From Screen to School: Applications of Children's Relationships with Film Characters to Elementary Curriculum Design

Rebecca Gayle Liss
Syracuse University

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Abstract

Children have access to popular media characters virtually everywhere in their daily lives except within a school setting. With familiar animated faces on packages of food, art supplies, shoes, clothing, etcetera, children develop relationships with characters and view them as socially relevant. Given the struggling education system in the United States and the knowledge that social relevancy contributes to bettering academic engagement and achievement, this study examined how the relationship between children and media characters can be used in elementary curriculum design to potentially decrease cognitive load. This two-phased study began with semi-structured in-depth interviews with 8-11 year old children to gain an understanding of how and why the relationships between children and fictional characters form—to learn what was attractive about these characters in order to inform how to best design engaging academic activities. The results of this phase found that children are most attracted to characters that take on a comedic role, characters that are part of a larger series, and characters that engage in the same activities as the child participants. Additionally, it became evident that male participants were much more closely tied to characters of their own gender than female participants. The second phase took the learned understanding and applied it to answering the question of how elements of popular children’s films can align with Common Core standards. Four primary methods of integration were discovered and explored in how to bring them into a school setting.
From Screen to School:
Applications of Children’s Relationships with Film
Characters to Elementary Curriculum Design

by

Rebecca Liss

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# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

  United States’ Education System  
  Common Core State Standards  
  Cognitive Load Theory  
  Learning and Media

Chapter 2: Literature Review

  Children and Media  
  Learning via Media  
  Relationships with Fictional Characters  
  Social Learning Theory  
  Learning Theory & Curriculum Design  
  Cognitive Load  
  Intrinsic Cognitive Load  
  Extraneous Cognitive Load  
  Germaine Cognitive Load  
  Engagement and Interest in Learning

Chapter 3: Phase 1 Methodology

  Data Collection  
  Sample  
  Data Analysis  
  Study Considerations

Chapter 4: Phase 1 Analysis
Chapter 1: Introduction

August 1998. I was seven years old—a pink bow in my hair and a doll in my hand—standing in front of a group of strangers. It was the first day of second grade in a new school. Shy, I shook my head ‘no’ when the teacher asked me if I wanted to tell the class anything about myself. At that moment a little girl raised her hand. “I like Belle too,” she shared, gesturing toward my doll. I smiled, suddenly less intimidated by the room of unfamiliar people.

I first saw Belle at home when my parents played Beauty and the Beast for me. I recognized her again and again in coloring books, on stickers, on clothing; she was the closest thing I had to a friend when I entered the elementary school building that morning. I was instructed to put Belle away after my introduction to the class.

Belle was for home, not for school. My teacher believed, as many do, that the characters students enjoy playing with outside of an academic setting serve as a distraction within the classroom. From personal teaching experience, I find that this might not be the case.

Through an educational perspective, this study sought to understand the relationship that develops between children and the characters within their favorite films. Student interests are the foundation for successful classroom engagement. Children can interact with these characters everywhere except where they learn; they see these characters as being relevant in their lives, and the relevancy these characters bring with them is what can benefit academic engagement in school. If a teacher engages his or her students, the students have a better ability to learn (Li, Qi, G. Wang, X. Wang, 2014). With an understanding of the dynamic between children and these characters, this study identified methods to use these relationships within the educational curriculum by aligning these findings with the Common Core State Standards.
United States’ Education System

Despite efforts to improve the United States’ education system, US student performance has dropped from 17th to 36th in global ranking between 2009 and 2012. The most recent results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) were released on December 3, 2013 and provided data demonstrating that children in the United States were working at or below average in reading, mathematics, and science. The amount of capital the United States is spending on education is not benefitting student performance. As of 2013, an average in excess of $115,000 per pupil was spent, yet the PISA scores were at the same level as students from the Slavic Republic (OECD, 2013). The Slavic Republic was spending $53,000 per student, a $62,000 discrepancy in funding for each child with no discernable variation in academic performance.

Lack of funding cannot account for the significant decline in performance of the United States’ education system. If the finances and resources are not at fault, attention turns to curriculum and curriculum delivery—the methods teachers are employing to educate American youth. What are teachers doing to engage their students with academic content? Student engagement in learning is a significant, highly studied predictor of academic achievement (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). If a teacher can tailor instruction to highly engage his or her students, the students’ ability to learn and absorb the academic content is greater. Students are more likely to actively engage in learning activities if they anticipate learning something they perceive to be interesting or relevant to their daily lives (Means, Jonassen, & Dwyer, 1997; Yoon & Kim, 2011). It is the perception of relevancy and interest in learning that bridges the gap between education and popular children’s media.
Common Core State Standards. The Common Core State Standards are a uniform set of specifically designed learning goals for public school students in kindergarten through twelfth grade ("Frequently Asked," 2014). These learning goals inform teachers what their students should know and be able to perform at each grade level; however, the standards do not tell teachers how to teach or how to design the curriculum. For example, while a standard might state that first grade students must know to capitalize first letters of names, the standard will not state how to best assist the first graders in attaining this knowledge. Essentially, the Common Core standards only dictate what the students need to learn and ultimately ensure that when students complete twelfth grade they are prepared to take college courses or enter the professional workforce ("Frequently Asked," 2014).

The District of Columbia, four United States territories, and 43 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards and are beginning to implement them in their public schools in either the 2013-2014 or 2014-2015 school year ("Standards in," 2014). Prior to the development of the Common Core State Standards, states were independently responsible for supplying public schools with learning goals for students at each grade level.

There is controversy surrounding the implementation of these standards nationwide. Some of this debate is framed around the extensive testing that students are subjected to. These exams not only put stress on the students, but also impact the teachers. Specifically, teachers feel pressure to “teach to the test” which involves a teacher planning his or her curricula around what they anticipate will be on the standardized tests (Evans, 2013). Teachers who feel pressured to “teach to the test” may have their students taking practice exams rather than engaging in more meaningful and memorable learning activities. Despite these valid criticisms,
it is important to note that the primary issue stems from the implementation of the Common Core rather than the standards themselves.

**Cognitive Load Theory**

*Cognitive load theory* expresses how working memory can become overwhelmed during a learning experience (Van Winkle, 2012); it is essential in understanding how differentiated instruction can impact cognitive function (Van Winkle, 2012). The concept of working memory overloading during the learning process means cognitive effort that should be focused on making sense of and retaining new information is being spent on something else. For a child this could be something as simple as focusing on what the boy named John in his or her word problem might look like rather than attempting to solve the problem.

An abundance of cognitive load has a negative impact both on the acquisition of new knowledge and the comprehension of the new material. In any educational environment, minimizing cognitive load will better allow a child’s working memory to be efficiently and effectively applied to taking in the intended academic content (Yoon & Kim, 2011). Cognitive load is impacted by the inherent complexity of the educational material, the instructional design, and the need to process new information into what a student has already learned and experienced (Gilbert & Schleuder, 1990; Lang, Kurita, Gao, & Rubenking, 2013). Ultimately, the instructional techniques used to present the material directly impact cognitive load (Sweller, 1994).

**Learning and Media**

As children become familiar with television and film characters, the characters become increasingly socially relevant – leading children to be more likely to not only trust the characters, but also to become active learners in the messages being shared (Lauricella, Gola, & Calvert,
Socially relevant means that children begin to see these characters as connected to their daily lives. Kotler, Schiffman, and Hanson (2012) found that when pictures of popular media characters were used with food products, there was an increase in preschool-aged children’s preferences for these products. The children trust that a familiar character would not be on a box of food with an undesirable taste.

The idea of trusting media characters coincides with developing relationships. As children become familiar with the characters, “an emotional one-way attachment develops between an audience member and a media character” (Lauricella et al., 2011). Whether or not a child will attend to and learn from a media character can be linked to how the child feels about that character, whether he or she can identify with it or not (Richert, Robb, & Smith, 2011). As the emotional relationship with a character increases so does the ability to learn from the character.

Social meaningfulness and social contingency are two topics discussed in fostering learning through media (Kemar, 2010; Lauricella et al., 2011). They relate to the importance of interaction and familiarity between viewer and character. Studies have found that engaging with or learning from familiar rather than novel characters results in superior understanding of the delivered message (Lauricella et al., 2011; Rimal, Figueroa, & Storey, 2013). These two topics will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 2.

The topic of children and media use is controversial—whereas some people believe media can and should be used as a learning tool, others advocate that media use can have a negative impact on a child’s development. For example, children will spend hours with an iPad or in front of a television and are rarely engaging in physical activities. The rationale behind these varying opinions is not necessarily grounded in academics but in personal beliefs and
experiences with media. Because of this discrepancy, the idea of bringing popular media characters into the school setting may be unattractive to adults who choose to restrict their child’s media access.

Parents may be worried that engaging frequently with media will expose their children to information or ideas that they do not wish their children to learn. This is a reasonable concern because media is notorious for perpetuating stereotypes (Goodall, 2012; Harrison, 2000; Taylor, 2003). Additionally, parents might hesitate to allow their children much media time because they believe those bright screens are addicting, causing children to spend more and more time staring at a moving picture and less time interacting with people. This is one of the areas that has caused people to link an increase in childhood obesity to childhood media use (Rutherford, Biron, & Skouteris, 2011; Rutherford, Brown, Skouteris, Fuller-Tyszkiewics, & Bittman, 2015).

On the other hand, some parents encourage early interaction with media. Technological skills are becoming more and more necessary and desired in the job market (the need to be technologically literate). People find that these early interactions may benefit children’s ability to learn how to work with new technology and ultimately better prepare them for the future. Similarly, depending on what media children are engaging with, media can give children access to experiences that they otherwise would not have—whether this is giving them practice with social skills in simulated social situations, or seeing more diversity and culture than they can be exposed to in their immediate surroundings.

Though some criticize this interaction, children can interact with elements from popular children’s films virtually everywhere—characters are depicted on clothing, books, food, toys, etc.—except within the confines of a classroom. To explore the relationship that develops
between children and these films independent of any academic setting, the first research
questions will ask:

**RQ1a:** What do elementary school students perceive as socially meaningful features of
their favorite films?

**RQ1b:** How do elementary school students develop relationships with characters from t
heir favorite films?

**RQ1c:** What attributes make a film character (un)appealing to elementary
school students?

Subsequently, once an understanding of these relationships has been conceptualized, the study
will seek to integrate mass media and education by asking:

**RQ2:** How can elements of popular children’s films align with Common Core
standards?

The nature of these questions leads to a two-phased study, the elements defined by RQ2
contingent upon the findings and analyses of RQ1.

The next chapter will provide theoretical background on related material regarding both
education and media learning. Following the background information, Chapter 3 will detail the
methods utilized for the first phase of this study and Chapter 4 will contain the phase one
analysis. Subsequently, Chapter 5 will provide the methodology for RQ2 and Chapter 6 the
analysis of phase two. Finally, Chapter 7 will contain the overall conclusions.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter contains a review of existing literature and theory relevant to the proposed study. Because this study sought to combine an understanding of children’s relationships with film characters with elementary curriculum applications, two primary research areas are discussed. The first section contains research on children and media; this literature provides insight as to how children have previously developed relationships with media characters, the nature of these relationships, and what factors may have contributed to the willingness to listen to messages shared by these characters. The second area covered in this chapter is focused on learning theory and curriculum design.

Children and Media

Many studies have been conducted to understand if and how children learn through media (e.g. Calvert, Strong, Jacobs, & Conger; 2007; Fisch, Truglio, & Cole, 1999; Heintz & Wartella, 2012; Hendershot 1999). Although this study is be focused on educational media or its content, the concepts examined in how children learn through video and television are applicable and relevant in understanding how to best mediate the alignment of specific film content into elementary curriculum.

Learning via Media. Children’s learning through media has been studied with the goal of using television programs or videos to decrease the knowledge gaps that exist among children of different socioeconomic status in the United States. Briefly, the knowledge gap hypothesis expresses the idea that children born into a higher socioeconomic status receive knowledge at faster rates than those with lesser financial means (Gaziano, 1997; Tichenor, Donohue, & Olien, 1970). With 75% of children under the age of eight using screen media daily and nearly 80% of toddlers watching television or other video programs for an average of two hours a day, pushing
educational content into media is a hopeful avenue for reducing these fiscally produced informational gaps (Heintz & Wartella, 2012; Lauricella et al. 2011). Ultimately, the growing use of screen media in children’s daily routines suggests that screen technology may facilitate children’s learning (Richert et al., 2011).

When it comes to utilizing screen media as an effective educational tool, Heintz and Wartella (2012) describe that children need to not only pay attention to and understand the messages being shared on screen, but they also need to recognize how this information can be applied to their lives. This is known as social relevancy.

Social relevancy implies that a child views something on the screen and feels as though whatever is being presented is pertinent in his or her life beyond the context of watching the media; when the child determines that the media content is socially relevant, he or she can and will learn through television and videos (Heintz & Wartella, 2012; Krcmar, 2010; Lauricella et al., 2011; Richert et al., 2011). Likewise, if a child perceives video information to lack social relevancy, they may be unable to learn from it (Troseth, Saylor, & Archer, 2006). The concept of social relevancy is important to this study because it relates directly to traditional learning theories in education. When children perceive the material they are being taught is relevant in their lives, they engage more deeply with the content and thereby are better able to demonstrate positive learning outcomes. Aligning a child’s perception of the relevancy of media content with an educational goal may produce the same effect. This will further be discussed in the subsequent section on learning theory.

Krcmar (2010) breaks social relevancy down into two sub-categories, social meaningfulness and social contingency, arguing that in order for children to learn via media, the media must not only be perceived as relevant in their lives (social meaningfulness), but also
reinforced in interactive social experiences (social contingency). The basis of this argument centers on the results of an experiment with toddlers. The study found that toddlers who engaged with a screen-learning interaction that was supported with interactions beyond the viewing experience performed three times better on the intended learning task than toddlers who had no socially relevant interactions beyond the screen (Krcmar, 2010). Calvert, Strong, Jacobs, and Conger (2007) similarly found in a study related to learning via television that children learn when they are provided with opportunities to interact in a responsive environment (this is the element of social contingency) with a more intelligent other.

The reinforced interactions can be real or perceived. A real interaction might be between a child and an adult that copies what was seen on the screen (Krcmar, 2010), while a perceived interaction might occur during the media viewing itself. For example, a popular children’s television program *Dora the Explorer* often has pauses where the primary character waits in anticipation of an audience reply. After the pause, the character continues on as if she has heard the response from the viewer. Though the character could not actually hear the viewer’s response, the viewer may perceive the continuation of the program as a true interaction.

However, not all studies have found social contingency to be an imperative aspect of learning via media. Lauricella et al. (2011) performed a study with toddlers in which social contingency was held constant across all experimental groups. The results found that only social meaningfulness was a significant factor in children’s learning outcomes via video. When children viewed a video lesson presented by a familiar character, a character that they interacted with beyond an educational experience, they performed better on the desired learning task than children who viewed the same lesson presented by a novel character (Lauricella et al., 2011). Similarly, Rimal Figueroa, and Storey (2013) found that Egyptian children able to identify more
primary characters from the Egyptian version of *Sesame Street* also demonstrated higher numeracy, higher literacy, and stronger gender-equitable attitudes. This supports the notion that the more familiar a child becomes with a character, the more socially relevant that character becomes, the more a child is willing to learn from those messages that character has to share. This concept moves into the next focus of this proposed study: building relationships with media characters.

**Relationships with Fictional Characters.** Exposure, familiarity, and repeated interaction with fictional characters can lead to the development of a one-way attachment between a viewer and a media character (Horton & Wohl, 1956). These relationships are known as being para-social, meaning a viewer knows all about the media character but the relationship is not reciprocated (Kotler, Schiffman, & Hanson, 2012). The significant part of these relationships for this study is the understanding that a child’s social relationship with a character can considerably influence decision making and learning, and thus they should be considered as an aid to education (Hoffner, 2008; as cited in Richert et al., 2011).

Lauricella et al. (2011) argues that a benefit in utilizing these relationships in learning relates to a child’s attentional capacities (or cognitive load, which will be discussed later with learning theory). If a child is utilizing the majority of his or her focus to understand a novel character’s identity, less attention can be given to understanding the lesson the character is trying to share. The more children engage with media characters, the more they are able to determine who or what in their lives is providing them with reliable information; Harris (2007) finds that this discrimination is likely extended to the characters a child sees in screen media.

The bridge between familiar media characters, those that are perceived as being socially relevant to a child, and learning through media can be seen clearly in the results of the
experiment conducted by Lauricella et al. (2011) – the study found that children learning from a video featuring Elmo (a familiar character) out-performed children learning from a video featuring DoDo (a novel character). The findings supported that the participants’ emotional relationship with the character or about the character’s actions had an impact on their learning.

Identification with a character is another topic that is explored with learning through media. Bandura (1989) noted that whether or not a child identifies with a character has an impact on that child’s willingness to attend to and learn from that character. Identification can mean many different things—similar personality, similar experiences, similar physical features, etc.—but ultimately, “children tend to choose favorite characters that are the same gender as themselves, but girls choose less gender-typed favorite characters than do boys” (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 888). The bonds between a child and a favorite character can even make a difference in what food a child may choose to consume over others (Kotler et al., 2012). Knowing that there are gendered differences in how children build character relationships was important in designing the data collection method for this study.

When characters have more similarities to a viewer, that viewer’s emotional investment with a program increases, allowing the viewer to consider shared messages more deeply and thereby increasing the chance that the viewer is going to learn the educational content the program provides (Richert et al., 2011). Hendershot (1999) explains that Sesame Street offered African American children characters with which they were able to identify with, and thus bettered their self-esteem. This relates back to the concept of social relevancy and the influence of media characters on children’s lives.

**Social learning theory.** Social learning theory was developed by Albert Bandura, and when looked at in relation to media is very simplistic: behavior is learned through observation of
what is around you—your environment, people you see and interact with, etc. (Culatta, 2013). Children will repeat what they hear and mimic what they see, especially from people who are important in their lives such as parents, siblings, and friends (McLeod, 2011). With media, this can transfer to their favorite or most loved characters—they can even learn from those that they are less drawn to. As children age and begin to view media characters as relevant in their daily lives, they will become more willing and able to learn from these characters and are increasingly likely to model their behaviors. The key to social learning is modeling and how the child perceives what he or she is seeing in the media to be relevant in his or her day-to-day life.

Learning Theory & Curriculum Design

This proposed study combines two broad concepts: children’s relationships with media characters, as discussed above, and applications to elementary curricula. This section will focus on educational learning theory to better the understanding of how these relationships might be used to impact the learning process.

Cognitive Load. Cognitive load is the theory that working memory can become overwhelmed during a learning experience, thereby negatively impacting a learner’s ability to absorb the intended content (Kalyuga, 2011; Sweller, 2010; Van Winkle, 2012). Essentially, this means that a person’s potential to learn and retain the novel information is affected by the amount of cognitive effort required to process that particular information. Specifically looking at a child learning from media, cognitive load can impact a child’s ability to digest what they view on the screen and apply it in real life (Barr, 2010). This was shown in the previously mentioned experiment involving the characters Elmo (familiar) and DoDo (novel) from the Lauricella et al. (2011) study. The use of a novel character produced lower learning outcomes than the use of a familiar character. This demonstrates that the cognitive effort the children in the experiment
were using to make sense of the unfamiliar character could have been devoted to learning the intended material. For this study the most important factor of cognitive load theory is how it is applied to understanding how various types of instruction and curriculum delivery can impact the cognitive processing involved in learning (Van Winkle, 2012).

With any academic setting, minimizing cognitive load is an important goal. By lowering the amount of cognitive load the student’s working memory can be more effectively focused on absorbing the intended academic content (Yoon & Kim, 2011); however, minimizing does not mean cognitive load should be completely eliminated. This is where a distinction between types of cognitive load becomes important. Cognitive load is a combination of three categories: intrinsic cognitive load, extraneous cognitive load, and germane cognitive load.

**Intrinsic cognitive load.** Intrinsic cognitive load (ICL) looks specifically at the innate complexity of the material that needs to be learned (Kalyuga, 2011; Sweller, 1994, 2010; Sweller & Chandler, 1994; Van Winkle, 2012). This type of cognitive load is not impacted by the manner in which the instruction is delivered or what activities the learners engage in (Sweller, 2010). ICL can only be altered in two ways: change the content needing to be mastered or change the amount of base knowledge the learner has (Kalyuga, 2011; Sweller, 2010). The latter of the two changes is the act of learning in itself because cognitive load is impacted by how much the learner already knows in relation to what he or she must now learn; ultimately it is the learner’s own expertise in that domain (Kalyuga 2011).

**Extraneous cognitive load.** Extraneous cognitive load (ECL) refers to the instructional presentation of the material that needs to be learned (Kalyuga 2011; Sweller, 2010). This type of cognitive load causes the learners’ working memories to apply themselves to tasks that are not directly related to the educational material (Van Winkle, 2012). When a teacher is employing
less-than-optimal instructional design, extraneous cognitive load increases (Kalyuga, 2011; Sweller 2010). Teaching techniques and curriculum design have been studied to reduce extraneous cognitive load (Sweller 2004, 2003); creating meaningful learning experiences (learning that appeals to student interest and life relevancy), helps to reduce ECL and thus benefits learning outcomes (Kaderavek, 2009; Van Winkle 2011; Yoon & Kim, 2011). This will further be discussed in the next section regarding engagement and interest in learning. The Common Core standard alignment component of this study was designed with the hope of minimizing extraneous cognitive load for elementary school students. Van Winkle (2011) cites that there is a significant issue when learning material presents high levels of both intrinsic and extraneous cognitive load as they are additive.

**Germane cognitive load.** Germane cognitive load (GCL) is distinguished from the other types of cognitive load because it does not always obstruct or hinder learning, but is in fact necessary to the learning process (Kalyuga, 2011). Without any effort from the working memory, it would be unlikely for meaningful, complex learning to occur (Kalyuga, 2011). Lutz, Guthrie, and Davis (2006) explain that assigning students more complicated tasks may better facilitate high engagement and high academic achievement. The important element to acknowledge here is that complicated tasks do not mean a high level of difficulty. It means that the curriculum is presented with multiple steps or multiple concepts to consider—the curriculum should be designed to make the students think. A rote vocabulary exercise, for example, would not be considered complex and its simplicity may cause decreased engagement and lesser learning outcomes (Lutz et al., 2006). Students need to be challenged, but the challenge should focus on the desired learning goal.
Engagement and interest in learning. Engagement with respect to learning is a significant area of research in seeking to understand academic achievement as it is a direct predictor of learning outcomes (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Li et al., 2014; Lutz et al., 2006;). While motivation accounts for a person’s enthusiasm in doing something, engagement relates to the drive that turns motivation into an action. Bahji, Lefdaoui, and Alami (2013) argue that the most beneficial learning experiences are those that raise both the motivation and the engagement of the learners. Engagement is typically determined by interactions between individuals and their environment; therefore, participation can better engage students in learning as it provides appropriate scaffolding to evoke essential cognitive processing skills (Calvert, Strong, Jacobs, & Conger, 2007; Li et al., 2014).

As discussed by Sørebo & Hæhre (2012), positive learning results are often the outcome of learning based on interests. The ideal curriculum would require taking student interests as the foundation of lessons (Kaderavek, 2009). By doing so, students are more likely to actively engage in the lesson, thus producing positive learning outcomes. The foundations of student interests involve the pre-existing knowledge, personal experience, and emotions that the students bring with them into the academic setting (Tobias, 1994)—the things students enjoy when they are outside of the classroom should not be seen as taboo in a school environment, they should be used to enhance learning.

The literature discussed in this chapter explored the key components for both areas of interest in this study children and media, and educational learning theory and teaching practices. The following chapter provides the methodology that was used to explore how a deep understanding of the relationships that form between children and media characters may be used in applications to elementary curriculum design.
Chapter 3: Phase 1 Methodology

This thesis sought to understand the relationship that develops between children and their favorite film characters. The purpose of gaining this understanding was to explore potential applications to elementary curriculum design stemming from these relationships. Student-interest focused teaching has shown to improve engagement which directly relates to better learning outcomes (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Li, Qi, G. Wang, & X. Wang, 2014; Lutz, Guthrie, & Davis, 2006; Sørebø & Hæhre, 2012). In order to achieve this goal, two phases were required. A comprehensive, in-depth understanding of children’s relationships with their favorite film characters needed to be developed before attempting to design film-based methods to bring these characters into the classroom curriculum. Insight into what children are attracted to about these characters provided key foundation for phase two of this study. High student engagement with classroom activities is the overarching hope, and therefore student insight needed be an integral part of the creation process.

Data Collection

The first phase of this study was completed through semi-structured in-depth interviews with children in third, fourth, and fifth grade (ages 8-11). A semi-structured interview is conducted through a set of pre-determined questions that will be asked to all respondents, however there is flexibility to shift the conversation to delve deeper into a respondent’s answer with follow-up questions (Brennan, 2013). Follow-up questions were specifically catered to the respondent’s answers and therefore were not asked of all participants. The key was for me to be a good listener, and to build a comfortable dynamic with the participants.

The participants in this study was young, and previous research using in-depth interviews with children has found that interest in the subject and personality type can impact willingness to
participate (Andersen, 2007; Martínez, Jarlbro, & Sandberg, 2013). A variety of personality types also contributes to understanding that some people are better able to articulate their responses than others. Additional areas of caution included the possibility that my presence might have impacted or biased the participants’ responses (Cresswell, 2014; Kellett & Ding, 2004)—in this situation, it was important to keep in mind the power dynamic that exists between children and adults.

Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews with the children, I requested each child’s guardian to complete a short survey of questions regarding his or her knowledge of the child’s film preferences. These questions were intended to allow me to better prepare for the interviews. The interview quality was dependent upon my ability to guide the conversation in a manner that navigated through the questioning and elicited meaningful responses. Interview preparation was key because I was the primary instrument in the study and needed keep the children interested (Cresswell, 2014).

Because the interviewees were children, I took into consideration attention span and was prepared to take a break or schedule interviews in two sessions if necessary. Additionally, the child’s primary guardian or guardians were invited to be present during the interview. All interviews were audio recorded and subsequently transcribed.

The semi-structured interview process began with talking about favorite films and moments in those films that the child enjoyed to gain a sense of what kinds of moments are memorable enough that they would engage student interest if put into curriculum. The second section of the interview probed more specifically into the child’s relationships with the characters in the films, ultimately trying to understand what character traits are appealing enough to allow this connection to form (or unappealing enough that negative feelings are formed). The
final section consisted of questions regarding the child’s perception on recognizing and enjoying movie characters even if they have not seen those movies.

Field notes were taken throughout the interview process in order to accurately capture visual information during the discussion such as smiling, frowning, laughing, or lack of focus. These notes were helpful during the transcription process and in identifying moments of enthusiasm or disinterest.

This phase of the study did not begin until I received approval from the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The participants required for this study belong to the vulnerable populations category because they were under the legal age of consent; therefore, I completed an expedited application, including both a guardian consent form and participant assent form. Because the questions presented in the interviews pose minimal risk to participants, the study did not require a full board review.

**Sample.** The desired sample was approximately twenty children (ideally ten male and ten female) enrolled in elementary grades three, four, and five. These grades were selected because the Common Core State Standards for the mid to upper elementary grade levels are not only greater in number, but also more conducive to character integrated activities than the standards for the lower elementary grade levels. The only additional requirement to participate in this phase of the thesis is that the children have previously viewed films.

Considerable recruitment efforts were made in order to attain the desired sample via purposive and snowball sampling. Due to this sampling method the participants were all of a similar socioeconomic status to myself, which may have had an impact on the results. Children from other socioeconomic backgrounds may view media and form bonds with characters differently, which may have been visible with a more stratified sample.
I had contact with parents of children who fit the criteria to participate in New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Connecticut. These families were asked to recommend other families that might be willing to participate in the study. Additionally, a $10 gift card incentive was offered to the participant’s guardian, as well as a small toy incentive to the participant.  

Due to the age of the participants, I felt it necessary to conduct all interviews in person. Each participant’s guardian chose the location of the interviews, though I requested that it be a setting that the child is familiar and comfortable with. I was also willing to meet and get to know the participants before conducting the interview.  

In total, nineteen (19) children were interviewed for this study. Of the total, seven (7) were in 3rd grade at the time of the interview, six (6) were in 4th grade at the time of the interview, and six (6) were in 5th grade at the time of the interview. A gender-based breakdown of participants and grade level can be viewed on Table 1 below. On average, interviews lasted just under 15 minutes (14 minutes and 47 seconds).

Table 1
Participant Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using NVivo research software throughout the data collection process. All interviews were transcribed and imported into NVivo to be coded for quotes and themes related to the study’s research questions. This analysis occurred simultaneously during the
collection process in order to direct future interviews, possibly conduct follow-up interviews for clarity, and ensure that time was being used productively.

Initially four main areas were thematically coded, line-by-line, during the analysis process: identification with a character, perceived positive character attributes, perceived negative character attributes, and emotional connections to the characters. These themes were preliminary and subject to change throughout the data collection process. In order to gain a deep understanding of how children were forming relationships with these characters it was important to recognize not only how a child views a character, but how he or she perceived himself in respect to that character. For example, if a child was enthusiastic about a character because she has demonstrated bravery, was bravery a personality trait that the child would also attribute to herself, or perhaps one she would like to acquire one day?

Similarly, looking at the perception of both positive and negative characteristics (characteristics referring to both physical and personality traits) provided a better understanding of what character features were most memorable in the context of a film. This knowledge was informative during the second phase of this thesis as it was be important to know how children were categorizing preferences. It was particularly interesting to see if disliked characters had redeeming qualities and vice versa with favored characters—to understand if a character’s appeal hinges on a single defining moment or if the character’s development throughout the film impacted the child’s perception. This was important in understanding the concept of identification with a character discussed in the previous chapter.

The emotional connection between a child and a film character was also significant in driving the academic applications. Understanding the attachment between a child and these characters can assist in designing a lesson that children want to engage with. If curriculum is
character driven, it may have an impact on these relationships that will make these bonds feel less one-sided.

**Study Considerations**

It is important to note that I understood it might have been difficult for some children to open up and have a discussion with an unfamiliar adult, even if the topic of discussion was something the child enjoyed. Therefore, some children offered much more in-depth responses than others. However, all children contributed valuable insight to understanding all components of RQ1.
Chapter 4: Phase 1 Analysis

Interviews were transcribed and then coded line-by-line using NVivo coding software. Analysis for themes related to RQ1 (a, b, and c) began after all interviews had been coded.

Multiple themes emerged for each area in question. The most dominant finding was the element of humor—characters that were funny, or movies in the comedy genre were key factors in children relating to and enjoying both characters and films. Within each of the questions, other themes also emerged and are discussed below.

RQ1a

What do elementary school students perceive as socially meaningful features of their favorite films?

Love to laugh. Nearly every child interviewed mentioned that funny moments are the most attractive or entertaining parts of their favorite films. This signified that these children find humor to be socially relevant in their lives as it is something they are able to relate to and enjoy. In every case, talking about some of these silly moments was accompanied with numerous laughs and giggles as the children recounted what it is they like so much within these films. Humor was appreciated in different ways—meaning that what some children found funny varied from what another child was most drawn to. For example, some children related to moments in which a fictional situation that could exist in reality has been constructed as humorous. Other children described moments in which characters were just acting silly—regardless of how realistic or abstract the moment might be. There were also a few children who expressed enjoyment in watching the main characters get themselves into some kind of trouble, often stating that it’s funny to watch because it is not a situation they would want to find themselves in, but that it was funny to see it happen to someone else.
Third grader Hannah described a moment in *Mom’s Night Out* (2014):

> It’s funny.. uhm, because in one part there’s the kids, they’re, they had a bird named MaMa and the dad, one of the dads by accident sat on it and the police came and they were, um, [the dads] were babysitting, because they were breaking the speed limit. The police came and the kids said we don’t want to go with them, and he said why, and he, [the kids] said – “he killed MaMa!”

What Hannah describes as funny in this moment is something that could exist in reality—a father getting pulled over by police for breaking the speed limit. The moment was construed as funny because the children in the car expressed to a police officer that the driver had killed MaMa. Hannah knew that MaMa was the name of a family pet and not the children’s mother, but the police officer in the movie did not. This caused Hannah to find the scene to be not only funny and entertaining, but also memorable.

Though Hannah didn’t seem to find much humor in the fact that the animal had gotten hurt (she was much more focused on how the bird’s name had created a funny scenario), some of the children did express that scenes in which characters were injured can be viewed as both socially relevant and funny. Third grader Ryan explained that he really enjoys watching *The Longest Yard* (2005) because not only is it a football movie, but it is also incredibly funny, especially when the characters “get hurt in really weird ways.” Though there are scenes in this film that put a humorous spin on moments such as a grown man getting hit with a football in his groin, or a grown man crying that someone “broked-ed” his nose, Ryan went on to specifically describe a moment in which a football player was trying to catch a ball and was run into by another player, causing what he considered to be a funny foot injury. Like Hannah, Ryan too
was expressing that the scene he was drawn to could occur in reality—it is not uncommon for football players to acquire injuries while playing the sport.

Humor was also discussed in reference to less visually realistic situations. One example came from fourth grader Adam as he described a scene from Frozen (2013). Adam discussed the introduction of the character Olaf, a talking snowman. He explained the humor in the scene to be the snowman’s head being put on upside down (and thinking that the other characters were hanging off of the earth) in addition to the snowman calling a human character a “funky looking donkey.” While a talking snowman with an upside down head isn’t something a child is going to see in his or her everyday life, Adam finds the silly humor entertaining, likely finding Olaf’s foolishness to be comical. It is of note that children in this age range have probably been exposed to name-calling and may or may not find this notion as funny as Adam perceived it to be.

One theme within the humor domain that stood out was the idea of trouble—predominantly, but not limited to, the concept of moments when characters were doing things that they probably shouldn’t be doing, and often times when they were caught doing so. Another third grade student, Kyle, described a scene from the film Good Burger (1997):

This is such a funny part! So funny. When they were trying to like, they.. there is like a competition with another burger place.. that’s right across the street from them called Mondo Burger – and then when Ed and his friend.. he just got the job at Good Burger, his name is Dexter and they were.. and then they were going to sneak into Mondo Burger and try and get the recipe why their burgers are so big.. and they, and the, and they use these illegal… like, illegal liquid to just like make it big.. and then they, and then they got, they got caught—so they ripped off their costumes, and Dexter was wearing his uniform for
Good Burger. and Ed, when they ripped off his costume, he was wearing this like, bikini and a bra!

Kyle laughed through the explanation and further described other similar moments that he found funny throughout the film. His biggest laughs were in the moments of describing the attire Ed was wearing after being caught snooping around an institution he should not have been in, however, he still expressed that the act of getting caught or being in trouble was humorous. Getting into trouble is something that children may relate to as it is likely something they are encountering every day both at home and at school. They’re still learning how to make good choices and what kinds of behavior are and are not acceptable. It would appear that seeing characters they idolize getting into trouble seemed to make those movie moments more memorable and enjoyable. This suggests that humor in the sense of seeing someone else get into trouble can create a socially meaningful experience.

Fifth grader Gabrielle gave insight to another interesting description of trouble being a key to humor. She described a scene from *The Fault in our Stars* (2014) during which a character is throwing eggs at his ex-girlfriend’s car. She explains how the ex-girlfriend’s mother came out, catching him in the act and how the mother had been very confused—in addition to Gabrielle’s explanation of finding the scene funny, she added “if I did that or something, then I think I probably would be in really big trouble.” This anecdote shows that she was taking a plot point in the film and seeing how a similar scenario would fit into her own life, away from the screen. She has an understanding that throwing eggs at someone’s car isn’t a great choice to make, but still acknowledges that seeing it happen in a movie is enjoyable; it’s as if she gets to experience the act without winding up in trouble herself.
Similarly, third grader Farah remarked on her favorite scene in *The Lion King* (1994)—when young lion cub Simba is singing “I Just Can’t Wait to be King.” She described the scene as funny because Simba was angering another character (Zazu) by not listening to him. Farah acknowledged that by not listening when he was supposed to, Simba was going to be in trouble. It is very understandable that an eight-year-old child would recognize that when you don’t listen to an adult or authority figure, you’re going to get in trouble. Overall, the concept of causing or getting into trouble is something that children in this age range are very familiar with. Therefore, when trouble is present in movies, it seems as though these children are more likely to respond to it, find humor in those situations, and remember them positively because the viewing children are not on the receiving end of any negative consequence for the behavior.

Though not overwhelmingly present amongst the majority of interviews, there is one more aspect of humor worth discussing in relation to what the interviewed children (particularly boys) perceive as socially meaningful within their favorite films. Fifth grader Peter specifically stated that he and his friends enjoy movies with “dirty humor” and later expressed a desire to watch almost any movie that actor Adam Sandler was in because he knows he appreciates that kind of humor. Four of the nine boys interviewed chose to talk about Adam Sandler movies\(^1\) as well; some mentioning that they understood the humor in those films may be inappropriate or offensive. In some cases the boys seemed embarrassed or shy to talk about the fact that they enjoyed these movies. This may be because they were speaking with a female interviewer or because even at a young age they are able to recognize that the content of these movies isn’t always socially acceptable to translate from the screen into their daily lives.

In terms of movie appeal in general, it might actually be very valuable to understand which celebrities children gravitate towards. Research in celebrity endorsement for marketing explores how people form para-social relationships with celebrities (Hung, 2014) which is the same type of bond that forms between a child and a beloved character. It seems as though if children can form these bonds with fictional characters, they can also form them with the celebrities who portray those characters.

**Just like me.** Though humor was by far the most common element that these children described as what made movies enjoyable, many of these children also referenced that some of their preferences were related to them enjoying seeing things on the screen that they personally engage with in their day-to-day lives. The most prominent example was sports—children expressed that they enjoy sports movies because they like to play those sports with friends or are on a team. Erica and Danielle (in grades three and four respectively) both expressed enjoying either *Flicka* (2006) or *Flicka 2* (2010) because they are movies about horses. Both girls also explained that they ride horses. While describing the movie, Danielle stated, “She finds a wild horse and tames it a little bit. But I don’t think you’re supposed to really do that kind of stuff without an adult.” This comment shows that when Danielle is thinking about the content of the movie, she’s making meaningful real life connections between what she sees on the screen and what she knows to be true in her own life. By stating that finding and taming a wild horse is something you shouldn’t do without an adult, Danielle is showing that she not only understands the storyline of the movie, but that she was imagining what that scenario might be like in a non-fictional reality.

Another example came from third grader Ryan when talking about *The Longest Yard* (2005). After he described the movie and shared that he sometimes plays football with his
friends, Adam went on to remark, “It’s cool because I have some of the same clothes, like the helmets and the guards and stuff.. but I don’t go to jail or anything.. at least I hope not!” Similar to what Danielle did, Ryan compared the reality of his life to the fictional setting of the movie, discovering what he had in common with what was in the film and also what differed. It would appear that knowing that children are thinking about their personal realities while watching movies and making judgments as to how what they see fits into what they know is important to understanding what kids determine to be socially meaningful features of these films. Other sports and hobbies that children referenced in this regard included hockey, golf, and singing.

In addition to being able to relate to specific events within the films, many children (predominantly fourth and fifth graders) also commented that they prefer live action films over those that are animated. When fifth grader Peter was asked what he prefers about live action movies, he expressed:

I don’t know.. I feel like, it’s, it just actually seems more funny because when it’s animated you don’t really get to see their facial expressions.. I mean, well you do but it’s not a real expression on a real person so you can’t really relate so much to the jokes.

Children are familiar with human emotions—they’re exposed to games and lessons designed to help them understand how people in their surroundings are feeling, how they are expressing their emotions. Children are accustomed to learning how to recognize another person’s emotions from their home and school environments (Adams, 2011; Dunn & Brown, 1994). It’s possible that this does not translate as well, or as realistically when a child is viewing an animated film. The lack of realism in the animation pulls children further away from their reality than what they experience when watching a live action film.
The ability to identify with film characters’ emotions seemed to be an indicator of these children enjoying certain films. Fifth graders Bridget and Gabrielle both described how watching live action film *The Fault in our Stars* (2014) appealed to their emotions. Gabrielle stated specifically, “Well, I really like the emotions and how it’s kind of about something that’s, it’s about a serious thing but it’s not like they’re sad all the time and I think that’s a good message.” When further prompted to describe what message she thinks the movie sends, she explained, “Even when things can be bad…it doesn’t mean you can’t be happy.” In this situation, Gabrielle has found herself able to empathize with and understand the circumstances in the movie—and above that, she has been able to construct a meaning and a message she can apply to her own life from what she has seen in the film.

Although most children who expressed that emotions and connecting their lives with films was more realistic when they were watching a live action film, that was not always the case. One such example was fourth grader Mia in describing the finale of the animated film *Frozen* (2013). Mia explained that at the end of the movie, when Anna saves her sister’s life, Mia “[cries] for happiness.” This shows that while many children may express that they more easily relate to characters with human actors, it does not mean that animated films cannot also connect with their emotions.

Whether it’s humor or empathy, the majority of children interviewed for this project seemed to agree that they’re more likely to relate to events in a live action film; however, it is also important to also recognize that although these children seem to find live action films to be more socially meaningful, that does not indicate a lack of connection to the characters and events in animated features.
Who’s it for? Another interesting finding relates directly to what movies appeal most to which children. In this instance, the biggest divide in movie preference was noticed between genders. Both boys and girls seemed equally drawn to movies that had surprises in them—moments that kept them on the edge of their seat and contained a lot of action; however, when it came to learning about what movies a child might not want to watch, these boys often (in one way or another) made a statement indicating that they wouldn’t want to watch something that was “for girls.” One of the most outspoken responses came from third grader Kyle who exclaimed, “It’s SO obvious! Like all boys, barely don’t like girls’ movies! And like.. who.. what kind of boy would like to watch a girl movie! It’s so obvious!” When prompted to indicate what might be an example of a “girl movie” and why he might classify it as such, he explained that Barbie would be a girl movie “because girls like to play with Barbie dolls!” In some cases, a male participant either laughed or whispered the fact that he had viewed what might be classified as a “girl movie.” Another prime example was when fifth grader Ian expressed his dislike for Cinderella (1950) because, “it’s a girl movie!” When he was asked why he felt the movie was for girls, he explained, “Well, first of all… there’s a girl that’s the main character. And I want a boy to be the main character.” Ian was then asked if there were any male characters in the movie to which he responded, “Well, I mean.. the Prince, but the main character is a girl.” These overall findings displayed that even in the young age range of 8-11, it seems as though boys are very much aware of gender stereotypes, and how it may impact how other people view their masculinity (Armengol, 2007).

Both boys and girls equally expressed a dislike for movies they considered “babyish.” Movies were considered too young for their taste for a variety of reasons. The most dominant reasons seemed to be something that they watched when they were little (such as Mickey Mouse
or Elmo movies), movies that did not have much action, or movies in which characters were trying to teach simple lessons. At this age, these children indicated that they are viewing movies for entertainment, rather than educational purposes. They’re looking for stories they can relate to and characters they enjoy. Similarly, it appears that they are more involved with movies that they can talk about with their friends—this and the idea of gendered movies and movie characters was brought up by all nine boys, but only one of the ten girls. This will be discussed in much further depth with the discussion for RQ1b.

One final interesting finding that relates to RQ1a is the idea of movies with music and singing integrated into the story. Not a single boy referenced a musical movie as being something he wanted to watch (though no one specifically named one as one he would not want to watch), while six of the ten girls named movies they enjoy with one of the primary reasons being the songs. This may go along with children perceiving certain movies as being for boys and certain movies being for girls, but it was interesting to note. The movies the girls discussed included: *The Sound of Music* (1965), *Grease* (1978), *The Lion King* (1994), *Mulan* (1998), and *Frozen* (2013).

**RQ1b**

How do elementary school students develop relationships with characters from their favorite films?

In order to gain an understanding of what kinds of characters children were most drawn to, the participants were prompted with questions about what characters they might like to be and what it was they admired about those characters. Similarly, they were asked about what characters they would least like to be and why. Several common trends emerged in the analysis of the participants’ responses, though there were some variations, particularly when looking at
gender. The most common response, especially for boys, was to select a character of their own gender (this was not always the case for female participants). It was also evident that these children were drawn to the characters that they have more exposure to—most specifically if those characters also appear in books or in television series. Children also expressed a preference for “main characters” over characters that have less screen time, which is similar to the exposure effect. In some cases, it seemed as though the physical or personality traits of characters are what these children were most attracted to. Another interesting finding was that a few children developed a like for a character before they had ever seen that character in a movie. An example of this will be discussed near the end of this section.

**Boys and girls.** Children were prompted with questions about characters they like or might like to dress up as and then questioned about what they liked and disliked about those characters. Without exception, the male participants chose male characters and many expressed an aversion to the idea of even considering a female character. This showed just how much gender roles and stereotypes are ingrained in children’s minds even at such a young age (Albert & Porter, 1988; Liben & Signorella, 1980; Rosenthal & Paltiel, 1982). In fact, the mere idea of being like a female character was almost always enough to have the male participants laughing. One example was when fourth grader Adam expressed that he would absolutely not want to be Cinderella for Halloween. When the interviewer expressed that she would love to be Cinderella and wanted to know why he wouldn’t, he addressed through his laughter, “but I’m a boy!” The response was similar from the other participants, some exclaiming that the clothing female characters wear (such as dresses and things that sparkle) were absolutely unacceptable. Boys in some instances were hesitant to even admit that they had seen movies with predominantly female characters—or movies that were in their minds, “girl movies.”
Girls also tended to have a preference for characters of their own gender, but were open-minded to characters that were not female. For example, fifth grader Jackie was talking enthusiastically about the idea of being Hermione Granger from the *Harry Potter* series for Halloween. When questioned if she might be open to the idea of dressing up as Ron Weasley or Harry Potter (two of Hermione’s male friends in the series), she stated, “Yeah, I think that would be okay. I dressed up as Olaf from Frozen this year and he’s a boy!” Though a female character was her initial choice, she wasn’t offended by the possibility of identifying with male characters.

Overall, six of the girls chose female characters, three chose male characters, and one talked about multiple characters, both male and female. One of the most interesting findings was that the male characters girls chose to speak about were not human. Third graders Farah and Hannah chose to talk about Mushu, a dragon from *Mulan* (1998), and Olaf, a snowman from *Frozen* (2013), respectively. In both instances, the girls expressed that their favorite things about these characters was how funny they were on screen. Rather than humor, fifth grader Gabrielle stated that she’d like to be Mickey Mouse because he’s “the oldest Disney character.. so he has history and everyone would know who I was.” She went on to further comment that she doesn’t like Mickey Mouse shows or movies because “[they’re] for babies,” but that does not impact her liking the character. It seems as though humor coupled with a lack of realism (talking animals/magic creatures/etc.) made the gender boundaries more transparent.

While the concept of movies and characters being “for girls” has already been addressed, one female participant made the claim that something was “for boys.” Fourth grader Mia determined that she would not want to be The Lone Ranger. When asked why, she stated, “He shoots a lot and I don’t like shooting, and also he’s the hero and he’s, that’s like, that’s like a boy thing.” Her statement prompted a series of questions about whether a girl could be a hero, in
which Mia replied with an affirmative yes, and indicated that she and her sisters had dressed up as heroes before (including Bat Girl, Wonder Woman, and Super Girl). She was then asked what it was that made The Lone Ranger a boy thing. She replied, “A boy was doing it! And also… ‘cuz he has, he carries like a gun and like a pin for a big superhero and it was a boy costume not a girl costume.” Mia associated violence with masculinity, which isn’t an uncommon linkage (Armengol, 2007). She also addressed that costumes are made with a target gender in mind. Given the prevalence of what Mia spoke about, it was surprising that she was the only female participant to make this claim.

These findings regarding gender and the desire to be like a character seems to mirror societal norms and stereotypes. It would appear that girls are more likely to relate with girls and what they believe is considered “girly,” while boys are more likely to relate with male characters and express distaste for anything less than masculine. This could be because in society, the male gender is typically viewed higher in terms of privilege, making a boy’s masculinity something that must be protected—even in a school setting (Martino, 2000). Anything feminine might be seen as a step down, or as something of lesser appeal.

**Have I seen them before?** A common theme about characters children favored was that in many cases these were characters children had exposure to beyond the single setting of a movie. Characters that were in comics, books, games, TV series, or had their own line of toys/merchandise were among the most chosen characters. It seemed as though the more time children spent voluntarily looking at, reading about, or listening to these characters, the more likely they were to begin admiring them; however, this finding does not necessarily translate to repeated exposure guaranteeing that a child will begin to relate to a character. From speaking with these children, it appears as though a child must have a personal interest in a character for a
relationship to develop—whether that interest is ignited via gender, common hobbies or sports, or even admirable personality or physical traits.

When children were discussing characters who were also in books, many verbalized that there was something appealing about knowing a character’s backstory—seeing into their thoughts or understanding their history. One interesting finding was that in some cases a child expressed that reading about a character in the book made them interested in seeing the film, and then seeing the film made them even more excited about the characters. One such example came from fifth grader Bridget while talking about characters from *The Hunger Games* (2012). She explained, “I think I get more into it when I watch a movie because like I can see it in front of my eyes, but.. yeah, I do think I’d still like them [if I didn’t see the movie].” Bridget acknowledges that there is a visual component to what draws her to characters—this is something that will be discussed in further depth with the findings for RQ1c.

Although Bridget expressed that her enthusiasm for a character grew after being able to physically see the portrayal of a character on screen, some children thought that learning the backstory of a character was what boosted their like of that character. For example, fifth grader Ian was talking about what he might say to a friend who didn’t know Batman well. In his explanation, he stated, “I would say to get started, you could watch Gotham.. and then watch Batman and how he grows up because it makes [the movie] cooler to watch.. like, it makes you know more so it’s more interesting.” The biggest difference between what Ian explained and what Bridget expressed is that in the instance of *The Hunger Games* (2012), the character’s full story is detailed in a book. With Batman, his story is being shown in a television series. These findings suggest that while children can and do relate to characters from the words they might read about them, there is something very powerful about the ability to see those characters in
Some other examples of series that children spoke about in which they were exposed to characters both on and off a movie screen included: *Harry Potter, Charlotte’s Web, The Simpsons, Pokémon*, and an assortment of superheroes (Spiderman, Batman, Iron Man, Captain America, The Avengers, and The Flash).

Related to this exposure effect, children also seemed significantly more drawn to primary characters in films. If not the lead, children typically selected the lovable (or humorous) sidekick. In fact, no child mentioned a connection with characters who had little screen time, and several specifically mentioned that they wouldn’t like to be a so-called minor character. For example, when fourth grader Mia was asked if there are any characters she wouldn’t want to be like, she expressed a lack of enthusiasm for Beauty and the Beast (1991) character Chip because “[he is] hardly in the movie!” Another example came from fifth grader Leo. When he was asked if there was anything he didn’t particularly like about superhero The Flash, he stated:

I would make him like, maybe more of a main character so he could have a lot more action because usually the main character can get, like has a lot more to do so it kind of makes them a little cooler—like more exciting I guess.

The concept of characters being cool, and what might have children labeling them as such, will be discussed in the subsequent section regarding RQ1c. Ultimately, it seems as though the more opportunities children have to interact with these characters (whether that is seeing them in a movie/on TV, reading about them in books, or playing with them in a game), the more likely they will be to develop a fondness for them.

However, it is also important to acknowledge that children may be more likely to develop this fondness if the exposure to the characters is voluntary. Over-exposure might have the seemingly opposite effect on how a child perceives a character—especially if the child’s
interactions with the character were not by his or her own choice. Fifth grader Peter described one example of this type of situation. When speaking about *Frozen* (2013), he explained that he has “grown out” of it and that the songs were “really getting on [his] nerves.” Peter was asked if he liked it when he had first seen it which led him to explain, “Yeah, it was decent.. but I feel like now people just, it’s still going and it’s getting annoying because everything is always *Frozen* this or *Frozen* that.” Peter went on to describe that he’s always been a comedy fan, so Olaf had filled that role for him within the movie; however, because he felt like people were always talking about *Frozen* (2013), he was less interested in anything that had to do with the film. Essentially, it appears that if a child loses the freedom to choose which characters he or she is frequently seeing or hearing about, it may negatively impact how he or she perceives those characters.

**What if I haven’t seen the film?** The final area addressed within the scope of this research question is whether or not children might develop a relationship or interest in a film character if they have not had the opportunity to see the film. According to the children interviewed, the ultimate answer is yes. This, however, depends on several factors: publicity, access to content, and what friends talk about. Many of the kids expressed that they often hear about movies through their friends. For example, in addressing whether or not he might know who Spiderman was if he had never seen any of the films, fourth grader Adam stated:

> Maybe other people would know about him and they would tell me. Sometimes people could talk about him or maybe make a picture and stuff. Or I could see a toy because sometimes you could maybe get a toy without watching the movie.

It seems that if their friends are fans of a series or a film, they are likely to talk about it when they spend time together. Similarly, if children like to spend time with people they have
common interests with, it seems typical for kids to tell their friends about movies that they enjoy—part of those descriptions might include who the main characters are. Superheroes and other characters in series (most notably books) were often mentioned as characters that kids did in fact know and enjoy prior to viewing the films.

For characters that aren’t in a book or part of a TV show, it appears to come down to publicity and other means of access. For example, fourth grader Natalie expressed that she’s likely to recognize characters “if it’s like a main movie, like a big big movie” that a lot of people know about. Similarly, fourth grader Cara explained that she had in fact known and enjoyed Olaf for his sense of humor in Frozen (2013) prior to seeing the film. How had she known? She explained that she watched videos of the characters on YouTube and that watching these videos sometimes made her want to watch the full film. Cara also mentioned that when she wanted to watch the film but was unable to, she could still watch clips online.

Miscellaneous. Though not directly related to the other findings described, it was interesting to learn that disliking a movie did not necessarily coincide with disliking characters in that movie. A prime example of this came from third grader Tyler in his discussion about Spiderman. He mentioned that he did not enjoy the Spiderman movies, claiming they were “too scary.” However, he was later prompted to describe some superheroes he’d been talking about. After stating that he believes superheroes are “good” and “powerful,” he was asked if he felt the same about superheroes in movies that he didn’t like—provided with the example of Spiderman as he’d mentioned before. Tyler responded, “Spiderman isn’t exactly powerful.. but he can do a lot of things and he’s, he’s still a good guy—he’s actually my favorite superhero.” Tyler expressed that he enjoyed the character from the comics he had access to—disliking the movies hadn’t impacted the way he felt about Spiderman the character.
A similar trend was noticed when speaking with other participants about movies that they were not particularly fond of or might not want to watch. When questioned if there was anything in these less appealing movies that they did enjoy, many children would single out a character or mention that he or she enjoyed the scenes that had that specific character. The most frequent example was with boys talking about movies that they claimed were “for girls.” Characters such as the mice in *Cinderella* (1950) and Maximus the horse in *Tangled* (2010) were referenced in that specific manner. It’s also interesting to note that the characters that were referenced as being the good parts of less appealing films were the characters that provided comedy. This directly relates to the appeal of humor, which will be further explored in the subsequent section.

**RQ1c**

What attributes make a film character (un)appealing to elementary school students?

Participant responses for this research question varied greatly, but upon analysis ultimately came down to three categories in terms of appeal and three categories in terms of a lack of appeal. Very similar to what attracted these children to movies, the largest indicator of a child enjoying a character was related to the character’s humor. If not humor, children were inclined to express their fondness of something related to one of two things: the character’s physical traits or the character’s personality traits. When looking at what might cause a child to dislike a character, physical and personality traits were still among the top reasons, however, the third category that emerged was not a lack or humor, rather it was the feeling that certain characters are “boring” or “for babies.”

*Can’t stop laughing.* The most prominent form of humor these children addressed was what will be referred to as “silly humor.” This is the sort of comedy in which the characters themselves are innocently funny—frequently the humor stems from something they’ve
misunderstood or from the character’s actions, often not following socially constructed norms.

One example came from fourth grader Adam. He was discussing the mice in Cinderella (1950). When asked what made the mice funny, he replied:

I guess they kind of just make me laugh? Like there’s.. they have a song when they make the dress for the party, and it’s funny like.. the main mice make fun of the mean sisters and mom and stuff. It’s also like, they have silly voices because it’s squeaky like a mouse.

Adam finds humor in the expressions and mannerisms of the mice. He’s able to relate to them in the sense that he sees them making fun of characters who he describes as “mean” which is something that a lot of children brought up throughout the course of the interviews—finding humor in some kind of behavior that they probably wouldn’t engage in themselves, but think is funny to watch. In this case, Adam likely knows that if he were to make fun of someone, there would be some kind of negative consequence for that action, but seeing the mice do it in their squeaky voices (along with a well-founded dislike for the characters being mocked), is funny to watch.

Third grader Kyle provided another example of silly humor about his favorite character in Good Burger (1997). When describing that Ed was his favorite character because of how hilarious he was, Kyle explained with a laugh:

If he like, wins something he’s like.. and then if people carry him, like if he wins something and then people carry him he like.. and they’re cheering like “Ed! Ed! Ed! Ed! Ed!” And then he’s like, “What? What? What? What? What?”

This is one of those moments where the character is missing out on common social cues, making him appear somewhat foolish—but because Kyle is aware of standard social behaviors and thus
able to recognize that Ed’s behavior doesn’t quite fit, he finds the situation funny. It’s evident in the scene that the character doesn’t understand that the other characters chanting his name are not attempting to gain his attention; they are merely celebrating his win.

Another example came from third grader Farah in her description of Mushu, her favorite character from *Mulan* (1998). Farah ultimately describes Mushu’s comedy to stem from circumstance—he’s “a little tiny dragon… who wants to be big and like cool, like the other dragons.” Farah also explains that things tend to go wrong for Mushu. He knocks over statues, accidentally lights fires, and when he needs to assist Mulan his suggestions are less than helpful. As some of these less fortunate displays of clumsiness occur, Mushu is the character that provides comic relief throughout the film. Farah’s example underlies what other children also described—while she wouldn’t want to knock over a statue or accidentally start a fire, it is funny to see it happen to someone else.

Olaf, the talking snowman from *Frozen* (2013), was the character children seemed to mention most frequently in terms of what they liked when speaking about humor. He is one of those characters that not only lacks knowledge of acceptable social norms, but also seems to get into some entertaining situations. For example, fourth grader Cara expressed that it was very funny when Olaf mistakes a male character’s name for that of the male character’s reindeer—in that after being told the reindeer’s name, he went on to ask what the “funky looking donkey” was named (implying that the man looked like an animal). This is a situation in which realistically making this statement about another person would be considered impolite, however, the snowman’s comical tone makes the moment humorous. Third grader Ryan, however, found it funny when Olaf’s “nose gets pushed through his whole head,” alluding to the fact that humor can come from visual stimulation as well as what the characters say. Meanwhile, third grader
Hannah expressed that one of her favorite funny Olaf moments was when he almost immediately did something he was specifically told not to do. After the character was told to stay out of sight, Hannah laughed and explained, “Olaf slid on his belly and said hello to everybody and they started screaming!” It seems as though the character didn’t understand that staying out of sight also meant not being heard. This was also a direct act of disobedience, or the potential to get into trouble, which was something a lot of children seemed drawn to—it falls under that umbrella of things that are funny to see, but not to do.

The other type of humor that children discussed was “dirty humor,” or humor that was in poor taste and might be offensive. Far fewer children (none of the girls) spoke about this type of comedy, but it still came up in referencing favorite characters. One example came from fifth grader Peter. When asked how he might describe one of his favorite films, *Billy Madison* (1995), to his friends, he replied, “Hilarious and I know a lot of my friends like dirty humor, so I would probably have to tell them that and then they’d definitely want to watch it.” When asked to explain some aspects of the film, Peter used words such as “inappropriate” and “offensive,” acknowledging his awareness that the contents of the film were not okay to translate into his everyday life. It seems as though there was almost a taboo effect when it came to dirty humor—with silly humor, children expressed that they found it funny when characters got into trouble or did things that they wouldn’t do themselves. With dirty humor, this translated to the recognition that these actions weren’t acceptable because they might cause harm or discomfort to someone in real life.

**Positive physical traits.** When these children discussed what physical traits might be appealing about a character, there were ultimately two types of traits: active and passive. Active traits were those that might require something of the character beyond appearance, such as
physical strength or powers. Passive traits were those that directly related to the character’s image such as what the character is known to wear.

Many girls expressed a fondness for characters that were “pretty” whether that be from the dresses they wear, the fact that they wear makeup, or even mentioning the long length of a female character’s hair. For example, fourth grader Mia spoke about how she likes Belle’s yellow dress in *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) as well as Elsa’s long dress in *Frozen* (2013). Similarly, third grader Cara expressed she liked sisters Anna and Elsa from *Frozen* even before she’d seen the film because she thought they were very pretty. Both of these examples show that a character’s visible features can spark a child’s interest in that character regardless of the character’s personality. Boys also mentioned similar details when it came to physical (passive) traits that they admired in characters. Fourth grader Adam specifically mentioned that he liked the colors of Spiderman’s costume while third grader Tyler expressed that he thinks Iron Man’s suit of armor is incredibly “cool” looking. Ultimately, it appears as though the visual appeal of characters can attract both boys and girls equally to spark an interest in those characters—however, it does seem as though there is a difference between what children of different genders will find appealing. Of these children, girls were more likely to state a fondness of something pretty while boys were more likely to express an interest in something that was cool.

When it came to active physical traits, the most common expression concerned superheroes and their strength or other abilities (which was also related to their ability to fight evil and help people). One example came from fifth grader Leo who spoke about superhero The Flash—what he liked about this character was how he “is the fastest guy, pretty much on all of earth basically.” Similarly, fifth grader Jackie acknowledged that one of the things she enjoyed about Hermione Granger from the Harry Potter series is that she is a wizard and has magical
powers. These sorts of traits are not realistically attainable outside the world where these characters live, but it seems as though children are attracted to that element of fiction or fantasy.

It’s also important to note that regardless of whether or not children mentioned that physical traits were part of character appeal, every child was able to accurately describe what the characters they spoke about looked like as they appeared in the films.

**Positive personality traits.** Appreciating a character’s personality was a big indicator of whether or not these children felt a connection with a film character. Children brought up a plethora of what they found to be positive traits. Some of these included being: caring, brave, kind, cool, smart, inspiring, and determined. It’s also important to understand that some of these traits are somewhat ambiguous – for example, a child may have claimed that they liked a character because he or she was “cool” but their definition of cool might vary from what another child said when attributing that word to a favored character. Descriptions of being cool varied from being a hero, to being a main character, to being strong and brave. Fifth grader Ian provided one example of a character who he described as cool. When talking about Batman and what makes him worth watching, Ian expressed, “because he’s cool. He fights crime and.. he has cool machines that he can ride on!” In this case, not only does the character have machines that are technologically advanced and glorified, but the character himself is viewed in a more positive light because he’s using the tools he has access to in order to fight crime. The concept of heroism and helping people was something that these children mentioned as honorable and appealing.

Fifth grader Jackie and third grader Tyler mentioned that they admired characters for their intelligence. Jackie spoke about her favorite character, Hermione Granger from the Harry Potter series. She described her as “very smart, she’s nice to everybody, she doesn’t like being
called a know-it-all.” What’s interesting about Jackie’s explanation is that she indicates that while she admires intelligence, she also expresses that this particular trait has stigmatized the character in a negative way—in this case, being referred to as a “know-it-all.” It appears that this is something children are confronted with every day as they try to navigate and understand social skills; children learn that it is important to be smart and understand that it is desirable, but they may also be aware that people who are “too smart” can come across negatively. When talking to Tyler, he mentioned that he’d like to be like Sherman from *Mr. Peabody & Sherman* (2014) because “at the end of the movie, Mr. Peabody said to Sherman he’s a genius and then Sherman says, ‘Just remember, I’m a genius!’ So it’s like, it’s good to be smart!” Tyler was specifically stating that this is a character he wanted to be like. This shows that when children are engaging with films, they might be thinking about themselves in relation to the characters. Because Tyler views intelligence and being smart in a positive light, when Sherman is told he is a genius in the film, it makes the character more appealing.

Another area of appealing personality traits that came up was somewhat related to social responsibility. For example, fourth grader Natalie spoke about how she admired Fern in *Charlotte’s Web* (2006). She explained that Fern “saved the pig and now has her own pet, a little baby pig and she treats it like a baby and she treats it like.. umm, like very nicely.” Natalie went on to divulge that she disagreed with the idea that Fern’s father was going to kill the small pig, stating that it was the same thing as killing a child—which is not okay. This demonstrates that Natalie admires the fact that the little girl was standing up for something she believed was right, and this aligned with Natalie’s personal perception of the situation. Because she believed that the act Fern’s father wanted to commit was morally wrong, she seemed more inclined to appreciate Fern’s character who believed the same.
An additional example of admiring social responsibility in characters came from fifth grader Bridget in describing Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* (2012). Bridget described Katniss as “determined, brave, and inspiring.” When prompted to explain why she attributed those traits to that character, Bridget explained:

Katniss really cares about her family and stuff. I mean, she goes into the Hunger Games because she wants to save her little sister even though she knows she’ll probably die. And then a lot of people really look up to her in the movie because they see her kind of the same way like, she says things and people want to listen.

Bridget also mentioned that when Katniss speaks, she has the ability to get people to rebel in the hope of changing a system that she finds morally corrupt. What Bridget is speaking to is the idea of standing up for what you believe in and taking a stand against a system that you feel is unjust. Bridget acknowledges that Katniss is willing to give her life in order to save her sister, emulating bravery and determination. She is inspiring because people want to listen to her. Bridget is drawn to this strong female character because she displays qualities that Bridget admires.

Also interesting to note, after children described characters that they liked, they were asked if there was anything about those characters they did not find appealing—in nearly every interview the children said no, indicating that if they like a character, they are unlikely to view any of that character’s attributes negatively.

**Negative physical traits.** When children explained what they might dislike about a character, physical traits mentioned were always related to something they found unappealing about that character’s appearance. One example came from fifth grader Gabrielle. She expressed that the characters in the movie *Rango* (2011) “look like they were built out of clay,” which was something she wasn’t fond of. She went on to further explain that the character
Rango specifically “was just.. honestly he was hard to look at. Not cute at all.” Third grader Hannah also commented on Rango being physically unattractive, referring to him as “an ugly looking lizard.” Research has shown that it’s actually easier for the brain to process features that are pretty or more familiar (Dingfelder, 2006). This might be why children will dislike characters that possess strange or ugly physical features.

A lack of realism also seemed to be a feature that might deter children from enjoying certain characters or types of characters. Fifth grader Jackie explained that she didn’t think she’d enjoy being like a Barbie character because of the unnatural hair that seems not to move. She commented, “It doesn’t even move, how is that a real thing?” She went on to describe that she was not only put-off by the atypical characteristics of Barbie’s hair, but that “Barbie dresses are always like poofy and then [Barbies] have really crazy eyes.” Ultimately this is similar commentary to what Gabrielle and Hannah were saying about Rango. If a child is unable to overlook physical features of a character that they find unattractive, it appears to be unlikely that they will have any interest in engaging further with that character. This is similar to the idea of making a good first impression – if a child is unimpressed with what they initially see, they might be turned off of the character immediately. However, this is not always the case, and it should be noted that a child might initially enjoy a character and later make the determination that he or she is no longer a fan or that there are other characters they prefer. This will be discussed more thoroughly later in this section.

Fifth grader Ian also provided some interesting examples of characters he didn’t enjoy or wouldn’t want to be like based on physical features and a lack of realism. He was describing his favorite scene in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone (2001) in which Harry Potter enters a bank and is greeted by a banker. Ian described, “the banker has like.. he has such long, like Elf
ears! They’re just so so big! He’s.. I think he’s a goblin.” Having already spoken about characters he admires and might want to dress up as, he was asked if he might like to dress up as the goblin. Ian responded with a laugh, “I don’t think so.. HE HAS ELF EARS! WHO LIKES ELF EARS?!” He went on to explain that the character’s ears were “too ugly,” something that he wouldn’t want even if it were only temporary. Similarly, third grader Kyle described Rumpelstiltskin as being uncomfortable to look at because “He’s VERY old. It’s creepy. The wrinkles! They just, they pop out!” The less realistic a character appears, the less likely it seemed these children liked those characters—this goes back to the idea of characters being relatable and familiar. Children appear to have an easier time relating to characters that they see as being similar to themselves. Animals, elves, and other mythical creatures might be less appealing because children may not be able to make sense of how they fit into their own lives. This was reflected in the results of this study as out of the 19 children interviewed, 16 favored characters that were human (whether animated or embodied by human actors).

One final observation worth mentioning is the fact that it seems children are forming their opinions on what characters they like or don’t like with influence from their environment—such as their parents and their friends. Children mentioned that if they didn’t see a movie, their friends or trailers might influence them to see it, or may encourage an interest in the characters. Fifth grader Ian was the only child who directly mentioned a specific influence during his interview. He had been explaining that Harry Potter was his favorite character. When asked if there was anything about Harry that he disliked, Ian responded, “My dad told me that I’m not supposed to like the glasses.. but I do. I’m just saying.. I don’t know why he says that, but I like them.” What was interesting in Ian’s claim was that despite being told he shouldn’t like the character’s glasses, he determined for himself that he liked them anyway. It is important to
realize that not all children will decide that they like something their parents have said is not desirable. Disliking physical features, as well as any other character traits, might be influenced by a child’s environment.

**Negative personality traits.** According to these children, the most unappealing personality traits a character can exhibit include being mean, being a bully, or being scary. When asked what general features might make them dislike a character, many children immediately mentioned in one way or another that they are uncomfortable watching characters who treat other characters poorly, or if they are scary in some fashion. For example, third grader Ryan responded to the question with, “Probably the way he acts. I don’t really like mean characters, or sometimes when they’re kind of scary.. it’s not fun to watch.” The lack of fun Ryan expresses is likely related to discomfort in viewing another character being mistreated. Part of an elementary school curriculum includes social skills and many schools are thorough in executing anti-bullying programs (such as Back off Bully, The Bully Free Classroom, Creating Caring Communities, and The Hands Project). It is likely that children in this age range are very much aware of what kinds of actions can be construed as bullying—they are also informed on what actions they should take to stop or prevent these behaviors. Because it is evident that these children are thinking about their own lives and their personal similarities and desires to be like characters in the movies they watch, it is logical that when they see things they believe aren’t okay, they are less enthusiastic about relating to or enjoying the characters that participate in those actions.

Fourth grader Adam remarked that he’s not a fan of villains, or evil characters in general. He gave the example of the Green Goblin from the Spiderman movies. Adam explained that the Green Goblin “wants to hurt Spiderman and he like, he hurts other people and flew around on a
machine and throws fire and stuff. I think he’s just, like he’s mean.. and some of his parts are scary.” Again, Adam echoes Ryan’s remarks—both boys acknowledge that hurting other people and being mean is not acceptable behavior. What separates these actions of being mean from the very appealing humorous trait possessed by other characters is that the appealing characters (who may be getting themselves into trouble with their mischievous actions) are not causing harm to other characters with their actions.

It was also interesting to hear children describe characters that they may not always dislike, but have moments within a film that are off-putting. For example, fourth grader Natalie was discussing how the primary character’s mother in Brave (2012) was fine when she was human but, “is mean when she’s a bear.” This shows that children may have issues with certain character attributes, but not all. Natalie struggled with the character’s behavior when she wasn’t quite human, however, she didn’t have any issues with the mother or her actions when she wasn’t under the spell that caused her to not only turn into a bear, but to act like one as well. This may relate to having trouble understanding and making sense of so much fantasy in addition to being uncomfortable with the character’s behavior. Ultimately, the less a character looks and behaves in a manner that children have learned to be socially acceptable, the less likely they may be to enjoy that character.

Fifth grader Jackie shared one other example of negative personality attributes. When asked about what in general might make her dislike a character in a movie, she replied, “That they’re not like, nice to other people—they fight a lot.. they think they’re smarter than everybody else, they think they’re popular.. I don’t like people like that.” What was interesting in Jackie’s response is that she specifically states that she doesn’t like people, not characters, who exhibit those traits. Therefore, this displays that Jackie is thinking of what qualities and attributes she
likes in the social actions she engages in throughout her daily life in order to determine what she may or may not like about characters she views in movies. She’s making connections between what she sees in the fictional people on screen to what she knows to be socially comfortable in the real world.

**That’s for babies.** The “that’s for babies” (also sometimes translated to being boring) appears to be the female participants’ version of the “that’s for girls” concept presented by the male participants. That’s not to say that male participants didn’t claim an aversion to characters that they deemed as being “for girls,” however, they were more likely to comment on a distaste for the bullying/scary behavior as described above. When boys made the claim that they disliked a character because it was too feminine, they were mostly describing a movie in its entirety or a character they would not want to be for Halloween. When female participants responded to what might generally cause them to dislike a movie character, the concept of characters being for a younger demographic was one of the most prominent responses. The examples were interesting—children described that characters might be boring or babyish because they watched them when they were younger or because they felt that the characters were trying to teach something they already knew, often by repeating themselves.

Fourth grader Mia explained that a character that keeps on saying the same thing would be boring, something she wouldn’t want to watch. Fifth grader Gabrielle mirrored this statement. She said, “If a character was like trying to teach something and they just kept trying to bring something up. I feel like it just gets really annoying and even boring and it makes it so like, I don’t really want to watch that character anymore.” It appears that children at this age are watching movies for entertainment and are turned off by the idea of characters trying to teach during a film. Given that the structure of much early childhood programing is focused on
teaching kids social and early elementary skills, it is reasonable that children who feel they have
grown out of that stage will lose their desire to engage with characters that are still following that
pattern on the screen.

Other participant responses indicated that not only is it frustrating to watch a character
repeat him or herself, but that they find themselves wanting more excitement in the films they
watch. For example, third grader Erica claimed that *My Little Pony* was “boring and it’s
definitely for babies,” while fourth grader Danielle also explained, “it’s slow… I watched it
when I was little but now I don’t like it.” The concept of a plot being slow is something that
multiple children spoke about in terms of what might make them dislike something about a
character—what was interesting is that the children referenced the story that the character fit into
as a reason to dislike the character itself, as though the two were indistinguishable. For example,
Fifth grader Leo determined that Tinker Bell is “boring and babyish!” When asked what made
him feel this way, his explanation was related to the plot of her movie. Leo explained:

> Because there’s not really action, there’s just like these little guys that just like fly around
> and just like try to figure out these very, like, these weird very easy mysteries basically. I
> mean you could figure the things out easy and it’s like, little kids maybe couldn’t do it as
> well so it’s more for them I think.

Leo brings up two key ideas: a simplistic plot and a lack of action. Children’s comprehension
skills are growing as they age and their ability to understand and desire more complex stories is a
natural progression of this growth (Eme, Puustinen, & Coutelet, 2006). It might feel like an
insult to their intellect if they’re required to engage with characters who are constantly trying to
Teach them things they already know or in this case solve mysteries that are probably not so
mysterious to a viewer at this age.
Fifth graders Ian and Jackie also spoke to the same ideas Leo mentioned. They stated that there were characters they enjoyed when they were little, but now found the programs these characters were in lack entertainment. In describing what she felt made Barbie movies babyish, Jackie claimed that they were, “more colorful, and they’re just like… I don’t know, they just don’t look right to me. I like something that looks more real, and has more action.. more exciting stories and stuff.” Jackie made a point to explain that visuals also have an impact on whether or not she enjoys a character—the lack of realism in what she sees in Barbie movies has caused her to no longer enjoy the Barbie characters. Like Leo, she enjoys characters and movies that are more dynamic because she has the cognitive abilities to comprehend them.

Similarly, Ian explained that he no longer likes characters from *Mickey Mouse or DuckTales* because he watched them “even before Kindergarten.” He went on to justify that because he watched those characters when he was so young that “it’s not fun to watch now, they’re like.. boring. I like stuff with more action and stuff now.” Although Ian’s claims may sound like the primary reason for disliking these characters now is caused by the fact that he watched them before he entered formal schooling, it is also likely that he too no longer finds their plots or storytelling to be as engaging as he did when he was younger.

Third graders Hannah and Farah described that they may not like certain characters because they think they exhibit features that are babyish. When prompted for an example, Hannah claimed that she didn’t like Dora from *Dora The Explorer* because the character “talks in a baby voice.” Dora is one of those characters known for repeating what she says, which is also something Hannah mentioned in her interview. If Hannah perceives that Dora is speaking as though she should be talking to babies, that can be a big turn off because children like to see themselves as maturing and are less likely to enjoy engaging with characters or even in activities
that they feel are for children who are younger. Farah, on the other hand, expressed that she finds the character Elmo to be very babyish due to his physical features. She described his “funky eyes” and the fact that “he’s a talking monster!” Farah finds the unrealistic features of Elmo to be unappealing. A talking monster is not something that she will encounter in her daily life, making the character seem too fictional for her to enjoy. As expressed by the other participants, children are relating to characters based on what they know to be true and what they personally believe to be positive features. A talking monster does not ideally fit into that category.

**Miscellaneous observations**

Although not directly related to specific research questions, upon analysis of the children’s interviews there were several interesting observations that emerged. The first is that in almost every moment when children were discussing a specific character that they disliked, they started laughing—as though they found something humorous about whatever it was that they found to be lacking appeal. Whether they were laughing because they thought a character acted mean or because they thought a character was for a younger audience, there was always something going on that made them laugh. This seems to show that despite the fact that children might not independently choose to engage with these characters, that doesn’t mean that they would be turned off from participating in activities that involved them. In fact, some children specifically made a point to explain that it was funny when something went wrong for a character that they did not like. These examples were generally related to characters that would be labeled as the antagonist in a film. If the bad guy blew up from eating cheese (third grader Tyler’s favorite part of *Mr. Peabody and Sherman*), then it was fantastic. On a similar note,
these children very much favored moments and movies where the “good guy” or the character they were rooting for won in the end.

A final observation was that whenever children were asked to pick one scene from their favorite film—told that they didn’t have time to watch the whole thing but should think about the one part that they would want to make sure they were able to see—they almost always picked one of two things: the scene they thought was the funniest, or the final scene in which everything came together. This again shows just how attractive humor is to children in this age range. They appear to enjoy laughing and are able to relate to those moments and the characters that provide comedy. Liking the end of movies, specifically relating to the idea of everything falling into place, shows that the children are following the storylines and enjoy when everything wraps up neatly—they’ve followed characters through the journey and have understood what it took to reach a satisfying conclusion.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter discusses the first research question a, b, and c. In respect to RQ1a, children find social relevancy in three primary areas when they view films. The first area is humor. Film moments that have children in genuine laughter are not only memorable, but they are the parts of the film that children want to make sure they don’t miss. The second area is shared activities such as sports or hobbies—children in this study who play a certain sport or engage in a certain hobby are more likely to express an enjoyment of and a desire to watch films that also contain these pastimes. The third and final area is an awareness of whom the film is marketed toward. This particularly stands out with male participants expressing distaste for any movies they perceive to be “for girls.”
The findings for RQ1b also indicate three principal areas that contribute to children developing relationships with film characters. The first indicator is the character’s gender. Characters of the same gender are more appealing to the kids in this study. However, girls are more open-minded to boy characters than boys are to girl characters. The second indicator is whether or not the characters exist beyond the movie. Children are able to better identify with characters that have more backstory and history to them. These are typically characters that children can also be exposed to from books or other franchises. The final contributing factor is related to understanding if a relationship or interest can develop without having seen the character’s film. Ultimately the answer is that it varies based on film publicity, access to film content (such as commercials, merchandising, and online clips), and what friends have seen and choose to talk about.

RQ1c specifically focuses on which character attributes are most appealing to children. The results from these kids indicated that humorous characters are the most attractive. Similarly, finding that characters with positive personality and physical traits are also significantly more appealing than those with “weird” looks or mean/bully-like personalities. Additionally, both male and female participants noted that they are likely to be disinterested in characters they feel are “for babies.”
Chapter 5: Phase 2 Methodology

Two primary steps were taken in order to evaluate how elements of popular children’s films can align with Common Core Standards. The first step involved evaluating the content of children’s films. The number one box office children’s films from 2010-2014 were utilized for this part of the study. Content from each of the five films was organized to create three key guides (a vocabulary list, a character list, and a summary sheet of key/memorable scenes) for each of the five films. Ultimately these guides are tools that a teacher might find useful to incorporate the film into the curriculum and can be found in Appendices F, G, and H.

The purpose of this step was to gain a thorough understanding of these children’s films (e.g., knowing the story arch, character dynamic and growth, and the vocabulary level in each film). This was necessary prior to executing the second step—aligning the content of the films as seamlessly as possible with the Common Core State Standards. As previously noted, there is controversy surrounding the implementation of these standards nationwide. However, because they were the most widely adopted educational standards in elementary schools at the time of the study they provided a logical starting point for looking at how to incorporate students’ relationships with media characters into curriculum design.

Data Collection

Five children’s films Toy Story 3, Cars 2, Brave, Frozen, and The Lego Movie were selected because each film was the highest grossing box office children’s film from the years 2010-2014 respectively. Exploring the films that reached the widest audience was essential as these are the films that more children have been exposed to. Even if children have not viewed the film, the films were popular enough that the extensive marketing and merchandising would have made them visible.
Prior to viewing these films, Common Core standards for grades three through five were downloaded directly from the Common Core website and sorted into an excel spreadsheet. This document was printed and put into individual binders for each film. The binders were used to organize observations as each film was viewed.

The first viewing was preliminary, to give myself a basic overview of the story and the characters in each film. From the interviews conducted in phase one, it was evident that children responded more positively to certain plot elements and specific character traits. Knowing which moments and characters children were likely to relate to assisted me in later note-taking.

Informed by the preferences expressed by children in their interviews, the film was then viewed for the purpose of making specific notations on the story progression, interesting quotes, and memorable moments (whether they be visually stunning, emotionally-driven, foreshadowing incidents, or anything that might be a relevant lesson foundation). During this viewing, the film was paused and rewound frequently. Subtitles were on to ensure accuracy in quotes—in instances where there was a conflict between the written subtitles and auditory dialogue, I documented the auditory dialogue in my observational notes.

I viewed each film a third time to produce a film-specific vocabulary list in which words and their context were recorded. The fourth viewing was focused on noting key character dynamics—looking at interactions, changes in dynamic, and the cause of these changes. Characters were also defined in terms their role in the film, e.g., hero, villain, sidekick, comic relief, etc., and a primary character sheet was created.

After the viewings, I used the three guides (vocabulary list, character list, and summary sheet of key moments) that were created to work on step two of this process—seeking alignment and integration with the English and mathematics Common Core standards for grades three
through five. I have earned a 4-year degree in elementary and special education, has trained to
design lessons using the Common Core State Standards, and holds two current teaching
certifications in New York. At this time, I addressed each standard by asking two primary
questions: Can a lesson be created for this standard utilizing this film? If so, what might that
lesson look like? Standards were identified as being suitable for a film-based lesson or noted as:

- Not substantial enough for an independent film-based activity
- Has the potential for a film-based activity, but there might be better ways to help
  students master these skills
- May need additional consideration to use the film (e.g., technology resources)

Sample. As mentioned, the sample in phase two was composed of three parts: the
Common Core State Standards for grades three through five, the data analysis from phase one,
and five children’s films. The Common Core State Standards were available for download
online and the phase one data analysis became available as soon as I completed that portion of
the study.

The films used in this study were purposively selected based on box office numbers. The
highest grossing children’s films from the years 2010-2014 were used because these were the
most recent popular children’s films that had reached the widest audience. These films were the
ones that more children were likely to have had access to at the time of the study. Even if a child
had not seen a film, these films were popular enough that merchandising and advertising may
have made them visible. All five films were available to purchase on DVD.
Study Considerations

It is important to recognize that these integration methods were created from the perspective of a single certified teacher. Other experienced educators in elementary schools may have a different take on the applications found in this study.
Chapter 6: Phase 2 Analysis

RQ2: How can elements of popular children’s films align with Common Core standards?

After reviewing the Common Core standards for each of the three grade levels in respect to each film, four dominant methods of aligning content from children’s films with elementary curriculum were determined. The four methods are identified based on the required level of commitment to the film needed to develop an effective lesson. Essentially, each method requires a varied amount of film knowledge for the teacher to execute the lesson and for the students to be able to participate. The methods are presented in this chapter in order of increasing commitment to the film. The methods are:

- **Hidden integration** – Film elements are incorporated directly into lessons; however, a student’s ability to successfully participate will not be adversely affected if he or she has not seen the film

- **Sparks** – Use of film content to engage students and get them excited about the activity they are going to do

- **Examples** – Use of film content to supply students with an example of a topic students are working on; not relevant if all students have not seen the portion of the film required for the lesson

- **Units** – A group of lessons or a long term project that requires a deep commitment to the film and covers many standards

The lesson designs showcased in the appendices referenced in this chapter were created by me to provide clarity and examples of the methodology described for utilizing films in an elementary school setting.
**Hidden integration.** Across both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics standards, there are opportunities to incorporate film elements directly into lesson content without acknowledging that the lesson is related to the film. This is the most prevalent method within the mathematics standards, and opportunities occur most often with standards related to word problems. For example, third grade Operations & Algebraic Thinking standard CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.A.3 states:

> Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

One of the simplest ways to employ “hidden integration” into mathematics is to utilize the film’s story and characters to create the word problems. Using the above standard and *Toy Story 3* (2010), a sample word problem might be: *Molly and Andy were packing toys to donate to Sunnyside Daycare. If each box they packed contained 9 toys, and they packed 7 boxes altogether, how many toys did Molly and Andy pack to donate?*

In the film, character siblings Molly and Andy do gather toys they no longer want and donate them to Sunnyside Daycare. Children who have seen the film (or perhaps even one of the two other Toy Story films in the series) may recognize the character names and see the connection to the film. On the other hand, children who have not seen the film will still be able to solve the word problem without any negative impact caused by the integration of the characters and their storyline.

The characters in this example, however, are not the leading roles in the film. As discussed in respect to the children’s interviews in Chapter 4, some children described that they had a preference for characters that had more screen time or that they happened to feel less of a
connection with characters that were more on the sidelines. For example, fifth grader Leo had explained that superhero The Flash would be cooler if he were more of a primary character and fourth grader Mia stated a lack of fondness for characters like Chip in Beauty and the Beast (1991) because the character has a small role in the film. The possible difference between those participant statements and the characters mentioned in the mathematics problem is that even though Andy and Molly are not primary characters, they are characters that children might recognize from being in multiple films. Both of these characters have been in all three films in the Toy Story series.

An additional “hidden integration” sample of a fourth grade word problem activity sheet can be found in Appendix B, pages 83-84. The activity sheet includes five sample word problems, each with content from one of the five films used for this portion of the study. Additionally, the mathematics processes addressed within the activity are meant to reflect a fourth grader’s mastery of CCSS.Math.Content.4.OA.A.3 which states:

Solve multistep word problems posed with whole numbers and having whole-number answers using the four operations, including problems in which remainders must be interpreted. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.

Although “hidden integration” is most easily implemented with standards that require word problems, film content can also be incorporated for other kinds of activities. Though not all mathematical processes or lessons are centered on solving word problems, it can be helpful to frame a lesson or practice sheet around something less abstract than just the mathematical concept. Rather than instructing students to simply solve equations, explain that each problem
they solve is going to help a character get closer to some kind of goal—this can easily be added to the instructions of a lesson or at the top of an activity sheet. Helping a character achieve a goal might help with engagement because, as discussed in Chapter 4, many of the participants expressed that their favorite moments in films were the conclusions, when everything came together in a satisfying way. For example, fifth grader Bridget expressed that the final moments of *The Hunger Games* (2012) were the most enjoyable because everything seemed to work out the way she had hoped. The children enjoy when everything falls into place for the characters they are rooting for throughout a film.

Fourth grade Number & Operations in Base Ten standards such as CCSS.Math.Content.4.NBT.A.2 and CCSS.Math.Content.4.NBT.A.3 would work well with this method of assisting a character. These standards reference comparing two multi-digit numbers using the greater than, equal to, or less than symbols and using place value understanding to round whole numbers to any place respectively. Instructions might state: *Help racecar Lightning McQueen take first place in the race!* *Each problem you solve will bring him get closer to the finish line.* Throughout the rest of the activity there can be small prompts referencing where the car is on the track and what will help the car to win. A full example of a similar activity can be found in Appendix B on page 85. This activity sheet addresses fifth grade Number and Operations in Base Ten standard CCSS.Math.Content.5.NBT.B.6 which specifies:

> Find whole-number quotients of whole numbers with up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. Illustrate and explain the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models.
The sample sheet included focuses on finding whole number quotients, however it also contains a reference to the relationship between the multiplication and division operations. A teacher can use student performance on this activity to indicate if her students have mastered the standard. If not, it can also serve as a guide to inform the teacher that she needs to spend more time covering the content of this standard, or perhaps approach it in a different manner than she has previously.

An alternative integration method to assisting an appealing character achieve a goal or preventing a less-liked character from creating problems might be to incorporate film elements that children expressed an attachment to—most notably humor. Humor can be brought in by incorporating comical characters such as Olaf from Frozen (2013) or Merida’s three pesky brothers in Brave (2012). One idea is to frame an activity around a funny situation the characters may have gotten into within their film—possibly around the idea of getting into trouble. An example that might work well is something similar to what fifth grader Gabrielle spoke about in respect to The Fault in Our Stars (2014). She mentioned that she enjoyed when a character was throwing eggs at another character’s car—advancing through each step of an activity could be the equivalent to one egg hitting a car, without any negative consequence to the students, but still hinting at something that would usually result in trouble.

Within the English Language Arts standards, “hidden integration” fits in well with most grammar and writing conventions activities. This is especially helpful because practicing grammar is ongoing—children don’t learn the rule once and never speak of it again. As they learn more writing conventions, they are adding new knowledge to what they have already mastered, and with each new lesson, they have one more thing to practice.
Third grade writing standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2 states, “Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.”

Figure 6-1 contains a sample “hidden integration” writing activity, utilizing *The Lego Movie* (2014), that scaffolds appropriate paragraph writing necessary for students to master this
standard in addition to some sub-standards under the W.3.2 heading. This particular activity is helpful in assessing whether or not students have an understanding of logical sequence and paragraph writing. As with the mathematics model, students can successfully engage in “hidden integration” English Language Arts activities without requiring any knowledge or awareness of the film being used.

Appendix B, page 86 contains the same full sample writing activity, but uses Frozen (2013). The sample in the appendix, however, uses two female primary characters, which is something that the male participants specifically spoke negatively about in the interview process. It is possible that the knowledge of who the female characters are may still produce the desired effect of lowering cognitive load and benefitting academic performance, however, there is also a possibility that disliking characters may have children less interested or engaged with the material.

Because students can participate in these activities without needing to recognize that there is any foundation in a children’s film, “hidden integration” lessons are the least invasive in terms of how present the film may seem in the lesson. These activities may only incorporate creative elements from the films, such as the characters’ names or the name of a fictional setting. In some cases a plot point might be adapted if it fits the goal of the lesson. Regardless, the manner in which films are incorporated into the curriculum via “hidden integration” should feel no different from using arbitrary names, settings, and plot tools when a teacher creates a lesson or when a student engages in one. However, for those students exposed to this popular media, there may be significant benefits in engagement because of the social relevancy and potential decrease in cognitive load.
**Sparks.** The purpose of a “spark” is to engage the students, to get them excited about what they’re going to do. Essentially, a “spark” requires the teacher to take something from a film (e.g., a quote, an image, or a clip) and use it not only to launch the lesson, but also to serve as a base for the activity. Similar to a “hidden integration” lesson, viewing the film is not actually necessary to participate in a “spark-driven” activity; however, regardless of whether or not students have seen the film, they will be aware that the lesson has some foundation within the film’s context.

**Figure 6-2.** Sample “Spark” Image for an ELA Lesson

For “sparks” specifically, there seem to be more natural opportunities to align within the English Language Arts standards. Primarily, they fit well with any kind of writing or storytelling goal. Figure 6-2 contains a sample image from *Toy Story 3* (2010) that could serve as a good “spark.” Children who were interviewed expressed a fondness of main characters and the two primary characters of the film are in that image, both with very different emotional expressions. Children who are unfamiliar with these characters can use their imagination to come up with
their own names or stories for the characters to complete the activity because the academic goal is writing achievement, not character recognition.

As a teacher, one might show the image and then prompt students to come up with their own story of how the characters (which they would be free to name as they pleased) ended up as they are in the picture, or possibly to write about what they think should happen next. In this context, the film is used to ignite, or spark, the creative writing process. This would work well for grade 3 ELA writing standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3 which states, “Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.” This standard, as well as sub-standards (which detail specifics such as providing a sense of closure), are mirrored by very similar standards for both grades four and five. Additional sample images and quotations from the five children’s films used in this study that would work well as a “spark” can be found in Appendix C on pages 87-92.

The “spark” method lends itself well to lessons that incorporate creativity. Because mathematics standards are very formulaic, opportunities to use this method for a math lesson are less abundant. Some standards, however, do allow for “sparks” to bring context to numbers and operations, but they will likely need to be from specific moments that might not exist in all films. This does not mean that it is impossible to use this method for math, but it does mean it needs to be well planned. Both the math standard and the film incorporation (be it an image, clip, or quote) should be chosen carefully and with purpose.

Mathematics standards that concern fractions may work well with the “spark” method because a teacher can use something in the film to provide a context for the fractions being looked at in a lesson. For example, an image of a character eating a candy bar could “spark” a lesson about that character needing to share that candy bar with another character—and the class
needs to help the initial character determine how to keep the largest fraction of the candy bar to himself by assessing the sizes of a given set of fractions. A sample of materials for a third grade fraction activity can be found in Appendix C, pages 93-95. This sample uses an image from *Brave* (2012) to “spark” the lesson; the image can be seen in Figure 6-3.

There are three young boys with a tray of cookies, a teacher can explain that the boys need to share the cookies and the class needs to determine how to split them up. The activity requires students to cut out and fill in specific fraction pairs, and then sort them into groups, aligning with CCSS.Math.Content.3.NF.A.3 in addition to sub-standards A & B. Together these standards state that students must be able to understand and explain equivalent fractions. After the students fill in the fraction cards they should recognize that, despite the different numbers, some are the same size. They can use these groupings to help the characters determine how to split up the cookies and then provide their rationale. These three young boys fill the comedic role in the film,
which makes them an ideal choice for a lesson activity because of how much the interviewed children favored humor and humorous characters.

**Examples.** Similar to a “spark”, an “example” requires pulling an element of the film (e.g., a clip, quote, or image) to literally provide an example of a topic that students are engaging with. The difference between a “spark” and an “example” is that an example is neither relevant nor logical to use unless all students participating in the lesson have seen the film excerpt required to give a logical context to the example. “Examples” are teacher-led and do not provide the foundation of an entire lesson. Typically, they should be mentioned at the beginning of the lesson or activity in the context of other examples—possibly in a class discussion format.

An important note with “examples” (that is not present in the other three identified methods) is that examples are not equally applicable across all films. Ultimately the film needs to contain something worthy of example that is relevant to the Common Core State Standards. For instance, fourth grade language standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5 states, “Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.” Under the umbrella of this standard are sub-standards that specify fourth graders must explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors, recognize and explain common idioms, adages, and proverbs, and demonstrate an understanding of words by relating them to their antonyms\(^2\). If a film does not contain any examples of figurative language, this particular set of standards could not be addressed.

In *The Lego Movie* (2014), character Wyldstyle tells leading character Emmet he can “drop the act” with her, referring to her belief that he is only pretending he is not brilliant. To

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use this figurative language as an example, a teacher might play the clip of this scene and then ask the students to explain what “drop the act” means within the context of that moment for those characters—they can be further prompted to think of situations in their lives when they might choose to use the same phrase. Wyldstyle and Emmet both have a significant amount of screen time during the film, which would appeal to what the children expressed about enjoying main characters. Additionally, Emmet is one of those characters that doesn’t quite understand acceptable social norms within the scope of his film. This attribute is one that children discussed as appealing because they view it as humorous.

A complete sample discussion for a fourth grade figurative language prompt from Toy Story 3 (2010) can be seen in Appendix D on page 97. The sample outlines a teacher-led class discussion that revolves around a specific quote from the film. First the teacher will show the clip, and then prompt the students to make sense of what was really meant by what the character said.

“Examples” can be more difficult to find within the mathematics context. They are not impossible to create, but if it feels like a stretch to make a connection between a learning goal and something in a movie then it is probably a better idea to use a different method. On page 96 in Appendix D, there is an outline of how a teacher might provide an example to fourth grade students regarding CCSS.Math.Content.4MD.A.3, which concerns the formulas for finding area and perimeter. The example requires a short clip from The Lego Movie (2014) in which characters are required to build something from a set of instructions. Following the clip, a teacher would prompt the class to see if they believe the characters could build the structure correctly if they only knew that the building was a square and had the dimensions of the
perimeter. The prompt can be altered in other ways, but ultimately this can either launch into a full activity or remain as a class discussion.

**Units.** A “unit” is essentially a group of lessons or a long-term project that requires deep commitment to a film for an extended period of time. A “unit” also aims to target multiple standards throughout the course of its completion. Unlike the first three methods, the unit method requires a different level of film reliance between mathematics and ELA lessons; for this reason, they are discussed separately.

**ELA units.** English units involve going through a film as a teacher might when using a novel in a traditional classroom setting. A cluster of scenes in a film might represent a chapter or so in a book. All activities that would typically go along with a novel group (e.g., vocabulary practice, comprehension questions, making predictions based on the text, discussions on setting/plot/character development, reports or projects, etc.) can still be employed within the context of using the film as the primary source of literature. Ultimately, when using a film for an ELA unit, the students will be required to view the full film. This might be an issue for students who do not have access to the film in their home, or similarly do not have access to the technology required to view the film.

While the other three themes have the potential to incorporate 3-4 standards across any activity, a unit should address significantly more. A sample fourth grade English Language Arts unit outline encompassing 15 Common Core standards in reading literature, speaking & listening, and writing can be viewed in Appendix E on pages 98-100. This outline includes verbal and written discussions, comprehension tasks, possible long-term character-driven projects, class presentations, and many prompts for further practice in developing speaking, listening, and writing skills.
The use of an ELA unit might be complicated, especially with regards to what some of the child participants expressed in terms of being over-exposed to a film. Fifth grader Peter specifically discussed how the hype surrounding Frozen (2014) was wearing on him—and how he now felt frustration over a movie that he had initially enjoyed. Because of this, using a film for an English Language Arts unit might be most beneficial in circumstances with children who have demonstrated difficulty with comprehension skills. Using dynamic visuals can be a powerful tool in assisting students to comprehend a story and can serve as a useful scaffolding tool.

**Mathematics units.** Unlike an ELA unit, a math unit does not require students to see the film; however, all lessons associated with the unit will be under a prompt unified by a film’s context. Because students don’t need to view the film to participate in a film-based math unit, there is probably a lower risk of that over-exposure effect mentioned above with ELA units. Measurement standards lend themselves best to developing a mathematics unit based on a film—but time and geometry standards may also be applicable. A sample unit outline for a fifth grade measurement unit, addressing 10 Common Core standards, can be found in Appendix E on pages 101-102. This outline contains potential prompts that could be used from each of the five films used for this portion of the project, followed by sample problems of how to continue using a single prompt throughout the course of an entire unit, across many different standards.

As with all the methods described, it is important to consider which parts of the film and which characters to feature throughout the unit. Based on the preferences the child participants indicated, it might be most beneficial to select lead characters and their comical side-kicks— or to frame the unit around a funny scene or give the class the goal of making everything come together nicely for the conclusion.
Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the second research question and the four discovered integration methods that can align Common Core State Standards with film content. The methods are differentiated in terms of how much commitment the teacher must make to the film in developing the lessons and how much exposure the children need to the film being used in order to successfully participate in the activities. The least invasive method is identified as “hidden integration.” This method involves directly incorporating film elements into a lesson without requiring students to have any film knowledge to understand the material. The second method is identified as “sparks” which use film content to engage students and get them excited about the activity they are about to accomplish. Method three is “examples,” meaning that film content is used to supply students with a sample of a topic they are working on. “Examples” are not relevant if all students have not seen the portion of the film required for the lesson. Finally, the fourth method is to create units. Units are a group of lessons or a long-term project that requires a deep commitment to the film and addresses many standards throughout its completion.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

This research study explores children’s relationships with media characters in order to help identify possible methods for teachers to create engaging, socially relevant lesson activities for elementary school students. The study is founded in my belief that the relationships elementary-aged students develop with these characters can be meaningfully integrated into an academic setting to benefit learning outcomes. Ideally, I believe that student interests should always direct learning. Learning through methods that engage and excite students will create the most memorable learning experiences. The “teaching to the test” methodology that is currently present in many public school environments is teaching students to dislike learning altogether. It is my belief that one way to address this issue is to center learning around features already relevant and enjoyed in students’ lives.

The interviews with child participants clearly and consistently reinforced the idea that not only are para-social relationships present, but that children view these characters to be socially relevant in their daily lives. Children expressed a particular fondness for humorous characters, characters that engage in the same activities that the children also participate in, characters that have depth and visibility beyond a single film, and characters that identify with the same gender as the children. Among the phase one findings, it was interesting to discover that environmental influences—such as parents, siblings, and friends—can impact the development of bonds with film characters. Children indicated that they have developed enthusiasm for characters through conversations with friends or through secondary media including advertising, merchandising, and shorter film clips.

From these interviews I have concluded that both positive and negative bonds might be useful in an academic setting. Positive bonds, which are typically developed with characters that
express humor, likeness, or have broad media exposure, can be incorporated into lessons as characters that students need to help to accomplish a certain goal. Conversely, negative bonds, which are typically developed with characters that take on the role of a bully or a villain, can be utilized in lessons as characters that students need to prevent from causing trouble or creating problems. Helping a hero to succeed or a villain to be defeated can be powerful motivation for a young learner to achieve an academic objective.

Having confirmed that meaningful relationships form between school-aged children and popular media characters as well as gaining an understanding of how these bonds form, I then focused on seeking alignment with the Common Core State Standards.

I have identified four primary methods to take the bonds children form with these characters and integrate them into an academic setting. The examples provided are all based on Common Core standards, which have been adopted by 43 states in addition to the District of Columbia and four United States territories ("Standards in," 2014). Each method varies in terms of its dependence on the media being referenced when creating and executing the lessons.

The first method is identified as “hidden integration,” defined as activities that directly incorporate film elements into the lesson without requiring students to have any knowledge of the film to comprehend the academic material. This method specifically capitalizes on socially meaningful bonds between children and characters in a way that will advantage children who know and love those characters without creating any direct disadvantage to children who either have not engaged with or have not been exposed to those characters. The second method, “sparks,” involves using film content to engage students and get them excited about the activity they are about to work on—a “spark” can be anything from the film, such as a screen capture, a quote, or a short clip. Method three is “examples” which is ultimately using something from the
film to provide students with a literal example of the topic they are learning about. These are only relevant if all students in the class have seen the portion of the film required to make the connection to the lesson. The fourth and final identified method is units, or a group of lessons/a long-term project that requires a heavy commitment to the film and addresses many standards throughout its completion. Using these methods is the difference between creating or using lessons with arbitrary names, places, and stories and using content that is already socially meaningful and relevant to many students. As previously noted this social relevancy is potentially able to reduce cognitive load, which in turn increases academic outcomes.

In summary, I have concluded that the children interviewed formed meaningful bonds with media characters based on definable character attributes and that these relationships can be successfully integrated into the academic curriculum. It is important to recognize that while the integration methods were similarly applicable across all five films examined, that does not mean all children will find the same film features to be socially relevant as the 19 participants interviewed in phase one. In designing lessons for the children in this study, a teacher would want to focus on characters that bring humor, films that showcase hobbies or sports that these students participate in, or characters and films with broad media appeal. At the same time, a teacher would want to avoid incorporating characters that repeat themselves or come from films with simplistic plots. These features are specifically socially relevant to the participants in this study. A teacher with students who find other attributes to be more meaningful can still align film content with the standards using the same four identified methods, however, the focus of integration would shift to what the students in that particular class most identify with and appreciate.
Limitations

One thing to consider in terms of the first phase of the study is that a female interviewer conducted all interviews. Given the gender-based differences in the children’s responses, it is possible that the interviewer’s gender had an influence on what the participants chose to share. Similarly, the integration methods were developed and discovered by a single researcher. Other educators may have found different or additional alignment methods and opportunities. Finally, due to the subjects of phase one being part of a protected population, IRB suggested that I neither collect nor use specific data regarding socioeconomic status or ethnicity. However, based on the findings (particularly related to identifying and interacting with characters), future research should include these areas if possible.

Future Research

This study has confirmed the existence of para-social relationships between children in 3rd to 5th grade and media characters. It has also provided insight into how these relationships form. From the literature review in Chapter 2 there is a strong inference that these para-social relationships can have a beneficial impact on the learning process. For example, using characters students are familiar with may reduce the level of cognitive load involved in completing an academic activity; this would result in an improved learning outcome. The logical next step to validate this hypothesis is to pilot a character-based curriculum in a school setting and measure learning achievement.
Appendix A

Interview Questions

If I told you we could watch any movie that you wanted to see today, what would it be?
  Why/Have you seen that movie?
  What makes that movie worth watching?
  What would you say about that movie to a friend who has never seen it?
  Maybe to get them excited about it.

What if you could only watch one scene/a few minutes of that movie. Which part do you think you would want to see?
  Why/tell me about that
  Can you describe that scene to me?

Can you think of any other movies that you like? Or kinds of movies (animated, action, Disney, etc.)
  Tell me about them

Are there any movies that if I said, “Guess what, [PARTICIPANT NAME]! We’re going to watch this movie today!” and you’d be like ---- “Ughhhh, Becca, no.” -- Any movies you might not like or not want to watch
  What didn’t you like about that movie?
  Is there anything in that movie that you do like?

Can you think of any movies you’ve seen and maybe you didn’t really dislike it, but you don’t think you’d like to see it again?
  Why not/what didn’t you like about it/those movies?

Okay, so we’re going to pretend Halloween is coming, and you get to dress up as any movie character. Who might you want to be?
  Tell me what you like about him/her
  What would your costume look like?
  Can you describe him/her to me?

  Is there anything about CHARACTER that you don’t really like?

What would you tell a friend about CHARACTER if he or she didn’t know who they were?

Can you think of any movie characters that you would absolutely not want to dress up as?
  Why/Tell me about that character

In general, what might make you not like a character in a movie?

Are there any characters that you might like, but wouldn’t want to dress up as?
  Who/why?
If you had never seen FAVORITE MOVIE HERE, do you think you might still be able to recognize the characters/know who they are? Why?
Do you think you would still like CHARACTERS if you had never seen the movie? Why/why not/tell me about that

Is there anything else you think I should know about movies/movie characters?
Appendix B

Directions: Solve the word problems below. Show your work!

1. Molly packed 82 toys to donate to Sunnyside Daycare. Andy packed 118 toys. If each box they packed had exactly 10 toys, how many boxes did they need?

Answer

2. Racecar Lightning McQueen needs to drive 247 miles to make it to his next race. He has 8 gallons of gas in his tank, and can drive 32 miles per gallon of gas. Does Lightning McQueen have enough gas to make it to the race? Explain your answer.

Answer

What if Lightning McQueen could only drive 30 miles per gallon of gas? Explain.

Answer
3. Merida stole a party platter with 204 cookies. She gave 50 cookies to her first brother. If Merida split the remaining cookies evenly between her two other brothers, how many cookies did each boy get?

Answer _____________

4. Olaf made 43 paper snowflakes. Elsa accidentally spilled chocolate syrup, ruining 18 of the snowflakes. Does Olaf have enough snowflakes left to give 2 snowflakes each to 10 of his friends? Explain your answer.

Answer
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Will Olaf have any snowflakes left to keep for himself? If yes, how many?

Answer _____________

5. If Lord Business uses the Kragle glue to freeze 12 citizens of Bricksburg every minute, how many citizens will be frozen after 2 hours?

Answer _____________
Directions: Help racecar Lightning McQueen take first place in the race! Each problem you solve will bring him closer to the finish line. Be sure to show your work!

1) 192 ÷ 8 =

2) 135 ÷ 9 =

3) 168 ÷ 14 =

4) 105 ÷ 7 =

5) 204 ÷ 17 =

6) 234 ÷ 13 =

7) 1032 ÷ 12 =

8) 1620 ÷ 30 =

9) 1478 ÷ 2 =

Pit Stop! If 108 ÷ 6 = 18, then _____ x _____ = 108?

10) 2072 ÷ 56 =

11) 756 ÷ 18 =

12) 1575 ÷ 35 =

One more lap! Lightning McQueen is in the lead!

Congratulations! You helped Lightning McQueen win the race!
**Directions:** Put a check next to the sentences that are appropriate **details** for the topic sentence.

**Topic Sentence:** Last winter Anna and Elsa spent a whole day playing in the snow.

- When they first got outside, they decided to build a snowman.
- Winter has always been Elsa’s favorite season, but Anna prefers summer.
- Once the snowman was finished, Anna and Elsa had a snowball fight!
- Sometimes Elsa and Anna play outside during the summer.
- One day they hope to visit an outdoor ice skating rink.
- The snow was so much fun that they wanted to build an igloo and sleep outside.

**Directions:** Re-write the topic and detail sentences below. **Challenge** – Can you add a concluding sentence?

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C

Sample Spark Quotes:

“Authority should derive from the consent of the governed, not from the threat of force.” – Barbie, *Toy Story 3* (2010)

“A wise car hears one word and understands two.” – Finn McMissile, *Cars 2* (2011)


“Don’t worry about what the others are doing, Emmet. You must embrace what is special about you.” – Vitruvius, *The Lego Movie* (2014)
Fraction Recording Sheet

How many groups did you make? __________

Why did you put your fractions in these groups? ________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Look at your group that has the fraction ½. Make a prediction about what fraction would go in this group with 100 as the denominator.

_______

100

Explain why you predict this.

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Try to create your own group of fractions. Use the same reason you used for grouping your fraction cards.

My group: ________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraction</th>
<th>Diagram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{4}{12})</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{2}{3})</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{1}{3})</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{2}{4})</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{5}{6})</td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{3}{6})</td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{8}{12})</td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Mathematics Example, grade 4

CCSS.Math.Content.4MD.A.3

- Apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles in real world and mathematical problems. For example, find the width of a rectangular room given the area of the flooring and the length, by viewing the area formula as a multiplication equation with an unknown factor.

Potential Example:

- Play clip of “Everything is Awesome” from The Lego Movie (2014); prior to showing the clip, tell the students to pay attention to the work the characters are doing (construction/building)
- After the clip, remind the students that the Lego characters were told to build the structure exactly as it appeared in their instructions.
- From that starting point, prompt: If the instructions had no images, but said that they needed to make a square building with an area of ## could the builders figure out what the building’s perimeter would need to be? What about the length of each side?
  - This can be altered in any way (given the length of the sides can they figure out the area; what if it wasn’t a square, etc.)
- This example can launch into a full activity or simply remain as part of a discussion. The purpose of an example like this is to get the kids excited/interested in the topic you are discussing.
Overview:
- Examples are not universal across all films; ultimately the film needs to contain something worthy of example. For instance, looking at CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5, you cannot give an example of figurative language within the film’s context if there is no figurative language within the film.
- Examples are teacher-led and can serve as a scaffold in an “I do, we do, you do” format depending on the context of the example.
  - These serve specific skills and/or introductions; they are not intended to fuel an entire lesson (like a spark) or occupy a lot of time (like units).

What it might look like when using a film-based example in the classroom:
- Within a discussion, the teacher will say, “For example…” and then provide the context for the example by showing a clip, image, sharing a quote, or doing a combination of those three.
  - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5
    - Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings
      - “He’s made us into a pyramid, and he put himself on top!” – Ken, Toy Story 3 (2010)
        - Play the clip with the quote; write the quote on the board.
        - Did the bear really put them into a pyramid? (may need to talk about what a pyramid looks like)
        - When I saw this, I thought he meant __________.
        - What about you guys, what do you think Ken means by putting them in a pyramid, and putting the bear on top?
        - Can you think of another way to say the same thing?
        - Good job! Let’s try another one.

Alternative quote samples:
- “Looks like it’s the end of the line.” –Lemons, Cars 2 (2011)
- “Some say our destiny is tied to the land…as much a part of us as we are of it. Others say fate is woven together like a cloth.” –Merida, Brave (2012)
Appendix E

SAMPLE ELA UNIT OUTLINE

Grade 4
15 Standards in Unit

Where to start: A film-based ELA unit will involve going through the film as you would a novel in a classroom setting. A cluster of scenes may represent a chapter or so in a book. All activities that would go along with a novel group (vocabulary practice, comprehension questions, making predictions, discussions on setting/plot/character development, any type of report or project, etc.) can be used within the context of using the film for literature.

I have not separated examples for specific films below because all of the standards and proposed lessons/activities are applicable to any of the 5 films that were used for this project.

Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1
  - Refer to details & examples in a text when explaining explicit statements and drawing inferences
    - This is addressed in any verbal discussion or written question responses to specific film-based questions; responses can include character quotes, citing sequence, citing setting, etc.
    - In any student response, the teacher is responsible for prompting for examples/details and assessing accuracy and relevance

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2
  - Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
    - Also verbal or written; response to questions about themes (whether they be about the film as a whole or sections – the distinction is important when looking at plot and the development of dynamic characters)
    - Summaries are addressed similarly, though I recommend having students write and share (possibly after a discussion with a partner/small group)

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3
  - Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text
    - Fits well with a project – Create a character profile and/or document the story setting as the plot/character develops
    - Individual or group project; assign characters and have students provide a report (similar to a book report) – with projects, writing, and discussions, teachers are also able to measure if students are meeting standard requirements in grammar conventions, speaking & listening, and writing.
**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.7**
- Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text; identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text
  - This works very well with any type of ‘reader’s theater’ mini-production assignment. Assign students a notable or significant scene from the film, and have them come up with a script that they will ultimately perform for the class. This will allow for comparisons between their interpretation and how it was shown in the film
    - Great for creativity & also addresses standards in text conventions, speaking & listening, and writing.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1 (including a – d)**
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (come to discussions prepared; follow discussion rules; ask and answer relevant questions; review key ideas and understandings)
  - This standard represents all teacher and student led discussions that relate to the film; this is where the teacher monitors student response and participation and can also be key into seeing student comprehension levels.
  - Discussions can be general (about the film as a whole – once the whole film has been seen) or specific and topic based (character-focused, language focused, setting, plot, etc.).

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4**
- Report on a topic or text, tell a story or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts & relevant descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace
  - This can be used as an independent assignment (assign each student something to report on); however, I think it works well with standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3 in which students are reporting in-depth on a character or story event.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1 (including a – d)**
- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information (clear introduction & organization; reasons supported by facts and details; opinion linked with purposeful phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition); clear concluding statement
  - This works well with many spark prompts, just make sure you’re consistent with the film that the class is using for the unit. After watching a particularly interesting/important/unique scene, prompt students to write their opinions.
    - Example opinion prompts:
      - If you were in __________’s place, is that how you would have reacted to __________? Why or why not?
o How do you feel about the decision ______________ made in the scene about ______________? Explain.
o Based on the scene in which ______________, what do you think might happen next? Why?
SAMPLE MEASUREMENT UNIT OUTLINE

Grade 5
10 Standards in Unit

Launch: Frame the unit with an overarching film-related goal. I’ve constructed every prompt around building because it is an easy way to incorporate multiple means of measurement while still supported by a single context.

- *The Lego Movie* – Lord Business has destroyed Bricksburg! Emmet needs your help to rebuild his city!
- *Frozen* – Elsa is building an ice palace and she needs your help!
- *Brave* – A bear has destroyed Merida’s castle! Can you help her repair the damage?
- *Cars 2* – Lightning McQueen is ready to build his own race center and he’s asking for your help!
- *Toy Story 3* – Sunnyside daycare received so many toy donations that they’ve decided to expand! Andy and his mom have volunteered to help, but they need your help too!

Standards:

- CCSS.Math.Content.5.MD.A.1
  - Measurement conversions
    - Frame conversions as information that the contractors/builders need.
      - *Example:* Elsa has decided she wants her bedroom to be 120 inches long, but the builder needs to know how long this is in feet. Can you tell the builder how many feet equal 120 inches?

- CCSS.MathContent.5.MD.B.2
  - Creating line plots to display data (in fractions of a unit)
    - Because everything is structured in building for this unit, fractions can be seen as portions of the construction.
      - *Example:* Elsa’s ice palace is looking great! The first floor has 4 finished rooms – the kitchen, the living room, a bathroom, and the hallway.
      
      The kitchen takes up 1/2 of the floor; the living room takes up 1/4 of the floor. The bathroom and the hallway are the same size. What fraction of the floor do they cover together? Separately?
      
      Show your work! Then create a line plot to represent your data.

- CCSS.Math.Content.5.MD.C.3 (including a & b); CCSS.Math.Content.5.MD.C.4; CCSS.Math.Content.5.MD.C.5 (including a – c)
Recognizing volume as an attribute of solid figures; understand concepts of
volume measurement (cube units)

Measure volumes by counting unit cubes

Relate volume to multiplication and addition (find volume of a right rectangular
prism with whole number sides; apply $v = lwh$)

For cubic volume, you can phrase scenarios around how many
boxes/cubes are needed to completely fill a space (or what the maximum
number of boxes/cubes that can fit into that space)

Example: Construction on the ice palace had to shut down due to an ice storm. Elsa decided to have some fun, and filled a closet with giant ice cubes!

Each ice cube is 1 ft. x 1 ft. x 1 ft. and the closet is 5 ft. x 5 ft. x 8 ft.

Elsa says she must have put at least 300 ice cubes into the closet! Is it possible to fit 300 of those ice cubes in that closet?

Explain.

What is the maximum number of ice cubes that could fit in Elsa’s closet?
Appendix F

THE LEGO MOVIE (2014)

Plot Points/Standouts:

○ Opening scene – goes through lava to old man character (Vitruvius), “He is coming. Cover your butt.”

○ Lord Business enters – tells Vitruvius he has hidden “the Kragle” well; commands robots to destroy him
  ○ Vitruvius claims the robots are no match for a “MasterBuilder” because he can see everything

○ Learn that the “Kragle” is “The most powerful super weapon” & Lord Business wants to take it; will give him unlimited evil power

○ Vitruvius says there was a prophecy about the “Piece of Resistance” which is supposedly missing.
  ○ Vitruvius shares the prophecy about a “Special One” with a yellow face (a talented young fellow) will make the Piece of Resistance found from it’s hiding refuge underground – will save the realm and be the “most interesting, most important person of all times”

○ Lord Business says the prophecy is made up; then he knocks Vitruvius into the lava

○ Jumps 8 and a half years; meet Emmet Brickowski

○ Emmet follows morning routine – getting ready, saying good morning to inanimate objects in his apartment (floor, ceiling, doorway, etc.)
  ○ Follows instructions to “fit in, have everybody like you, and always be happy”
    ▪ Emmet has no special people in his life; watches TV with his plant o see a message from President Business

○ “Everything is Awesome” sequence
  ○ See where Emmet works; still following instructions
  ○ Sequence lasts for 5 hours

○ Emmet is excluded from going out with co-workers after work, chases after his instructions
  ○ Spots someone searching around on construction site; Emmet about to report the girl – seems stunned by thinking she’s pretty
  ○ Emmet falls down through the ground and finds the “Piece of Resistance” – voices telling him to touch it; he is confused without his instructions

○ Emmet sees the prophecy from the beginning of the movie and hears, “It’s your turn to be the hero”

○ Passes out and wakes up with an angry cop questioning him on how he found the Piece of Resistance – being called a MasterBuilder
  ○ Cop calls him a liar when he says he has never heard of the prophecy or “The Special”
  ○ Cop plays good cop/bad cop
  ○ Emmet finds out that a strange piece is stuck to his back; freaks out/wants it off
  ○ Find out President Business is going to use the Kragle to end the world in three days
Emmet thinks “all his friends” will be worried and out looking for him – the cop shows a video in which his friends say he isn’t “normal like us” and that he isn’t special; they don’t know who he is, that he is weird, that they don’t know anything about him. Describe him as a “blank slate”
  - “We all have something that makes us something and Emmet is...nothing”
- Bad Cop wants to melt Emmet; Emmet claims there has been a mix up, that they have the wrong guy
- The unnamed girl from earlier reappears and rescues Emmet from the melting chamber
  - She compliments Emmet for being brilliant in pretending to be a useless nobody, but tells him he can “drop the act” with her
  - She builds a motorcycle for their escape
- Wyldstyle (the girl character) says they need to meet up with Vitruvius; explains that because he found the Piece of Resistance he is “the Special” and the most interesting, important, extraordinary man in the universe
- Rush through a tunnel and end up in “The Old West”
- Wyldstyle is angry – says Emmet is not the special and that he lied to her and ruined the prophecy
- Wyldstyle explains that Emmet’s home, Bricksburg, is one of many realms in the universe – there’s also The Old West, Pirates Cove, Knight’s Club, Viking’s Landing, Clown Town, and a bunch of others
  - Lord Business (President Business) stole the Kragle, which is the most powerful object in the universe; they need to put the Piece of Resistance onto the Kragle to “disarm it forever”
- The people of the universe were once free to travel to different realms; President Business was confused by the chaos, and erected walls between the worlds
- Lord Business hired Bad Cop to hunt down the MasterBuilders who were changing everything – those who remained went into hiding and built tunnels to survive
- Lord Business is upset that his employees have not been able to find “the fugitive”
  - He threatens Good Cop/Bad Cop
  - Doesn’t like that people everywhere are messing with his stuff – will use the Kragle to keep everything exactly the way he thinks things are supposed to be
  - Going to spray the Kragle (Krazy Glue) over everything on Taco Tuesday
  - Lord Business wipes off Good Cop’s face
- Wyldstyle instructed Emmet to “blend in” and act like he blonds in the Old West
- They locate Vitruvius who is now a blind man and tell him they have found the Piece of Resistance
- Emmet is challenged to create a racecar with what is in his surroundings; Vitruvius says he needs to create the instructions in his mind
- Vitruvius says that of course Emmet will never be a Masterbuilder if Wyldstyle keeps telling him he can’t
  - Wyldstyle: “I don’t think he’s ever had an original thought in his life”
  - Emmet counteracts her with the “double-decker couch” idea
  - Emmet starts describing a “vision” he had and both Wyldstyle and Vitruvius are impressed – this is something MasterBuilders spend years trying to train their
minds to do; Vitruvius thinks that with proper training he can become a great MasterBuilder
  ▪  “All you have to do, is to believe”
  o  “We haven’t a moment to lose. We must assemble the MasterBuilders”
  o  Bad Cop shows up in the Old West looking for Emmet
  o  Vitruvius sends out message for the MasterBuilders to meet in the secret realm, Cloud Cuckooland
  o  Bad Cop breaks into the room where Vitruvius, Wyldstyle, and Emmet were about to begin Emmet’s training
    o  “Whew. I think we’re in the clear.”
  o  Evading Bad Cop Sequence – on their way out of the Old West
    o  “Vitruvius, they’re gaining on us! Build something!”
    o  Batman saves them from falling into a canal with alligators; Batman is Wyldstyle’s boyfriend
  o  Characters enter “Middle Zealnd” and drive up to Cloud Cuckooland
    o  Emmet is confused because there are no signs or rules; Princess Unikitty says that there is no government, no babysitters, no bedtimes, no frowny faces, or negativity of any kind in Cloud Cuckooland
  o  They go to meet the other Masterbuilders, gathered in “the Dog”
  o  Everyone cheers as Emmet shows the Piece of Resistance; continues to give speech until Metal Beard interrupts
    o  Wants to tell his “tale of woe”
  o  Emmet says he isn’t technically a MasterBuilder yet; everyone gets upset. Emmet continues his speech
    o  MasterBuilders start leaving
      ▪  “A house divided against itself would be better than this” – Abraham Lincoln Lego
  o  Bad Cop shows up because there was a tracking device on Emmet
  o  Emmet says they could go underwater to not be found – Batman takes credit for the idea and they build a submarine (Emmet, Unikitty, Vitruvius, Wyldstyle, Batman, & Benny)
    o  “Don’t worry about what the others are doing. You must embrace what’s special about you” – Vitruvius to Emmet
  o  Submarine makes it into the water; Cloud Cuckooland sinks
    o  “I feel something inside. It’s like the opposite of happiness. I must stay positive” – Unikitty
  o  Emmet built his double-decker couch and put it in the submarine
  o  There is a whole in the submarine, it starts to sink as it fills with water; Bad Cop thinks everyone died
  o  The MasterBuilders that were captured are taken to Lord Business’s “think tank”
  o  Emmet’s couch stayed together when the submarine broke and saved everyone; Metal Beard pulls them out of the ocean
    o  “I Thought you said we were a lost cause!”
    o  “Ye are! Did ye not hear me whole story circumscribing the folly of this whole
enterprise?”

- Now everyone is looking to Emmet to determine what they should do next
  - “What’s the last thing Lord Business would expect MasterBuilders to do?”
  - Follow the instructions
- Emmet explains that they all need to work together as a team – that doing so could save the universe
- Emmet comes up with a plan to get in the tower, put the Piece of Resistance on the Kragle, and save the universe
  - “Oh, you’re really letting the oxygen out of my tank here” – reaction to Emmet saying they can’t build a special spaceship, that they have to build on that looks exactly like all the other delivery spaceships
- Batman leaves to go to a party, leaving everyone else behind – he was only pretending, left to steal the hyperdrive
- Continue plan to get into Lord Business’s tower
- Wyldstyle and Emmet pretend to be robots – sing Everything is Awesome to trick them
- Wyldstyle shares that she was jealous, that she wanted to be The Special and that’s why she was rude to Emmet in the beginning
  - Wyldstyle’s real name is Lucy
- Benny and Metal Beard disable the shield surrounding the machine that holds the Kragle
- Emmet is about to put the Piece of Resistance on the Kragle when Lucy/Wyldstyle is in danger
- Lord Business finds all of the intruders, calls Vitruvius old – Vitruvius says he prefers the word experienced and fights back
- Vitruvius’s head comes off – says he made up the prophecy; wants to tell something to Emmet but then he dies
- Lord Business throws the Piece of Resistance out into space and orders the release of the Kragle – Bricksburg will be first
- Lord Business starts freezing everyone; has the micro-managers go out and make everyone look as though they are “acting normal”
- Ghost Vitruvius comes back and says:
  - “The only thing anyone needs to be special is to believe that you can be...Look at what you did when you believed you were special. You just need to believe it some more.”
  - “But how can I just decide to believe that I’m special when I’m not?” –Emmet
  - “Because the world depends on it” –Vitruvius (Ghost)
- Emmet jumps off the tower to stop the machine from going off (pulls apart the battery); saves all of the MasterBuilders
- The MasterBuilders broadcast a message to every universe
  - “He was so good at fitting in, no one ever saw him”
  - She wants them to build things to defend themselves to fight back against the President’s plans to freeze everything
- Good Cop draws on his good face again and tries to hold off the less-good workers who work for Lord Business
- Benny builds a spaceship to get the MasterBuilders to a place where they can help – in
Bricksburg

- President Business is getting upset because people are building “unnatural” things; things are less than perfect
- Emmet lands on the floor – film is now live action, no longer animated; Emmet thinks he is having a vision
- See a child running, accidentally steps on Emmet; little boy picks up Emmet and says hi to him
- Child’s (Finn) father comes downstairs and asked what happened to his Lego creations – he doesn’t understand why a dragon is on top of a luxury condo development (doesn’t like things that are chaotic/out of place
- Finn says the lego set up is kind of a toy; his father disagrees
- The father says he wants to make things the way they’re supposed to be, permanently
  - Emmet spots more glue, “more kragles!”
- Goes back and forth between animation and live action as the father starts destroying some of the more creative things his son has made and starts to glue things into place
- The father reaches out and takes Emmet from his son – Finn says Emmet is the hero; Emmet is still focused on getting the Piece of Resistance and wants to get Finn’s attention
  - Starts moving on the table, slides onto the floor
  - Finn picks up Emmet and gives him the “Piece of Resistance” (top to the krazy glue)
- Finn puts Emmet back onto the Lego table and says it’s up to him; Emmet is back in the animated world
- Emmet says he is a MasterBuilder; Lord Business wants to release every micro-manager he has
- Unikitty jumps out of character, no longer able to stay positive – she attacks the micro-managers
- Emmet faces Lord Business; says he wants Lord Business to join him – it’s the Power of The Special. Look at all the things that people built, what he sees are people taking what he’s made and making something new out of it because they were inspired
  - Cuts to live action, father asking his son if he made all of it – Finn shares the story of the people trying to stop President Business
  - The father recognizes that he is the President Business in his son’s life – and that President Business is “the bad guy”
    - He asks what “the construction guy” would say to President Business
      - Cuts back to Emmet animation, “You don’t have to be the bad guy. You are the most talented, most interesting, and most extraordinary person in the universe. And you are capable of amazing things, because you are The Special. And so am I. And so is everyone. The prophecy is made up, but it’s also true. It’s about all of us. Right now it’s about you. And you still can change everything.”
- Father walks over to sun and gives him a hug; President Business hugs Emmet
- Both put the cap back on the Krazy Glue; President Business explodes; they have saved
the day
- The father and son are playing together, father says his sister will have to be invited to come down and play too (baby toys show up in animated world); mother called father and Finn up for dinner – Taco Tuesday
**FROZEN (2013)**

**Plot Points/Standouts:**

- Men sawing ice; singing – See young Kristoff & Sven
  - “Beware the frozen heart”
- Anna trying to wake Elsa – wants to play
  - Elsa shows her magic; build Olaf; “Hi, I’m Olaf. and I like warm hugs.”
  - Playing in the snow
- Anna going too fast; Elsa accidentally zaps her in the head; calls for parents
  - Parents take Anna to rock trolls in the forest
  - Young Kristoff and Sven see the ice trail and follow
  - “You were lucky it was not her heart. The heart is not so easily changed, but the head can be persuaded.”
- Troll removes all of Anna’s memories of magic
- Learn Elsa’s power will grow – There is beauty in it, but also great danger; she must learn to control it – “Fear will be your enemy”
- Parents close the castle gates so Elsa can learn to control her powers; keep her powers hidden from everyone, including Anna
- Do you wanna be a snowman sequence
  - Elsa shuts Anna out; Elsa’s powers are getting stronger, her father gives her gloves
  - Anna tries to do things with her sister; eventually gives up trying
  - Their parents leave & get killed in a storm on the sea
  - See Elsa in her room full of ice
- Jumps ahead three years
- The queen has come of age, it’s Coronation Day
- See grown up Kristoff & Sven (Kristoff speaks for him)
- Town’s people and visitors excited for the gates to open
- See Anna, still asleep (says she’s been up for hours); time for her to get ready
- For the First Time in Forever sequence
  - “Why have a ballroom with no balls?”
  - Anna excited to meet everyone (the one – foreshadowing); not to be alone
  - Anna & the paintings
  - See Elsa – repeating words her father said to her; “Make one wrong move and everyone will know.”
- Anna trips and falls into a boat; meet Hans; awkward moment (include awkward in vocabulary?)
  - Anna leaves for the coronation; Hans falls into the water
- Elsa has to remove her gloves for the ceremony – some frost starts showing up, but no one notices; puts items down quickly
- Party – dancing; presenting Queen Elsa & Princess Anna
- Anna surprised when Elsa talks to her; More beautiful vs. Beautifuller
  - Meet the Duke of Weaselton; offers Elsa first dance—Elsa sends Anna; he questions Anna on why the gates were closed in the first place
  - “They don’t call me the ‘Little Dipper’ for nothing!... Like a chicken with the face
of a monkey, I fly.”

- Anna says she wishes it could be like this all the time – having people there; talking with her sister; Elsa says it can’t be like that all the time (harsh)
- Anna walks away upset, gets bumped, & dances with Hans
- Talking all evening sequence; he has 12 older brothers; leads into Love is an Open Door sequence
  - “All my life has been a series of doors in my face…”
  - “Love is an open door.”
  - “Our mental synchronization can have but one explanation.”
- Hans proposes; Anna says yes
- Back in the party; Ask Elsa for her blessing in their marriage – Elsa says no one is getting married; asks to talk to Anna alone (no)
  - “You can’t marry a man you just met.” – “You can if it’s true love.” – “Anna, what do you know about true love?” – “More than you. All you know is how to shut people out.”
- Elsa says the party is over, close the gates; Anna grabs her and pulls off Elsa’s glove; Anna won’t give up & pushes Elsa; Elsa get’s mad and ice shards blast from her hands; everyone sees
- Elsa runs as everyone stands in shock; Elsa tries to leave the castle, touches the fountain and it freezes; Elsa begs people to stay away & accidentally throws ice at the Duke of Weaselton; he calls her a monster
  - Town’s people are staring/scared
  - Anna runs after her – Elsa runs across water, it freezes as she steps; everything freezes
- Anna says she didn’t know; it starts snowing; Duke of Weaselton says the queen has cursed the land; asks Anna if she is a sorcerer too – “No, no. I’m completely ordinary.”
  - She defends her sister; “She didn’t mean it. She didn’t mean any of this.” – says she pushed her so she’s the one who has to go after her; asks Hans to take care of Arendelle
- Anna takes off on her horse to find Elsa; “She’s my sister. She would never hurt me.”
- Let it Go sequence; recreates Olaf;
  - “It’s funny how some distance makes everything seem small. The fears that once controlled me, can’t get to me at all.”
  - “My soul is spiraling in frozen fractals all around.” (No fractals in film)
  - “And one thought crystallizes like an icy blast.”
  - “The past is in the past.”
  - “Let it go, and I’ll rise like the break of dawn”
- Anna looking for Elsa; “Elsa, it’s Anna! Your sister who didn’t mean to make you freeze the summer.” – Says apology, it was her fault; “Of course, none of it would have happened if she would have just told me her secret.”
- Anna finds the trading post (and sauna); gets winter clothing; Kristoff shows up (covered in snow –asking for carrots
  - “A real howler in July...wherever could it be coming from?” (trading post owner about the storm); “The North Mountain.”
o Supply & demand problem – Kristoff says he sells ice
o Kristoff kicked out; Sven wanted his carrots (sad)
  o “I’m sorry about this violence. I will add a quart of lutefisk, so we have good feelings.”
  o Kristoff singing to Sven (different voice for Sven)
  o Anna asks Kristoff to take her up the North Mountain – tosses bag with rope and tool at him; and carrots for Sven (hit him on the head); demands to leave right then
  o “This is fresh lacquer. Seriously, were you raised in a barn?”
  o Talking with Kristoff – he gets stuck on the idea of getting engaged to someone you just met that day
    o “Look, it doesn’t matter. It’s true love.”
    o Kristoff mentions his “love expert” friends (Trolls – foreshadowing)
  o Chased by wolves
    o Anna wants to help, Kristoff says no because he can’t trust her judgment because she wants to marry someone she just met that same day
  o Sled falls and breaks; Anna promises she’ll replace it
  o Kristoff talks to himself (as Sven) in reasoning why he should or should not continue to help Anna
    o “I mean, sure. I’ll let you tag along.”
  o See Arendelle is completely frozen; “It’ll be fine. Elsa will thaw it.”
  o See Olaf, the talking snowman (comment about hanging off the world like a bat); Anna gives him a nose – He says he likes warm hugs & Anna recognizes him from her childhood; Olaf calls Kristoff a funky-looking donkey & Anna assumes he’s talking about Sven the reindeer
  o Olaf shares that Elsa built him
  o What a Snowman Does in Summer sequence
    o “Find out what happens to solid water when it gets warm.”
    o “Winter’s a good time to stay in and cuddle, but put me in summer and I’ll be a... (see a puddle) happy snowman!”
  o Back to Arendelle – see people with Hans; he says the castle is open; trying to keep people warm
    o “There is soup and hot glogg (?) in the great hall.”
    o “Has it dawned on you that your princess may be conspiring with a wicked sorceress to destroy us all?” – Duke of Weaselton
    o “I will not hesitate to protect Arendelle from treason.”
  o Anna’s horse is back, but Anna isn’t; Hans asks for volunteers to go find her (with him); Duke of Weaselton sends two men & says that if they encounter the queen they are “to put an end to this winter.” (inference as to what he means by that)
  o Back to Anna/Kristoff/Olaf/Sven
    o “Oh look at that. I’ve been impaled.” – Olaf
    o “Most people who disappear into the mountains want to be alone.” – “Nobody wants to be alone.”
    o Bring up the love experts again
  o Olaf finds the staircase to the ice castle
  o “I might cry.” – “Go ahead. I won’t judge.”
o Anna asks Kristoff and Olaf to wait outside the ice palace so she can talk to Elsa alone
o Anna & Elsa talk; Elsa says she doesn’t have to apologize, but asks her to go. Elsa doesn’t believe she belongs in Arendelle; she belongs there, along – “Where I can be who I am without hurting anybody.”
  o Olaf runs in before Anna can tell Elsa about Arendelle being frozen
  o Anna reminds Elsa of how they made a snowman just like him as kids—says they were so close and can be like that again, but it reminds Elsa of when she hurt Anna (inference; show memory)
o First Time in Forever reprise
  o “Arendelle’s in deep, deep, deep, deep snow.”
  o “You kind of sent off an eternal winter everywhere.”
  o Elsa doesn’t know how to end the winter
o Anna gets struck with ice in the heart; she refuses to leave without Elsa – so Elsa makes a snow monster (Marshmallow)
  o Feisty-pants; Anna hits snow monster with snow; monster chases her and Kristoff
  o “Man am I out of shape.” – Olaf (literal & figurative)
  o Olaf tries to help but Marshmallow tosses him over the mountain
o Anna worries about going back to Arendelle without fixing the weather; Anna’s hair starts turning white; Kristoff says she needs help
o Going to see the “love experts” – Kristoff says they will be able to fix it, he knows because he has seen them do it before
o Elsa telling herself not to feel it, to control it; the Palace continues growing
o Kristoff talking about his friends; “They can be a little inappropriate and loud.”
  o Meet my family – see rocks; Olaf says he’ll distract Kristoff while she runs; Olaf talks to the rocks & Anna says she’s going to go – then the rocks start rolling towards him
o Asks for Grandpabbie (the head troll) to help Anna
o Bit of a Fixer-Upper sequence
  o “I’ve learned to just roll with it.”
  o There is ice in Anna’s heart – if not removed, she will freeze forever; only an act of true love can thaw a frozen heart – assume a true love’s kiss & need to get to Hans
o Hans is at the ice palace – says they are there to find Anna, but no harm is to come to the queen; Marshmallow comes out & the Duke’s men see Elsa – they run inside
  o Elsa uses her power to defend herself
  o Marshmallow falls off the cliff; Hans makes his way inside
  o “Queen Elsa! Don’t be the monster they fear you are.” – Hans; Elsa stops fighting – arrow shoots ice chandelier; Elsa wakes up in metal cuffs, back in Arendelle castle
o Elsa sees Arendelle frozen; Hans comes to speak to her – Elsa learns that Anna has not returned; Hans asks Elsa to bring back summer & Elsa says she can’t; Hans says he will do what he can to get Elsa free
o Kristoff rushing back with Anna; Olaf gets separated (Kristoff tells him to stay out of sight)
o Anna returned to the castle; brought to Hans – she tells him that he has to kiss her; Hans
won’t kiss her
  o “Oh, Anna. If only there was someone out there who loved you.”
  o “As thirteenth in line in my own kingdom...I knew I’d have to marry into the
throne somewhere.” Learn he used Anna
  o “I figured after we married, I would have to stage a little accident for Elsa.”
    ▪ Hans puts out the fire; Hans says he’s going to kill her & be the hero that
is going to save Arendelle from destruction & that he has already gotten
away with it
  o Hans tells everyone that princess Anna is dead – Says Queen Elsa killed her; says they
said their marriage vows before she died
    o Hans charges Elsa with treason, “with a heavy heart”
  o Elsa escaped
  o Sven tries to get Kristoff to turn around; he won’t until a huge storm erupts from the
castle
  o Olaf finds Anna; lights a fire to keep her warm & experiences heat for the first time; he
says he won’t leave until he finds an act of true love for her; she learns Kristoff loves her
    o “Love is putting someone else’s needs before yours.”
    o “Some people are worth melting for.”
  o Olaf sees Kristoff and Sven coming; Anna needs to get to him for her act of true love;
trapped by ice
  o Elsa running; Olaf & Anna get out through a window (her hair is fully white now)
  o Anna’s fingers turn blue; Kristoff & Sven get separated; Kristoff runs towards Anna;
Anna falls
  o Hans finds Elsa; she asks him to take care of Anna; Hans tells her that she froze Anna’s
heart and that Anna is dead because of her
    o Elsa collapses & the storm stops – Anna sees Kristoff, but then sees Hans about
to kill Elsa – she runs to save her sister just as her heart freezes
  o Elsa cries, hugging her sister – Anna begins to unfreeze
  o The act of true love was Anna sacrificing herself for Elsa; Elsa realizes she knows how to
restore summer (with love)
  o Elsa gives Olaf his own personal flurry so he won’t melt; Anna deals with Hans, “The only
frozen heart around here is yours.” – She punches him off the boat
  o Hans sent back to his country for his brothers to deal with; Duke of Weaselton –
Arendelle will no longer do business with them
  o Anna delivers Kristoff the sled she promised
  o Elsa makes an ice skating rink for Arendelle; Says they will never close the gates again
BRAVE (2012)
Plot Points/Standouts:

- Mother searching for young Merida; “Where are you, you little rascal? I’m coming to get you.”
  - Merida is the birthday girl
  - “I’m going to gobble her up when I find her.”
  - Playful
- Merida wants to shoot the arrow; father gives her one for her birthday – teaches her how to shoot.
  - “A bow, Fergus? She’s a lady.”
- Merida runs into the forest to find the bow; hears a creaking noise – sees a will-o’-the-wisp (little blue light)
  - Merida follows the wisps; mother calls her to come back
    - Tells her parents she saw a wisp; “You know, some say that will-o’-the-wisps lead you to your fate.”
- “Come on, let’s be off before we see a dancing Tatty Bogle. Or a giant having a jigger in the bluebells.”
- Mother tells Merida that her father doesn’t believe in magic; Merida says he should because it’s true
- Giant bear appears; Merida and her mother run (horseback); father and other men stay to fight the bear
- Merida speaking in background (older now) about fate/destiny
  - Learn her father lost his leg fighting the bear
  - See she has three brothers; “Wee devils,” “They get away with murder.” – “I can never get away with anything.”
  - “I’m the princess, I’m the example. I’ve got duties, responsibilities, expectations.”
- Says her mother is in charge of every day of her life
- Merida practicing something with her mother; Elinor wants her to enunciate and project
  - “From the top! A princess must be knowledgeable about her kingdom.”
  - A Princess does not doodle; see them practicing music; Laughing with her father, “A princess does not chortle.” – long list of what a princess does not do, finally says a princess strives for perfection
- Once in a while there’s a day where she doesn’t have to be a princess/no lessons; goes off on horse (Angus) with bow & arrows; climbs mountain with waterfall (Crone’s Tooth & Fire Falls)
  - Song playing – “Misty mountains sing and beckon, lead me out into the light.” – “Where dark woods hide secrets and mountains are fierce and bold.” – “Deep waters hold reflections of times lost long ago.” – “Be as strong as the seas are stormy, and proud as an eagle’s scream”
- Back home for dinner; father telling 3 brothers bear story; Merida chimes in
  - “I’ll finish what I guddled in the first place.”
  - Mom tells Merida not to put her weapons on the table/that she shouldn’t have any weapons; father says learning to fight = essential
  - “You’ll get dreadful collywobbles. Oh, Fergus, will you look at your daughter’s
plate?" (full plate of cookies) – The three boys are playing with “Haggis”

- Mother gets letters; Merida slips cookies under table for her brothers
  - Boys are excused; All the clans have accepted and the lords will be presenting their sons as suitors to Merida for her betrothal; these boys will compete in games for her hand
- Merida fights with mother; she does not want to get married – Father knocks over table
- Mother tells story of ancient kingdom – divided among four sons; oldest prince wanted to rule it all himself, followed his own path and the kingdom fell; “Legends are lessons, they ring with truth.”
- “It’s marriage. It’s not the end of the world.”
- Elinor sewing; Fergus comes in & sees something is troubling her – Fergus encourages her to talk to him as if he were Merida; “I want to stay single and let my hair flow in the wind as I ride through the glen firing arrows into the sunset.”
- Merida is not ready; wants her mom to call it off (both Merida and Elinor are practicing what they want to say to each other, but are not actually speaking to each other)
  - Ultimately, they both want the other to listen to their perspective
- The lords arrive with their sons
  - See traditional Irish clothing (hear music)
- MacIntosh Clan, MacGuffin Clan, Clan Dingwall
  - Other clans make fun of Clan Dingwall; fighting
  - “You’ve had your go at each other. Show a little decorum.”
  - Triplets crush Dingwall’s foot, fighting begins again
- Elinor grabs the 4 leaders
  - “My humblest apologies.” – “We mean no disrespect.”
- Elinor explains the event; Merida picks archery
- Strength game sequence; horn blows and it’s time for archery; “May the lucky arrow find its target.”
  - “I bet he wishes he was tossing cabers.” (Response to MacIntosh)
  - “Well that’s attractive.” (Sarcasm in response to MacGuffin fit)
  - Dingwall hits bullseye

- Merida (firstborn descendant of Clan Dun Broch) comes out to shoot for her own hand.
  - Elinor wants her to stop, “Merida! I forbid it.”
  - Merida gets 3 bullseyes
- Merida & Elinor argue; Merida says mother is a beast, Elinor says Merida is acting like a child
  - Merida rips her mother’s tapestry
    - “I’d rather die than be like you!” – Mother burns Merida’s bow; Merida runs out & Elinor pulls the burned bow out
- Merida takes off on her horse; Merida in stone circle, Angus won’t go in it
  - Sees wisp & follows into the forest
- Wisps lead her to a little shop with an old woman making something out of wood (“humble wood carver”)
  - “Perhaps a touch of whimsy to brighten any dank chamber?”
- Merida sees the woman’s broom sweeping by itself; “That’s ridiculous. Wood cannot be
imbued with magical properties. I should know. I’m a wit... Whittler” (implied witch.)

○ The crow speaks; Merida realizes she is a witch – witch says if she’s not going to buy anything, she needs to leave
  ○ Merida says she will buy every carving, pay with her necklace – She wants all the carvings and one spell
  ○ “Are you sure you know what you’re doing?” – “I want a spell to change my mum.”

○ Leave and go back in; now a different room; last time she did a spell it was for a prince who demanded the strength of ten men (given a different clan medallion; foreshadowing)
  ○ Makes a cake; “Trust me. It’ll do the trick, dearie.”
  ○ “Expect delivery of your purchase within a fortnight.”

○ Witch tries to remember something about the spell, but disappears

○ Merida’s mother was worried about her; “I’ve pacified the lords for now.”
  ○ When Elinor says a decision still needs to be made, Merida gives her the cake; “Now, why don’t we go upstairs to the lords and put this whole kerfuffle to rest?”

○ Leave the cake behind

○ Elinor suddenly woozy; Merida takes her mother to her room (keeps asking her mom if she has new thoughts on the marriage)

○ Mother turned into a bear
  ○ “Oh, that scabby witch gave me a gammy spell.”

○ Fergus thinks something isn’t right; leads the men on a hunt through the castle
  ○ Maudie (baker woman) sees the bear and tells Fergus

○ Merida asks her brothers to help her get their mum out of the house
  ○ “It must have sprouted wings.” (sarcasm)

○ Merida tells the boys to help themselves to anything they want as a reward for helping; they see the cake (inference that they will eat it & become bears)

○ Merida and mum bear walk into the woods, “Does she think we’re just going to happen upon the witch’s cottage?”
  ○ Find the cottage, it’s empty – learn that by the second sunrise, the spell will be permanent unless she remembers: “Fate be changed, look inside, mend the bond torn by pride.”

○ Merida and her mom sleep in the woods; Merida says they will sort it out tomorrow

○ Flashback of Elinor comforting young Merida during a thunder storm; “I’ll always be right here.”

○ Morning – Elinor (bear) still acting ladylike (no weapons on the table, eating with fork & knife)
  ○ Merida catches them a fish; Elinor doesn’t want to eat it so Merida cooks it
    ▪ Eats it and begins acting a bit less ladylike; takes off her crown
    ▪ “But each word we spoke the wind blew away.” (Song lyrics)

○ Elinor leaves her crown behind and walks away; growls at Merida (more bearlike than mumlike) – losing control as spell gets closer to permanent

○ They follow a wisp to ruins; Merida falls through a wooden plank into a throne room
  ○ Merida realizes she’s with the bear Mor’du from her father’s story (it’s the ruins
of his home

- Elinor pulls Merida out of the throne room but Mor’du comes out too; Merida rides on her mother away from the bear – they knock into a stone pillar in the ring of rocks
  - Merida wants her mother to go with her back to the castle so that Elinor doesn’t turn into a bear inside; she says “The witch gave us the answer. The tapestry.”

- Elinor is hesitant to go in through the front, goes through a door down below and they climb up through a well

- The 3 clans are arguing and want Fergus to pick which boy will marry Merida
  - “None of your sons are fit to marry my daughter!” – “Then our alliance is over! This means war!”
  - “How do we get you through there and up to the tapestry with the lot boiling over like that?”

- Merida walks into the room to pacify the clans while Elinor sneaks up to the tapestry
  - The clans want to see the queen; “This is highly irregular.” – “We will not stand for any more of this jiggery-pokery.”
  - “I know now how one selfish act can turn the fate of a kingdom.”
    - “Our kingdom is young. Our stories are not yet legend. But in them, our bond was struck. Our clans were once enemies. But when invaders threatened us from the sea, you joined together to defend our lands. You fought for each other. You risked everything for each other.”
  - Merida explains how all of the lords have helped each other

- Merida’s mom stayed to listen/watch in the back
  - “I’ve been selfish. I tore a great rift in our kingdom. There’s no one to blame but me. And I know now that I need to amend my mistake and mend our bond.”

- As Merida says she’s decided to do what’s right with her betrothal, Elinor starts waving wildly to get her attention; signals to “break tradition” – Elinor helps her through the remainder of her speech (The queen feels they should be free to write their own story, follow their hearts, and find love in their own time)

- The sons of the lords agree with Merida – Let the young lads try to win her heart before they win her hand

- Elinor sighs; man hears her and turns, she freezes like a statue – Merida distracts them all by sending all the men to the cellar to celebrate
  - Merida is happy, smiling – they go to the tapestry and Elinor begins behaving like a bear again when looking for a needle and thread to fix the tapestry
  - Fergus looking for Elinor and finds his wife’s ripped dress; runs through the castle screaming for her – sees Merida with the bear
  - Fergus draws his sword and Merida tries to tell him; Merida got a scratch and Elinor runs out

- The men see the bear and chase after her

- Merida tries to explain to Fergus but he doesn’t believe her; says she is talking nonsense and says he will avenge her mother even if that bear is not Mor’du
  - He locks Merida in the bedroom

- The men take off after the bear; Merida cries for her mother

- See the three brothers have turned into little bears; they listen to Merida when she tells
them to get the key from Maudie
- Men chase the bear; Merida get a needle and thread to fix the tapestry
  - Brothers get the key and let Merida out; she takes off on her horse with her 3 brothers
- Men tie up Elinor; Merida follows a wisp & you see Mor’du watching
- Merida shoots an arrow to stop Fergus from killing Elinor
  - Fergus begins to believe when he sees the boys are bears
- Focus turns to killing Mor’du; he’s on top of Merida and Elinor breaks free to help her
  - The bears fight; one of the pillars falls on Mor’du and a blue wisp comes up, in the shape of the man who the witch’s spell had transformed
- The second sunrise happens and Merida grabs the tapestry, throwing it over Elinor – everyone watches – Elinor’s eyes are dark; Merida cries, apologizing, she hugs her mum; “You’ve always been there for me. You’ve never given up on me. I just want you back. I want you back, mummy. I love you”
- The sun goes over the tapestry, and Merida’s mom is back to normal; “You changed!” – “Oh, darling, we both have.”
- See that Merida and her mom are working on a new tapestry
- Go to say goodbye to the men from the other clans
  - The 3 boys got onto one of the boats
- “There are those who say fate is something beyond our command, that destiny is not our own. But I know better. Our fate lives within us. You only have to be brave enough to see it.”
  - Merida rides off on her horse, her mother beside her on her own horse.
**CARS 2 (2011)**

Plot Points/Standouts:
- Introduction to the problem; unknown character (Leland Turbo), unknown issue – requesting help
  - Show image that looks like fire through a window?
  - Speaking to Finn, but looking directly at audience
- Boat scene – meet Finn
  - “What does it look like, genius?” – Sarcastic response to “What are you doing out here?”
  - “Looks like it’s the end of the line.”
- See Finn is on back of the boat that told them to turn around; talks to Leland Turbo (car from beginning?) says he is at the “rally point” – no response
  - “You know the drill”
  - Meet Professor Zundapp
- See that Leland Turbo has been crushed into a cube; Finn reacts and the other cars are after him; chase sequence
  - Car spills oil; one slides into the water (not Finn)
  - Finn jumps into the water and uses water skis to get away
  - Missile hits him but he’s okay; releases 4 tires from his trunk so the other cars think he died
- See Tow Mater helping Otis
  - “Smooth like pudding” – after hearing bad engine
  - “Who am I kidding? I’ll always be a lemon.”
  - “This is your tenth tow this month, so that means it’s on the house”
  - “Don’t sweat it” (Otis says Mater is the only one nice to lemons like him) – Lemons = cars that leak oil?
- Welcome home Lightning McQueen; Mater rushing back
- Mater and McQueen having summer “fun”
  - Driving on train tracks, honking at a large truck to make it flip (like cow flipping)
  - McQueen hurts Mater’s feelings by going to have dinner with Sally
- “Mater the waiter”
  - Mater sees clip of missing car that tried to circumnavigate the globe; emerged 36 days later
  - Mini-lesson on benefits of electric cars
  - Learn about the newly created racing competition; alternative energy; looking to get people to stop using gasoline
  - Meet Francesco Burnoulli; learn McQueen was invited and did not accept
  - Mater calls to defend McQueen
  - “It’s three syllables, not 10” – McQueen commenting on how Sally said Burnoulli’s name
  - “Those are strong words from a car that is so fragile”
- McQueen agrees to do the race to settle the dispute with Burnoulli; invites Mater to come
- Going to competition – Heading to Tokyo, Japan; music sequence
o Streets in the city; small hotel rooms, shop with McQueen toys, movie, red carpet
o Party – Asks Mater to be on his best behavior
  o Talking about different lifestyles between Tokyo event and Radiator Springs
  o Mater goes to introduce McQueen to Burnoulli (calls him Mr. San Francisco?)
o Finn is at the party; meet Agent Holley Shiftwell
  o Have a moment (speaking in code) to confirm they are both agents – inference
  o Meeting; camera appears to be standard television camera; oil platforms Finn was on at beginning were on top of the biggest oil reserve in the world
  o Going to meet with American to get photo of car running the odd-camera operation
  o Finn sees cars that were on the oil platform when he was; says Holley has to meet the American
o Mater & wasabi; thinks it’s ice cream
  o “My condolences”
  o Interrupts McQueen’s introduction at party – excellence and professionalism (contrast)
  o Mater leaking oil – confusing bathroom set up; contrasting cultures (Japanese speaking)
  o Cars from oil platform recognize the American; American transfers tracking device to Mater
    o Speaking in code – Mater has the “air-cooled” answer (because he works at a shop in Radiator Springs; causes the confusion – Holley and Finn now believe he is the American spy
  o Agree to meet again; Mater thinks it’s a date; Holley thinks it’s because the area is compromised
  o See the real American spy with the cars from the oil platform and the professor
    o The camera is actually an “electromagnetic pulse emitter”
    o Allinol (the oil good for the planet) is dangerous with the effect of the camera
    o Cars from oil platform & the professor find out the spy has given the transmitter to Mater – say they need to kill Mater
o First race – News anchors speaking
  o Street races – First in Japan, then in Italy, then in England
  o “Well I think you need to clean your windshield. You’re clearly not seeing this for what it is: Francesco’s race to lose.” –After one said that he believed McQueen was the best all-around racer
o One moment just before race begins; clearly McQueens POV (Speed, I am Speed)
  o Race begins – Holley & fin talk about Mater’s excellent cover (being in the pits, having such detailed/realistic rust)
  o The car race is secondary to the main plot with the spies, but takes the center of focus
  o “McQueen looks happier than a roll bar at a demolition derby!”
  o Now the racer’s hit the bridge with a 360 degree loop (angles & shape lesson)
  o Professor signals his cars to turn on the camera with the electromagnetic pulse emitter to blow a car’s engine (car in the race)
Lemons see Mater in the pit; Holley and Finn see that they are all closing in on Mater – Finn tells Holley to get him out of the pits
  ▪ Mater leaves pit
  ▪ Finn blows fire hydrant on lemons
  ▪ Chatter messes up McQueen’s race

Francesco wins – “Wait for Lightning McQueen to choke..”

McQueen & Mater have a disagreement; McQueen is upset with Mater – says he doesn’t need/want Mater’s help; emotional for Mater – “We know what the problem is and we’ve taken care of it.

Three cars blew their engines; Miles Axelrod says his fuel (Allinol) is safe and did not cause these cars to flame out (Doesn’t know the camera electromagnetic pulse emitter situation)

Mater at airport to head home; Finn meets him there disguised as security – Introduces himself as British Intelligence; the Lemons are also at the airport
  ▪ Lemons chase Mater & Finn; Mater & Finn make it onto the plane with Holley

McQueen reads letter from Mater – Says he didn’t really want him to leave.
Mater identifies the engine in the spy image; he realizes they are spies – they don’t realize he isn’t
  ▪ Mater shows that all the parts have been replaced & that they are rare, original parts
  ▪ “You obviously have a lot of experience in the field.” – “Well, yeah. I live right next to one.”
  ▪ Think Mater is being sarcastic when he says he’s just a tow truck

Italy
  ▪ Italian markets – see the car that can identify who ordered the rare parts (Tomber) – never met the car, did business over the phone
  ▪ Learn all the cars involved are lemons (cars that never work right, but are all different kinds of cars); having a secret meeting in Porto Corsa, Italy in two days where the next race is

Team McQueen“
  ▪ You look so down, so low. It’s like you have flat tires.”
  ▪ “A wise car hears one word and understands two.” (??)
    ▪ He’s my best friend – “Then why would you ask him to be something else?”
    ▪ Friendship important; “Whoever find a friend, find a treasure”

Mater disguise sequence – changing his appearance; voice-activated
  ▪ Doesn’t want his dents fixed because they are linked to memories
  ▪ Friendships can be dangerous in our line of work, Mater – Finn
    ▪ “But my line of work is towin’ & salvage” –Mater
    ▪ “Right. And Miss Shiftwell’s is designing iPhone apps.” –Finn (sarcasm)

Seeing Italy; Porta Corsa, Italy – on the Italian Riviera
  ▪ Called the “Gem of the Riviera”
    ▪ Secluded beaches, and opulent casinos – “Playground for the wealthy”

News anchors pondering safety of Allinol; speculating how McQueen will do in the race;
McQueen missing Mater
- 2nd race begins; cuts to Holley pretending to need help & Finn prepping Mater to go into disguise
  - Mater learns that everyone sees him as an idiot and thinks it’s an act; Finn says that’s the genius of it
    - “Nobody realizes they’ve been fooled because they’re too busy laughing at the fool. Brilliant.”
  - Mater in the secret meeting – learn the plan to blow all the engines using Allinol – These cars own the largest oil reserve in the world, if everyone goes back to gasoline, they will be the most powerful cars in the world
  - Today hard work pays off; world turned back on cars like us – stopped manufacturing/making parts; only thing they haven’t stopped doing is laughing
  - See the car engines blowing; Holley tracks the electromagnetic pulse to the camera
- Finn caught when trying to mess with the camera; cars all crashing – Holley sees Finn being taken away
- McQueen wins, only he and Burnoulli finish the race
- Miles Axelrod says the show must go on, but the final race will not require the cars to run on Allinol
- Holley caught; McQueen says he’s going to still run on Allinol because his friend Fillmore says it’s safe and he didn’t stand by a friend recently which was a mistake
  - The Lemons are upset with McQueen’s decisions; will kill McQueen – Mater discovered & accidentally sets off his guns
  - Shoot vs. Chute.
- Mater tries to warn McQueen; security won’t let him through gates; pushes through – McQueen sees him but the lemons got to Mater before McQueen could find him; knocked him out with gas
  - Replay of scene in which Finn told Mater everyone sees him as an idiot – see many moments of him getting laughed at
- London
  - “Inside Big Bentley.” --- Big Ben..?
  - In the clock tower, Mater hanging & Holley/Finn tied up
  - Finn & Holley finally understand that that Mater really is just a tow truck
- Sally & the cars from Radiator Springs show up in London for the final race; Miles Axelrod comes to thank McQueen for using Allinol & giving it one more shot – McQueen does the race for Mater.
- Final race sequence begins
  - The camera didn’t work on McQueen, but the Lemons put a bomb in McQueen’s pit
  - Mater escapes and goes to save McQueen and everyone in the pits
    - “Go and get some more dents, Mater.”
    - “Being killed by a clock. Gives a whole new meaning to ‘your time has come.’”
    - Holley tries to reverse the polarity of the clock so she and Finn don’t get
crushed
- Reference to people in England driving on the other side of the road
- Holley & Finn escape; see a part the fell off Mater?
  - Mater gets to the pit – learn the bomb is on Mater
    - Mater tries to get away from everyone so they don’t get hurt; McQueen chases him to try and apologize
  - “I’m the bomb” – “Yes, you are the bomb!” – Miscommunication
  - Lemon (Professor) tries to set off the bomb but Mater is out of range
  - Holley gets the Lemons away from the bomb trigger; Lemons racing to get McQueen
    - See many landmarks in London during this sequence
    - Finn’s bombs blow up a boat
  - Mater talks to the Lemons about knowing what it’s like to be laughed at; Lemons still want the money – Bomb is activated
    - “If people aren’t taking you seriously, then they need to change. Not you. I know that because I was wrong before.”
  - Mater knows what to do; “Mater, just cut to the chase.”
    - Figured out that Miles Axelrod is behind the sabotage because the same bolts keeping the bomb in him were in the old British engine in the photograph
    - Realized that Axelrod leaked oil in Japan and blamed it on Mater – it wasn’t the Wasabe
    - Says Axelrod did not convert to electric
    - No one believes mater until Axelrod deactivates the bomb because Mater figured it out – Axelrod didn’t want to blow up
  - See Mater messing with the guards; Mater gets an honor
  - Mater & everyone else return to Radiator Springs; Mater telling everyone the story; Finn & Holley show up – Holley says she is Mater’s girlfriend; Holley wants to keep her dent – “It’s way too valuable”
  - Find out that McQueen was never using Allinol
    - “If you’re implying that I switched that rot-gut excuse for alternative fuel with my all-natural, sustainable, organic biofuel just because I never trusted Axelrod, you’re dead wrong, man!”
  - Radiator Springs Grand Prix; lie about Francesco’s appearance to McQueen
    - Finn & Holley need to leave – the Queen asked for Mater to come
      - Say he’s the smartest/charming/honest
      - Mater doesn’t want to go, wants to stay with his friends in Radiator Springs; gets a statue and speed rockets
      - Never know who wins the race (Mater & McQueen)
TOY STORY 3 (2010)
Plot Points/Standouts:
  o Mr. Potato Head busts out of train (money, money, money)
    o Woody stops him; Mrs. Potato Head shows up; knocks Woody off train
    o Woody on Bulls-Eye with Jessie.
      ▪ “You’ve reached the end of the line.”
      ▪ “I’ve always wanted to go out with a bang!”
  o Potato Heads jump into car with aliens; Woody tries to save the orphans before
    the track runs out; track runs out and the train falls down the tracks
    ▪ Buzz Lightyear saves the train; “To infinity and beyond!”
  o Potato heads and aliens have money; Buzz zaps their car in half
    ▪ “Reach for the sky.”
    ▪ Mr. P says Woody/Jessie/Buzz can’t touch him (force field dog—visual)
      • Woody brought dinosaur who eats force field dogs
  o Evil Dr. Pork hop (Flying pig plane shows up); pulls up the “villains” and sends
    barrel monkeys on Jessie, Buzz, & Woody
  o Cut to video of Andy playing with his toys (using his imagination – inference)
  o Birthday video sequence; Andy growing up (you’ve got a friend in me)
    o “Charming” (Sarcasm)
  o Toys in box – “Get into position”
    o One shot at this – pulled phone into the box; “Target is on approach”
    o See Andy (grown up - 17) – pulls phone out of box; accuses little sister (Molly) of
      being in his room/messing with his things
      ▪ Toys upset; “Well, that went well.” (Sarcasm)
  o Woody gathers toys for a meeting
    o “We all knew Operation Playtime was a long shot.” – “More like a misfire.”
    o “I’m callin’ it guys. We’re closing up shop.”
      ▪ Andy going to college any day
    o “Don’t you get it? We’re done! Finished! Over the hill!”
  o Knew this day was coming – Army men going AWOL; moving on
    o Afraid of getting thrown away
  o Woody says no one is getting thrown out; says Andy must care about them or they
    wouldn’t be there; reassuring
    o “…get ready, and go out on a high note.”
    o Woody reminisces with Buzz.
  o Toys rush back into box as Andy and Molly come in
    o “Off the hook” (Molly has more toys than she knows what to do with)
  o Toys overhear daycare discussion
    o Andy calls them junk
    o Andy puts toys into a garbage bag; stops at Woody and Buzz – Woody goes into
      college box – other toys on way to the attic; Andy interrupted by helping Molly
      with her toys – Andy’s mother mistakes the bag as trash
  o Woody tries to get the (very old) dog to help him get to the curb – garbage truck coming
    o Woody slides down side of house with scissors
“Andy doesn’t want us, what’s the point?”

Woody starts stabbing trash bags & chases the truck after not finding the toys – sees the trash get crushed; turns around and sees the toys running into the garage.

Toys trying to figure out why Andy threw them away (don’t know his mom made mistake)

Jessie see’s Sunnyside Daycare donation box (“I know what to do!”)

Woody sees the toys climbing into the donation box.

Toys plan on going to daycare
  ▪ “Have you lost your marbles?”

Woody tries to explain what happened (mom mistake)

Woody and Buzz trying to figure out what to do – Mom comes into the car and begins driving; cars still in trunk

Barbie upset she was thrown away
  ▪ “Welcome to the club.”

Woody has plan for toys to hide under the seats until they get back home

Toys still say Andy doesn’t want them anymore (Mr. P & Jessie); Woody makes Daycare sound unappealing
  ▪ “Quite the charmer, aren’t ya”

Arrive at daycare, toys still in the box

“Welcome to the club.”

Meet Bonnie and her mom

See children playing nicely with toys in the Butterfly Room

Woody wants to go back to Andy; other toys want to be played with.

Rex knocks over box; meet the toys in the Butterfly room.

Meet Lotso (Lots-o-Huggin’ Bear); country-like speech patterns

Says they’ll find that being donated was the best thing that ever happened to them

When kids get older, new kids come in

“Down in a jiff”

Barbie meets Ken

Lotso introduces Big Baby; were abandoned by the same owner – “We don’t need owners at Sunnyside. We own ourselves. We’re masters of our own fate.”

Enter the Caterpillar room

“Holy moly guacamole”

Toys are excited to be played with; Lotso goes back into the Butterfly room

Ken asks Barbie to go with him; toys tell Barbie to go

Woody tells the toys they need to go home; the toys tell Woody to stay there – he says no; Says his loyalty is with Andy

Buzz chooses to stay at the Daycare; “Our mission with Andy is complete, Woody.”

“Okay, fine. Perfect! I can’t believe how selfish you all are.”

Woody refuses to shake Buzz’s hand; turns to leave – Tells Bullseye he needs to stay.
- Woody leaves; climbs out bathroom window & onto roof
  - Uses glider to get over the wall
  - Gets stuck in tree; Bonnie gets him & puts him in her backpack; lost his hat
- Buzz (perspective) sees Caterpillar room toys hide before children come back in
  - Toddlers come in; play rough with toys
  - See Buzz perspective (head hitting blocks); toys being played with gently in the Butterfly Room
- Bonnie playing nicely with Woody.
- Toys that stayed at Sunnyside in rough shape
  - “Make the best of it.”
  - Want to be in the Butterfly room with the big kids; “We’ll get this straightened out.”
- Toys realize they’re locked in the room
- Buzz hoists up and makes it to the transom
  - Sees toys going into vending machine; climbs in and sees them gambling (lots of gambling language – don’t include in vocabulary)
  - “Hey, what do you guys think of the new recruits? Any keepers?” – “Oh, please. Landfill!”
  - Overhears them talking about him and Andy’s other toys
    - “He ain’t the sharpest knife in the place where they keep the knives.”
      (About Buzz)
  - Ken not happy to be called a “girls’ toy”
- Big Baby saw Buzz, turns him in
- Woody sneaks away when Bonnie is sleeping
- Buzz tied up; wants to talk to Lotso
  - “Zip it!”
  - Lotso calls Buzz a keeper, agrees to transfer him to the Butterfly Room
  - “We’re calling you up to the big leagues, son.”
- Lotso won’t let all of the toys go, only Buzz; Buzz says, “I can’t accept. We’re a family. We stay together.”
  - Put Buzz in the ‘timeout’ chair
- Return Buzz to original factory settings.
- Mrs. Potato Head can see Andy with the eye she left behind; it’s in Andy’s room
  - Sees Andy upset with his mom; realizes he’s looking for them (the toys)
  - The toys want to go home to Andy
- Lotso comes in – the toys say they need to go
  - Lotso tells them they are not leaving Sunnyside
  - Buzz catches/stands on them all; “Prisoners disabled, Commander Lotso!”
    - Toys realize he’s been reset; they get locked up
    - “Keep your paws off my wife!”
- Mr. Potato Head taken to “the box” – Barbie breaks up with Ken (not happy with what is happening to her friends)
  - Buzz gives them their rules; Lotso says to remember that they will say anything to make him doubt himself
“Any doubt I had got pounded outta me at the academy.”
Start at the bottom, “pay your dues”
- Lotso tosses Woody’s hat towards the toys; the toys assume Lotso has hurt Woody (don’t know he got out safely) (inference)
- Woody looking up his address; finds out that Andy lives just around the corner
  - Woody learns Sunnyside “is a place of ruin and despair;” learns that Lotso is a monster
- Chuckles tells story of Lotso, Big Baby, and their kid Daisy.
  - Daisy fell asleep and parents forgot to get the toys from picnic
  - Toys made it back to Daisy’s house, but Daisy already had a new Lotso toy; Lotso told Big Baby and Chuckles that they’d been replaced too
  - Chuckles got broken and Bonnie took him home (how Chuckles got out); says new toys don’t stand a chance
    - “Returning now would be suicide!” (don’t include in vocabulary..)
- Toys at Sunnyside
  - Hamm playing harmonica; “Knock it off!”
  - “He ain’t ever comin’ back” (Jessie speaking)
- Woody sneaks back into Sunnyside in Bonnie’s backpack
  - Climbs through ceiling to get to the Caterpillar Room; sees how his friends are being played with; the phone (Chatterbox) tells Woody that he and his friends will never be able to get out now
    - “They’ve cracked down hard since you left. More guards, more patrols.”
  - Learns there is only one way toys leave – in the trash; truck comes at dawn
- Woody asks the phone for help; learns everything he needs to know – the Monkey is the problem (watches security cameras and screeches
  - Need to get rid of the monkey
- Recess; Woody lets the toys know he’s back; learns about Buzz being reset
  - “We’re busting outta here, tonight.”
  - Woody gives the plan (don’t hear it)
- Toy check in; notice Mr. Potato Head not in his crate; chase him – he bangs on door
  - Monkey watching commotion while other toys start to escape.
- Barbie locked up, crying to ken – saying she wants to go to the Butterfly Room with him; fake crying; Ken lets her out
- Mr. Potato Head in sandbox; Woody & Slinky dog try to take out monkey; tape him up
- Ken showing Barbie all of his clothes
  - Outfit modeling sequence
- Woody gets the key; “Bingo!”
- Toys start fighting to distract Buzz; trap Buzz
- Mr. Potato Head puts his pieces into a tortilla
- Barbie forces Ken to tell her what Lotso did to Buzz
  - Ripping Ken’s clothes while he’s tied up in his underwear; “Oh! Barbie! Those were vintage!”
  - “They’re a dime a dozen.”
- Jessie gets the key & the toys sneak out after signal from Mr. Potato Head
Barbie dresses up as Ken to get the instruction manual (still wearing her heels)
Bird tries to eat Mr. Potato Head (he splits in two)
Buzz gets out; toys try to switch him off Demo mode; reset Buzz and he speaks in Spanish.
Buzz and Jessie have a moment
Mr. Potato Head gets his body back (after being on poo?)
Toys must sneak passed trucks and Big Baby
Buzz opens the garbage chute
Toys need to climb across, but Lotso finds them (with the Octopuss – and broken Chatterbox)
  “Speak of the devil” – Hear the garbage truck coming
  “This isn’t a family! It’s a prison! You’re a liar and a bully! And I’d rather rot in this dumpster than join any family of yours!”
  Ken tries to get the toys to stop listening to Lotso (Sunnyside toys)
    “Sunnyside could be cool and groovy if we treated each other fair. It’s Lotso. He’s made us into a pyramid, and he put himself on top!”
    “Anyone concur with Ken?”
    “Chew on that when you’re in the dump.”
Woody talks about Daisy; Lotso orders the Octopus to push all the toys into the trash; Big Baby throws Lotso in and closes the door
Toys rush to get off the bin before the truck comes; Alien gets stuck and Woody goes to help; Lotso pulls Woody into the bin – all the toys fall into the truck except Barbie and Ken
Buzz gets crushed by a TV; back to normal (no more Spanish)
Toys get scooped up and pushed towards crusher & incinerator; Slinky pulled up because of magnet
  All grab something metal to be on top
Lotso needs help – Woody goes to help him; Buzz too
Dinosaur confuses incinerator for daylight
Lotso sees the stop button, climbs up after Woody helps him; he doesn’t push it
  “Where’s your kid now, Sheriff?”
  Toys fall towards the fire; hold hands; Claw drops down and grabs the toys (the Aliens saved them)
Truck man finds Lotso and straps him to the front of his car
Toys ride the garbage truck back to Andy’s (inference)
  Hose off and rush into Andy’s room (Mrs. P gets her eye back)
  Buzz and Woody shake hands “This isn’t goodbye”
  Toys jump into attic box, Woody into college box
Woody sees picture of him with Andy and his friends
  Switches Attic label to Bonnie’s address (inference) while Andy is saying goodbye to Buster (the dog); jumps into that box
    “Hey mom.. you really think I should donate these?”
Andy tells Bonnie all about his toys – gives them all to Bonnie; struggles with giving away Woody; has Bonnie promise to take good care of them; plays with the toys one last time
## Appendix G

### THE LEGO MOVIE (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destroy</td>
<td>“Robots, destroy him!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>“Now my evil power will be unlimited!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophecy</td>
<td>“Wait. There was a prophecy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>“Piece of Resistance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supposed</td>
<td>“Oh, yes. The supposed missing Piece of Resistance that can somehow magically disarm the Kragle.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarm</td>
<td>“...found from its hiding refuge underground”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble Helm</td>
<td>“And with a noble army at the helm, this MasterBuilder will thwart the Kragle and save the realm.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thwart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Realm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring Legend</td>
<td>“That was a great, inspiring legend…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen</td>
<td>“That’s the day every rule following citizen gets a free taco and my love!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obey Regulations</td>
<td>“Obey all traffic signs and regulations”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convulsing</td>
<td>“You were found at the construction site convulsing with a strange piece”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently</td>
<td>“Then why is it permanently stuck to your back?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misunderstanding</td>
<td>“It’s a misunderstanding – I’m just a regular, normal, ordinary guy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erected Obsessed Perfection</td>
<td>“President Business was confused by all the chaos so he erected walls between the worlds and became obsessed with order and perfection”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysterious</td>
<td>“And he stole a mysterious secret super weapon called the Kragle”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fugitive</td>
<td>“President Business, we’re trying to locate the fugitive, but his face is so generic it matches every other face in our database” --- “Diabolical”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabolical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approve</td>
<td>“Can you approve this sign for Taco Tuesday”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>“Engage dramatic entrance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relic</td>
<td>“Have I ever shown you my relic collection?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinite</td>
<td>“…and out into the infinite abyss of nothingness!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abyss</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behold</td>
<td>“Behold – the most powerful weapon of all the relics”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrecked</td>
<td>“Pa, you just moved and you wrecked it!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innocent</td>
<td>“I can’t do it. They’re innocent”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>“Are you the student I had who was so insecure she kept changing her name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embodiment</td>
<td>“The embodiment of good, foiler of evil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foiler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential</td>
<td>“We are entering your mind to prove you have the unlocked potential to be a MasterBuilder”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original</td>
<td>“I don’t think he’s ever had an original thought in his life”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fleeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Glimpse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prodigiously</td>
<td>“MasterBuilders spend years training themselves to clear their minds enough to have even a fleeting glimpse of The Man Upstairs and yet, your mind is already so prodigiously empty…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assemble</strong></td>
<td>“We haven’t a moment to lose. We must assemble to MasterBuilders”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanical</strong></td>
<td>“These mechanical birds will get our message out”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instincts</strong></td>
<td>“Step one: Trust your instincts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wondrous Mutton Poverty Leeches Illiteracy</strong></td>
<td>“A wondrous land full of knights, castles, mutton, torture weapons, poverty, leeches, illiteracy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negativity Consistency</strong></td>
<td>“No negativity of any kind…and there’s also no consistency”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Import</strong></td>
<td>“You have traveled far to be here for a moment of great import”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arisen</strong></td>
<td>“The Special has arisen”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eloquent</td>
<td>“The Special will now give an eloquent speech”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceive</td>
<td>“We used every plan we could conceive”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massacre</td>
<td>“The result was a massacre too terrible to speak of”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td>“I know what you’re thinking – He is the least qualified person in the world to lead us”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumscribing</td>
<td>“Did ye not hear me whole story circumscribing the folly of this whole enterprise?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folly Enterprise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precious</td>
<td>“Yeah, but according to your precious instructions…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malfunctioning</td>
<td>“This hyperdrive keeps malfunctioning”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perturbed</td>
<td>“Captain Solo, we must go. You know how perturbed I get if we are not punctual”</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plunder</td>
<td>“And we’ll plunder his collection of relics for disguises”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disguises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stall (verb)</td>
<td>“Left the weird cat thing to stall”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undermining</td>
<td>“You are undermining me!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disable</td>
<td>“Disable the shield!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination</td>
<td>“Termination failure”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>“All of you have the ability inside of you to be a groundbreaker”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundbreaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>“Luxury condo development”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated Interlocking</td>
<td>“Actually, it’s a highly sophisticated interlocking brick system”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resist</td>
<td>“You can’t expect me to be able to resist playing with all this”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspired</td>
<td>“What I see are people inspired by each other and by you”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>“And you are capable of amazing things”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursed</td>
<td>“Your Majesty, born with the powers or cursed?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuaded</td>
<td>“The heart is not so easily changed, but the heart can be persuaded.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enemy</td>
<td>“Fear will be your enemy.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Limit</td>
<td>“We’ll reduce the staff. We will limit her contact with people and keep her powers hidden from everyone, including Anna.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceal</td>
<td>“Conceal it, don’t feel it. Don’t let it show.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overdue</td>
<td>“I think some company is overdue, I’ve started talking to the pictures on the walls.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>“They say, ‘have courage,’ and I’m trying to.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Quote</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coronation</td>
<td>“The queen has come of age. It’s Coronation Day!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysterious</td>
<td>“Ah, Arendelle, our most mysterious trade partner. Open those gates so I may unlock your secrets and exploit your riches.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roamed</td>
<td>“For years I’ve roamed these empty halls.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elated</td>
<td>“Don’t know if I’m elated or gassy, but I’m somewhere in that zone.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetchingly</td>
<td>“Fetchingly draped against the wall, the picture of sophisticated grace.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draped</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agony</td>
<td>“It’s agony to wait.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awkward</td>
<td>“This is awkward. Not you’re awkward...”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sprightly</td>
<td>“Well, he was sprightly.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synchronization</td>
<td>“Our mental synchronization can have but one explanation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorcery</td>
<td>“Sorcery. I knew there was something dubious going on here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fjord</td>
<td>“The fjord.” (seeing it freeze)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursed</td>
<td>“The Queen has cursed this land!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flurries</td>
<td>“My power flurries through the air into the ground.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiraling</td>
<td>“My soul is spiraling in frozen fractals all around.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fractals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tropical</td>
<td>“She couldn’t have tropical magic, that covered the fjords in white sand and...fire!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crook</td>
<td>“Now back up... while I deal with this crook here.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>“I’m sorry about this violence. I will add a quart of lutefisk, so we have good feelings.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lutefisk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frostbite</td>
<td>“Don’t let the frostbite bite.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lacquer</td>
<td>“This is fresh lacquer. Seriously, were you raised in a barn?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thaw</td>
<td>“It’ll be fine. Elsa will thaw it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indebted</td>
<td>“Arendelle is indebted to you, your highness.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conspiring</td>
<td>“Has it dawned on you that your princess may be conspiring with a wicked sorceress to destroy us all?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorceress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treason</td>
<td>“I will not hesitate to protect Arendelle from treason.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>“Anna is in trouble. I need volunteers to go with me to find her.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounter</td>
<td>“Be prepared for anything, and should you encounter the queen, you are to put an end to this winter.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impaled</td>
<td>“Oh look at that. I’ve been impaled.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flawless</td>
<td>“Flawless.” (Kristoff admiring Elsa’s ice castle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>“I never knew what I was capable of.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awaits</td>
<td>“Please go back home. Your life awaits.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eternal</td>
<td>“You kind of set off an eternal winter everywhere.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anchor</td>
<td>“I’m digging a snow anchor.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hesitated</td>
<td>“You hesitated.” (After Anna asked if her white hair looked bad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate</td>
<td>“They can be a little inappropriate and loud...they’re also stubborn at times and a little overbearing.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overbearing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heir</td>
<td>“As heir, Elsa was preferable, of course. But no one was getting anywhere with her...you were so desperate for love, you were willing to marry me just like that.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desperate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doubt</td>
<td>“There can be no doubt now. Queen Elsa is a monster and we are all in grave danger.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valiant</td>
<td>“Riding across the fjords like a valiant, pungent reindeer king!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pungent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacrificed</td>
<td>“You sacrificed yourself for me?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoundrel</td>
<td>“I will return this scoundrel to his country.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>“I am a victim of fear. I have been traumatized.”</td>
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<td>Traumatized</td>
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<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rascal</td>
<td>“Where are you, you little rascal?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fate</td>
<td>“You know, some say that will-o’-the-wisps lead you to your fate.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Destiny</td>
<td>“Some say our destiny is tied to the land...as much a part of us as we are of it.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woven</td>
<td>“Others say fate is woven together like a cloth.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intertwines</td>
<td>“So that one’s destiny intertwines with many others.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legend</td>
<td>“The story of how my father lost his leg to the demon bear Mor’du became legend.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
<td>“I’m the princess, I’m the example. I’ve got duties, responsibilities, expectations.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project (verb)</strong></td>
<td>“Aye, Robin, Jolly Robin, and thou shalt know of mine.” — “Project!”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enunciate</strong></td>
<td>“Enunciate. You must be understood from anywhere in the room, or it’s all for naught.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Naught</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledgeable</strong></td>
<td>“A princess must be knowledgeable about her kingdom.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chortle</strong></td>
<td>“A princess does not chortle.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strives</strong></td>
<td>“And above all, a princess strives for... Well, perfection.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beckon</strong></td>
<td>“Misty mountains sing and beckon, lead me out into the light.” (song lyrics)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fierce</strong></td>
<td>“Where dark woods hide secrets and mountains are fierce and bold.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bold</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hide</strong></td>
<td>“His hide littered with the weapons of fallen warriors.”</td>
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<td><strong>Littered</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Warriors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shattered</td>
<td>“One swipe, his sword shattered.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roaming</td>
<td>“…and is roaming the wilds waiting his chance of revenge.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>“Princess or not, learning to fight is essential.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suitors</td>
<td>“The lords are presenting their sons as suitors for your betrothal.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betrothal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beloved</td>
<td>“…Ruled by a wise and fair king who was much beloved.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pillars</td>
<td>“...That they should be the pillars on which the peace of the land rested.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mutter</td>
<td>“Aye, you do. You mutter, lass, when something’s troubling you.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declarations</td>
<td>“Good day to you. We’ll expect your declarations of war in the morning.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reservations</td>
<td>“Even I had reservations when I faced betrothal, but we can’t just run away from who we are.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heir</td>
<td>“Your Majesty, I present my heir and scion, who defended our land from the northern invaders, and with his own sword, Stab Blooder, vanquished 1,000 foes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scion</td>
<td>“I present my eldest son, who scuttled the Viking longships and with his bare hands vanquished 2,000 foes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invaders</td>
<td>“I present my only son, who was besieged by 10,000 Romans and he took out a whole armada singlehandedly.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanquished Foes</td>
<td>“You’ve had your go at each other. Show a little decorum.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scuttled Viking</td>
<td>“In accordance with our laws, by the rights of our heritage, only the firstborn of each of the great leaders may be presented as champion.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Besieged Armada</td>
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<td>Besieged</td>
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<td>Armada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maiden</td>
<td>Feats</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“To win the fair maiden, they must prove their worth by feats of strength or arms in the games.”</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customary Challenge Determined</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“It is customary that the challenge be determined by the princess herself.”</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tossing Cabers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I bet he wishes he was tossing cabers.”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descendant</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Firstborn descendant of Clan Dun Broch.”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forbid</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Merida! I forbid it.”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whimsy Brighten Dank Chamber</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Perhaps a touch of whimsy to brighten any dank chamber?”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ridiculous Imbued</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“That’s ridiculous. Wood cannot be imbued with magical properties.”</td>
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<td>Word</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conjure</td>
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<td>Kerfuffle</td>
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<td>Avenging</td>
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<td>Novelties</td>
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<td>Enquire Portraits Vial Cauldron</td>
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<td>Mend</td>
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<td>Alliance</td>
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<td>Irregular</td>
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<td>Vocabulary</td>
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<td>Compromised</td>
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<td>Ironically</td>
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<td>Canapés</td>
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<td>Scrambling</td>
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<td>Technical Diagnostics</td>
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<td>Field Agent</td>
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<td>Infiltrator</td>
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<td>Equalizer</td>
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<td>Ruckus</td>
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<td>Dedication</td>
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<td>Jalopy</td>
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<td>Deploying Acknowledged</td>
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<td>Justice</td>
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<td>Force-Field</td>
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<td>Improv (Improvisation)</td>
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<td>Emperor Defeated Immune Bewitching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grateful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanquish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix H

**THE LEGO MOVIE (2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vitruvius</td>
<td>Wise old man; helps guide Emmet to save the Lego realms; dies, but ghost continues to advise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President/Lord Business</td>
<td>Villain; likes everything to be precise and perfect; wants to freeze the Lego characters and buildings in place with the Kragle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmet Brickowski</td>
<td>Hero; dynamic character – comical in that he is made fun of/doesn’t see things the way other characters do; creative; saves the day in the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Cop / Bad Cop</td>
<td>Two opposite personalities / character changes appearance depending on which persona he is displaying – funny through self-conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyldstyle</td>
<td>Strong female character; direct, isn’t afraid to share her thoughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batman</td>
<td>Secondary character – saves Wyldstyle, Vitruvius, and Emmet from Bad Cop when leaving The Old West; Wyldstyle’s boyfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Unikitty</td>
<td>Very positive/upbeat character; helps Emmet and the others to stop Lord Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superman, the Green Lantern, Wonder Woman</td>
<td>Secondary; comical – brief cameo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Beard</td>
<td>Tells brief story about previous attempt to infiltrate Lord Business’s office; not particularly memorable; ends up saving everyone from the ocean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benny</td>
<td>A MasterBuilder who helps the team get into Lord Business’s tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Man Upstairs</td>
<td>Live action version of Lord/President Business; child’s father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finn</td>
<td>Child (live action); shows his father (the man upstairs) how to be more creative/less strict about playing with legos; imaginative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**FROZEN (2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elsa</td>
<td>Born with magical powers (can freeze things/make snow); fearful; independent; lost &amp; confused; ultimately learns how to control her powers with love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Adventurous and outgoing; clumsy; caring; determined to keep her family together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristoff</td>
<td>Comical and helpful; very much a realist; often speaks for Sven, the Reindeer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olaf</td>
<td>Very comical snowman; optimistic &amp; adorably clueless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pabbie (and trolls)</td>
<td>Wisdom; mind vs. heart; saves Anna at the beginning of the film and tells her what she must do; gave Elsa advice, “fear will be your enemy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans</td>
<td>Deceptive and selfish; hurts other people to get power and what he wants; seems kind at the beginning of the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King &amp; Queen of Arendelle</td>
<td>Loving – care for their family; die early on in the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke of Weselton</td>
<td>Comical and curious/sneaky; very determined to learn things that are not his business; doesn’t seem to have the best intentions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## BRAVE (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merida</td>
<td>Lead character; dynamic; rebellious against her family traditions; caring; enjoys free time because she feels very restricted by the rules she is told to follow for being a princess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Elinor</td>
<td>Dynamic; calm &amp; poised/proper; cares about tradition; turns into a bear and must overcome challenges with her daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Fergus</td>
<td>Comical character; brave; seems to listen to his wife; people from other kingdoms listen to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris, Hubert, &amp; Hamish</td>
<td>Comic relief; very mischievous; they help Merida when bribed with sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witch</td>
<td>Gives Merida a spell to change her fate; this results in Merida’s mother turning into a bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mor’du</td>
<td>Represents greed and selfishness; once was a prince who was turned into an evil bear (much like Merida’s mother); he is mostly spoken of in legend, but appears toward the end of the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lords</td>
<td>Value tradition and masculinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lords’ Sons</td>
<td>Agree with Merida that it is time to change the longstanding traditions (winning over a bride through physical challenges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Name</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightning McQueen</td>
<td>Race champion; learns about trust and friendship; personality shifts throughout the film; known from the first Cars movie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow Mater</td>
<td>Primary character; speaks in very informal English; teased for appearing to lack intelligence; confused for being an agent; saves the day; very loyal friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finn McMissile &amp; Holley Shiftwell</td>
<td>British intelligence; work together with Mater; Finn is sarcastic and does not believe that Mater is “just a tow truck” – Holley helps Mater with disguises and calls herself his girlfriend at the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francesco Burnoulli</td>
<td>Italian racecar; McQueen’s biggest competition; very egotistical; flirt; initially led to believe he is the villain, but ultimately he is harmless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Carrera</td>
<td>Known from previous film; dating Lightning McQueen; static character – only seen at the beginning and end of the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles Axelrod</td>
<td>Created Allinol (alternative fuel); owns the world’s biggest oil reserve; very deceptive, and turns out to be the villain; this is a mystery until the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillmore</td>
<td>One of the Team McQueen members; tells McQueen that Allinol is safe, but never puts it into his tank; saves his life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemons (Prof. Z &amp; Pack)</td>
<td>Cars that never really work right; plot with Axelrod to destroy cars using Allinol so they will be rich when cars go back to using gasoline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TOY STORY 3 (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woody</td>
<td>In prior films; loyal, problem solver, leader, determined; cowboy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buzz Lightyear</td>
<td>In prior films; best friends with Woody; second in command, leader; used as a prop when reset to factory settings – speaks in Spanish for a bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>In prior films; very innovative and optimistic even when times are hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots-O’-Huggin’ Bear (Big Baby &amp; Chuckles)</td>
<td>At first he appears to be friendly and welcoming; ultimately represents unfair monarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy &amp; Molly Davis</td>
<td>In prior films; see them growing up and maturing; they change a lot as they grow; Andy reminisces about his childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbie &amp; Ken</td>
<td>These characters offer some very profound, democratic insights when things are rough (when Lots-O is trying to control everything)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie</td>
<td>New toy owner at the end of the film; she treats the toys nicely and plays with them as Andy once did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Potato Head</td>
<td>In prior films; Mrs. Potato Head’s eye gives insight into what’s going on in the house; comedic characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rex</td>
<td>In prior films; comedic character; sometimes afraid of change/the unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slinky Dog</td>
<td>In prior films; comedic; he is magnetic which turns out to be important to the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>In prior films; a hog; comedic role in the film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliens</td>
<td>In prior films; have an obsession with “the claw” and ultimately end up saving the toys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/frequently-asked-questions/.


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http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Test_Problems_Seven/.


Yoon, J., & Kim, M. (2011). The Effects of Captions on Deaf Students’ Content Comprehension,
VITA

Rebecca Gayle Liss was born December 4, 1990 in Houston, Texas. She completed her undergraduate work at the School of Education at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York. In 2013 she received her Bachelor of Science, summa cum laude, in Elementary and Special Education. Upon graduation she immediately began work on her Master of Arts at the S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communication at Syracuse University with the purpose of combining her interest in children’s learning and media.