

PSYC 3590 Grief and Bereavement
Paper: Movie Analysis and Application of Concepts from Reading*



Select a movie or video that depicts loss and grief **within a specific cultural context**. (Below is a list of suggested movies, although you may know of others.) Read the following questions before you watch the movie and be prepared to write your answers. Make sure that your answers are thorough and reflect the concepts and material covered in the reading.

1. Identify the types of losses (symbolic and tangible) the characters have experienced. Be sure to define and describe the difference between the symbolic and tangible losses, using the definitions in the textbook.
2. Discuss your observations of the behavior of the main characters who have experienced loss. How do these behaviors fit or not fit with the age group the characters are in? Be sure to refer to specific information from the material in Chapter 4, 5 & 6 (Loss and Grief Across the Lifespan: Childhood & Adolescence, Young & Middle Adulthood, Older Adults) to explain your answers.
3. What aspects of the characters' experiences and behaviors were similar to the views and practices of your own cultural or religious group? What aspects were different? (Be sure to refer to specific information from Chapter 8 Cultural and Spiritual Influences to explain your answers.)
4. Did the main character(s) show evidence of normal grief reactions or complicated grief reactions? Explain how the presence or absence of risk factors may have contributed to their grief reactions. Be sure to use the information from the Chapter 7 Normal and Complicated grief reactions to inform your answers.

Your paper should be a minimum of three (3) pages and no more than 4 pages (12 point font). It is due through the D2L Assignments portal by the due date posted on the D2L Calendar. Late papers will not be accepted.

Suggested movies:

- Soul Food (African American)
- My Girl (Christian Caucasian)
- Ordinary People (White Anglo Saxon Protestant)
- Smoke Signals (Native American)
- Steel Magnolias (Christian, Southern)
- To Live! (Chinese)
- The Kids are Alright (LGBT)

Note: The movies on this list have been chosen for their themes of loss. However, some of the material may elicit unanticipated emotional reactions or may be objectionable to some viewers. You may want to read reviews before making a selection and remember to exercise discretion and self-care in making choices and completing this exercise.

*Adapted from Walsh, K. (2012) *Instructor's Manual to Accompany Grief and Loss: Theories and skills for the helping professions*. Pearson.

Other Movies with Themes of Loss and Grief

A Woman under the Influence
Antwone Fisher
Beaches
Corrinna, Corrinna
Crazy Heart
DAD
Death at a Funeral
Fearless
Fried Green Tomatoes
Garden State
Ghost
Imaginary Heroes
In America
Life as a House
Lorenzo's Oil
My Girl
My Life
Never Let Me Go
Philadelphia
Ponette
One True Thing
Rabbit Hole
Reign Over Me
Simon Birch
Stand By Me
Spitfire Grill
Terms of Endearment
The Descendants
The Hurt Locker
The Other Woman (Natalie Portman)
Things We Lost in the Fire
This is Where I Leave You
Up
Wristcutters: A Love Story

Grading Rubric

Section	Excellent (23-25 points)	Good (15-22 points)	Poor (0-14 points)	Points
Symbolic and tangible losses (25 points)	Detailed description differentiating symbolic versus tangible losses for several main characters.	Description lacked some detail in correctly explaining symbolic versus tangible losses and/or only described losses for one main character.	Did not correctly identify symbolic versus tangible losses for several main characters.	
Developmental reactions to loss (25 points)	Used specific information from the reading to explain several characters' reactions to the loss and how these were typical or not for their age.	Did not cite adequate information from the reading and/or described one only one character's reactions.	Did not show evidence of application of information from the reading.	
Cultural and spiritual analysis (25 points)	Used information from the reading and showed insight into the cultural and spiritual influences and how they were similar and different from your own.	Provided a limited description of how the characters' culture and spiritual background influenced the loss; used limited information from the reading; did not provide an adequate comparison to your own cultural background.	No real discussion, thought, or information from the reading was applied to the characters' reactions.	
Normal versus complicated grief and risk factors. (25 points)	Gave a clear explanation and rationale for normal versus complicated grief; provided an insightful discussion of the risk factors, using information from the reading.	Provided a limited rationale for normal versus complicated grief and risk factors and/or used limited information from the reading.	Examples were not specific and lacked evidence of using information from the reading.	
TOTAL				