



Cinema/Chicago and the Chicago International Film Festival
Education Outreach Program Screening: *Chasing Fireflies*
Director: Roberto Flores Prieto
100 minutes, not rated
In Spanish with English subtitles

Please use the below synopsis, study ideas/questions and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students are required to respond to the screening with a one-page essay. Essays (either all or select) must be sent to Cinema/Chicago.

Synopsis: Manrique's lonely existence watching over an abandoned salt mine in the remote Colombian Caribbean suits him just fine. Content in his isolation, with a dog that spends its nights chasing fireflies as his sole companion, his world is upended when his teenage daughter Valeria shows up as if out of nowhere. As the days pass, Valeria's determined but cheerful presence forces Manrique out of his routine in this beautiful, understated story about family, love and the small joys of life.

Recommended for: humanities, social studies, film and video students

Appropriate for: all high school students

Study Ideas/Questions:

1. Manrique lives in solitude. What do you think "solitude" means? How much social interaction and solitude do you think we need as humans? How much solitude is too much, and why?
2. Manrique seems reluctant to check in with his superior on the radio and doesn't look Valeria in the eyes when she arrives. Do you think Manrique was always like this, or do you think his years of being alone have made him more introverted?
3. Valeria is nearly always wearing the color yellow. Why do you think the director and costume designer put her in yellow? What do you think the color says about her character?
4. Why does Valeria come looking for her father?
5. Why does Valeria tell Manrique that her mother is dead?

6. After Manrique injures himself, he becomes dependent on Valeria to help him with the daily chores and work. Do you think that if he had not injured himself, he would have ever needed and asked for her help?

7. When Valeria blows out the candle on her birthday, what you imagine she wished for?

8. In front of the fire, both Manrique and Valeria admit to disliking certain aspects of each other's cooking. Their confessions bring them closer to each other. Is honesty always the best policy? Do you think we should always speak our minds to those we love, or are there instances where it is better to keep our mouths closed?

9. The title of film, *Cazando Luciernagas* translates to *Chasing Fireflies* in English. Why do you think this is the film's title, and what might fireflies symbolize?

10. At the end of the film, after Valeria leaves, things seem to return to "normal" for Manrique. Do you think Manrique has changed? How has he changed or not changed?

Useful Links and Resources:

Film website (includes trailer): <http://www.cazandoluciernagas.co/>

Information about Cinema/Chicago's Education Outreach Program:
<http://cinemachicago.org/education/>

*Schools who do not send in essay requirement will not be allowed to attend future Education Outreach Screenings.