



GOD IN FILM

STUDY GUIDES



Producer



Director



Reviewer

CODA

Child of Deaf Adults - Academy Award winner

"Who makes a person's mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see?

Is it not I, the Lord? - Exodus 4:11

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God in Film study guides combine your two favourite things, God and movies. Upskill yourself for group discussions that explores deep themes. Learn to be the Producer, Director and Reviewer of your own film discussion group.



PRODUCER

Prep for the discussion

How can you make the most use of your time?

- Watch the movie first alone to prepare to facilitate the discussion
- Read the guide for the movie you are watching, decide what your group needs
- Have a running sheet for the way the event will run, or use our template.
- Arrange your physical or online space for group dynamics
- Pray for the group before you meet.



DIRECTOR

Keep the discussion rolling...

How can you make sure the night runs smoothly?

- As the "director", you are not the expert but the person who makes sure the night runs smoothly, not the final authority on film or God.
- Ask an opening question, to get people thinking.
- Watch the movie together all the way through to allow people to develop their own ideas
- Prepare key clips to re-watch and discuss (provided in guides). These help with engagement



REVIEWER

Help your group members become reviewers

How can you encourage your group to engage with deeper questions?

- Establish a positive culture. Affirm people's comments and encourage respectful listening from the whole group through your example.
- Don't correct ideas but listen, mirror their response and then ask for the group's opinions to keep discussion flowing
- Encourage experiential comments and opinions. When people become more analytical, try and bring it back to the person's experience of the film by asking questions. Use your pre-prepared clips to refresh their initial reactions

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Film Synopsis

Set in Gloucester, Massachusetts, in the United States, the Rossi family make their living within the fishing community. Ruby (Emilia Jones) is 17 years old and is the only hearing member of her culturally deaf family. She serves as the interpreter and negotiator in their business dealings and within the community. Her parents and brother work hard to scrape by in the competitive industry, but their daughter hopes to sing. Because she has not been heard by her family, they have difficulty connecting with her dream or understanding her struggles in life. Their days begin at three o'clock each day and they put in a full day of hard work. Still, after the haul at sea, Ruby must go to school smelling of fish, looking forward to her time in the choir room with Bernardo Villalobos (Eugenio Derbez) and the choir.

Her teacher sees her talent and does all he can to invest in her aspirations of attending the Berklee College of Music in Boston, despite challenges at home where everything is changing in the family business. Even though her family is exceptionally close, they rely heavily on Ruby. Frank (Troy Kotsur) and Jessie (Marlee Matlin) need their daughter to help them with a new business venture. This all leads to tensions and frustrations within the home and at school, mainly as she develops strong feelings for Miles (Ferdia Walsh-Peelo), her new singing partner.



Produce

Planning List

- 1) Watch the Film, what themes can you see? What will your group connect with?
- 2) Prepare some discussion points to highlight these themes (suggested clips (p. 3)
- 3) Prepare a run sheet or adapt the template
- 4) Pray and prepare your space (online or physical)



Direct

Discussion Questions

1. Do physical disabilities mean that we cannot experience all things in life?
2. How can we deal with life's changes as they come?
3. What happens when we follow our dreams when it comes at a cost for our relationships?



Review

This coming-of-age journey turns the tale into something even more profound as it shows the connectedness of their family and how they all must grow to survive. Everything about the story capitalises on Heder's ability to depict the humanity of the Rossi family and the challenges they endure as they make their way in the hearing world. This means that the writer/director exposes every aspect of their lives, meaning that the screenplay contains some mature content. Still, Coda quietly becomes one of the most endearing and touching films of the year. One that will have viewers singing and desiring to know more about the fascinating world of the deaf.



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Discussion points

Can we celebrate with those we love despite not being able to understand what is going on around us?

This scene was brilliantly framed to show how those within the deaf community experience life. It is one where the Rossi family must celebrate for this daughter, despite not being able to enjoy her gift.

is it possible to celebrate with those you love despite not being to fully appreciate what is happening in their lives?

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; - Ecclesiastes 3:4

How do we let go?

Many times in life there are major transitions that cause turmoil and suffering. Do they make us better or bitter?

More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. - Romans 5:3-5



Close the Curtain

Both sides now

During Ruby's audition, she begins to see how the clouds of life bring shade and rain. She has grown to appreciate her life as a CODA and sees how she must move forward with her dreams.

What difficulties in your life are holding you back from moving forward with your life? How can God possibly help you in seeing beyond the 'clouds' of life and see how he has something significant for you?

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand - Isaiah 41:10