



October Sky Possible Discussion Questions

- Homer's friends, the "rocket boys," were at first skeptical of Homer's interest in rockets. However, they quickly came to encourage his dream. Do we tend to encourage or discourage the dreams of our friends and peers? Why?
- In the 1950s, Homer's dream was considered far-fetched. Space exploration was only a thing of

comic books and a few movies. Do you know anyone who has a "far fetched" dream today? Maybe it is you! What is your dream, your vision for your future?

- At the end of the movie, Homer and the rocket boys launch one final rocket in honor of the mentors in their lives. If you were firing a rocket in honor of the mentors in your life, who would those mentors be? Why? How could you be a mentor to your siblings or your friends?
- Why did Homer's father want him to work in the mine? Was his father being a good parent in wanting Homer to follow in his footsteps?
- Everyone in Homer's family wanted to get out of Coalwood except his father. (Remember the mural the mother was painting throughout the film.) How did each member of the family deal with this desire?
- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of Homer's father as a parent.
- Would you call Homer's actions in building rockets a "rebellion?"
- Describe the relationship between Homer and his father and how that relationship changed over time.
- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of Homer's mother as a parent and as a wife.
- Why was Homer's mother so determined that her sons should leave Coalwood?
- What is the conflict in this film? Who are the contending characters? How is the conflict resolved?

- What was the theme of this film? What were the film makers trying to tell us? Were they successful? Justify your answer.
- Did you learn anything from this movie? What was it?
- Was there something you didn't understand about the movie? What was it?
- What did you like best about the movie? Why?
- What did you like least about the movie? Why?
- Select an action performed by one of the characters in the film and explain why the character took that action. What motivated him or her? What did this motivation have to do with the theme of the film?
- Who was your favorite character in the movie? Why?
- Who was your least favorite character in the movie? Why?
- Did all of the events portrayed in the film ring true? Describe the scenes that you found especially accurate. Which sequences didn't seem to match reality? Why?
- Imagine that Homer has been asked to speak at his graduation. He has decided to talk about the three adults who have had the most influence on his life thus far. Write Homer's speech for him on a separate piece of paper. Be sure to explain how the qualities possessed by each of these adults differ and what each did to influence him.
- Make a list of individuals from the sciences whom you most admire, and have a discussion on the qualities these individuals possess. Then think about one person who has influenced you in an important way. Explain how he or she helped you to make a significant change in your life.
- Imagine that, like Homer, you could correspond with any scientist living today. Who would that person be? What questions would you ask him or her?
- How do you feel about the Shenzhen rocket program? Do you think Chinese astronauts should land on the moon? Do you think China should build an orbiting space station? Why or why not?

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