

OVERVIEW

This movie chronicles the real-life events of Apollo 13. It is the most challenging of all missions carrying astronauts into space. It was termed a “Successful Failure,” as all three astronauts returned safely, yet never landed on the moon. If not for the help, coordination, teamwork and composure of thousands of men, it would have been a NASA’s worst disaster instead of their finest hour.

MORAL OF THE STORY

Composure is the ability to stay calm in stressful situations. The ability to maintain composure can turn a lot of negative events into a successful outcome.

SELECTED SCENES

Scene 19-23 (49:33 – 1:01:55)	10 minutes
Scenes 28-35 (1:07:19 – 1:21:00)	14 minutes
Scene 39 (1:27:06 – 1:33:30)	6 minutes
Scenes 44-48 (1:43:40 – 1:56:32)	13 minutes
Total	43 minutes

Happy Ending Scenes 52-56 (2:02:08 – 2:13:54)

Attention Teacher: Prior to viewing film, ask the students to focus on the composure of three main characters: Gene Kranz/Ed Harris (flight director), Jim Lovell/Tom Hanks (flight commander) and Ken Mattingly/Gary Sinse (back up simulator).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) 1) The real “leader” in this film is flight director Gene Kranz. He is the in charge and is responsible for the mission. What did he do to exemplify leadership and composure?

Answers: Limiting Chaos: 51:20 – “Keep calm. One at a time people.” 54:21 – “Quiet down, let’s stay cool. Let’s work the problem. Let’s not make things worse by guessing.”

Decision- making Ability: 56:09 & 1:19:40 – After listening to the proposed solutions, he made gutsy decisions after

considering the options (shutting down fuel cells & return trajectory).

Positive Attitude & Tone Setting: 1:09:50 “We are not losing those men.” 1:17:00 “Failure is not an option.” 2:04:05 With all due respect sir, this is going to be our finest hour.”

Developing A Plan & Organization: 59:00 Gene took charge of the meeting, set up contingencies and delegated responsibilities. 1:09:00 “We have a new mission.” 1:20:10 “I suggest you gentlemen invent a way to fit a square peg into a round hole... rapidly.”

2) The leader on the rocket Apollo 13 was flight commander Jim Lovell. What did he do to show composure during the flight?

Answers: Repurposing the Mission: 1:14:29 Instead of sulking about not going to the moon, he refocuses the crew, “Gentlemen, what are your intentions? I’d like to go home.”

Planning Ahead: 58:35 Instead of waiting for directions from flight command, he understood the issues and sent Fred Haise into the lem to begin sequencing, “We don’t have that kind of time.”

Working quickly under stressful situations: 59:00 Getting everyone into the lem. 1:27:10, the crew worked together to put together the Co2 filters.

3) Ken Mattingly was scheduled to pilot the flight, but it was thought that he would soon get the measles. However, his help was crucial to the crew’s return. What did he do to exemplify composure?

Answers: Simulating Flight Conditions: 1:18:30 When crawling into the simulator, he wanted the same flight conditions (cold, same equipment) & 1:33:20 (no breaks).

Determination to Find Solutions: Ken kept working the problem until he figured the right procedure to get the astronauts home.

Staying Focused on the Moment: 1:52:28, Realizing that the astronauts were tired, he decided to “talk them through” the procedures. 1:53:00 When asked what the condensation would do to the control panel, Ken said, “We’ll take that one at a time.”

4) What do you think would have happened if the leaders and team members would have panicked or let negative thinking cloud their judgment?