



Discussion guide developed by Heartland Truly Moving Pictures to accompany *Ratatouille*, a Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film. A Truly Moving Picture Award winner is a film that unlocks the vast potential of the human spirit and enables us to view stories that display courage, integrity and hope, taking entertainment to a higher level.

[www.TrulyMovingPictures.org](http://www.TrulyMovingPictures.org)





## One Film Can

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures, a non-profit organization, recognizes and honors films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. We believe that one film can move us to laughter, to tears, or to make a difference. *Ratatouille* is a movie that demonstrates that **One Film Can**.

## Synopsis

From Academy Award®-winning director Brad Bird and the amazing storytellers at Pixar Animation Studios comes *Ratatouille*, a movie about one of the most unlikely friendships imaginable.

The film's protagonist is a rat named Remy who dares to dream the impossible dream of becoming a gourmet chef in a five-star French restaurant. Together with a down-and-out garbage boy named Linguini, the pair carves their own imaginative path to becoming the greatest chef in Paris.

All his life, Remy has had a gifted sense of smell and a most unusual dream for a rat: to cook in a gourmet restaurant. Undeterred by the obvious problem of trying to make it in the world's most rodent-phobic profession, not to mention his family's urgings to be satisfied with the usual trash-heap lifestyle, Remy's fantasies are filled with flambés and sautés. But when circumstances literally drop Remy into the Parisian restaurant made famous by his culinary hero, Auguste Gusteau—whose mantra "anyone can cook" has been Remy's lifelong inspiration—he soon finds that being discovered in the kitchen can be alarmingly perilous if you've got whiskers and a tail.

Just as Remy's dreams look like they will go up in smoke, he finds the one thing he needs, a friend to believe in him: the restaurant's shy, outcast garbage boy who is about to be fired from his job. Now, with nothing left to lose, Remy and Linguini form the most improbable partnership—with Linguini's clumsy body channeling Remy's creative brains—that will turn Paris upside down, leading them both on an incredible journey of comical twists, emotional turns and the most unlikely of triumphs, which they could never have imagined without each other.

Disney•Pixar presents *Ratatouille*, directed by Brad Bird, the film is produced by Brad Lewis and executive produced by John Lasseter and Andrew Stanton. Bringing to life a wide-ranging roster of memorable characters is a voice cast that includes popular stand-up comedian Patton Oswalt, Golden Globe® Award winner Brian Dennehy, Emmy® Award winner Brad Garrett, comic star and Emmy® nominee Janeane Garofalo, Academy Award® nominee Ian Holm and the legendary eight-time Academy Award® nominee Peter O'Toole.



## Overcoming Difficulties

Just by being a rat, instead of a human, Remy is faced with daily obstacles on his journey to becoming a chef.

1. What is one obstacle that you have faced so far in your life?
2. What feelings do you experience when you have trouble accomplishing something? How can you turn those emotions into a positive plan of action?
3. In overcoming difficulties, why is it important to have the support of others? Who helps you through tough times?
4. Towards the end of the movie, the health inspector closes Gusteau's because of the rat presence. However, this huge obstacle turns into something even better. With the help of Ego, the restaurant critic, Linguini, Colette and Remy open their own restaurant entitled "La Ratatouille." Why do negative experiences often result in more positive outcomes? Give a few examples.

## Different Cultures

Ratatouille takes place in Paris, France, a location quite different from the United States.

1. What did you learn about the country after watching the movie?
2. French food can differ greatly from typical American food. What are some French foods? What makes them different? Have you ever tried French cuisine?
3. Various gourmet dishes are prepared by Remy and Linguini in the movie. Which did you find the most and least appealing, and why?
4. If you could travel to one other country, which would it be? What appeals to you about this place, and what foods are eaten there?

## Friendship

In spite of their lifestyle differences, Remy is very close with his brother, Emile, and father.

1. Do you have a close relationship with a family member? Describe this relationship and what it means to you.
2. Remy discovers an unlikely friend when he assists Linguini in the kitchen and saves his job. Have you ever made an unlikely friend (someone who is very different from you)? Describe your friendship and how it functions.
3. What are the qualities of a true friend? Do you convey these attributes in your friendships?



## All About Food!

Remy's love of food stems from his strong sense of smell for food.

1. What are your favorite cooking-related smells? What memories or emotions do these smells conjure?
2. What is your favorite homemade dish? Describe the ingredients that go into it.
3. Do you have a favorite dish that represents your culture or heritage? Describe it and why it's important to your family background.

## Activity Ideas

1. Make Your Own Ratatouille!

Remy and Linguini wow Ego, the picky critic, at the end of the movie with a delicious ratatouille dish, a simple medley of colorful vegetables. Here's a recipe for you to try making it at home!

### INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 medium onion, thinly sliced  
1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped  
2 large tomatoes (about 1 pound), halved and sliced 1/2 inch thick  
1 medium eggplant (1 pound), cut into 1-inch cubes  
1/2 pound zucchini, sliced crosswise 1 inch thick  
1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces  
1 bay leaf  
Salt and freshly ground pepper

### DIRECTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large, deep skillet. Add the onion and cook over moderate heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Reduce the heat to moderately low and add the tomatoes, eggplant, zucchini, bell pepper and bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are very tender, about 1 hour. Discard the bay leaf and serve warm or at room temperature.

2. Host a French food festival (in honor of Remy) at home or school. Find typical French cuisine at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_cuisine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_cuisine).
3. Start a cooking club. Each week you can feature a unique recipe or pick a weekly theme. Invite friends to bring items and contact local cooks and bakers to give demonstrations.



## Service Projects to Promote Healthy Eating

With his exceptional sense of smell and taste, Remy is disgusted by the scraps and trash his fellow rats consume daily. He encourages his brother and father to try to savor food and enjoy healthy, delicious dishes.

Think about a service project that you could do that addresses an aspect of healthy eating. How can you help others adopt a healthy lifestyle? Here are a few ideas:

1. Create food pyramid posters to decorate the walls of schools, libraries, community buildings and hospitals. Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) to find various pyramids, adjusted for different people (kids, teenagers, adults).
2. Cook together with others, using recipes that include healthy ingredients such as fresh fruits, veggies and whole grains.
3. Volunteer at a local soup kitchen, helping prepare and serve food with fresh, local ingredients donated from restaurants and markets.
4. Provide assistance at your nearby farmer's market, or help organize a new one.
5. Plant a vegetable garden in your community or your backyard.

## Advocate for Good Nutrition

In addition to service projects, you can also be a powerful champion for change. Despite recent efforts to improve the eating habits of the U.S. population, an obesity crisis still exists, especially among young people. Take the initiative to tell your policymakers that more changes are needed in order to preserve the health and happiness of today's youth and future generations.

1. Petition school boards to introduce healthier options in the cafeteria. Soda machines and junk food can be removed, replaced by nutritious salad bars and fresh juices.
2. Petition the government to include more detailed information about ingredients and nutrition facts on food labels.
3. Food stamps allow individuals and families who don't earn a lot of money to get food from supermarkets for free. Learn about the national food stamp program and find out how it can be improved with additional nutrition information! Visit [www.fns.usda.gov/fsp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp).
4. Visit [www.kidshealth.org/kid](http://www.kidshealth.org/kid) for more ideas on how to encourage youth to stay fit and healthy!





## Truly Moving Moments

*Ratatouille* has been honored as a Heartland Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film. This award was created to honor theatrically released films that align with Heartland's mission to recognize and honor films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life.

These award-winning movies are made up of moving and inspiring moments – those moments that cause you to think, see something in your life differently, and be inspired to do something. It's what makes the movie and its message remain with you well after you've left the theatre.

In the movie *Ratatouille*, what moments stood out to you? How did they make you feel? How will they cause you to think about things differently in the future? Share these moments with others at **TrulyMovingPictures.org**. Simply create a membership or login if you already have one, and then search the movie list for *Ratatouille*. Write your own review of the movie or share your thoughts about this Truly Moving Picture at **TrulyMovingPictures.org**.

Your feedback is inspirational to others!



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