

# Meet the Robinsons

## FosterClub Movie Discussion Guide

(use this viewing guide to help prepare you to complete a "Self Directed Training" form; submit a copy of the form to us to earn in-service training credit)

### **Summary of the Movie**

After being abandoned at birth and spending 12 years in an orphanage as a foster youth, Lewis goes on a journey to discover the meaning of family. Lewis is a brilliant inventor who meets a mysterious stranger named Wilbur Robinson, who whisks Lewis away in a time machine. Together they team up to track down Bowler Hat Guy in a showdown that

ends with an unexpected twist of fate.

Cast: Daniel Hansen, Jordan Fry, Angela Basset, Matthew Josten, Nicole Sullivan, Stephen J. Anderson. Length of time: 95 minutes. Rating: G

### **Themes relating to foster care:**

Permanence

Abandonment

Feelings of self-worth

Resilience

Peer-to-peer relationships

1) Lewis was abandoned by his mother shortly after birth. What are some reasons a parent might have for willingly giving up their child?

**Fact:** The most common factor for youth going into foster care is due to neglect on the part of their parents. This stems from many issues, poverty being one of the most prevalent.

2) Lewis was left by his mother at the orphanage. In the United States, most children in foster care are placed into families, and orphanages don't exist like they used to. Why do you think this is?

3) Why was Lewis placed in foster care? Was it his fault?

**Fact:** Most children are placed in foster care through no fault of their own. In fact, most youth are placed into foster care due to the inability of their parents to care for them. The perception that all foster kids are bad kids is a false assumption.

4) Lewis stayed in the same orphanage the whole time he was growing up. In reality, most kids in foster care must move multiple times, which often means changing schools. How would moving homes and moving schools have made Lewis' story different?

5) Lewis eventually finds his "forever family." How do you think it turns out for most young people in foster care?

**Fact:** In 2005 there were 513,000 youth in foster care. Of those 513,000 youth there were 76 percent that were living in a placement other than family. Of the youth leaving foster care 54 percent were reunified, but 9 percent were emancipated, or were judged to be an adult before the age of 18. In 2006 there were 26,517 foster youth who aged out of the foster care system without having been reunited, adopted, or found a permanent relationship and home.

6) "Keep moving forward." What does this mean to you? What does resilience mean? How does Lewis show resilience?

7) If Lewis and Goob had not found homes, they would have most likely transitioned out of foster care when they turned 18. What difficulties do you think they would have had trying to live on their own when they aged out?

**Fact:** In 2005 18 percent of foster youth who left the system were adopted. 54 Percent were reunited with at least one of their biological parents.

8) There are currently over half a million children in foster care. They may go to your school, your church, or play sports with you. How do you think friends could have supported Lewis while he was in foster care?

Additional in-depth questions

*Suggested for use with young people in foster care.*

9) Lewis is an inventor, and a pretty good one too. He throws himself 100 percent into his inventions; do you think this could be a way for him to escape? Could it be a coping mechanism? What coping mechanisms do you use when under stress or in a situation where you do not have the tools to completely deal with it?

**Fact:** Many times as foster youth we find ways to deal with our situations by finding an outlet for our emotions and energy. Lewis inventing things is a prime example of a creative outlet.

10) Lewis becomes upset after his adoption meeting where he gave the gentleman an allergic reaction. He says that he has had 124 failed adoption meetings. Why would he be counting? How would you feel if you had that many meetings that did not work out? Do you think this might explain his fear of failing and wanting to give up? How?

11) What does Lewis want in this movie? Does he want his biological mother, or does he just like the idea of having a mother? Does Lewis have a sense of family? **Note:** What Lewis really wants in this movie is to simply be wanted, to have people who accept him for who he is and love him for it no matter what. He wants to belong. At FosterClub this is how we define permanence. Does Lewis achieve this permanence in this movie?

12) Many youth in the foster care system want to go back to their biological families or find them even if they have never known them. Why do you think that is? Lewis begins to want to go back and find his biological mother. He begins to think without any proof that she wants him, even though she had never made the attempt to find him. Why do you think Lewis begins to think this way? Is he fantasizing about his biological mother?

13) There is another foster youth in this movie that has a very different experience; that person being Goob. After he does not catch the pop fly, he begins to blame Lewis for all of his circumstances. He even starts to see things through a different set of eyes, like when he said everyone hated him

when they were inviting him over. Why do you think this would happen?

What is Goob's thought process? Have you ever wanted to blame everything on someone else, trying to justify your place in the world even though it is no one's fault?

14) What is your definition of family? How would this compare to the picture of family we see in the movie?

**Fact:** Many alumni of the foster care system begin to create their own visions for what their family is and should look like. Family is who is in your heart, not what runs through your veins.

To learn more, read our stories, and connect to foster youth visit

[www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com).

### **About FosterClub**

FosterClub is the national network for young people in foster care.

Every two minutes, a child's life changes as they enter the foster care system.

Currently, there are over 513,000 young people in foster care in across America.

FosterClub is their club — a place to turn for advice, information, and hope.

FosterClub helps open the way for these young people to transform their lives and provides a forum to raise their voice. Our members engage with peers and regain control over their situation through support, skill building, and healing opportunities.

FosterClub's young leaders achieve impressive levels of success as they demonstrate remarkable resilience. Here they have real life opportunities to become true heroes as they reach back to improve the foster care system for their younger peers.

The members of FosterClub are resilient young people determined to build a better future for themselves and for other kids coming up through the system behind them. Their success depends on the generosity of concerned individuals and collaborations with partner organizations. If you would like to learn more about FosterClub, or how you can support young people in foster care, call 503-717-1552.

FosterClub is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. EIN 93-1287234.