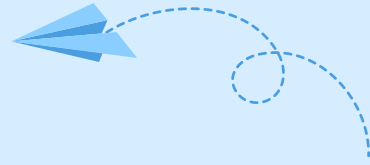




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Review of the movie *I am Sam*

Student's Name

Institution Affiliation



1. Date viewed / Title / Writer/ Main Actors / Year released (2 points)

The movie titled *"I am Sam"* was released on January 25, 2002, and I watched it on March 2, 2016. The movie was directed by Jessie Nelson and has major characters such as Sean Penn starring as Sam Dawson, Dakota Fanning starring as Sam's daughter, Lucy Diamond, and Dianne Wiest starring as Annie, Sam's neighbor. Other characters include Michelle Pfeiffer as Rita Harrison, Sam's lawyer. Kristine Johnson and Jessie Nelson created the screenplay for the movie.

2. Describe four (4) specific scenes from the movie that portray how limitations in cognition (e.g. comprehension, attention, memory, problem-solving, skill transfer, etc.) were portrayed by the character with intellectual disabilities.

One of the four specific scenes from the movie that portray how Sam, the main character, has limitations in cognition is shown in reading. Sam has problems with comprehension and reading as seen in the manner, in which he cannot read the word "different". Sam prefers to read to Lucy, his seven-year-old daughter the book entitled *"Green Eggs and Ham written by Dr. Seuss."* When Lucy begins to read high-grade books, such as *"Stellaluna"*, she realizes that her intellectual capacity is higher than that of her father who cannot read the new word "different". Since she does not want to show that she is intellectually smarter than Sam, she balks from reading that particular word. She then consoles herself by saying that her father is not like others, because he does what other fathers cannot do, namely loves her. Every Wednesday, Sam takes Lucy to the International House of Pancakes and the park.



The second scene that portrays Sam's intellectual disability is when Sam takes Lucy to the Big Boy with the aim of experiencing some change. Apparently, Sam is used to some type of French pancakes. He even causes a commotion, when he cannot find the exact kind of a pancake in this new environment.

The third scene that portrays Sam's intellectual disabilities in the movie is the fact that he keeps a group of friends around him, who also have the same problem of mental disability. The four friends that Sam has around him at the place of work at Los Angeles Starbucks are all mentally retarded. Together with Sam, they say silly things and dress in a funny manner. In addition, Sam's team of friends is odd and clumsy, but they enjoy the company of each other.

The fourth scene that portrays Sam's limitation in cognition is when he names his daughter after the Beatles' song "*Lucy on the sky with diamonds.*" His action saw Lucy acquiring the name Lucy Diamond. This shows that Sam has the problem of thinking independently and, therefore, he must associate one event or thing with another. His memory is constrained to only what he has interacted. Sam could only remember what he read in the song when naming his daughter. In addition, his colleagues had to remind him that it is time for his wife to deliver. Moreover, his neighbor, Annie has to relate for him the feeding schedules with common television programs on Nickelodeon channel that he loves in order for him not to forget feeding the baby. Some of the programs include "Hogan's Heroes," "I dream of Jeannie," and "I love Lucy."

3. Describe four (4) specific scenes from the movie that portray limitations in daily living skills (e.g. eating, dressing, preparing meals, taking medications, using the telephone, managing money, using transportation, housekeeping activities, work activities, maintaining a safe environment, etc.)

One of the four scenes from the movie that portray Sam's limitations in daily living skills is when he attends the Halloween party at Lucy's school. His daughter is so embarrassed, because Sam has dressed in a manner that portrays him as Paul McCartney, which brings him all the attention. Lucy's school mates laugh at her and call her father a mental retard.

The second instance in the movie is when his wife is about to give birth, and he has to go and attend to her. Unfortunately, he causes a commotion in the lift by constantly updating the other occupants about the floor where the lift is.

The third scene that portrays Sam's limitation in daily living skills is when he goes to the hospital with his job apron on. Sam does not remove the apron, which is not the right gear outside the restaurant where he works.

The fourth scene that portrays Sam's limitation in daily living is when Lucy wakes up in the middle of the night, and it is time to change her nappies. Unfortunately, the nappy that Sam uses to change Lucy is oversized and falls off immediately, even though a safety pin holds it.

4. Clearly describe two (2) different scenes from the movie of how speech or language limitations were portrayed by the character with intellectual disabilities.

One of the two scenes where Sam's limitation in speech is eminent is in the delivery room, when Lucy's mother is giving birth to her. When one of the male nurses helping in the midwifery says, "this is it", Sam recites the same words in a resonating manner because that is new to him.

Another instant that depicts Sam's limitation in speech is during the court proceedings. Apparently, Sam cannot express himself before the judge, and this makes him break down. His pro bono attorney, Rita has to come in and help him out.

5. Describe (2) specific scenes from the movie of how a physical abnormality or limitation in gain, coordination or balance was portrayed by the character with intellectual disabilities.

One of the two scenes where the character in the movie shows physical abnormality is when he becomes alerted that his wife is about to give birth to Lucy. Sam runs in a way that suggests a lack of coordination. He gawks and walks with an open mouth as he runs towards the hospital.

Another instance that depicts Sam's physical abnormality is when he goes to the supermarket to make some purchases and instead of carrying his items in manageable quantities, Sam carries all of them at once, together with the baby, thereby causing a disturbance at the supermarket.

6. Describe at least two (2) specific scenes from the movie of how inappropriate behavior or limitations in social skills were portrayed by the character with intellectual disabilities.

One of the two specific scenes from the movie that depict Sam as having an inappropriate behavior or limitations in social skills is when he cannot help Lucy in school on her first day. When Lucy forgets stages of the insect development, Sam cannot help her, because according to him, the insect developmental stages are just too many.

The next scene after the school incident also portrays Sam's limitation in social skills. Sam apologizes to the egg for breaking it by saying, "sorry Mr. Egg." This prompts Lucy's friend to ask whether her father is a retard, and Lucy confirms it.

7. Discuss the impact of intellectual disability upon the family members of the character with the disability, as portrayed in the movie (3 points).

The intellectual disability of Sam, a character in the movie, has greatly affected his daughter, Lucy Diamond, both in school and at home. First, when Lucy was a baby, Sam could not feed her regularly as required, and this made the baby cry all night. In the end, Sam's neighbor, Annie, is also affected, because she has to babysit Lucy to ensure that she feeds properly. The inability of Sam to feed the baby at the right time prompts Annie to help him in scheduling the feeding periods of the baby with the common TV programs that Sam has to stay awake to watch.

When Lucy is seven years old, Sam cannot assist her on her first day in school by recalling stages of the insect development, while other parents can. Additionally, when Lucy's teacher gives her new book called "Stellaluna," Sam cannot help her in reading the book, because he cannot read most of the words in the book such as "different," "perched," among others. Lucy's teachers are, therefore, worried of Lucy's academic development, because Sam's IQ equals that of a seven year old. Consequently, Sam loses the custody of Lucy to a family that acts as foster parents until Sam's lawyer, Rita, intervenes on a pro bono basis.

On another occasion, when Lucy's friend, Conner, visits them, Lucy is embarrassed because her friend realizes that her father is a mental retard. This is because Sam apologizes to an egg when breaking it by saying "sorry Mr. Egg'.

8. How accurate do you believe the portrayal of the disability was? Explain your rationale, citing text content to support your opinion. (4 points max.)

According to Hunt and Marshall (2012, p. 466-469), the cognitive development of an individual is not affected by an illness or physical disability, but communication abilities. Equally, Sam's physical impairment does not affect his cognitive development in any way, since he can communicate with anybody, including the customers at the coffee restaurant, where Sam works. Moreover, Sam can communicate with his daughter freely and easily without any problem, and this shows that his cognitive development does not affect his ability to communicate. He is

able to help his daughter in reading the book *“Green Eggs and Ham written by Dr. Seuss,”* and the daughter appreciates it so much. In addition, Sam brings up his daughter by himself without the mother, except for some little help from his neighbor, Annie. If Sam’s cognitive development could prevent him from raising Lucy, then it could have been a subject of concern. Furthermore, Sam acts responsibly as a father by helping his daughter to achieve her aspirations in life such as visiting the “Big Boy” and the park. In fact, the daughter recounts that it is only her father who does that, and this makes her father different from other fathers.

9. Discuss how public opinion of people with intellectual disabilities could be positively and negatively impacted by this movie. (4 points max.)

The public opinion of people concerning the intellectual disability can be impacted positively and negatively by the movie, because it tries to prove that there is no correlation between the intellectual disability and ability or inability to be a caring and loving parent. This is because most people believe that the intellectual disability affects one’s ability to raise children. Thus,, this public opinion is impacted by the movie in terms of demystifying the fact that people with the intellectual disability cannot be trusted with employment positions. As seen in the movie, Sam is able to have a job at the restaurant. In fact, he is portrayed as having a good rapport with the clients and colleagues.

10. Would you recommend this movie to others? Why or why not??

This is your chance to be a movie critic! (3 points max.)

I would recommend people to watch the movie, because it emphasizes the theme that “disability is not inability”. This movie can be a source of inspiration for most individuals who have been stigmatized due to the intellectual incapability. The society has been looking down upon those who cannot live normally. Such people, in turn, face challenges in getting jobs, just like any other normal society members. Most people do not appreciate the need to employ people who are thought to be intellectually disabled. Therefore, upon watching this movie, they will incline their minds to view the intellectually disabled persons positively. In addition, this movie proves that any human, whether intellectually disabled or not, can raise a child as a loving and caring parent.