

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

The Learning Curve have put together a list of fantastic family films based on children's books. From page to the big screen, these are must see films for family movie night. So sit back, relax and pull up the popcorn and enjoy these children's classics.

Peter Pan (2003)

Director: P. J. Hogan

Starring: Jeremy Sumpter, Jason Isaacs & Olivia Williams



The Darling family children, Wendy and Michael, are visited by Peter Pan, a boy who can fly. He and his mischievous fairy Tinkerbell take them to a fantasy world called Never Never Land, where an ongoing battle with the evil Pirate, Captain Hook takes place!

P. J. Hogan is the Director that stays closest to J.M. Barrie's source material, as with other versions they often have a twist in the tale. For example, what if Peter did grow up? Or they tell the story of how Peter got to Never Never Land.

However, in this version they stay on point with the story and themes. Telling the actual story from the book and without adding a twist in the tale, makes for a refreshing take.

Visually the movie is stunning, and Neverland is a blend of the creepy and magical. The music also brings the story to life. This story will be retold endlessly as Peter Pan will never grow old.



We're Going on a Bear Hunt (2016)



Directors: Joanna Harrison & Robin Shaw

Starring: Elsie Cavalier, Olivia Colman & Pam Ferris

Stan, Katie, Rosie, Max, the baby and Rufus the dog decide to go on an adventure in search of a bear. Michael Rosen's 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' is a short timeless tale, so it goes without saying that the movie is short as it is only 30 minutes long.

It is a little adventure about a family and their dog looking for a bear. On their travels they come across a few obstacles such as, long grass, rivers and forests. Although, they can't go over it and they can't go under it, they've got to go through it!

The animation style is 2D, making it look like the pages of the book has come to life. The voice acting is great and natural, as children voice the characters. George Ezra wrote and performed a song for the short film called, 'Me & You'. It's a nice song to end on that is easy and warm. This is a fun, short story, full of charm and heart. It is worth hunting out.

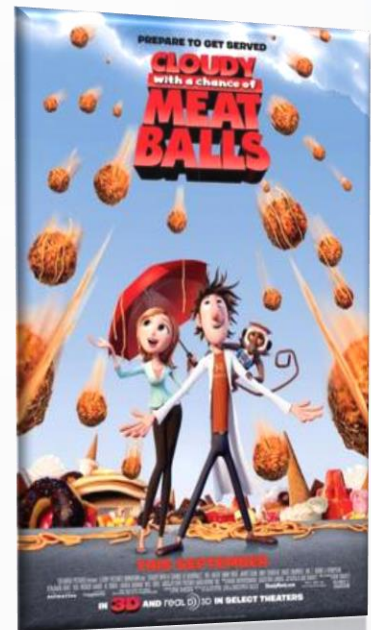
Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs (2009)

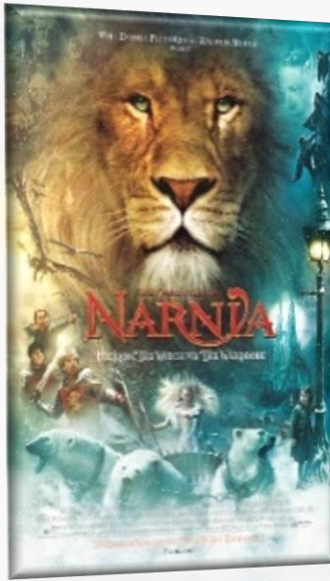
Directors: Phil Lord & Christopher Miller

Starring: Bill Hader, Anna Faris & Bruce Campbell.

An ambitious, foolish, genius inventor accidentally invents a new machine that converts water into food which falls from the sky this causes his island to start raining food. It's not long until things start to take a turn for the worst.

It is very fast, very colourful, very manic and very exciting! It's for all ages, as it is full of comedy, heart and charm. Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs is an all you can eat buffet, there is something here for everyone.





The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe (2005)

Director: Andrew Adamson

Starring: Tilda Swinton, Georgie Henley & William Moseley

J.R. R. Tolkien (Lord of the Rings) and C.S. Lewis were good friends and allegedly would proofread and make notes for each other on a regular basis. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe was published in 1950 and Lord of The Rings was published in 1954.

As for the movies the Lord of The Rings trilogy started in 2001, and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe came out shortly after. The movie was unfairly judged compared to Lord of the Rings, although the movie has its own identity. It is a great fantasy adventure that moves at a good pace. It is a timeless classic set in a magical world, which is only a wardrobe away.

Matilda (1996)

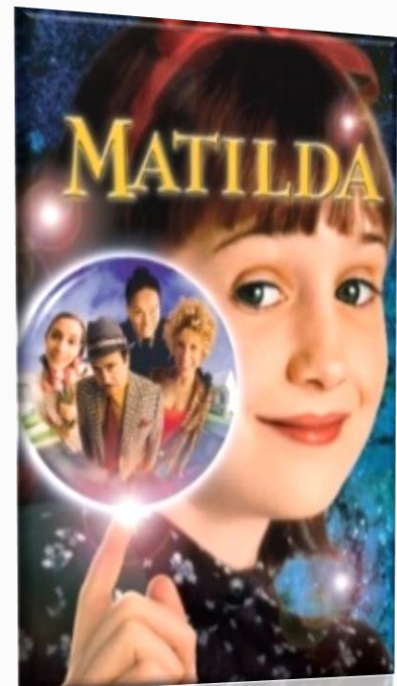
Director: Danny DeVito

Starring: Mara Wilson, Rhea Perlman & Danny DeVito.

Matilda is eager to learn, and her insensitive parents send her to a school run by Miss Trunchbull. She is a cruel authoritarian that loathes children. Matilda befriends her schoolteacher, Miss Honey, and she soon realizes Matilda's talents, but is later amazed to see the full extent of her powers.

A fun family comedy, with great music and charisma. The humour can be dark at times, as it is written by Roald Dahl and directed by Danny DeVito, but in the end the movie has a lot of heart and slapstick.

Grab a big piece of chocolate cake and give this a watch.



Fantastic Mr Fox (2009)



Director: Wes Anderson

Starring: George Clooney, Meryl Streep & Jason Schwartzman.

Mr. Fox has a wild side of hen heckling, turkey taking, and cider sipping and his nocturnal instinctive adventures. He must put that behind him and settle down with his wife and child. He moves into a tree opposite three dangerous farms. He struggles to provide for his family, so he decides the best way to feed them is to go back to his wild instincts.

Wes Anderson has a visual style and a unique approach to storytelling. Framing things like they are on a stage and he narrates it as if it is from a book, including chapters, which constantly remind you that you are watching a movie and yet that is what draws you in. The stop motion animation is amazing with a profusion of detail, the humour is sharp and the dialogue is witty. In short, it's some kind of fantastic.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005)

Director: Tim Burton

Starring: Johnny Depp, Freddie Highmore & Helena Bonham Carter.

Five children win a tour to the amazing Willy Wonka Chocolate factory and step into a world filled with wonder and lessons!

This is a remake of the original movie and a second adaption to the book. This movie is directed by Tim Burton, so we get the great gothic visuals. Although this movie stays closer to the book, they have added a back story to Willy Wonka, therefore, losing some of its mystery.

There is much to be enjoyed in this remake, from the music to the visuals but it's really a mixed bag of sweets, some you like and some you don't.



Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory (1971)

Director: Mel Stuart

Starring: Gene Wilder, Peter Ostrum & Jack Albertson.



The world-famous genius chocolate maker, Willy Wonka has hidden five golden tickets in ordinary Wonka chocolate bars. This is the opportunity for five lucky people to gain access to the mystery factory and have a tour around its many amazing rooms. For young Charlie Bucket it becomes a dream come true.

Firstly, Gene Wilder is the actor who plays Willy Wonka, he is a spontaneous genius with great energy and charm. The character of Wonka remains a mystery and is exciting, a little like a Father Christmas character. Every time he is on screen you can't take your eyes off him; especially in the famous boat scene. The movie was directed by Mel Stuart who was mostly known for directing documentaries. His vision of the chocolate factory is every child's dream and he does well with the task of bringing the story to life.

It is true that Roald Dahl was not a fan of this adaptation, as certain things were changed from the book to screen, but the movie was enjoyed by children and parents alike and many sought out the book. The movie is like a Wonka bar itself, sweet, unusual and leaves you wanting more.

The Railway Children

York Theatre have also done an audio recording of The Railway Children available to listen to here:

<https://www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk/be-part-of-it/collective-acts/the-railway-children-audiobook>

