



The Legend of Pale Male

FILM DISCUSSION GUIDE

Quick Film Overview

I. 0:00 – 10:00 – Introduction to story, Pale Male and other leading characters

Emphasis on ecology/ecosystems/web of life, urban wildlife habitat, impact of urban wildlife on humans, how beauty and drama of nature inspires art, love, loyalty, etc.

II. 10:00 – 12:20 – Force of Nature

12:20 - 13:44 – Romance with First Love

13:44 – 17:30 - Nesting / Adaptations

17:30 –18:30 - Survival against threats

18:30 – 22:30 - Fellowship of the bench

22:30 - 29:30 - The Great Event / reaction of children

III. 29:30 – 32:30 - The Hubble and Sharing your Passion with Others

32:30 – 33:30 - The Mates of Pale Male – survival in the city

33:30 – 43:40 - The Vigil and Fledging

43:41 – 46:30 - 9/11's aftermath

46:31 – 50:00 - The Crossroads

50:00 – 57:00 - The Nest Removal and the Protests / Audubon Society

IV. 57:00 – 1:08:30 - Social Justice / Protesting

- 1:08:30 – 1:10:20 - Rebuilding the nest
- 1:10:20 – 1:11:10 Mating
- 1:11:10 – 1:16:00 - Back at the Bench
- 1:16:00 – 1:19:40 - Pale Male’s offspring

V. 1:19:40 – END - Hope to the Heart of New York

What Pale Male and his story mean to us in the end

Film Discussion Questions (with lesson locator tips at the end of each section)

I. Introduction To Story, and Pale Male

Discussion Questions

- Charles Kennedy talks about how Pale Male will need to fit into an ecosystem. What is an ecosystem? What does Charles mean by Pale Male “making a magical accommodation to humans”?
- What is accommodation? What is adaptation?
- What elements of an ecosystem does Charles describe?

See [Adventures in writing - Lesson Starters A, B, C, D; Lesson Plan 1 My Outdoor Journal](#)

See [Science/Math- Lesson Starters A, B](#)

See [Arts- Visual Arts Lesson Starters D, E, F](#)

See “Silent Killers” in resources

II. Force Of Nature And “The Hubble”

Discussion Questions

Romance with First Love 12:20 - 13:44

- What are the physical differences between male and female hawks?
- List some courtship practices of red-tailed hawks.
- Extension question: Compare the courtship practices of red-tailed hawks with other birds of prey. List similarities and differences of both.

Nesting / Adaptations 13:44 – 17:30

- How long does the incubation process take for hawks?
- How does Pale Male contribute to the nesting phase?
- Extension question: When does the nesting process normally begin and what are the typical characteristics of hawk nests?

Survival against threats 17:30 –18:30

- What other animals typically threaten red-tailed hawks?
- In what ways does Pale Male protect his nest?
- Can you think of any other threats or dangers to Pale Male’s nest?

Fellowship of the bench 18:30 – 22:30

- Select two people that waited at the bench. Describe them and tell why they were so intrigued with Pale Male.
- What happened to the relationships of the people who met on the bench as they waited?
- Why do you think the filmmaker said, “...maybe it was Pale Male’s plan all along”?

The Great Event / reaction of children 22:30 - 29:30

- List the characteristics of the new baby hawks. Describe what they looked like.
- Why do you think children in NYC were so interested in the new babies? How would you describe their reactions? How would you have reacted?
- Do you see similarities between the reactions of the adults and the children?
- How did The Great Event attract more observers?

The Hubble 29:15-32:15

- Why is Lincoln Karim's telescope called "the Hubble"? (What is the original Hubble?)
- What types of optics (telescopes and binoculars and cameras) do you notice in the film? Why are they important?

See Adventures in writing [Lesson Plan 2 Journaling And Passions](#)

See [Science/Math- Lesson Plan 1 Classification Of Living Things](#); [Math/Science- Lesson Plan 2 The Many Wonders of Optics](#)

See Pale Male NYC Diorama

See All About Red-tailed Hawks

See Raptors

III. Survival, The Vigil, And Fledging

Discussion Questions

The Mates of Pale Male – survival in the city 32:30 – 33:30

- Why is the city such a difficult place for hawks to survive?
- List some of the dangers red-tails would encounter in the city.
- How old is Pale Male now and why is his survival unusual?
- What is contributing to his survival?

The Vigil and Fledging 33:30 – 43:40

- Describe the fledging. What is it and why is it considered a ritual? Or a rite?
- Why was the fledging such an important event that the filmmaker needed to capture for his project?
- What is a vigil and how did the people of NYC keep vigil at the nest?
- When are other times vigils are held?

9/11's Aftermath 43:41 – 46:30

- How was Pale Male a comfort to the people of New York City after 9/11?
- How was Pale Male directly affected by the events of 9/11? Can you think of any other unintended consequences for the animals in NYC?
- What other human events and behaviors have directly affected animals in our country or locally, especially in recent history? (e.g., fires, golf courses, roads, development generally, agricultural practices, dams, poisoning of many prey species...)

The Crossroads 46:31 – 50:00

- What decision did the filmmaker make about his personal journey with Pale Male after the six-year project?
- What happened to some of the characters in the film during this time and how did these events affect the filmmaker and his decision to leave NYC?
- Why was the filmmaker drawn back to NYC after he decided to return home to Belgium?

See [Science/Math Lesson Starter A, B, C, D](#)

See "Silent Killers" in related resources

IV. Social Justice And Protest

Discussion Questions

About the Dispute

- Whose position was correct: the Co-Op Board of 927 Fifth Ave. or Pale Male advocates? Can you distinguish between the rights of the protestors and the buildings' residents?
- Pale Male's advocates organized a peaceful/non-violent protest. What other peaceful/non-violent protests have been organized in history? What were the goals of these protests? What were the outcomes? What obstacles did the protestors overcome?
- What influence did media have in the protest? Was the media neutral? What other areas have media influenced throughout American/world history?

The Nest Removal and the Protests / Audubon Society 50:00 – 57:00

- What reasons did the building give for wanting the nest removed?
- List four ways the protestors let their voices be heard.
- How were the various forms of media used by the protestors to help their cause?
- Do you think today's social media culture would have made a difference? How?
- What role did Mary Tyler Moore play in this event? Who was she in American television history?
- What is the Audubon Society and what role does this organization play in Pale Male's story?
- What other avenues could the protestors have taken to have their voices heard?

Rebuilding the Nest 1:08:30 – 1:10:20

- Pale Male and Lola were resilient and began building their new nest just 15 minutes after the nest was prepped for their return. In what areas have you been resilient in your own life to rebound from challenges? Have you witnessed other people/animals defy misfortunes?
- Compare and contrast Pale Male's urban nest to a traditional red-tailed hawk rural nest setting. What are the advantages/disadvantages/challenges that New York City posed for Pale Male?

Mating 1:10:20 – 1:11:10

- What hindrances, biological and/or environmental, could have prevented Pale Male and Lola from successfully reproducing?
- How would you go about advocating help for Pale Male and Lola? What local groups/agencies might help you?

Back At The Bench 1:10:20 – 1:11:10

- What traits and/or actions did Pale Male exhibit regarding his efforts to have offspring?
- What do you think about Pale Male's fans reaction to what's happening?

Pale Male's Offspring 1:16:00 – 1:19:40

- Pale male's offspring assimilated to life in New York City. Locally, what other animals have assimilated to life in urban settings? How has urban sprawl affected animals' adaptation skills?
- In many ways humans have had to adapt to change. What are some adaptations you can think of and why was adaptation necessary?

See Sciences / Math Lesson Starters C, D
See Social Studies Lesson Starters A-F, The power of diversity Lesson Plan
See All about Red tailed hawks
See Raptors

IV. Hope To The Heart Of New York

Discussion Questions

What Pale Male means to New Yorkers 1:19:40 – END

- Is Pale Male just a bird?
- What does Pale Male represent to his followers? If Pale Male were a symbol representing something, what would this something be? Why?
- Why or how does Pale Male bring, “Hope to the heart of New York”?
- Discuss: What is the purpose of the film *The Legend of Pale Male*? Why do you think the filmmaker made it?
- Postscript: What was your reaction at the very end when you learned Pale Male eventually found a new mate and continued to produce young?

See Social Studies – Exploring Role Models and Hope Lesson Plan 3
See Pale Male NYC Diaporama