

Name _____ Hour _____ Date _____

The Butterfly Circus - Discussion Questions

Directions: Choose one of the following discussion items and write your answer completely and thoroughly on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to use examples from the movie and your own life experiences to support your answer.

1. How do you think Will felt when he was part of the sideshow in the first circus? Why did he spit on Mr. Mendez? How did Will change after he joined the *Butterfly Circus*?
2. In what ways did Will begin to positively affect the lives of others? How did Will discover his strengths and the courage to use them? Can we change that which is negative in our lives? If so, how?
3. How do you think the two circus masters viewed life - what's important, what does it mean to be successful? How did that affect how they treated people? Have you ever known anyone like the ringmaster or Mr. Mendez?
4. The movie takes place in the 1930s. Would people treat Will any differently today? Describe. What does Will believe about himself at the beginning of the film? At the end? Have you experienced something that changed how you view yourself, for better or for worse? What was it?
5. What does the ringmaster of *The Butterfly Circus* represent to you? What do you notice about the leadership style of Mr. Mendez? What is his greatest strength?
6. For each of the following quotes by Mr. Mendez, explain the meaning and share your reaction to it:
 - a. "There is nothing inspiring about a man's imperfections on display."
 - b. "If you could only see the beauty that can come from ashes."
 - c. "The greater the struggle, the more glorious the triumph."
7. Mr. Mendez says, "I think you'll manage" to Will when he is obviously floundering. Why? Has anyone ever let you struggle to figure something out yourself? How did you feel once you had done it?
8. Are there any comparisons you can make between *The Butterfly Circus* and your school? Are there people in your school who struggle to find their place or purpose? Is there anything from this movie that can help you be a better student leader?