



Viewing Guide

NAME _____

Darius Weems, a 15-year-old with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, had never left his hometown of Athens, Georgia. In the summer of 2005, he and a group of young college students traveled across the country in a wheelchair-accessible RV to test accessibility in the United States. Their ultimate goal was to reach Los Angeles and convince MTV's hit show "Pimp My Ride" to customize Darius' wheelchair. Along the way, they found joy, brotherhood, and the knowledge that life, even when imperfect, is always worth the ride.

As (or after) you view this movie, answer the questions below:

1. Who was Darius' chief inspiration to help open the minds of people to DMD?
(Hint: It's not Jerry Lewis) _____

2. Darius Goes West Day is celebrated on July 22 in what city? _____

3. At the first pit stop, the travelers were surprised by _____

4. One of the first places Darius visits is the beach in Florida. What other cities, states, or attractions did he visit? Record them here, and add a check mark if you've ever been there:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. How was Darius' trip funded? _____

6. Statistics on DMD: It is the number one genetic killer of: _____
One in every _____ has this disease
Victims typically lose the ability to walk by age _____
It is _____ percent fatal
There (is) (is not) hope of finding a cure within _____ years

7. In New Mexico, people were celebrating the Americans With Disabilities Act. Why? _____

8. What potential did "Pimp My Ride" have for Darius? (What motivated him and others to get his wheelchair pimped?) _____

What were the obstacles? _____

9. What does it mean to be "interdependent?" _____

Is it a good thing? _____

How is Darius interdependent? _____

10. In what ways is he independent? _____

11. Why is the "goslab" scene in the restaurant important for viewers of this film? _____

12. Why were spinners a significant item on the custom wheelchair? _____

13. What is Darius' message to us all? _____

14. If you could send a message to Darius, what might it be? _____

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Janet Dennis is a special services teacher at Wood River High School in Hailey, Idaho. Her personal growth class organized a school-wide screening of Darius Goes West and received an "overwhelmingly positive response."