

## Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

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"Up" starring Edward Asner, Christopher Plummer, & Jordan Nagai,  
2009, PG, 96 minutes

Major themes:

- Adventure
- Living in the present
- Dreams
- Grief
- Love
- Relationships
- Helping others

Major characters:

- Carl Fredricksen
- Ellie
- Russell
- Charles Muntz
- Kevin (the bird)
- Dug
- Alpha

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### Background info:

- "*Up*" was the very first animated film, as well as the first 3D film, ever to open the Cannes Film Festival.
- "*Up*" is the second animated film to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Picture (the first was "*Beauty and the Beast*"). It is also the only Best Picture nominee to have just 2 letters in the title. However, the record for shortest Best Picture nominee title belongs to the film from 1969, "*Z*".
- Pixar is known (at least by devoted Pixar fans) for referring to a character in their next movie to come out in their most recent one. A stuffed Lotso bear (from *Toy Story 3*) appears (along with the ball from Luxo Jr. and the plane from *Toy Story*) in the room of a little girl Carl passes when his house first takes off.
- All of the characters are based upon circles and rectangles, except for the villains, who are triangles. Objects around Carl and Ellie are also based on their shapes, for example, their chairs and picture frames. When they both appear in a photograph, the frame is both circle and square.
- Carl Fredricksen's face and gruff personality are based on Spencer Tracy and Walter Matthau.
- This was the film debut of Jordan Nagai, who voices Russell. He turned up at the audition, intending only to accompany his older brother. About 400 children had showed up for the auditions, but Nagai stood out because he would not stop talking.
- If Carl's house was approximately 1600 square feet, and the average house weighs 60 to 100 pounds per square foot, it would weigh approximately 120,000 pounds. If the average helium balloon can carry .009 pounds (or 4.63 grams), it would take 12,658,392 balloons to lift his house off the ground. (Incidentally, 20,622 balloons appear on the house when it first lifts off.)

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### Scriptures:

John 10:10 (The Message) – *“I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.”*

Proverbs 2:1 – 5 (The Message) – *“Good friend, take to heart what I’m telling you; collect my counsels and guard them with your life. Tune your ears to the world of Wisdom; set your heart on a life of Understanding. That’s right—if you make Insight your priority, and won’t take no for an answer, Searching for it like a prospector panning for gold, like an adventurer on a treasure hunt, Believe me, before you know it Fear-of-God will be yours; you’ll have come upon the Knowledge of God.”*

1 Peter 1:3 – 6 (NIV) – *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.”*

1 Corinthians 10:24 (The Message) – *“But the point is not to just get by. We want to live well, but our foremost efforts should be to help others live well.”*

2 Corinthians 5:18 (GWT) – *“God has done all this. He has restored our relationship with him through Christ, and has given us this ministry of restoring relationships.”*

Luke 19:26 (The Message) – *“Risk your life and get more than you ever dreamed of. Play it safe and end up holding the bag.”*

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### Discussion points:

1. When Carl finally reads all of Ellie's "*Adventure Book*", he notices that the adventures she longed for changed over time. How did her idea of what constitutes adventure change? How can we prepare ourselves for the next new adventure in our lives?
2. Russell says about times with his dad, "*It might sound boring, but I think the boring stuff is the stuff I remember the most.*" What makes the "*boring stuff*" memorable?
3. Carl had to let go of something in order to be able to live fully in the present. What are some of the things that keep us from being able to enter into the adventure right in front of us?
4. How do you know when to lay a dream down, when to pursue it, when to fight for it, when to forget it?
5. Which do you crave more: a quiet life or an adventurous life?
6. What are the most important factors that constitute a healthy friendship? What are some of the things that make it harder (or easier) for friendships to develop between people who are quite different from one another?