

“Finding Nemo” starring Albert Brooks, Ellen DeGeneres, Alexander Gould, Willem Dafoe, 2003, G, 100 minutes

Major themes:

- Father / son relationships
- Taking risks
- Overprotectiveness
- Letting go
- Journey
- Searching
- Belonging
- Adventure
- Ocean

Major characters:

- Marlin, Coral, Nemo (ocellaris clownfish)
- “School class”: Mr. Ray (spotted eagle ray), Sheldon (seahorse), Pearl (flapjack octopus), Tad (yellow longnose butterflyfish)
- Dory (Pacific regal blue tang)
- “The Tank Gang”: Gill (moorish idol), Bloat (porcupinefish), Peach (Ochre starfish), Bubbles (yellow tang), Deb / Flo (four-striped damselfish), Jacques (Pacific cleaner shrimp), Gurgle (royal gramma)
- Bruce (great white shark), Anchor (hammerhead shark), Chum (mako shark)
- Nigel (Brown pelican)
- School of moonfish
- Crush, Squirt (green sea turtles)
- People: Philip Sherman (dentist), Darla

Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

Background info:

- The word “*nemo*” is Latin for “*no one*.” It is also a reference to the character Captain Nemo from Jules Verne’s novel, “*Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.”
- The tagline for this film is “*Jaws will drop*.”
- “*Finding Nemo*” won many awards, including the 2004 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature.
- Pixar has a tradition of planning animation characters years in advance. Nemo was first seen in the 2001 film “*Monsters, Inc.*” as a stuffed toy on a couch in Boo’s room. In this film we see “*Mr. Incredible*” from the 2004 film “*The Incredibles*” and “*Luigi*” from the 2006 film “*Cars*.”
- The animated surface water that Pixar developed looked so realistic that Pixar had to tweak it to make it look more fake so that people would not think it was real footage of the ocean.
- “*Finding Nemo*” surpassed “*Lion King*” (1994) as the highest grossing animated film at that time, and is also the best-selling DVD of all time with over 40 million copies sold worldwide.
- Director Andrew Stanton provided the voice of Crush the sea turtle.
- “Deb’s reflection / alter ego is Flo, the names taken from the “*ebb*” and “*flow*” of the tide.
- The Australian state of Queensland used “*Finding Nemo*” in tourism promotions.
- The East Australian Current is a real ocean current that moves warm water from the tropical Coral Sea, where it splits from the South Equatorial Current, down the east coast of Australia. Its speed typically ranges from 2 to 7 knots. In reality, every summer, thousands of fish are swept along this current from the Great Barrier Reef to Sydney Harbor and further south.

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Scriptures:

Proverbs 2:11 (NLT) – *“Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe.”*

Psalms 37:39 – 40 (The Message) – *“The spacious, free life is from God, it’s also protected and safe. God-strengthened, we’re delivered from evil— when we run to him, he saves us.”*

John 12:24 – 25 (The Message) – *“Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you’ll have it forever, real and eternal.”*

Psalms 8:6 – 8 (The Message) – *“You put us in charge of your handcrafted world, repeated to us your Genesis-charge, Made us lords of sheep and cattle, even animals out in the wild, Birds flying and fish swimming, whales singing in the ocean deeps. God, brilliant Lord, your name echoes around the world.”*

Psalms 33:6 – 9 (NLT) – *“The LORD merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born. He assigned the sea its boundaries and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs. Let the whole world fear the LORD, and let everyone stand in awe of him. For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command.”*

2 Kings 18:5 – 6 (The Message) – *“Hezekiah put his whole trust in the God of Israel. There was no king quite like him, either before or after. He held fast to God—never loosened his grip—and obeyed to the letter everything God had commanded Moses. And God, for his part, held fast to him through all his adventures.”*

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Discussion points:

1. Discuss the place of risk-taking in Marlin's and Nemo's lives.
2. What are the differences between wise risks and foolish risks?
3. What impact did Marlin's overprotectiveness have on Nemo's choices?
4. What helped Marlin begin to release his fears and anxieties?
5. Why does trusting God with our futures so often involve a letting go of something we hold dear?
6. What is the relationship between what we have lost and what we long for?
7. Which character(s) do you relate to the most? Why?
8. What advice would you give Marlin in parenting his son after this adventure?
9. What advice would you give Nemo?