

Take a Pika-Pika at Detective Pikachu

You could sit and imagine a world where Pokémon are real, live creatures, walking the streets with their human counterparts. Or you could simply go see *Pokémon: Detective Pikachu*.

Watching the Pokémon come to life was my favorite aspect of the movie. I've seen my share of Pokémon stories on screen, though I have not managed to catch 'em all—not nearly. This movie, though, has definitely been kicked up a notch to bring the world to life in a creative, dynamic way.

One of my sons and I were excited to have the chance to see an advanced screening of the film. He's still riding an *Endgame* high, so I knew this was unlikely to rival that. But the movie captured our imagination, and he agreed with me that some of the action was a bit intense—and when he said that, it was a compliment.

Because I was so absorbed in trying to decide whether I'd rather have a pet Bulbasaur or a Growlithe, I think I might have enjoyed *Pokémon: Detective Pikachu* with or without a plot. Still, I appreciated that the main character, Tim, was grappling with the news of the sudden loss of his father—while still grieving the loss of his mother years earlier—and trying to find his place in the world.

Initially Tim doesn't relate to the Pokémon that are everywhere around him. As he starts to let his guard down and embrace the role of son and friend, he sees that the Pokémon are not just present but important. When he is more open to interacting with and understanding Pokémon, he seems to understand himself better, too. There's a lesson in faith in being open to the possibilities around us and opening our

eyes and hearts to what others can bring to our lives.

The overall themes of the movie were positive and engaging, even as there were a few unexpected plot twists. Good can triumph over evil, life sometimes offers second chances, and friendship and family relationships are important. Oh, and we should always have hope.

Pikachu is adorable, of course, but he's also funny and wise and caring in a way that is a little unexpected. He speaks with Tim about having faith in things, reminding him that there are times "when you really believe in something even when everyone tells you you're wrong."

Ah, the wisdom of a little yellow electric-type Pokémon.