



MENSA® FOUNDATION

# Educational Programs

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## Movie Night

### Overview

This series of educational programs was designed to simultaneously entertain and challenge gifted youth in their time outside of the school setting; however, the activities may be easily shared and enjoyed by older people as well. Programs may be scaled up or down depending on number of attendees, desired level of complexity, etc. Sample materials are included with most plans.

The Educational Programs series was developed by Lisa Van Gemert, M.Ed.T., the Mensa Foundation's Gifted Youth Specialist.

### Introduction

Virtually everyone likes movies, and this activity embraces the “filmophile” in all of us. Movie Nights lend themselves to both the whole-group and divided-group format, so choose which works best for you.

### Supplies

- The movie! (see Preparation section for some age-appropriate ideas)
- Snacks: popcorn, movie-type candy, soda/water
- Bags or bowls for popcorn; plastic red and white popcorn containers are available at dollar stores or at [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com)
- Any materials needed for pre- and/or post-movie activities (see Showtime! section for details)

### Samples

Attached as a separate Word file, you will find the following sample materials that you are welcome to use or reproduce:

- Movie Night Invitations
- Movie Bingo board



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## Preparation

Select a great location to watch your movie, one with adequate room for your movie-goers and also an adequate audiovisual system through which to enjoy the movie (a large screen improves the worst of movies, so you may want to consider borrowing a projector). If you have a large group, see if a local theater will show a movie for you at a reduced rate during off hours. If you live in an area with nice weather, consider having it outside and projecting the movie onto a wall.

Comfortable seating is a must, so if your venue doesn't have it, encourage people to bring bean bags, videogame chairs, camp chairs, etc.

Decide ahead of time if you want to advertise the particular movie that will be shown.

You may wish to provide pre- and post-movie activities (see the Showtime! section). Your teens will be a great resource to help with these.

If you would like to offer a door prize, consider, for instance, giving a companion movie or a copy of the book the movie is based on.

### Ideas for movies

The movies listed below were selected because they appeal to a wide audience and are appropriate for both adults and children. The movies for all ages marked with an asterisk feature gifted characters. Many are readily available at local libraries.

The movies identified for tweens/teens and solely teens have specifically been selected as having appeal for the gifted.

### Movies for all ages

- *Bringing Up Baby*
- *The Black Stallion*
- *Singing in the Rain*
- *E.T.\**
- *Searching for Bobby Fisher\**
- *The Princess Bride*
- *October Sky\**
- *Finding Neverland\**
- *Infinity\**





## Movies for gifted tweens and teens

- *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*
- *Sky High*
- *The Man Without a Face*
- *Real Genius*
- *Matilda* (or any movie based on a Roald Dahl book)
- *Dead Poets Society*

## Movies for gifted teens (not suitable for children under 13)

- *The Prestige*
- *The Hunt for Red October*
- *Proof*
- *The Emperor's Club*
- *First Knight*
- *Finding Forrester*
- *With Honors*
- *Taps*

## Tips for a successful event

- Decide ahead of time if you want to run two movies, one for kids and one for adults, or have a separate movie for teens. Make the invitation very clear as to who is invited. If you are going to divide, provide a sufficient number of adults for adequate supervision of the younger ones.
- Keep the activities appropriate to the age groups involved. If you think an activity may be too difficult for the younger ones but you want to combine as a group, pair them with a more mature member.
- Check [www.mpa.org](http://www.mpa.org) for information on rules regarding public performance of videos.





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## Showtime!

### Before the event

Set the snacks out in an area that will be accessible during the movie so that people can help themselves. Alternatively, plan to pause for an intermission.

### Ideas for pre- and post-movie activities

#### Play “Name that Tune” with movie music

Some movies with recognizable music are listed here:

- *Jaws*
- *Star Wars*
- *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
- *Titanic*
- *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*
- *E.T.*
- *Chariots of Fire*
- *The Wizard of Oz*
- *The Music Man* (and any other musicals)
- *Dr. Zhivago*
- *Snow White* (and many other animated movies)
- *Fame*
- *Footloose*
- *For Your Eyes Only*
- *Rocky*
- *Pirates of the Caribbean*



#### Choose the top 10 movie quotes of all time

To make this even more kid-friendly, limit the movies to animated features.

#### After the movie, have a renaming contest

Have participants (individually or in groups) come up with a new name for the movie. Vote on a winner. Your young members will probably want to write to the producer to convince him/her to change the title!



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## Have a movie trivia game

Questions can be found at the sites listed below, or divide the group in half and have each side create questions and challenge each other.

- [www.triviaplaying.com/93\\_movie3\\_Q\\_.htm](http://www.triviaplaying.com/93_movie3_Q_.htm)
- [www.inthe90s.com/generated/movietrivia.shtml](http://www.inthe90s.com/generated/movietrivia.shtml)
- [www.inthe80s.com/mtvtriv.shtml](http://www.inthe80s.com/mtvtriv.shtml)
- [www.usefultivia.com/movie\\_trivia/](http://www.usefultivia.com/movie_trivia/)

## Play Movie Bingo (board included in samples)

Use words from the movie you're watching or general movie terms. You can make the game much harder by giving clues to the words rather than the words themselves.

Here is a list of 25 generic movie terms and their clues. They are geared to a mixed audience, so some of the clues may seem easy to adults. Give everyone a blank form and show the list of words for them to write down in the spaces. Since the board has a free space, everyone will have to choose one word not to include on their board. This reduces the chance of identical duplicate winners. When someone calls out "Bingo!", do not tell him/her if each individual answer is correct; wait until he/she has called out all the answers required and then say, "That is Bingo" or "That is not Bingo." Otherwise, you will suddenly have 30 winners!

1. **Film:** This can mean the celluloid material on which the movie can be stored or the entire movie itself.
2. **Theater:** Shakespeare's Old Globe bears little resemblance to the modern version of this, which is called a "cinema" in most countries outside the United States.
3. **Popcorn:** According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the largest ball made out of this weighed 2,000 pounds.
4. **Animation:** Felix the Cat was the first character in this genre to achieve international stardom.
5. **Grip:** Although it sounds like you should be hanging on to it, this is actually the person who moves the camera around during moviemaking.
6. **Matinee:** Although the word comes from the French for "morning," this is usually a movie shown in the afternoon.
7. **Concessions:** These account for 40 percent of a movie theater's revenue, which is no surprise when the average price of a small bag of popcorn is \$4.75.
8. **Ticket:** The average price for one of these in 1990 was \$4.22.
9. **Screen:** The largest one of these in the world is in Darling Harbour in Sydney, Australia. It measures 97 feet by 117 feet.
10. **Seat:** When theaters switched to the stadium style of this, they were sued, claiming that it violated the Americans with Disabilities Act.



11. **Oscar®**: Tatum O’Neal was the youngest person to win a standard one of these at the age of 10, although Shirley Temple won an honorary one at the age of 5.
12. **Screen Actors Guild**: 120,000 people have paid the \$2,335 it costs to join this union that represents actors.
13. **Previews**: Although these are usually geared to all audiences, the movies they advertise are not.
14. **Script**: This can be a particular orthography or a synonym for “screenplay.”
15. **Thriller**: When Michael Jackson sang it, it reached number 4 on the Billboard Charts in the U.S. In a movie, it’s a suspenseful adventure.
16. **A-list**: James Ulmer developed a 100-point method to decide which stars belong on this.
17. **Gross**: Far from being disgusting, this term refers to the movie’s total earnings.
18. **Soundtrack**: While these used to be just for movies, even videogames have famous ones now, including *Final Fantasy*, which has inspired a piano collection CD.
19. **Characters**: The Greek alphabet has 24 of these. Movies can have many more, especially if you count extras.
20. **Critics**: Although disappointed fans have been known to boo and throw tomatoes, most of these just throw two thumbs down if they don’t like a film.
21. **Cast**: Before the advent of computer-animated crowd scenes, the director of the film *Gandhi* had to find 300,000 extras, making it the movie with the largest one of these in history.
22. **Blockbuster**: You have to make \$100 million in American dollars and make it fairly quickly if you want your movie to be called one of these.
23. **Premiere**: From the French meaning “first,” this is typically the first showing of a movie.
24. **Credits**: If you want to stick around through these at the end of *Return of the King*, you’ll have to stay an extra nine minutes and 33 seconds.
25. **Director**: If you want to win the Academy Award for being the best one of these, it helps to win best picture, too. Ask John Ford: he’s won it four times, but it took him 140 movies to do it.

