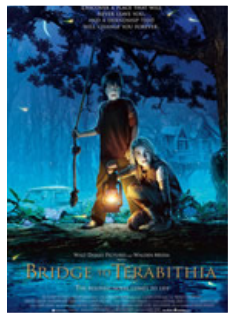


## BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA



### Synopsis

*Bridge to Terabithia* tells the story of the friendship between two unlikely fifth graders in rural Virginia. As an escape from the pressures and hardships of school and family life, new friends Jess and Leslie create the imaginary land of Terabithia in the woods near their homes. In their secret world they successfully battle the enemies of Terabithia and rule as king and queen. When a terrible tragedy occurs, Jess realizes just how much he has learned and gained from his friendship with Leslie.

### Discussion Questions

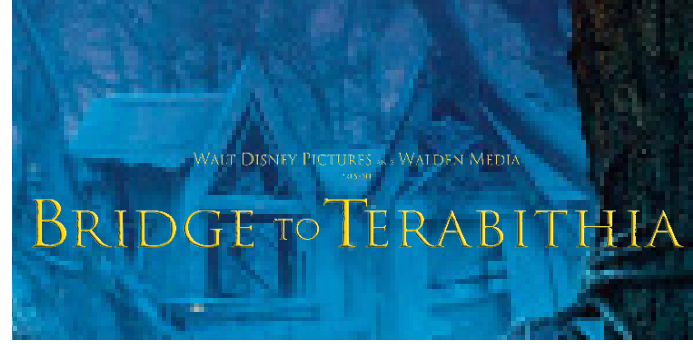
- Terabithia is a place where both Jess and Leslie are able to escape together using imagination. Why do you think Jess has trouble “seeing” the imaginary creatures and surroundings of Terabithia at first? Why do you believe the ability to imagine come so naturally to Leslie? Do you have a place, real or imaginary, that you escape to on a regular basis?
- The character Janice is a bully in the film. Jess and Leslie are shocked when they observe that Janice is not invincible – she cries when she is teased, just as others do when they are bullied by her. Think about any bullies you have encountered. Are they invincible in your eyes? Why or why not?
- Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke have noticeably different families. Although they are neighbors in the same small Virginian town, their families have unique characteristics and lifestyles. How do Jess and Leslie’s families impact their beliefs and personalities?
- Jess has to deal with a great tragedy in the film. Have you ever had to deal with a tragedy? How did you handle it and who helped you get through that tough time?



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## BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA

### Activities

- Jess is an excellent artist and constantly adds to his notebook of drawings with characters, animals and make-believe creatures. Even if you don't fancy yourself a great artist, both sketching and painting can be great ways to deal with emotions and help to develop creativity. Start filling a notebook with sketches and you might be surprised by the talent you discover.
- Leslie excels at creative writing and speaking, and uses her skills to narrate their adventures in Terabithia. Write a short story about friendship and share it with someone who means a lot to you.

### Get Involved

- Advocate against bullying in your schools. The Youth Policy Action Center at [www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org](http://www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org) or 1-866-MOBILIZE, provides lots of tips and information for youth who have seen something in their community or heard something on the news that they wish to change. The Center gives young people the same "tools" used by professional lobbyists to work to change laws and other ways that elected officials respond to young people's concerns about issues of importance.
- Art and imagination were important themes in *Bridge to Terabithia*. Organize an art auction in your community where local aspiring artists' work is sold and the proceeds donated to fund community are programs so that more youth have access to programs that will help fuel their imagination and creativity.

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