



Beauty and the Beast Discussion Guide

Do certain cultures encourage self-indulgence more than others? What are the real-life consequences for selfishness?

- ♥ *The prince is obsessed with beauty and doesn't know how to care for anyone but himself.*
- ♥ *The enchantress punishes him for his coldhearted selfishness.*

Why are some people focused more on outward appearances than deeper internal qualities?

- ♥ *Gaston is also obsessed with beauty; his own, and that of Belle, who he thinks is his match based only on physical attraction.*
- ♥ *Gaston has a sense of entitlement because of his masculinity, and believes he deserves the "best," which to him means "most beautiful."*

What are some examples of sexism you can find in the movie?

- ♥ *Gaston won't take no for an answer when proposing. This could be a contributor to rape culture since he thinks, as a man, he can control her and she shouldn't have any say in what happens.*
- ♥ *He speaks threateningly when he says she will end up as a spinster if she doesn't marry him.*
- ♥ *Belle apologizes for turning him down even though he's the one being rude.*
- ♥ *She doesn't feel like she can express her anger and indignation until he's gone. She clearly doesn't feel comfortable with him.*

What qualifies as abusive behavior, be it physical or emotional? Can a person who is cruel really change their nature?

- ♥ *The Beast's initial behavior towards Belle are aggressive and threatening. He demands that she come to dinner, and then denies her food unless she dines with him.*

What could possibly bring two very different individuals together and break down barriers after a rocky initial meeting?

- ♥ Belle runs away after Beast yells at her.
- ♥ Beast comes to rescue her from the wolves, starting to show a more selfless side.
- ♥ Belle brings him home and tends to his wounds. They start to appreciate the other more after saving each other.

Is it necessary to have things in common to fall in love?

- ♥ Beast and Belle find a common ground in reading. Beast makes a kind gesture by giving Belle the library.
- ♥ As they read together and spend time together, Beast shows a softer side and they enjoy each other's company.
- ♥ They find more common ground as they learn they both feel like outcasts and both their mothers died when they were young.

Is love all about putting the other's needs before your own?

- ♥ The Beast lets Belle go. Giving her freedom shows that he actually loves her because he would rather feel the immense pain of her leaving than know she's unhappy.
- ♥ He has learned what it's like to love and be selfless

What is the point of being married to somebody if they don't love you or even like you? Can forced marriage be beneficial for either partner?

- ♥ Gaston is just the opposite. He uses threats and force to attempt to make Belle marry him through fear. This is classic abusive and manipulative behavior.

What can influence a person to truly change?

- ♥ Beast doesn't attempt to fight back when attacked until Belle comes back and he has a reason to live.
- ♥ The Beast shows mercy. Gaston chooses violence.
- ♥ While both men initially act like beasts and repulse Belle, Beast changes for the better and feels real love, while Gaston only gets worse and becomes more aggressive in his selfish obsession.

Could Belle and the Beast ever truly have a healthy relationship if she was still his prisoner?

- ♥ As they dance in the final scene, both partners look happy. They are both secure and free. This is what a healthy relationship should be.

For more resources to help teens and young adults learn healthy relationship skills, visit

DibbleInstitute.org.

