

FILM DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Theory of Everything

UK, Japan, US | 2014 | 118 mins | Dir: James Marsh | Cert. 12 | Engaging for ages 14-16

Curriculum links: Science, PSHE Education, Film Studies

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Based on the book written by his wife, this moving drama tells the story of renowned British scientist Stephen Hawking. Following his life from his days as a dazzling young Cambridge student to his present status as a global icon, the film takes in some of his startling early theories as well as his devastating diagnosis of motor neuron disease aged 21. Perhaps less familiar, the film also focuses in large part on Hawking's domestic life, in particular his long and at times challenging marriage to his wife Jane.



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Talk about it before the film

What do you know about
Stephen Hawking?

Why is he so celebrated?

Discussion points

1. Stephen and Jane's first conversation is a debate about science and religion. How does this theme play out over the course of the film in their relationship?
2. What visual techniques do the filmmakers use to explain complex scientific ideas to the audience in ways that ordinary people can engage with?
3. In what ways is the film Jane's story as much as Stephen's? What particular challenges does she face?
4. Watch Stephen's speech about human endeavour. Why do you think the filmmakers chose to insert this into the film?

The Theory of Everything



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Extension activities

Watch our [Young Reporter interview](#) with the film's director, James Marsh, and principal actors Eddie Redmayne and Felicity Jones.

Think about what questions you'd like to ask to the cast of the film, its director, and the two real subjects at the centre if you had the chance.

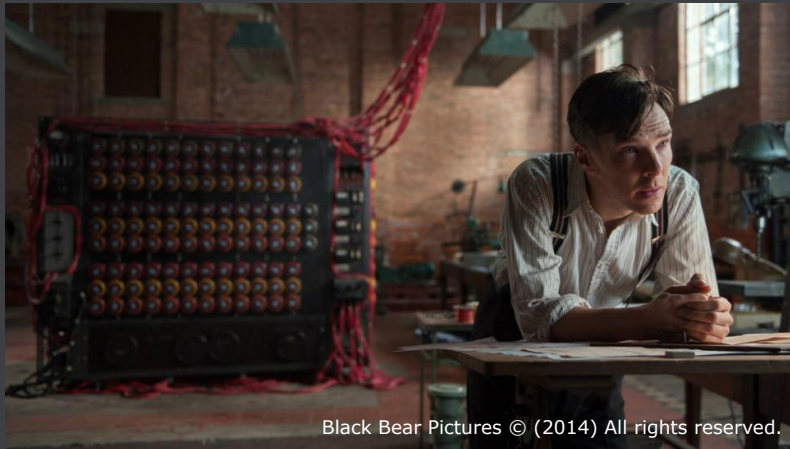
Come up with a list of five questions, one for each of James Marsh, Eddie Redmayne, Felicity Jones, Jane Hawking and Stephen Hawking.

Write about it

Bring your ideas together in a review and share it on our Into Film clubs' website. You could include a summary of the story, mention other films that it's similar to, describe what you particularly liked or disliked and give it your star rating.



Watch next



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The Imitation Game

2014 | Cert. 12 | Engaging for ages 11+

The story of pioneering mathematician and World War Two codebreaker Alan Turing, who was persecuted for being gay.



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A Beautiful Mind

2001 | Cert. 12 | Engaging for ages 11-16

The true story of mathematical genius John Nash who must battle to overcome his schizophrenia throughout his career.