

Ernest Scared Stupid Parents Guide



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"Ernest Scared Stupid" is a 1991 family comedy film that blends humor with a touch of horror, making it a unique choice for families during Halloween or any time of the year. While the film is designed for a younger audience, parents may have questions about its content, themes, and overall suitability for their children. This article aims to provide a comprehensive guide for parents to understand what to expect from "Ernest Scared Stupid," including themes, characters, and potential concerns.

Overview of the Film

"Ernest Scared Stupid" follows the adventures of Ernest P. Worrell, played by Jim Varney, as he inadvertently awakens an ancient troll who turns children into wooden dolls. In his quest to defeat the troll and save the town's children, Ernest embarks on a series of hilarious misadventures. The film combines slapstick comedy with elements of supernatural horror, making it both funny and mildly spooky.

Plot Summary

The film begins with Ernest, a well-meaning but clumsy man, working in a small town. He accidentally stumbles upon a centuries-old curse that unleashes a troll named Trantor. The troll seeks to capture children and turn them into wooden dolls. As Ernest learns about the troll's history, he teams up with a group of children to stop Trantor and save their friends. The climax involves a showdown that balances comedic antics with moments of suspense.

Target Audience and Age Appropriateness

"Ernest Scared Stupid" is primarily aimed at children and families. However, the film's mixture of comedy and mild horror elements may raise concerns for some parents.

Recommended Age

While the film is rated G (General Audience), parents may want to consider the following:

- Children under 5: May find the troll and some scenes frightening, as the film contains spooky imagery and some intense moments.
- Ages 6-10: Generally suitable, but parents should be prepared for questions about the supernatural elements.
- Ages 11 and up: Older children may appreciate the humor and nostalgic elements of the film without being overly frightened.

Content to Consider

Parents should be aware of the following potential concerns:

- Mild Scary Scenes: The troll appears in various frightening forms, which could be unsettling for younger viewers.
- Comedic Violence: While the violence is slapstick in nature and not graphic, it can be intense at times (e.g., Ernest's various mishaps).
- Themes of Friendship and Courage: The film ultimately conveys positive messages about friendship, bravery, and overcoming fears.

Key Themes

Understanding the themes of "Ernest Scared Stupid" can help parents engage with their children about the film's messages.

Friendship and Teamwork

One of the central themes of the film is the importance of friendship. Ernest teams up with a group of children to confront the troll, highlighting how working together can lead to success. This theme encourages viewers to value collaboration and support among friends.

Overcoming Fear

The film also addresses the theme of overcoming fears. The children must confront their fears to save their friends and defeat the troll. This can serve as a valuable lesson for young viewers about facing their own fears in a constructive way.

Character Analysis

The characters in "Ernest Scared Stupid" are quirky and memorable, contributing to the film's appeal.

Ernest P. Worrell

Ernest, portrayed by Jim Varney, is the film's lovable protagonist. His clumsiness and good-hearted nature make him a relatable character for children. Despite his mishaps, Ernest demonstrates courage and determination, making him a positive role model.

Trantor the Troll

Trantor is the film's antagonist, a troll that embodies the classic "scary monster" trope. His design is meant to be creepy but also humorous, making him suitable for a family audience. While he poses a threat to the children, his character allows for comedic interactions.

The Supporting Cast

The group of children who assist Ernest adds depth to the story. Each child has unique traits that contribute to the team's dynamics. Their personalities help to showcase themes of teamwork and courage.

Potential Concerns for Parents

While "Ernest Scared Stupid" is generally family-friendly, there are a few aspects that parents might want to consider before viewing.

Spooky Elements

- Troll's Appearance: The troll's design may be frightening for sensitive children.
- Jump Scares: There are moments intended to startle the audience, typical of horror-comedy films.
- Creepy Atmosphere: Some scenes may have a darker tone, which could be unsettling for

younger viewers.

Violence and Mischief

- Slapstick Comedy: While the violence is not graphic, it is exaggerated and frequent. Ernest often finds himself in ridiculous predicaments that lead to physical harm, albeit in a comedic context.
- Potential for Imitation: Younger children may attempt to imitate some of Ernest's antics, which, while humorous in the film, could lead to real-life accidents.

Discussion Points for Parents and Children

After watching "Ernest Scared Stupid," parents may want to engage their children in discussions about the film. Here are some suggested questions:

1. What did you think about Ernest's character?
 - Discuss his strengths and weaknesses and how he showed bravery.
2. How did the children work together to face the troll?
 - Highlight the importance of teamwork and friendship.
3. What did you find scary or funny in the movie?
 - Encourage children to express their feelings about the film's tone.
4. What would you do if you faced a scary situation like the characters?
 - This can lead to conversations about coping with fear and finding solutions.

Conclusion

"Ernest Scared Stupid" offers a blend of comedy and mild horror that can entertain families, particularly during Halloween. By understanding the film's content, themes, and characters, parents can make informed decisions about its suitability for their children. While there are elements that might concern some parents, the overall messages of friendship, courage, and teamwork provide a positive takeaway. Engaging in discussions with children after viewing can enhance their understanding and enjoyment of this classic family film.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Ernest Scared Stupid' about?

'Ernest Scared Stupid' is a family-friendly horror-comedy film where the character Ernest

P. Worrell accidentally unleashes an evil troll that turns children into wooden dolls. Ernest must team up with local kids to stop the troll and save the town.

Is 'Ernest Scared Stupid' suitable for children?

Yes, 'Ernest Scared Stupid' is generally considered suitable for children, though it contains some mild scares and comic horror elements. Parents may want to watch it first to gauge its appropriateness for their kids.

What age group is 'Ernest Scared Stupid' appropriate for?

The film is typically recommended for children ages 7 and up. However, parental discretion is advised, especially for younger viewers who may be sensitive to scary themes.

Are there any lessons or themes in 'Ernest Scared Stupid'?

Yes, the film touches on themes of bravery, teamwork, and overcoming fears. It emphasizes the importance of friendship and working together to face challenges.

What should parents know before watching 'Ernest Scared Stupid' with their kids?

Parents should be aware of the film's comedic horror elements, which include some mild violence and scary imagery involving the troll. It's a good idea to discuss any frightening scenes with children afterward to help them process the movie.

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