robinsons used against the pirates. Which was most successful?
12. Why do you think the family members made their decision to stay or go at the end of the movie?
Lessons & Activities

Salvage a Ship!

**Subjects:** Language Arts, Math, Social Science  
**Grades:** 3-8  
**Style:** Visual/Experiential/Kinesthetic

**Concepts:**
You will use math and survival skills to determine which items you will choose to bring with you as your ship is sinking!

**Lesson:**
Your ship is sinking! You have an hour to load up your raft to set sail for the distant island during a raging storm. However, your raft only can hold 300 pounds besides you and your crew.

**PART I**
Using the ship’s inventory list to the right, choose what you will bring with you, making sure your items don’t add up to more than 300 pounds. Next to each item, write why you chose it.

**PART II**
You have loaded your raft, and set sail in the stormy sea. But alas, your troubles are not over! On your way to the island, one compartment of your raft is punctured, and you have to throw 150 lbs overboard or your entire raft will capsize! (Maybe you will be lucky and some will float to shore, since you are close.)

Make a new list of the items that you would keep and the items that you would throw overboard.

**PART III**
You arrive at shore at last, with your small crew and 150 pounds of salvageable supplies, but it all got soaking wet! Which items from your list will be damaged, and what will you do about that?

**PART IV**
Write a journal log about your first week stranded on your island. What was it like? How much of the supplies have you used? What are you lacking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>50 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>3 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Dane</td>
<td>200 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Retriever</td>
<td>80 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood planks</td>
<td>50 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope</td>
<td>15 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compass</td>
<td>1 lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trunk of clothes</td>
<td>30 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 lbs of flour</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 lbs of sugar</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 cans of fish</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>20 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>20 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing rod</td>
<td>2 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackle box</td>
<td>15 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set of bowls</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrel of fresh water</td>
<td>100 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship’s sail</td>
<td>40 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>35 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanterns</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifles</td>
<td>40 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>3 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanket</td>
<td>3 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic tarp</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ax</td>
<td>15 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverware</td>
<td>8 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbrella</td>
<td>2 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulley</td>
<td>3 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life jacket</td>
<td>2 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery set</td>
<td>1 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool box</td>
<td>60 lbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learn More! Books and Online Resources

BOOKS

Swiss Family Robinson Coloring Book (NanaBanana Classics)

The Swiss Family Robinson (Great Illustrated Classics)

Child's Swiss Family Robinson
Joan Marlow Todd, Violette Diserens, Johann David schwe Wyss, Outlet; ASIN: 0805512632

The Swiss Family Robinson (Lake Illustrated Classics, Collection 5)

ONLINE RESOURCES

Swiss Family Robinson Online
http://www.ccel.org/w/wyss/swiss/swiss.html
Read the book in its entirety online!

Swiss Family Robinson Unit Study
http://www.easyfunschool.com/article2252.html
This unit is based on the book, and has chapter-by-chapter discussion questions and activities.

Teaching With Movies: Swiss Family Robinson
http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/swiss-family-robinson.html
Background information, discussion questions and resources related to the movie.

Penguin Reader: Swiss Family Robinson Guide (PDF)
This 4-page learning guide, based on the book, provides in-depth activities and questions.

Swiss Family Robinson: Island Survival
http://web.archive.org/web/20070213025813/http://www.suhsd.k12.ca.us/mvm/netlinks/1swiss/1swiss.html
This site provides worksheets and activities based on the book by Johann Wyss.
Swiss Family Robinson Fan Site
Read Earnst’s diary, chapter summaries, and view a character guide.

Island Survival Lesson
http://www.col-ed.org/cur/sst/sst241.txt
This is a text-based lesson for grades 7-10, which incorporates geography, environment and early civilizations as study topics.

Survival Math Unit
http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/2210.html
Use math to calculate what you will need to survive on an island!
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY:

Elementary
1. They were going to start a new life in New Guinea.
2. No; Yes.
3. Built a canoe by hallowing out a log.
4. Duck, dog, pig, donkey
5. Tiger, elephant, lizard, snake, ostrich, zebra, hyena
6. Answers will vary.

Intermediate
1. A compass/navigation equipment, rifles, barrels of food stock, some clothes, rope, and some sail material. They left behind the animals, the distress flag (they looked distressed enough) and other bulky items.
2. Answers will vary, but may include: the dogs were used for protection; the donkey was used for carrying and labor; goats could be used to get milk; ducks could be used to get eggs.
3. Answers will vary, but may include: the elephant helped pull heavy items as they built the home; the zebra could be used to ride and carry items; the tiger was used as a weapon.
4. He was discouraged, and was afraid that he had put his family in peril by “running away”. Mother encourages him by reminding him that they had not been free, and that they were right to set out for their new life.
5. Because Napoleon Bonaparte was taking over and making it an unsafe place to live and be free.
6. She was worried that her sons could never fall in love, marry and have their own family, so she allowed them to go sailing around the island.
7. They captured them to ransom them. The cabin boy was really the granddaughter, and was dressed as a boy so the pirates would not want to steal her for ransom first or know she was related to the grandfather.
8. Because they both liked and wanted to impress the girl.
9. They experienced snakes, lizards, zebra, hyenas, and a tiger. The zebra was the only animal of value; they rescued it from mud before the hyenas got to it, and then the girl was able to ride it for the rest of the journey.
10. Her two sons came home.
11. Coconut bombs, pits (with tigers), rifles, fuses attached to gunpowder bombs, exploding rocks, cascading log piles. They were all successful to some extent.
12. The Robinsons had been sailing to begin a new life in a new colony in New Guinea, yet they had created their new life right there on their island, and so they decided to stay. Because they were already “found” they could set up communication, and build a colony right there on their island. The boy decided to go off to university because that is where his passion lay.
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