



MOVIE DISCUSSION GUIDE



Wicked

The film adaptation of the hit musical, “Wicked” is a bold retelling of the story of Elphaba and Glinda from “The Wizard of Oz.” “Wicked” shows how their relationship developed and is a testament to friendship, self-worth and self-identity. It also casts a long shadow on those who we entrust to lead us and how that very trust can be used to control us. Elphaba, played by Cynthia Erivo, is the scorned daughter of Governor Thropp of Munchkinland who has untold powers in her grasp. By happenstance she enrolls in school with her sister and meets Glinda, played by Ariana Grande, and they forge an unlikely friendship. As their friendship deepens, Elphaba’s passion for fighting injustice grows, forcing both Glinda and Elphaba to make difficult choices in pursuit of their individual callings.

Programming Suggestions

This discussion guide is designed to facilitate educational programs after viewing the film “Wicked.” Its purpose is to generate discussion based on social issues found within the movie and for program participants to reflect on themes that might be pertinent to them. Therefore, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to questions in this guide.

The discussion facilitator may choose to utilize one of the following activities as a means of developing discussion:

- Invite a faculty member from your sociology department to come and discuss “The Wizard of Oz” and “Wicked” and the themes within each film.
- Create a bulletin board display focusing on bullying and ways it can be addressed. Include articles, statistics and other information regarding bullying and the impact it can have on people.
- Visit your Title IX office to learn more about how discrimination is addressed on your campus.
- Meet with representatives from your international or minority services or other related department to learn about the challenges these populations face on your campus.

Issues

FRIENDSHIP

FAMILY

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BULLYING

DISCRIMINATION

POWER

Pre-Screening Questions

1. What does bullying look like on your campus or within your age group?
2. What are the various forms of discrimination that people can face?
3. What does true friendship look like?

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss Elphaba and Glinda's relationship. How did it evolve over time?
2. How did the wizard and Madam Morrible use language to influence the citizens of Oz?
3. Discuss the idea of controlling the narrative and how that relates to politics today.
4. The Wizard of Oz says, "The best way to bring folks together is to give them a real good enemy." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
5. What are some common examples of this from history and present day?
6. Discuss the bullying that Elphaba endured as a child and at school. How does bullying impact its victims?
7. What are other examples of bullying in the film or that you might observe on your campus or in your community?
8. How was Elphaba discriminated against?
9. What is the difference between bullying and discrimination?
10. In what ways does discrimination impact its victims? Discuss.
11. Do you think Glinda was good? Why or why not?
12. Discuss Glinda's manipulation of people. Do you see this type of manipulation in real life?
13. What do you think motivated Glinda? Did this change over the course of the story? Discuss.
14. What changed that allowed Glinda and Elphaba to become friends?
15. Do you think Glinda was a good friend? Why or why not?
16. What are the traits of a good friend?
17. What motivated Elphaba?
18. Why do you think she did not get along with other students?
19. What are things that you are passionate about that separates you from your friends and family? Discuss.
20. What does social justice in action look like to you?
21. Discuss Elphaba and Nessarose's relationship. How did Elphaba try to protect and help her sister?
22. Elphaba believes that she is responsible for Nessarose's disability. Discuss how guilt impacts us.
23. Discuss Elphaba's father and his treatment of her. How did it shape her self-perception?
24. How do parents and guardians influence us as we grow up? Discuss.
25. Glinda asks "Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?" This is similar to the idea of nature vs nurture. Do you think people are born a certain way or does their environment shape them? Discuss.
26. Dr. Dillamond and the other animals spoke on how they were being marginalized. Discuss the marginalization and demonization of groups and why this occurs in society.
27. The new history teacher introduced the idea of the cage to the students and spoke about how animals enjoy the cage. How can abusive and inhumane ideas be rationalized to normalcy?
28. Elphaba and Glinda go to the Emerald City and meet the Wizard of Oz. Discuss the encounter and how they react to what he has to offer them.
29. What does each of their responses say about their character?
30. Why do you think the Wizard needs Elphaba and her powers?
31. What does the Wizard fear?
32. Discuss the idea of power and how it impacts decision-making.
33. When Elphaba spurns the Wizard, what changes in him and Madam Morrible?
34. Discuss Glinda's actions and how they oscillate between her friendship for Elphaba and her desire for what the Emerald City offers her.
35. How does the Wizard's actions empower and embolden Elphaba?
36. For those that have seen or know "The Wizard of Oz" and now have seen "Wicked," discuss the change in perception or how you view the two stories after viewing "Wicked."
37. How does knowing and understanding these two different versions of the same story allow us to see from multiple perspectives current or historical events?
38. How can we attempt to better understand different perspectives of conflicts or issues that seem to separate us as a society or a global community?