

MOVIE DISCUSSION GUIDE

MILAGRO BEANFIELD WAR

DIRECTED BY ROBERT REDFORD
BASED ON A BOOK BY JOHN NICHOLS



**CONFLICT RESOLUTION
MONTH IN COLORADO**

Listen. Talk. Work it Out.

"Nearly 500 residents of the agricultural community of Milagro in the mountains of northern New Mexico face a crisis when politicians and business interests make a backroom deal to usurp the town's water in order to pave the way for a land buyout. Due to the new laws, Joe Mondragon is unable to make a living farming because he is not allowed to divert water from an irrigation ditch that runs past his property.

Frustrated, and unable to find work, Joe visits his father's field. He happens upon a tag that reads "prohibited" covering a valve on the irrigation ditch. He kicks the valve, unintentionally breaking it, allowing water to flood his fields. He decides against repairing the valve and instead decides to plant beans in the field. This leads to a confrontation with powerful state interests, including a hired gun brought in from out of town.

An escalation of events follows, leading to a final showdown between law enforcement and the citizens of Milagro."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What types of relationships do you see in the film?
2. How are these relationships challenged by conflict?
3. What types of conflict are most prevalent in the film?
4. What strategies are used to work through conflict?
5. How are relationships defined/redefined by conflict in this film?
6. What did you learn about conflict resolution from this film?
7. How might you apply these strategies to your own life?