

Film Title and Release Date: *Brian Banks* (2017)

Film Length: 100 minutes

Film Genre: Biographical Drama

Reviewer name and grade: Maxime L., 8th Grade

Date Reviewed: December 28, 2020

The film *Brian Banks* is a biographical drama film directed by Tom Shadyac. Brian Banks is based on a true story that began in 2002 but was seen again years later. Just like any other talented high school football player, he had dreams of playing in the NFL, but everything changed when he got convicted of a crime he never committed. Throughout the movie Brian fights for his case to reopen by convincing the California Innocence Project to help him meet this goal. The setting of this movie varies from different locations in California but primarily takes place in Long Beach. The main characters are Brian Banks and his attorney, Justin Brooks. While in prison Brian meets a man that teaches and challenges him to always keep a good perspective and mindset in life even when things are at their worst. One time Brian faces this challenge is when he is put in solitary confinement for 60 days. This is what leads Brian to be the persistent, in control, and smart character he is. When Brian is released from jail he faces the challenges of finding a job and integrating into society because he is on parole. In addition Brian is not allowed to be around certain places or people because of the crime he was accused of. Brian's mother always supported his innocence.

How did you find the film on Kanopy (by title search, subject search, casual browsing, etc.)?

I found the film *Brian Banks* on Kanopy by browsing through the listed movies. I picked this film because I had heard good things about it and also because of my interests in sports.

Did the plot (for fictional movie) or presentation of information (for documentary) keep you interested?

Throughout the film, the plot intrigued me more and more up until the end. The movie had several exciting scenes that were very suspenseful.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of the film was just right and kept me entertained because it was easy to follow.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

This film is appropriate for grades 6 and up.

5 stars: I'm really glad I watched this film; it was awesome!

I found this film to be very enjoyable because of the main character's ability to persevere. It always kept me wondering what was going to happen next. Would he give up? Would he finally get his case reopened? The movie kept me questioning what might come next. Brian Banks' love for football and to play it again is also what intrigued me to continue watching. Would he finally get to play again? That is another question I was asking myself. Another interesting aspect was that no matter how many times Brian's parole officer told him to give up he didn't give in and maintained control of his actions. This film teaches to keep good character and mindsets throughout life.

Reviewer Name and Grade: James B., 8th Grade

Date Reviewed April 6, 2021

The movie *Brian Banks* was a biographical drama film by Tom Shadyac. Brian Banks is a movie based on a true story that began in 2002 but was seen again many years later. Brian was a talented high school football player with dreams of going to the NFL. Everything changed however, when he got committed of a crime he never committed. Brian has to fight the case and go to extraordinary lengths to prove his innocence. The story takes place in mostly Long Beach. The main characters of the story are Brian Brooks and his attorney Justin Brooks. While in prison, Brian meets a man that teaches him to always keep a good and optimistic mindset despite all challenges. Brian, is put into solitary confinement for 60 days, which helps him shape into the smart, persistent, and controlled character he is throughout the rest of the film. When let out of prison, Brian finds he has trouble finding a job in society because of his criminal record. On top of that, Brian is not allowed to go certain places or be certain places because of his criminal record and at times finds it difficult to keep pushing. Despite all of this, Brian knows to keep pushing and striving to be the best man he can.

How did you find the film on Kanopy (by title, subject search, casual browsing, etc.)?

I found the film *Brian Banks* on Kanopy by browsing through suggested movies. I ended up choosing the movie because it seemed interesting to me and I have a liking for sports.

Did the Plot keep you interested?

Yes. I found that throughout the film, I was constantly engaged and interested in the film. I felt that the directors did a great job of keeping engaged and wanting to continue watching.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

I found the pace of the film was just right and it kept engaged throughout the duration of the film.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

I would say that this film is appropriate for anyone grades 5 and up.

4 stars: I enjoyed this film and found it worthwhile to watch.

This movie was great because it constantly kept me engaged in the plot and storyline. I found it inspiring how the main character kept persevering his case being reopened and never gave up. I also liked how despite the inability to find a job, Brian was able to continue to look despite the troubled times and always think back to the teachings he was given in prison.