



THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

PALEY EDUCATION @Home
presented by **citi**

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 are continuing to reach out to our community with tips and ideas for consuming media with kids! We know that screen time has increased and so we’re here to help. Each week we are highlighting a different theme that connects to selected programs for younger and older viewers, with related activities and resources.

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: Halloween

Happy Halloween! We are jumping right on the creepy bandwagon this week with our viewing recommendations—two spooky programs inspired by books, the first of which could make a great costume. We hope you find time to revisit these classic unsettling stories!

This Week's Recommendations for

Younger Viewers

Coraline (2009)

Recommended for Grades 4+

Available to stream on Starz

This stop-motion animated fantasy horror film is based on the Neil Gaiman novel of the same name. Lots of Neil Gaiman books have been adapted for the screen but this one is among our favorites. Coraline is an adventurous girl who has just moved to a new town, which she finds extremely boring, so boring in fact that her father suggests counting all the doors and windows on their house as an activity. As she wanders aimlessly around the house she discovers a small secret door that leads to a parallel world with a fantasy version of her life. This parallel world contains a sinister secret that Corlaine must risk her life to reveal.

Viewing Questions

- Describe Coraline. What kind of person is she?
- How is she treated by her parents and how does she feel about it?
- How is she treated differently by her parents in the other world? How does she feel about them? What does she like about life in the other world?
- Which family would you choose and why?
- When Coraline unlocks the secret door, she knows she is doing something she isn't supposed to do. Why do you think she does it anyway? How did it make you feel? What were the consequences?
- In what ways does Coraline demonstrate bravery throughout the story?
- What significance do mirrors have in the movie? Do you think they represent the real world or an illusion?
- How does the cat help Coraline over the course of the movie? What challenge does Coraline present to the other mother? How does Coraline trick the other mother and return home?
- What do you think Coraline learns from being in the other world?

Extension Activity

[How to Make Stop Motion Animation](#)

[Stop Motion Studio Software](#) - at \$4.99 it's not free but not expensive if you want to make animation.

Additional Resources

Read

Coraline by Neil Gaiman, Grades 3+

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman, Grades 4+

Watch

[Behind the Scenes of *Coraline*](#)

The Boxtrolls (2014), Grades 4+

Monster House (2006), Grades 5+

The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993), Grades 2+

ParaNorman (2012), Grades 5+



This Week's Recommendations for Older Viewers

The Simpsons: Treehouse of Horror V: "The Shinning"

Recommended for Grades 5+

Available to stream on Disney+

Now in its thirty-second season, *The Simpsons* features an annual Halloween

special that, like every episode, is bursting with pop culture references. *Treehouse of Horror* began during the second season of the show and has made references to Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven," *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Stranger Things*, *The Exorcist*, *Amityville Horror*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Coraline*, to name a few. The fifth installment includes a segment called "The Shinning" that is based on the terrifying movie *The Shining*, which was in turn based on a Stephen King novel of the same name. In this segment, the Simpsons become the winter caretakers of Mr. Burns's mountain lodge where Homer goes insane and tries to murder the family. As frozen Homer suggests at the end, "Let us all bask in television's warm glowing warming glow," and enjoy this episode.

Viewing Questions

- What is the setting for "The Shinning" segment?
- What does Mr. Burns do to make the Simpson's life unpleasant while working at the mountain house? What do we see him pile into the trunk of his car at the beginning? What does Smithers suggest the result will be?
- What do we learn from groundskeeper Willy at the maze?
- What makes Homer go insane?
- How does the family stop Homer from wanting to kill them and survive?
- How is "The Shinning" similar to *The Shining*? How is it different?

Extension Activity

[Make a Murder of Crows](#)

Additional Resources

Watch

Looney Tunes: "Transylvania 6-5000" S28 EP7

The Shining (1980), Grades 10+

The Simpsons: *Treehouse of Horror* episodes

Read

The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson

The Raven Boys by Maggie Stiefvater

Through the Woods by Emily Carroll

[Visit The Poe Museum](#)

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—*Simpsons*: Fox; *Coraline*: Focus Features/Laika Pandemonium Films

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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