

'Ice Age' Offers More 'Prehistorical' Adventure

Continental drift, according to science, is the movement of the earth's continents relative to each other by appearing to drift across the ocean bed.

In *Ice Age: Continental Drift*—the fourth installment in the computer-animated adventure comedy film franchise—Scrat the saber-toothed squirrel, in his eternal pursuit of his beloved acorn, accidentally causes the breakup of the earth's single landmass.

Quicker than you can say “the theory of plate tectonics,” the growing extended family of mammoths—Manny (Ray Romano), Ellie (Queen Latifah) and their daughter, Peaches (Keke Palmer)—get split up, literally and relationally, by the splitting of continents.

Manny is very protective of Peaches, who wants to be popular and thrill-seeking, as she tries to impress a mammoth named Ethan—who's part of the “in” crowd. After Peaches disobeys and Manny, She tells her dad, “I wish you weren't my father.”

So Manny has to do some serious bridge-building with his daughter, but first his friends, Sid the innocent-but-accident-prone (John Leguizamo) and Diego the saber-toothed tiger (Denis Leary), have to rescue Manny's family from pirates—led by a nefarious, simian pirate king with very bad teeth named Captain Gutt (Peter Dinklage).

Along the way, Diego falls into a hate-love romance with an ornery female tiger named Shira (Jennifer Lopez)—Captain Gutt's right hand. Besides Sid's Granny (Wanda Sykes), the pirate crew significantly increases the cast of prehistoric animal characters, including Squint (Aziz Ansari), Eunice (Joy Behar), Arisratle (Patrick Stewart) and Gupta (Kunal Nayyar).

Ice Age: Continental Drift is far from the perfect family-friendly movie because it features some rude humor and peril, but it does offer some positive life lessons, including dealing with adolescence, the importance of true friendship, being yourself and family.

I took my three oldest boys (aged 11, 9 and 6) plus their 11-year-old friend to the movie's screening. They all enjoyed and laughed during the 3-D film, which the boys said was the best in the series. "It had more action and adventure," one of them said after the screening. "It showed the importance of love and cherishing your time with your family."

Overall, *Ice Age: Continental Drift* features positive moral, redemptive themes just like *Ice Age 3: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*—which received positive reviews from Christian movie Web sites.

Content Watch: Rated PG for mild rude humor and some action, *Ice Age: Continental Drift* is more intense than the other "Ice Age" films at the start, but it tones down a bit as the film goes on. The movie features mild slapstick violence plus some threatening weapons such as a knife, but they don't harm anyone. There are some somewhat creepy scenes with shape-shifting sirens who lure mariners to their doom. Small children may upset get scared at Captain Gutt's antics and demeanor. Kids may get also upset as Peaches is often worrying about how she might never see her father again, since the last thing she said to him was that she never wanted him as her dad.