

hidden figures movie watching notes guide answer key

Hidden Figures movie watching notes guide answer key serves as an essential resource for anyone looking to gain a deeper understanding of the film "Hidden Figures," which showcases the remarkable contributions of three African American women at NASA during the Space Race. This guide provides insights into the film's themes, characters, historical context, and more, making it a valuable tool for students, educators, and film enthusiasts alike. Whether you're preparing for a discussion, writing a paper, or simply want to enhance your viewing experience, this guide will help you navigate through the film's significant aspects.

Overview of "Hidden Figures"

"Hidden Figures," directed by Theodore Melfi and released in 2016, is based on the true story of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson. These women played pivotal roles at NASA, overcoming racial and gender barriers to contribute to the success of the United States' early space missions. The film not only highlights their individual achievements but also sheds light on the systemic challenges they faced during the 1960s.

Key Characters

Understanding the main characters is crucial for appreciating the narrative:

1. Katherine Johnson (played by Taraji P. Henson)
 - A brilliant mathematician who calculated flight trajectories for NASA.
 - Faced challenges in a segregated workplace but proved her worth through her skills.
2. Dorothy Vaughan (played by Octavia Spencer)
 - An expert in computer programming and the first African American supervisor at NASA.
 - Advocated for her team and learned Fortran to adapt to the changing technology.
3. Mary Jackson (played by Janelle Monáe)
 - An aspiring engineer who fought for the right to pursue her education.
 - Challenged the legal system to achieve her dream of becoming an engineer.

Themes Explored in the Film

"Hidden Figures" delves into several profound themes that resonate with audiences, making it more than just a biographical film.

1. Racial and Gender Inequality

The film poignantly illustrates the discrimination faced by African American women in the workplace. Key moments include:

- Segregation at NASA: The characters often encounter separate facilities and services, highlighting the pervasive racism of the time.
- Gender Bias: Despite their qualifications, the women must navigate a male-dominated environment where their contributions are frequently overlooked.

2. The Power of Education

Education is portrayed as a vital tool for empowerment:

- Katherine's self-taught skills enable her to excel in a predominantly white institution.
- Dorothy's pursuit of knowledge in computer programming showcases the importance of adapting to technological advancements.

3. Resilience and Determination

The determination of the main characters is a central element of the narrative:

- Each woman's journey reflects a steadfast commitment to their goals despite the obstacles they face.
- Their collaboration and support for one another emphasize the strength found in community.

Historical Context

To fully appreciate "Hidden Figures," it's important to understand the historical backdrop of the film.

1. The Space Race

The film is set against the backdrop of the Cold War and the Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union. Significant events include:

- The launch of Sputnik in 1957 marked the start of the competitive push for space exploration.
- NASA's establishment in 1958 aimed to advance the U.S. space program.

2. The Civil Rights Movement

The 1960s were a pivotal time for the Civil Rights Movement, which sought to end racial segregation and discrimination. Key aspects include:

- The fight for voting rights, desegregation of schools, and equal employment opportunities.
- Prominent figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X played crucial roles during this era.

Watching Notes: Key Scenes and Discussion Points

As you watch "Hidden Figures," take note of the following significant scenes and discussion points that encapsulate the film's core messages.

1. Katherine's First Day at NASA

Consider the impact of Katherine's entrance into a predominantly white, male environment. Reflect on:

- How the reaction of her coworkers sets the tone for her experiences at NASA.
- The initial challenges she faces in gaining respect for her capabilities.

2. The Bathroom Scene

One of the pivotal moments in the film occurs when Katherine is denied access to the "whites-only" bathroom. Discuss:

- The symbolism of this scene in relation to racial segregation.
- How this moment impacts Katherine's determination to succeed.

3. Dorothy's Promotion

Dorothy's fight for recognition and her eventual promotion as a supervisor is another critical moment. Analyze:

- The significance of this achievement in the context of workplace equality.
- How Dorothy's leadership influences her team and breaks barriers.

Conclusion: The Legacy of "Hidden Figures"

"Hidden Figures" is not just a film about three extraordinary women; it is a powerful reminder of the resilience and ingenuity of those who have been historically marginalized. As you reflect on the film using this watching notes guide answer key, consider the ongoing relevance of its themes in today's society. The challenges faced by Katherine, Dorothy, and Mary resonate in contemporary discussions about race, gender equality, and representation in STEM fields.

By engaging with the film on this deeper level, viewers can appreciate not only the remarkable achievements of these women but also the larger societal changes they helped inspire. "Hidden Figures" serves as both an educational tool and a source of inspiration, encouraging us all to acknowledge the contributions of those who have historically been hidden from view.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in 'Hidden Figures'?

The main themes include racial segregation, gender equality, and the importance of perseverance and intelligence in overcoming societal barriers.

Who are the three main characters in 'Hidden Figures'?

The three main characters are Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, who are African American women mathematicians working at NASA.

What historical event is central to the plot of 'Hidden Figures'?

The plot centers around the space race, particularly the launch of John Glenn's Friendship 7 mission.

How does 'Hidden Figures' address the issue of workplace discrimination?

The film highlights the struggles the main characters face due to their race and gender, illustrating the systemic barriers in their work environment at NASA.

What role did Katherine Johnson play in John Glenn's mission?

Katherine Johnson was responsible for calculating the trajectory for John Glenn's orbital flight, ensuring the mission's success.

How does the film depict the importance of teamwork and collaboration?

The film showcases how different departments and individuals at NASA had to work together, emphasizing that collaboration was key to overcoming challenges.

What impact did 'Hidden Figures' have on public awareness of women's contributions to STEM fields?

The film raised awareness about the underrepresented contributions of women, particularly women of color, in STEM, inspiring new generations to pursue careers in these fields.

What are some notable achievements of Dorothy Vaughan in 'Hidden Figures'?

Dorothy Vaughan became a leader in her department, learned programming in FORTRAN, and was instrumental in transitioning her team to computer programming.

How does the film portray the personal lives of the main characters?

The film provides insight into their personal struggles, including family dynamics, relationships, and the balance between work and home life during a turbulent time in American history.

What message does 'Hidden Figures' convey about perseverance?

The film conveys that perseverance in the face of adversity can lead to significant achievements and that individual determination can challenge societal norms.

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