

“Shrek” starring Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, 2001, PG, 90 minutes

Major themes:

- Stories
- Friendship
- Community
- Exile
- Home
- Courage
- Transformation
- Beauty
- Authenticity
- Self-Acceptance

Major characters:

- Shrek
- Donkey
- Princess Fiona
- Lord Farquaad
- Robin Hood
- Merry Men
- Gingerbread Man
- Magic Mirror
- Dragon

Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

Background info:

- This film is loosely based on the 1990 children's picture book of the same name by William Steig.
- The song played in the opening credits, *All Star* (Smash Mouth), was initially just a placeholder for test screenings while filmmakers sought just the right song. But test audiences loved it, so the producers kept it.
- The principal actors did not meet each other during recording sessions. They all read their parts separately, with a reader feeding them the lines.
- After Mike Myers had completed recording Shrek's voice for the film and was shown a rough cut, he asked to re-record all of his lines with a Scottish accent, similar to that his mother used when she told him bedtime stories.
- During production, animators who failed while working on other projects were often sent to work on Shrek. The reassignment was known as being "Shreked" and being sent to "The Gulag."
- The film references a number of classic movies, including *Peter Pan*, *Dumbo*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Babe*, *The Matrix*, *A Christmas Carol*, and the American TV show *The Dating Game*.
- Shrek was shown at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival, where it competed for the Palme d'Or, making it the first animated film entry chosen since Disney's 1953 *Peter Pan*.
- Shrek won both the first ever Academy Award for Best Animated Feature and the Best Adapted Screenplay at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA).
- The U.S. Library of Congress selected Shrek for preservation in the National Film Registry in 2020, becoming the first animated film of the 21st century to be preserved.
- Shrek has received his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

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Scriptures:

Proverbs 18:24 (The Message) – “Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks by you like family.”

Proverbs 24:26 (NIV) – “An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.”

Proverbs 17:9 (The Message) – “Overlook an offense and bond a friendship; fasten on to a slight and—good-bye, friend!”

Matthew 13:34-35 (NLT) – “Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables. This fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet: ‘I will speak to you in parables. I will explain things hidden since the creation of the world.’”

Psalms 12:5 (The Message) – “Into the hovels of the poor, into the dark streets where the homeless groan, God speaks: ‘I’ve had enough; I’m on my way to heal the ache in the heart of the wretched.’”

Deuteronomy 31:6 (The Message) – “Be strong. Take courage. Don’t be intimidated. Don’t give them a second thought because God, your God, is striding ahead of you. He’s right there with you. He won’t let you down; he won’t leave you.”

Proverbs 28:2 (The Message) – “When the country is in chaos, everybody has a plan to fix it— But it takes a leader of real understanding to straighten things out.”

Romans 12:2 (The Message) – “Fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

Numbers 22:28 (NLT) – “Then the LORD gave the donkey the ability to speak.”

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Discussion points:

1. How do Shrek and Fiona's experiences with isolation parallel real-life encounters with loneliness and the quest for meaningful connections?
2. Analogous to peeling back the layers of an onion, both Shrek and Fiona possess concealed depths in their personalities. What does this teach us about looking beyond outward appearances?
3. In what ways does Fiona defy conventional fairy tale norms and expectations, contributing to the film's thematic undertones?
4. The movie addresses the topics of prejudice and stereotyping. How do these themes materialize through the interactions between the diverse cast of fairy tale creatures and the central characters?
5. Shrek" is known for its humor and pop culture references. How does the film use these elements to both entertain the audience and provide commentary on traditional fairy tale narratives?
6. Lord Farquaad embodies the classic villain archetype, but his character is also a satirical representation. How does Farquaad contribute to the film's overall message about power and authority?
7. How does Shrek and Donkey's unlikely friendship challenge stereotypes and offer insights into the importance of diverse relationships in our lives?