



Discussion guide developed by Heartland Truly Moving Pictures to accompany *Last Chance Harvey*, 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



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. *Last Chance Harvey* is a movie that demonstrates that **One Film Can**.

Synopsis

Academy Award® winners Dustin Hoffman (*Rain Man*) and Emma Thompson (*Sense and Sensibility*) reunite in *Last Chance Harvey*, a heartfelt romance that celebrates new beginnings—at any age. The film is written and directed by Joel Hopkins (*Jump Tomorrow*).

New Yorker Harvey Shine (Dustin Hoffman) is on the verge of losing his dead-end job as a jingle writer. Warned by his boss (Richard Schiff) that he has just one more chance to deliver, Harvey goes to London for a weekend to attend his daughter's (Liane Balaban) wedding but promises to be back on Monday morning to make an important meeting—or else.

Harvey arrives in London only to learn his daughter has chosen to have her stepfather (James Brolin) walk her down the aisle. Trying to hide his devastation, Harvey leaves the wedding before the reception in hopes of getting to the airport on time, but misses the plane anyway. When he calls his boss to explain, Harvey is fired on the spot.

Drowning his sorrows at the airport bar, Harvey strikes up a conversation with Kate (Emma Thompson), a sensitive, 40-something employee of the Office of National Statistics. Kate, whose life is limited to work, the occasional humiliating blind date and endless phone calls from her smothering mother (Eileen Atkins), is touched by Harvey, who finds himself energized by her intelligence and compassion.

The growing connection between the pair inspires both as they unexpectedly transform one another's lives.

“...I think, falling in love when you’re older is devastating. It’s an enormous thing to happen, especially when you don’t think it’s going to come your way.” Actor Emma Thompson about the movie

Emma Thompson and Dustin Hoffman’s characters in *Last Chance Harvey* meet each other late in life. Emma Thompson discusses how impactful falling in love late in life can be in the quote above. Use the discussion prompts below to explore whether there is truth in this quote.

Discussion Questions

- Do you agree that falling in love when you are older could be devastating? Why?
- How have past relationships impacted Harvey and Kate?
- Did Harvey and Kate demonstrate the devastation of falling in love later in life? If so, in what ways did they demonstrate this?
- How does this love story differ from one that focuses on a couple in their mid-twenties? How do Kate and Harvey treat this new relationship differently than a younger couple might? Think of particular scenes from the movie.
- Are there different elements at play in this romance story than in other romance movies? What are they and how do they help infuse the story to make it unique and different?
- Have you experienced love late in life like Kate and Harvey? Were you able to relate to either character’s actions or emotions while watching the movie? Were there aspects of the relationship and time spent together that were unbelievable? Why?



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“He works from a very sweet and definite position. He believes that no matter how far the chips are down and luck is gone, there’s no such thing as, ‘That’s it.’” Actor James Brolin on director Joel Hopkins

Hollywood often creates movies that are unbelievable; that cause us to suspend disbelief. Whether it is fantasy, action, comedy, or romance, many films tell stories that are not particularly plausible. Although many filmgoers realize they will encounter implausible storylines, sometimes as a story unfolds it is easy to feel manipulated. Oftentimes critics grumble about sugar-coated sentiment and unrealistic happiness portrayed in some movies.

Last Chance Harvey has received strong reviews by several critics and both Hoffman and Thompson were nominated by the Golden Globes for Best Actor and Actress in a Musical or Comedy for their performance in this film.

Discussion Questions

- Was *Last Chance Harvey* a believable story? What aspects about it were? What were not?
- Do you feel the story of Harvey and Kate was worth telling? Why?
- List a few movies that have told stories that strongly impacted you. What about these stories had the most impact on you? Why?
- *Last Chance Harvey* is Joel Hopkins second film. His first, *Jump Tomorrow*, is a romance as well. In the quote above, James Brolin mentions Hopkins optimism. What type of person do you think you have to be to make romantic films?
- Do you believe that a writer or director’s personal life directly impacts their ability to make a certain type of film?
- What type of story or what genre is best suited to your life experience if you were to make a film?

Read more about Joel Hopkins’ thoughts on *Last Chance Harvey* in his interview with Heartland Truly Moving Pictures at

www.trulymovingpictures.org/interview-view.aspx?id=84.

“What was touching to me was the real honest human kind of damage that all the characters have, especially Harvey. He’s honest and real and not that likeable. He’s made the kind of mistakes in his life that a lot of people have, so I think many people can identify with the estrangement and families going astray, being alone in life, facing really difficult odds.”

Actor Liane Balaban on the film

Many of the talent in the movie signed up because of the passion they had for Hopkins’ script and the strength of the characters he created. Use the following prompts to discuss the characters in *Last Chance Harvey*.

Discussion Questions:

- Harvey is not a particularly likeable character, but he is a sympathetic one. In what ways, if any, were you able to relate to Harvey’s character?
- Harvey has been trounced by love in the past and is a very defeated man because of it. How is his defeated nature demonstrated when he pursues Kate?
- How is Harvey’s defeat identifiable in his interaction with other characters such as his daughter, ex-wife, and her new husband?
- Were you able to identify with Kate’s character? How? Was her character likeable?
- After learning about both Harvey and Kate’s characters do you believe the two are compatible and a good fit? Why?
- Joel Hopkins has referred to this movie as a character study. After watching the film are you left with questions about these characters? What are they? Are there situations in the movie that could have been created in order to answer some of these questions?
- Are there any actions the characters take that don’t align with the actions you believe the character would have actually taken?
- Take this opportunity to examine the other characters in the film, particularly Harvey’s ex-wife, daughter, and Kate’s mother and discuss the qualities that help strengthen an onscreen character. What things make them most believable? What qualities detract? Why?

Truly Moving Moments

Last Chance Harvey has been honored as a Heartland Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film. This award was created to honor films released theatrically 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, be inspired to do something. It's what makes the movie and its message remain with you well after you've left the theatre.

Think about *Last Chance Harvey*. What were the moments that stood out to you? How did they make you feel? How will they cause you to think about things differently in the future? Share those Truly Moving moments with others at www.TrulyMovingPictures.org. Simply create a membership or login if you already have one and then search the movie list for *Last Chance Harvey*. You can leave your review of the movie or thoughts about this Truly Moving Picture in the "Thoughts and Reviews" section.



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