

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN²

DISCUSSION GUIDE

PLOT

Tom Baker is the proud patriarch of the Baker family in this sequel to the original *Cheaper By the Dozen*. This time, all twelve Baker kids and their parents, Tom and Kate, are going on vacation, returning to their summer cabin in Wisconsin for one last hurrah before the kids grow up and go their separate ways. Lorraine is on her way to New York to begin an internship with *Vogue*, Nora is hugely pregnant, and the Bakers want to spend some quality time all together for a change.

As the family arrives at their old vacation house, however, they realize that some things have changed--and some things never do. Tom's old high school rival, Jimmy Murtaugh is now the big man about town, owning much of the surrounding area, and raising his large family in a huge home across the lake from the Bakers'. The longstanding competition between the two families--or at least that of the fathers--mounts over the course of their vacation, as the two men resort to ever nastier tactics of one-upsmanship.

Meanwhile, Charlie Baker becomes closer with Anne Murtaugh, and Sarah embarks on her first romance with Eliot Murtaugh. It all comes to a head when the two families face off in a canoeing race, during which they are faced with a decision between loyalty to family and friends, and competition.

Time	Chapter	Discussion Questions
3:46	13 <i>Tom Tags Along</i>	Early attractions - Elliott and Sarah are 8th graders that like each other. Is this too young to date?
5:12	14 <i>Parental Pressures</i>	Parental Pressure - Why do some parents try to pressure their children? Would things have been different if the parents knew their children's goals and desires?
3:30	15 <i>Screw-Ups</i>	Be Yourself - When you like someone, never be anything but what you are. Have you ever dated someone who turned out to be different from the image they initially portrayed?
4:33	18 <i>Two in the Balcony</i>	Parenting - Both Sarah's and Elliott's Dad go to the theatre to oversee their date. Do you think they are guilty of over-parenting?
1:13	25 <i>What We Really Want</i>	Hopes and Dreams - The son shares his dreams for his future. How did his Dad respond?
2:21	26 <i>Welcome to the Family</i>	Parenting - "you taught us you can't be a perfect parent but there are a million ways to be a good one, And you're as good as they get. How was Tom a good parent?
1:30	27 <i>The Bond is Forever</i>	Parenting - Letting go is the hardest thing to do as a parent. You have to settle with the past, engage in the present and believe in the future. What does this statement mean?

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