

## Media Study Guide

# WALL-E

The heart  
warming animation  
story with a powerful  
message

Guide created by  
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- **Title:** WALL-E
- **Company:** Disney/  
Pixar
- **Rating:** PG
- **Length:** 103 minutes



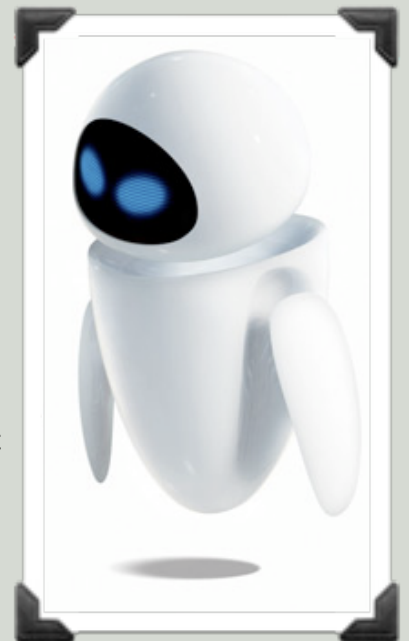
### CURRICULUM

**This study guide to accompany the Disney film Wall-E. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Health and and Media. It will touch on issues of citizenship, media, and symbolism.**

### INTRODUCTION

The Walt Disney Pixar Film WALL-E hit theatres on June 27, 2008. The film was written and directed by the acclaimed team Jim Morris and Andrew Stanton (Toy Story, Monsters INC, Finding Nemo). Wall-E grossed 63.1 million during its opening weekend. The film also won the 2008 Golden Globe Award for Best Animated Feature as well as being nominated for 5 Academy Awards. New York's David Edelstein calls it "one for the ages, a masterpiece to be savoured before or after the end of the world ... a sublime work of art." Receiving great reviews and awards was not as important as the message that the creative directors managed to integrate into the heart warming adventure of a lonely Robot.

The story takes place in a distant but no so unrealistic future where the human race has left earth due to over-consumerism polluting the planet. Their plan was to leave behind robots, WALL-E, to clean up the mess before their return. Over the years, WALL-E has developed a personality and discovers he is in dire need of companionship. His routine life turns upside down when EVE, a robot sent by the Axiom, shows up looking for proof that life is once again sustainable on earth. With the discovery of a single plant their adventure takes them up to space to join the evacuated humans who have been stuck on the space cruise for the last 700 years. The socialization of the human race has deteriorated leaving themselves obliviously at the mercy of technology.



## BEFORE VIEWING THE FILM

THE FOLLOWING **PREVIEW** HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR  
**ALL AUDIENCES**  
BY THE MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

www.filmratings.com

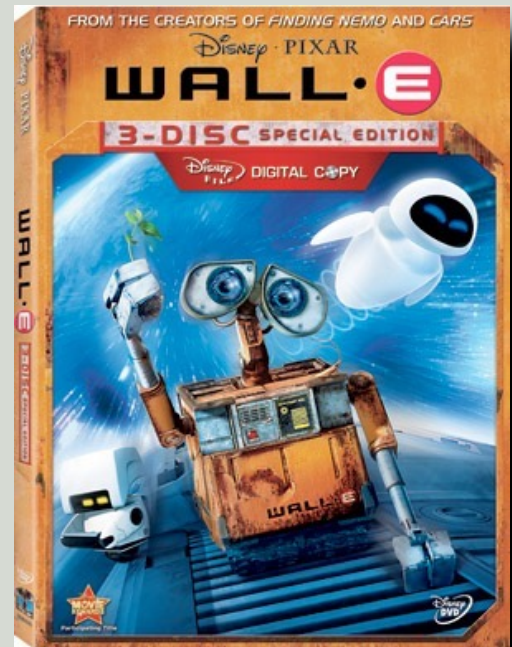
www.mpa.org

## THE TRAILER:

- After watching the trailer, who do you think the video is meant for? Does the animation make you automatically assume it is for children and therefore is there any purpose to older people watching besides for amusement?
- Messages often hidden in animation films, name a couple others. Explain the hidden messages.

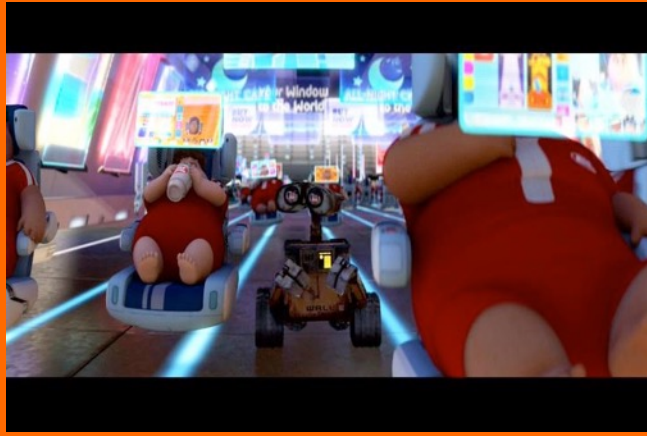
## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How do you picture the world in 2800? What is technology like? what are the people like?
- Issue of environment and pollution are important topics in the news and schools right now. What are they trying to do to combat pollution and preserve the planet? Why do you think it is important? How do you think it affects or will affect your lives?
- What role does technology play in your life? What are some of the benefits? Are there any disadvantages?
- What would be the perfect invention, how would it make your life better?
- What constitutes living a healthy life?
- What is the purpose of exercising and physical education in schools?
- What sorts of activities do you enjoy doing? Does technology increase, decrease or not play any role in the amount of activity you do? Do you do it on your own or with friends? Family?



*"One for the ages, a masterpiece to be savoured before or after the end of the world ... a sublime work of art"*

- David Edelstein



"an enthralling animated film, a visual wonderment, and a decent science-fiction story"

- Roger Ebert

## AFTER VIEWING THE FILM

After viewing the film, we discover many messages intertwined into the entertainment it provides; touching on issues that affect all generations. Within this sweet story, the creators use music, special effects, and symbolism to create a powerful message that creates everyone who sees it to evaluate their life and how they are treating their planet, bodies and civilization and what role technology exactly plays in their society, is it aiding it or removing it.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which age group do you think the film is made for?
- Why do you think the creators chose to animate this film?
- Did you enjoy the film? Would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- Would you have seen this film on your own just based on the trailer or the DVD cover?
- What are some things you enjoyed about it? What are some things you would change?
  - What are the major themes or issues in the film?
  - How does the film present our future?
  - How would you categorize or classify this film?
- What does Wall-E's truck, filled with all of his treasures, represent? Why does he collect these things?
- What does Wall-E long for and how does that relate to his function?

*"We'll see who's powerless now!"*



## THEMES & ISSUES:

There are some major issues that are addressed throughout the film. After the students have discussed which ones they recognized go into further discussion on these three main topics: *Pollution/Environment, Health & Technology.*

### Pollution/ Environment:

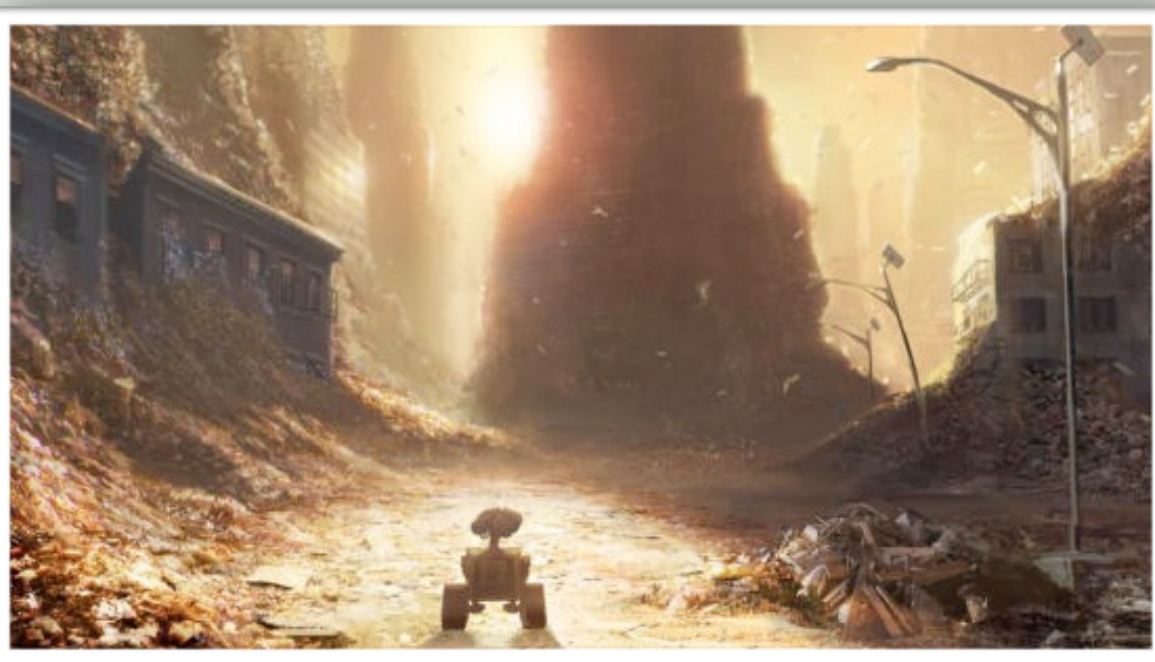
The copious amounts of damage done to the earth is blamed on the mass production and consumption brought about by very advanced technology.

Show the clip of the opening scene. During the clip have students to think about the following questions:



Wall-E on Earth

- Compare the music and the tone of the opening scene to the moment you start to realize they aren't buildings but piles of garbage and the destruction. What message is the director sending through the transition between the music and view of the opening scene to the garbage scene?
- Look for recycling bins and garbage cans throughout the scene, are there any? What is the film blaming the pollution on?
- What is this film saying about consumerism?
- What is the answer to the problem of pollution in the movie?
- In the movie, the Buy n' Large CEO says, "Rather than try and fix this problem, it'll just be easier for everyone to remain in space." What message is this sending? Is this the same attitude we have today about our planet's survival?



## Health & Wellness

Health & wellness can encompass 5 components: spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual. Define the 5 components and with one example for each and how they contribute to us having a well rounded healthy life.

The director explained that when portraying the humans he wanted them to resemble large babies completely reliant on technology for all aspects of life. Show the students clips from when WALL-E first arrives on the Axiom, with the people in hover crafts, watching TV, drinking food in the form of slushy's and of the man falling off his chair and having to wait for someone to put him back on.

Complete the following chart, deciding whether the humans aboard the Axiom practice the 5 components of wellness that lead to a healthy life:

Health Aspect	Example on the Axiom	Example from your own life
Social		
Physical		
Emotional		
Intellectual		
Spiritual		

Watch the clip of the different captains on the ship over the years:

- Looking at the pictures of the all the different captains, what is it showing us?
- What does the lack of a healthy diet and no activity lead to? What kind of life is it?

Answer the following questions after viewing the clip of WALL-E turning off Mary's TV:

- What is the significance of WALL-E turns of the Mary's TV? What does Mary notice once her TV is off?
- What does the Captain mean when he says "I don't want to survive, I want to live"?
- Are we on the road to becoming these people? What is going on today that could lead to a similar life that is portrayed in Wall-E? How are some ways in which we could prevent this?
- How important are the 5 components of wellness now that you see what life would be like without them?



*"I didn't know we had a pool!"*



## Technology

Technology played a part in both the health and pollution issues. Along with those two issues it was generally playing a part in hindering the development of society, at least for the humans. Technology has often been described as the “complicated villain” in the movie getting people to re-evaluate its role in their life.

### Discussion Questions:

- What role do the robots play in society? Who was running the show?
- What constitutes a human - what are their responsibilities and daily routines? Who were the “humans” in the movie?
- Give some examples on how the robots have almost created a society paralleling what use to be human society.
- Was the way WALL-E was living along on earth any different from the way the people were living on the spaceship?
- Does technology make life easier?
- Re-mediation is defined as “creating something, but in the process losing the original idea” what is an example of this in the movie?
- On earth how is the technology portrayed? The TV and radio, the old robot down on earth?

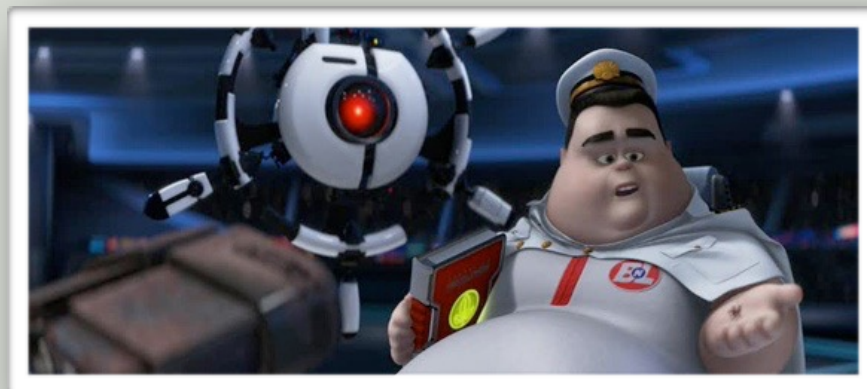
*“Foreign Contaminant”*



### Complete the chart

Show the clips of WALL-E going to work, having his lunch box, wanting to hold hands, the robot police force, M O the cleaner robot, the robot “psych ward”, humans being told it’s bed time, and then get the students to fill out the chart:

Robots chores/ responsibilities	Human’s chores/ responsibilities



**Symbols:**

Throughout the film there are objects and obscure names all with deeper meanings. Complete the chart.

Symbol	What it means/represents	Clip from movie that supports your idea
The Plant		
Cockroach		
WALL-E		
The Axiom		
AUTO		
Buy-N-Large		

*“Too much garbage in your face?  
There's plenty of space out in space! BnL StarLiners  
leaving each day. We'll clean up the mess while you're  
away.”*



**Music:**

This film has very little dialogue. Emotions and messages are revealed through music throughout the film. After addressing the lack of dialogue, discuss the following questions:

- What might be the deeper meaning behind the lack of conversation and dialogue throughout the movie?
- How does Wall-E use his music?

Play the theme song for WALL-E “Hello Dolly”, read the lyrics and discuss Why was this an appropriate song to be the theme song?



## LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

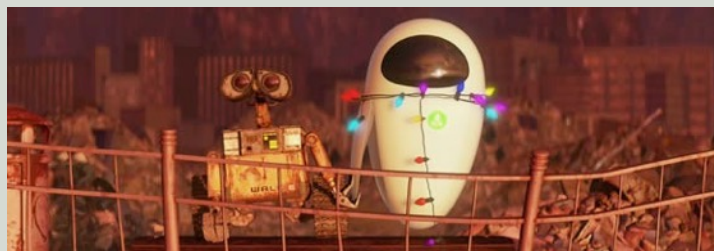
- 1) According to this film, in the future we'll be too fat and lethargic to even chew our food. Everyone has his or her meals "in a cup." Drive through a few fast food places and purchase meals (burger, fries, shake or sub sandwich), put these in a blender and discuss what's inside and if anyone will eat it. Create a comic strip on paper, or using an online or computer based program (i.e., comic life, [toonlet.com](http://toonlet.com), [pixton.com](http://pixton.com)) explaining "the food of the future".
- 2) Research a company that is producing hazardous materials for the environment or an unhealthy food product. Once research is complete, write a letter explaining the issues with the product and what are the long term repercussions of this product.
- 3) Create a Public Service Announcement about saving the environment OR about staying healthy and fit. Try to use tips from Wall-E and use no words, only sounds and music.
- 4) Make a video promoting a health day/ environment day fundraiser. Create a proposal to give to the administration about the purpose of the day and how it would benefit the student body. Create a video promoting the day to show students and advertise the fundraiser.

## TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- The film touches on important topics that will affect our future, whether exaggerated or not they are important to review, what other issues might we be concerned about for the future as the future leaders of the country?
- Watch or read other future films, and compare to Wall-E. What are some key differences or similarities? Which story is the most accurate portrayal of our future?

## FURTHER READING & VIEWING:

- An Inconvenient Truth (2006)
- The Fifth Element (1997)
- The Road (2009)
- Addicted to Plastic (2008)
- Taking Root (2008)
- Humans (2016)
- The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins ISBN: 0439023483
- Brave New World by Aldous Huxley ISBN: 0-06-080983-3
- Cradle to Cradle by McDonough ISBN-13: 978-0865475878



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Retrieved from: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/>,

Movie Segments for Warm-ups and Follow-ups (2010).  
Retrieved from: <http://warmupsfollowups.blogspot.com/2010/05/fifth-element-wall-e-road-future-trends.html>.

