*Cinderella Man* – Viewing guide questions

Great Depression

Film Description: *Cinderella Man* is a 2005 American biographical sports drama film by Ron Howard, titled after the nickname of James J. Braddock and inspired by his life story. James J. Braddock was an Irish-American boxer from New Jersey, formerly a [light heavyweight](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Light_heavyweight) contender, who was forced to give up boxing after breaking his hand in the ring. This was both a relief and a burden to his wife, Mae, who could not bring herself to watch the violence of his chosen profession, yet she knew they would not have enough income without his boxing. The story accurately encompasses the Braddock family’s experiences during the Great Depression.

Cast:

James J. Braddock (nickname: Jimmy): Russell Crowe

Mae Braddock: Renée Zellweger

Joe Gould (Braddock’s manager): Paul Giamatti

Note: This film has been praised for its historical accuracy. All names, dates, and events shown actually occurred.

**Viewing Questions:**

1. Briefly describe the following aspects of Jim Braddock’s life in the beginning of the film BEFORE the Great Depression:

● Boxing Career/ Reputation

● Housing Neighborhood:

● Clothing:

● Income:

● Relationship with family:

2. What type of job does Braddock work during the Great Depression? What prevents him from working this job on a consistent basis?

3. List at least three examples of how things people did to survive during the Great Depression, as learned from the movie.

4. After working the docks, Jim Braddock and his co-worker Mike Wilson discuss the situation of the Great Depression. How do BOTH Braddock and Wilson view the situation?

5. Mike’s character was reflective of what some men resorted to in the midst of continued poverty. What sort of behaviors did Mike exhibit?

5. Explain what “Hooverville” was and describe how it is displayed in the movie?

6. Overall, what did you learn about the Great Depression from watching this movie? What was life like for the typical American?

7. What happens to the Braddocks?

8. What, if anything, inspires you about the story of James Braddock?