

THE YOUNG & PRODIGIOUS T.S. SPIVET

Themes for Discussion

- Relationships with family (parents and siblings)
- Being gifted
- Having gifted parents

Materials needed

- DVD or Digital Copy of MOVIE (Dir. Jean-Pierre Jeuhet, 2013)
- Equipment for showing film screen/monitor/dvd player/computer/speakers
- Paper/Journals/Writing Utensils
- Activity Descriptions/Directions
- Discussion Questions

Purpose of activity

- To promote learning about accepting giftedness as part of one's identity
- To discuss how being gifted can present challenges and benefits
- To discuss dealing with tragedy
- To understand that people cope with difficulties differently

Plot summary

- T.S. Spivet is part of an eccentric family who are each different. This family seems to be like many families with each member having a role, individual personality, and differences that sometime lead to difficulty. T.S. has inherited or developed his mother's science mind. He makes many inventions and discoveries leading him to be discovered by the Smithsonian. T.S. had a twin brother who was their father's favorite. The brother dies by tragic accident. T.S. Spivet blames himself. Each of the family members seem to be figuring out how to deal with the loss in their own way without connecting with each other. The mother seems to struggle to face the tragedy further burying herself in her research with bugs, her passion. This is her escape from the sadness she carries, but it also puts her in an emotional cocoon that prevents her from being able to meaningful connect with her family.

Description of activity

- For this activity we will Evaluate, Create, Analyze, and Apply. See directions below and record your answers in your journal.

EVALUATE:

- Discuss—Work in small groups to discuss and decide on the following prompt: Choose one word to describe how the family was at the beginning of the film compared to the end of the film

CREATE:

- Poem—Find or create a poem that describes an emotion that is displayed in the film, it can be of a specific character, scene, situation, etc.

ANALYZE:

- Compare—How did each family member in the story deal with the loss of the twin brother

APPLY:

- Map—Construct a timeline indicating the how T.S.'s mother changed throughout the movie, describe how you think she was feeling or thinking at each time noted on your time. You can note her successes or failures, happiness or sadness, etc. In order on the timeline, state the event and the emotions/thoughts during the event.

Discussion questions

- How did each family member isolate themselves from the others?
- How did the parents affect the kids?
- How could the parents have reacted or behaved differently in response to the tragedy?
- What do you think the mother was feeling?
- Why do you think she did not show it?
- In what ways, do you think her giftedness made it easy or difficult to emotionally connect with her family?
- How was the relationship of the parents with their children before the tragedy?
- How do you think the tragedy changed the relationships?
- What do you think the family could have done differently to help each other cope?
Address each family member.