

Name: _____

Date: _____

HTF

Blizzard Bag #1

Directions: Please list your top 10 movies and why you like them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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Blizzard Bag #2

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What movie would you like to see and alternate ending?

2. How would you end the movie?

3. Do you think people will like it?

Name: _____

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Blizzard Bag #3

Directions: Read the following film critic review and answer the following questions.

Based on the story of Frederic Niland, who was pulled out of frontline duty after his mother had received three MIA telegrams on the same day regarding his brothers, this is based on that mission - to find and rescue Private Ryan in the midst of the French landings.

Bookended by the most shocking, searing battle sequences in film history, Saving Private Ryan is as powerful, devastating, memorable and moving as movies get. Steven Spielberg's riveting infantryman's-eye-view of World War II will change the way war movies are perceived. Hymns to brazen heroism and gung ho guts'n'glory will be impossible, impertinent even, in its wake. Going far beyond simplistic War Is Hell platitudes, never before has the fear and flux of fighting been so vividly realised on celluloid. Eschewing the niceties of character introduction, we are thrown headfirst into the US D-day assault on Omaha beach through the eyes of Captain John Miller (Hanks). With consummate skill - frenetic editing deftly mixes film stocks, desaturated colour and handheld, often speeded-up, footage - Spielberg piles image upon image to evoke the gut-wrenching, rapid fire tumult of conflict: GI's vomit over the side of the landing craft; bullets rip quietly into bodies flailing underwater; a soldier searches for his severed forearm. Yet, for all the bravura cinematic virtuosity, this is by no means an exhilarating spectacle - subsumed by the sickening minutiae of combat, the overriding effect is exhausting, numbing visual viscera that leaves you shaken to your very core. Out of the turmoil, however, a simple premise emerges; Miller and his outfit - including wisecracking cynic Reiben (Burns), Godfearing sharpshooter Jackson (Barry Pepper), rookie translator Upham (an excellent Jeremy Davies) and reliable sarge (Sizemore, just edging the supporting honours) - are seconded to undertake a piece of military PR, to locate and bring home Private James Ryan (Damon), whose three brothers have been killed in action. As the sortie progresses, Spielberg and writer Robert Rodat throw up vignettes from the theatre of war - an argument over whether to save a French child, a bungled attack on a German bunker, squad dissension over executing a POW - lacing the journey with mordant humour and moments of snatched intimacy. Indeed, as lives are inevitably lost, the growing doubt over Miller's leadership and the whole mission is superbly etched. Without any overt moralising or chinstroking, the film raises pertinent questions about the warfare - not least, when is one life more valuable than any other? Perfectly conveying devotion to duty versus war weariness, Hanks excels as a bottled-up yet crumbling leader, unable to control events that supersede him. As his own personal details eke out, his attempts to preserve his humanity amid the carnage ("With every man I kill, the farther away from home I feel...") are extremely heartrending.

En route, there are minor quibbles - the middle section could be pruned, a closing coda distills the complexity all too neatly - but such nit-picking pales in the face of the ambition and achievement on offer. Indeed, just as the blitzkrieg on the senses appears to have petered out, Spielberg unleashes a near hour-long battle as the rescue outfit teams up with Ryan's own to hold a bridge against four German tanks; the manipulation of suspense - offscreen Panzers approach with the malevolent rumble of marauding dinos - the lucidity of the furious imagery and a heart stopping finale is evidence of a filmmaker approaching the top of his game. A modern masterpiece. Uncompromising, powerful war movie that does not pull any punches. Perfectly balances the inhumanity of war and the humanity of its protagonists. Devastating and essential viewing.

William Thomas (Empire)

1. What movie is this based on?
2. What are some words that the critic uses to describe the movie?
3. Is this movie based on a true person?
4. What is the critics overall review of the movie?
5. What does he call the finale?