Discussion Guide: Hoosiers

A classic tale of redemption, this film features a volatile coach and a former star player-turned-alcoholic leading a small-town basketball team on an improbable run to the Indiana high school championship game. Coach Norman Dale encounters several hurdles in his path: a feisty teacher determined to keep the best player from going out for the team, a town chock full of second-guessing fathers, and a group of athletes trying to find their path.

Take advantage of the teachable moments presented in Hoosiers by using these questions to help guide a discussion with your team or children.

1.) As a coach who’s made a controversial decision do you stick with your plan or give in to the crowd and players frustration?

2.) Should the coach have focused more on scouting and the other team, or did he do the right thing by only focusing on his own players?

3.) Why does coach Dale not let the players change the play at the beginning, but in the finals lets the players change the play during the time out?

4.) Describe coach Dale’s strategies to gaining his players’ trust at the beginning? How does he overcome the initial backlash from certain players?

5.) Discuss Coach Dales relationship with Shooter. How does he help Shooter get back on his feet and how might this also help Shooters son?

6.) Was Coach Dale building a relationship with Shooter a move to benefit Shooters son or really to have an assistant coach?

7.) How does Coach Dale grow as a coach from the beginning to the end. Does he become more motivational and less tempered?

8.) What may have changed Jimmy’s mind and made him reconsider joining the team? What did he like about Coach Dale that made him say “I join, he stays”?

9.) Which coaching relationship is more important for the team’s success, his relationship with Jimmy (the star) or with Ollie (the last bench player)?