

Into the Woods parent guide

(warning, spoilers!)

This guide will help you to determine if the show is right for your child. We recommend that children be at least 10-12 years old to see the show. The show rating is PG-13.

Into the Woods is a beautiful, clever, frequently funny, sometimes somber, and ultimately uplifting take on classic Brothers Grimm fairy tales. Its presentation of characters like Cinderella, Prince Charming, and more as very flawed people may be confusing or upsetting for younger kids; there's lots to think about here, but it's pretty emotionally complicated stuff. A lascivious wolf preys on a young girl, children lose and are separated from their parents, sympathetic characters die, handsome princes aren't all they appear to be, and there's no promise of happy ending for anyone. But teamwork is valued, family is found in unexpected places, and characters tackle moral dilemmas in ways that will resonate with viewers. Act 1 follows the well-known storylines and ends with a "happily ever after." Act 2 is more contemplative and darker, delving into the consequences of our choices and other more grown-up themes.

Language:

-There is no swearing in the show.

-The Witch sings how a character raided her garden of vegetables. In describing this she says "he was robbing me, raping me". This is not a literal meaning of this word, but rather that he took something that belonged to her and she felt the violence of that.

-The anatomical term breast is used: "She drew my head to her giant breast",

- Lots of name-calling - liar, Mr. Liar, peasant, dim-witted, fool, mad, etc.

Substances:

Cinderella's Father carries a flask and is often intoxicated.

Sexual Situations:

-A married woman encounters a married prince in the woods and he begins to woo her, asks to kiss her, embraces her, and kisses her hand before they go off "in the woods" together. When they return they are adjusting their clothing. She sings that it is nice to have a husband for always and "a prince for whenever."

-A husband and wife kiss briefly/lightly.

-A wolf speaks of a young girl in double entendres (he sings that her "...flesh is pink and plump" and "delectable") as he tries to veer her off of her path in order to get to Granny's house ahead of her.

-After marrying a prince, Cinderella leaves him because he is unfaithful; he says, "I was raised to be charming, not sincere."

-The witch has put a curse on the Baker and his Wife so that they are unable to have children. They grab their lower abdomens when she "zaps" them.

Violence:

-The film centers on dark fairy tale villains and opposing heroes: we see a haggardly Witch, a mean and frivolous Stepmother, a creepy Wolf, and a Giant out for revenge. all of which menace humans; loud crashes occur several times. MANY people die. People scream.

-A Wolf stalks Little Red. Once she arrives at Granny's house the Wolf eats her. Afterwards the Baker cuts the Wolf open and Little Red and Granny exit the Wolf's stomach. This is done in comical way, and is not particularly gory.

-A Giant causes destruction by stepping on houses. We never see the Giant, and the destruction is more talked about rather than witnessed. She kill several people offstage, but we hear grotesque squish sounds as they die, as well as screams. We hear loud booms as a giantess stomps through woods.

- The Giant demands Jack be turned over to her so that she can kill him as revenge for Jack killing her husband.

- Characters describe how they will kill the Giant and then we hear Little Red say that there is a club sticking out of her head after being hit.

-Birds peck out the eyes of three different characters.

-A man is blinded by thorns.

-A character is locked in a tower for her entire childhood. She is later dragged on stage and has her hair forcibly cut.

-Stepmother cuts off part of her daughters' feet in order to make the golden slipper fit them.

-As a woman confronts the Giant she starts to raise her ire, and the Steward kills her via a hit to the head with his staff in order to keep her from provoking the Giant.

-Cinderella is slapped by her Stepsister.

-Jack's Mother pulls him offstage by his ear after berating him.

-A child threatens several people with a knife.

-People yell at one another.

Other:

-Bullying, including by a Stepparent

-Neglectful father.

-Loud yelling, noises and sound effects.