

# SUCCESS! Learning Center

presents

# THE SPOT

Headin' for **SUCCESS!**

August 15, 2011

No. 33

## Educational

# MOVIES

### *Lessons for Life*

by *Mark Gaare, SLC Elementary Teacher*

Recently, a parent asked me, "What can my child learn from movies? These days, aren't movies just full of violence, teen romance, and foul language?"

Indeed, many new live-action movies are just that: devoid of redeemable characters, morals, and actions. In other words, the kind of things that you wouldn't want your child to mimic. But thankfully, Hollywood has also produced many gems over the years, filled with valuable lessons for young minds. Success! Learning Center now offers its students a lending library of great films with positive messages for young minds.

The **SLC Movie Loan Program** is based on a program used by best-selling author and teacher, Rafe Esquith. We have over 50 classic Hollywood movies available for loan. Many of these movies were Oscar winners. Others are adapted from classic pieces of American literature or contain accurate portrayals of



*Continued on Page 2*

## Now Enrolling

*After-School Session Begins September 6th*

*Mon-Tues-Wed-Thurs ❖ 3:00-6:00 p.m.*

*Tues & Thurs Evenings ❖ 6:30-9:30 p.m.*

The After-School Session begins Sept. 6th. Each class period runs for three hours, and students may attend two, three, or four tutorials each week. Registration forms are available on our website or by calling the office (see below).

During the school year we concentrate especially on helping students understand their coursework, complete homework accurately, and prepare for tests. Additional enrichment activities, supplementary skills practice, and English tutoring are also available (see Page 3).

Our classrooms are led by experienced, credentialed teachers, and our T.A.s are highly-skilled college and high school students who enjoy sharing their knowledge. We maintain a very low teacher/student ratio of 1 to 4.

Rates and fees are explained on Page 3.

## Success! Learning Center

*a non-profit educational and tutoring center*

**Tutoring, test preparation, and homework assistance for students in grades 3-12**

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**E-mail:** success@cliveden.com

**Website:** www.successlearningcenter.org

## Educational Movies

(Continued from Page 1)

historical times. All of the movies have been carefully screened by SLC teachers, and were selected for our students based on their movie rating (G, PG, or PG-13) and on their high educational content.

### High Educational Content

What is “high educational content”? Typically, we look for movies that make a deep exploration of important themes, such as teamwork, ambition, racism, or ingenuity. The lead characters are role models who face difficult situations and make good choices in the end. Witnessing the characters in their struggles gives students a framework for how to deal with similar problems that may arise in their own lives.

Another key element of these movies is the way they demonstrate proper academic language. These movies feature many different kinds of English including historical language, formal language, technical language, poetry, song, storytelling, and ESL.

### Dangers of Unsupervised Viewing

Movies and TV are perhaps the most powerful medium for influencing the behaviors of our children. They combine color, light, large images, motion, speech, and music in a deeply memorable way. Further, this powerful medium now offers more and more adult content to children in unsupervised environments. Movies and TV can teach many things through a highly-effective technique known as “modeling”. Their content is legitimized by the mere fact that it is glossy, published, and in some cases, projected 30 feet high onto a big screen. Numerous research studies have linked the viewing of violent media with aggressive behaviors such as fights, arguments, and poor grades (see <http://drdouglas.org/>). Therefore, parents need to



take special care directing and monitoring what their child watches.

American animated films are typically safe for kids, but parents should still be wary and check the film’s MPAA rating shown on the disc’s box or TV guide info. There’s a big difference between an animated film from Disney and an animated film from the creators of *South Park* or *The Family Guy*. A movie that is rated **R**

is not intended to be viewed by anyone under 17, unless you plan to spend a lot of time explaining to your child about all the sex, drugs, and cursing that they witnessed in the movie. You can also check the MPAA website at <http://www.mpa.org/> for more information on their movie ratings system.

### Directed Viewing

- Parent chooses the Content
- Parent Chooses the Time
- No Commercials
- Discussion or Writing Afterwards

### Directed Viewing

Directed Viewing is a lot like Family Movie Night. The main difference is that Directed Viewing happens all the time and becomes the rule governing a child’s use of media such as movies, TV, and video games. When the rules are clearly set by parents, children listen. Without rules, children soon begin to see media viewing as their “right”, and not as a *privilege* that is controlled by their parents. Therefore, parents also need to administer consequences if the child breaks a rule, such as limiting their viewing. (In one study, cutting a child’s TV viewing in half led to increased reading time

Continued on Page 4

## SLC Tuition

### *10% Discount for Full Semester Paid in Advance*

Fees are paid every four weeks, generally during the first week of the month. The tuition for a student who attends two days per week (24 hours total tutoring in four weeks) is \$268 per month, three days per week is \$332, and four days is \$396. A discount is available for families.



Some months, such as November and December, have only three weeks of teaching due to school vacations, and parents thus pay only three weeks of tuition. Check the complete 2011-2012 calendar including holidays and payment schedule online at [www.successlearningcenter.org](http://www.successlearningcenter.org) (click on "2011/2012 After-School Session"), or pick up a copy at the Learning Center.

This year we are trying something new. Several parents have asked if they can receive a discount for paying the entire semester at once, and we're happy to oblige. It's a lot easier on everyone when there is only one payment to deal with. We've warmed up the calculators and figured out the numbers. The Fall Semester runs from 9/6/11-1/26/12, a total of 18 weeks. We are offering a 10% discount when the entire semester is paid in advance. A student attending two times each week will pay a total of \$1,206.00 when the monthly fees are added up; the discounted rate is \$1,085.00 paid in advance. A similar 10% discount applies on fees for students attending three times and four times each week.

Success! Learning Center is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization. Donations are gladly accepted to help underwrite our educational program. Limited scholarships are available for those in financial need. Please see the Director for more information.

## Improving English Language Skills

*Success! Learning Center offers English writing, grammar, vocabulary, and reading practice.*

*Lessons are adjusted to the individual student's needs and weaknesses.*

*Includes daily composition and grammar practice, pronunciation, and language effectiveness.*

*Strengthens speaking and listening skills; improves reading and writing skills.*

*Students may also work on study skills and note-taking exercises.*

*Also available for ELD (English Language Development) and bi-lingual students.*

## Math Workshop

*Practice classroom skills*

*Learn new math subjects*

*Enrichment and review*

*Word problems and turning English into math*

*Analytical thinking plus creative problem-solving*

*Elementary topics include telling time, handling money, fraction, decimals, place value, and math manipulatives*

*High School topics include algebra and geometry*

*through trigonometry and calculus*



## Educational Movies

(Continued from Page 2)

and improved IQ.) Parents who don't follow their own rules can expect to see their child breaking rules, also. Again, that is the power of modeling.

### Active Learning

Parents and students may participate in the **SLC Movie Loan Program** if they wish to. The movies are available for loan each Thursday, and they should be returned to the Learning Center on the following Monday. We recommend that students watch these movies with their parents or other adults in the family, so they can be discussed at home.

### Library Categories

- 6th Grade Social Studies (Ancient History)
- 7th Grade Social Studies (Middle Ages)
- 8th Grade Social Studies (American History)
- Sci-Fi, Fantasy, & Modern Times
- Female Role Models

The **SLC Movie Loan Program** also has an optional homework component. After watching a movie, the student writes a one-page review of that movie. This assignment ensures that the movies are watched *thoughtfully and actively*, as opposed to the passive viewing given to many TV programs. The movie reviews are then graded, discussed with the student, and they count as part of each student's writing assignments.

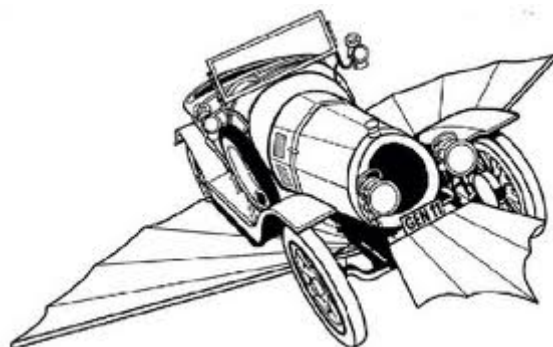
### Student Favorites

**Greek Myths** (2005) is a must-see for students in 6<sup>th</sup>-grade Social Studies. Presented by TV's "The Story Teller", these four episodes are faithful depictions of classic Greek myths: Daedalus and Icarus, Orpheus and Eurydice, Perseus and the Gorgon, and Theseus and the Minotaur. Part of the California Social Studies curriculum, these morality tales teach (if nothing else) the consequences of human actions. The exciting creatures are designed by

Jim Henson (but are much more scary than his Muppets from *Sesame Street*). This series is rated PG.

**Ice Princess** (2005) is a live-action Disney movie about Casey, an ultra-ambitious high school student who wants to excel in academics, *and* excel in the art and sport of figure skating, all at the same time! Along the way, Casey finds herself at odds with teammates, boys, teachers, and administrators. But when her mother and her coach lock horns, Casey is torn between pleasing them and fulfilling her own needs. *Ice Princess* is a hilarious and heart-warming coming-of-age story, starring Michelle Trachtenberg, Kim Cattrall, and Joan Cusack.

**Chitty Chitty Bang Bang** (1968) is a wonderful musical fantasy starring Dick Van Dyke, Benny Hill, and the most amazing car ever built (Chitty). From the producer of the James Bond 007 series, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* whisks viewers back to the early days of the automobile. When grandpa is kidnapped by the oppressive King of Vulgaria, the whole cast embarks on a far-flung adventure to save him. Van Dyke plays an eccentric inventor, and the film inspires ingenuity in all of its viewers. The theme song was nominated for an Academy Award.

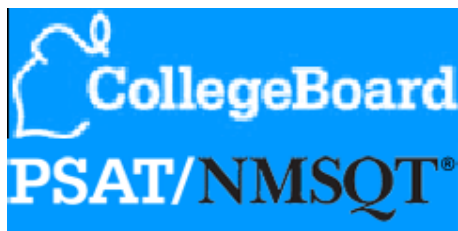


We encourage our parents and students to take full advantage of the SLC Movie Loan Program. Who would have thought that learning could be so much fun!

## PSAT at High Schools

Saturday, October 15, 2011

The PSAT (preliminary SAT) provides excellent practice for the SAT Reasoning test. It also gives 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students a chance to compete for National Merit scholarships.



The PSAT is offered only once each year. Students register for and take the test at their high school. There is no online registration. Most high schools will offer the test this year on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Remember to register and pay the fee (about \$25) early!

We recommend that college-bound students take the PSAT in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in order to become more familiar with the types of questions and

the skills necessary for the SAT. However, it's important that sophomores not be discouraged by low scores—they will be compared against 11<sup>th</sup>-graders. Remember, this is a practice test—the “real” test is in 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Scores on the PSAT enable students to compare their performance on an admissions test with others applying to college.

Success! Learning Center has PSAT practice tests for those interested in a little extra preparation. You can also find practice materials online: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html>

Worried about **Childhood Obesity**? Check out Prevent Obesity.net, which seeks to harness the power of online networks to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic and to use technology to tap the talents, creativity, expertise and energy of potential collaborators. Their goals:

- ◆ PreventObesity.net supports all those working to change policies and environments to help children and families eat well and move more, especially in communities at highest risk for obesity.
- ◆ By using technology to bring together a greater number of people who seek to improve the health of our children, families and communities, we hope to create a network that becomes smarter and more helpful as more people use it. By creating a series of online networking tools, we seek to create a more effective movement for change and make it easier for all advocates to know and capitalize on current activities, strategies, successes and lessons.

Online: [www.preventobesity.net](http://www.preventobesity.net)

Also remember (highlighted in last issue): [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)

### Registration & Office Hours

Tues-Wed-Thurs  
8/16-9/1/11  
3:00-6:30 p.m.

or phone for an appointment  
(408) 263-9754

