THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

PALEYEDUCATION @Home
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What We're Watching

Greetings from The Paley Center for Media's Education Department!

Welcome to the latest installment of "What We're Watching," a weekly Paley Education@Home guide. During this unprecedented time, we thought we would reach out to our community with some tips and ideas for consuming media with your kids! We know that screen time has increased so we're here to help! Each week we are highlighting a different theme that connects to two selected programs, one for younger kids and one for older students, each with related activities.

Consuming media with your kids is a perfect jumping-off point to making media literacy a part of your everyday lives. Familiarizing yourself with the basics is a great first step. In case you missed it, you can view our first edition about media literacy best practices. We also recommend the National Association for Media Literacy Education's Parents Guide—it's a terrific introduction!

Weekly Zoom Meet-ups
Thursdays, 3:00 to 3:30 pm ET

Students Grades 3+ can join us for a weekly Zoom Meet-up, **Thursdays from 3:00 to 3:30 pm ET**, to chat about the week's theme and engage in some hands-on learning led by a Paley Educator. Parents and teachers are welcome to join as well!

For connection details, please RSVP to eduny@paleycenter.org.

What We're Watching: Alfred Hitchcock

This week we're celebrating a special anniversary in cinema history—Alfred Hitchcock's masterpiece *Psycho* was released on June 16, 1960. The film was nothing short of a sensation when it hit theaters sixty years ago. Audiences loved the thriller—it broke box office records all over the world—while critics hemmed and hawed over the (at the time) shocking violence and indecency. With hindsight, we know that it is truly one of the most artistically and culturally iconic films of all time. Our understanding of how audiences experience suspense is deeply tied to the tropes used by Hitchcock in *Psycho* (and his

many other film and TV projects). Through elements like soundtrack, set design, lighting, and editing, the storytelling contains layers of tension and anxiety for the viewer to grapple with and, ultimately, delight in. We hope you enjoy being spooked as much as we do!

This Week's Recommendation for Younger Kids: Alfred Hitchcock Presents Ghost Stories for Young People

Ghost Stories for Young People (1962)
Recommended for Grades 3+
Available to stream on YouTube and Spotify

Psycho is admittedly much too scary for young viewers but we know that some kids enjoy spooky stories just as much as adults! This album of ghost stories is perfect for the kids looking for some chills and thrills. It employs all the same hallmark Hitchcock touches—suspense, humor, and captivating narratives. As an added benefit, audio stories can also be a great opportunity to work on critical listening and comprehension skills with young audiences!

Listening Questions
- What sounds did you hear? Try to name as many as you remember.
- Listen closely to the narrator's voice. Does it ever change? If so, why?
- Listen closely to the sound effects. What kinds of sounds are they?
- Do any of the sound effects give you information about the setting? How?
- Do any of the sound effects give you information about the action? How?
- Do you hear any music? What effect does the music have on your emotions?
- What effect do these spooky stories have on the listener? How do you feel when you listen to them?
- Why do you think people enjoy spooky stories so much?

Extension Activity: Tell Your Own Story!

Use this article as inspiration to write and record a spooky story of your own creation at home!

Additional Resources:

Build Better Listening Skills

This Week's Recommendation for Older Students: Psycho

Psycho (1960)
Recommended for Grades 9+
Available to rent on Amazon Prime Video, iTunes, and Google Play ($3.99)

It is easy to write off the horror genre as schlock or pulp—we know it's not everyone's cup of tea. But a film like *Psycho* proves that there is more to horror than jump scares and cheap thrills. It is a masterclass in story pacing, editing, and, ultimately, the power of suspense. The film follows Marion Crane, a secretary on the run, as she ends up at the Bates Motel. We won't say any more because the film earns every twist and turn. As Alfred Hitchcock once said, "There is no terror in the bang, only in the anticipation of it."

Viewing Questions:
- Notice everything you can about the setting(s) in the film. How do they make you feel? Why?
- Notice everything you can about the characters in the film. Is there a main character? Who is it? Does this answer ever change?
- What is the problem in the film? Does that problem change? How?

- How is information delivered in the film? Who has information? Who doesn't? What problems does that cause?
- Notice everything you can about the film's soundtrack. Does it stay constant or does it shift? What effect does it have on the viewer?
- Notice everything you can about the film's editing style. What effect does it have on the viewer?
- How do you feel while watching the film? How does suspense manifest physically and emotionally with a viewer?
- How do you think audiences would have felt watching the film in 1960?
- How does artful suspense improve storytelling?

Extension Activity

In this clip, Alfred Hitchcock explains the theory behind different styles of film editing. Using this as inspiration, try your hand at editing some footage in the style of Hitchcock using your favorite app: Instagram, Clips, Tik Tok, Snapchat, whatever you like!

Additional Resources

Alfred Hitchcock: from silent film director to inventor of modern horror

Alfred Hitchcock Explains the Plot Device He Called the 'MacGuffin'

The Greatness of "Psycho"

Young Game Designers: New for You!

We are thrilled to offer our online student community two exciting opportunities to learn game design through our partnership with the Urban Arts Partnership's School of Interactive Arts (SIA).

SIA: Summer Coding Camp: Apply now for a six-week (July 13 to August 2, 2020) virtual coding camp where you will learn the foundations of game design

and be introduced to C# programming language on the Unity game engine.

The Ghost School: Interactive Video Game That Teaches Computer Thinking: Create your avatar then make your way through the levels of the haunted schools as you learn programming logic and syntax, computational thinking, and more.

MORE INFO

Paley Online Classes

Explore these rich, full online classes, with complete thematic descriptions, clips from the Paley Archive, pre- and post-viewing questions, associated vocabulary, further online resources, and more.

Think Green
Fractured Fairy Tales
Portrayals of Women on Television
Get Up! Stand Up! The Civil Rights Movement and Television
and more!

As always, if you have any questions, thoughts, or ideas, don't hesitate to reach out to us at eduny@paleycenter.org.

Happy viewing,
Rebekah Fisk, Director of Education
Caroline Quigley, Senior Manager of School & Family Programs

Photos—Alfred Hitchcock: Hulton Archive/Getty Images & Moviestore/REX/Shutterstock

Support The Paley Center for Media

We hope this inspires you to watch and learn together in a new way at home! The Paley Center is here for you and, now more than ever before, we would deeply appreciate your support. Please consider making a donation:

$25	$50	$100	$250

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