

Inside Out (Disney/Pixar) Study Guide



INSIDE OUT has won an Oscar in 2016 for the best animated film.

In **Inside Out** most of the film takes place inside the head of an 11-year-old girl called Riley. It demonstrates that our emotions guide how we think, feel and act.

Inside Out is rated PG: parent guidance only. Therefore many schools, especially primary schools, cannot show the film without parental permission. To overcome this problem the following Study Guide for **Inside Out** uses two of the official low key movie's trailers on youtube to teach some of the film's important messages about the role of emotions in our happiness and wellbeing.

If you think it's necessary, you may like to send out a letter to your parents including these 2 youtube links. Request that parents let you know if they have any objections to these movie clips being shown in class. Remember to mention that the messages about our emotions in the movie are underpinned by good research and leaders in this research field, Paul Ekman and Dacher Keltner, have been the advisors on the movie. The Inside Out trailers are:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQ3hjymiCCg> (1 minute)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seMwpP0yeu4> (2.29 minutes).

1. What are the five emotions characterised in **Inside Out**? (*Inside out emotions are Joy, Fear, Disgust, Sadness and Anger*). What are some other emotions that people often feel? How do you the animators make each character look like the emotion? (*colour, facial expressions, posture, tone of voice, shape (sadness=teardrop, anger=square brick, joy=starlike, fear=big eyes, very thin, disgust=cool dress, curvy shape)*)? How do people show each other how they are feeling?
2. When we first meet Riley, most of the time Joy is in charge of the control panel (console) that guides all of Riley's emotions. Joy's biggest goal is to make sure that Riley is always happy. Is Joy realistic? Can people be happy all the time? Is it healthy to always be positive about everything? What might be the dangerous side of always being positive?
3. Riley experiences a range of mixed emotions when she starts a new school. Do you think this is normal? What are some of those emotions? Can you remember how you felt when you started school or started high school? In what ways might it be harder to start school at a different time of the year to everyone else? Why is it useful to identify the different emotions you are experiencing? (*Identifying your emotions, how you are feeling helps you to be in charge of your emotions. Identifying your emotions also helps you to better understand a particular situation that then helps you to make better choices about how to behave. For example Fear let's you know that something is wrong and Anger alerts you to being treated unfairly. – this identification potentially makes you feel happier*).

If time allows (6.48 minutes) you may like to also show this clip too:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvMxhza4myY> This clip is not a trailer



1. In the movie the glowing balls of different colours are core memories. Our core memories are influenced by the emotions that we experienced at the time; joyful memories are represented by gold balls, sad memories by blue balls etc. When Sadness touches one of Riley's happy golden core memories, she colours it blue. What do you think is happening here? Is it possible that our current mood can affect ('colour') our past 'happy' memories?
2. At one point Joy draws a circle around sadness in chalk and instructs Sadness to stay in the circle. What is Joy trying to do here? (*Joy is trying to 'contain' Sadness so Riley won't ever feel sad. Suppressing unpleasant emotions can lead to anxiety and depression*). Is it healthy to experience a range of different emotions? What does Joy finally realise? (*In the movie Joy finally realises that the other emotions, especially Sadness, are an important and natural part of Riley's life. Life has its ups and downs and it's important to acknowledge these unpleasant feelings rather than suppress them*).
3. In the movie there are different islands of core memories (like Family Island and Friendship Island) that are made up of Riley's largely positive emotions that have built up over time. These islands represent her mental fitness (ie psychological wellbeing). The more positive emotions she experiences over time, the more her islands represent all those happy memories that together make up the islands.
Activity: Share one of your core memories of a happy time. How does the sharing of that memory make you feel? (*sharing helps you savour the memory*)
4. In the movie when Riley is feeling angry and sad because she has moved from Minnesota to San Francisco, her islands of core happy memories start to crumble and fall down. How do you think she could rebuild them? *Helping Riley to recall the happy times can contribute to restoring the islands, however she can also experience new memories that will help to restore her island. Also helping Riley to find new ways to experience positive emotions in her new situation will help her to develop new islands of core memories.* **Activity:** What is one thing you like doing that helps you to feel positive and happy?

Notes: A recent study found that people who experience "emodiversity," or a rich array of both positive *and* negative emotions, are happier and healthier (Newman, 2014). (*Riley decides not to run away and is reunited with her family, giving her a deeper sense of happiness and contentment in the comfort she gets from her parents, even though it's mixed with sadness and fear*).

greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/variety_is_the_spice_of_emotional_li