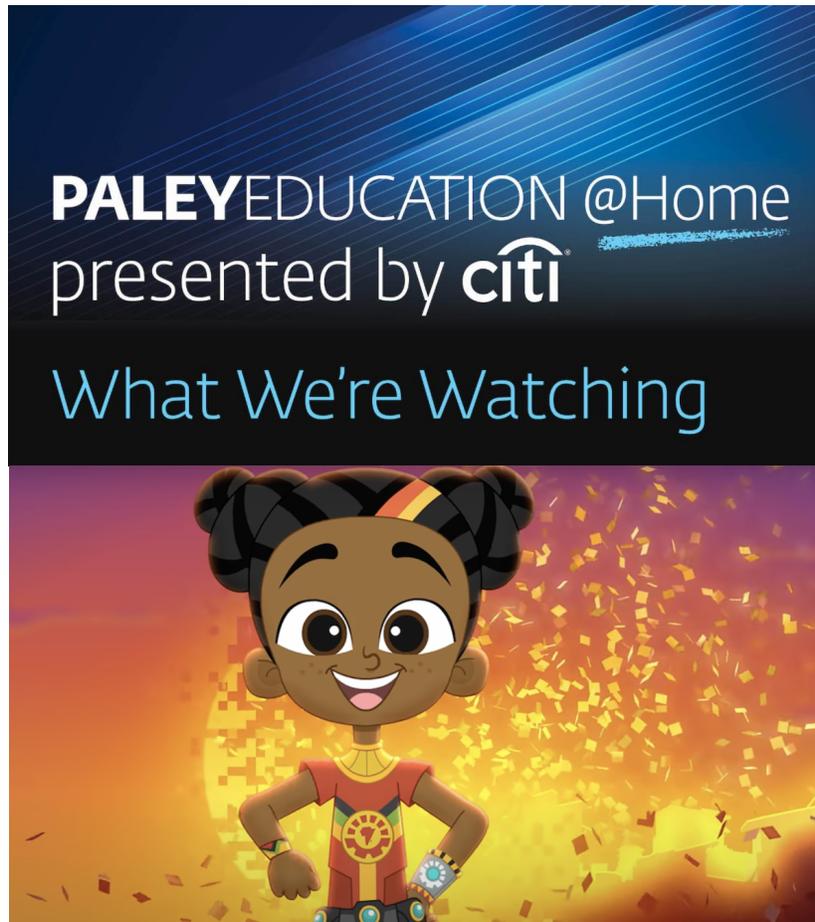


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**THE PALEY** CENTER FOR MEDIA



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

Welcome to the latest installment of "What We're Watching." Twice a month the education department reaches out to the community with tips and ideas for consuming media with kids by highlighting different themes that connect to two selected programs, one for younger viewers and one for older viewers, each with related activities and resources.

Watching media alongside 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. You can [view our first newsletter about media literacy best practices archived here](#). We also recommend the [National](#)

[Association for Media Literacy Education's Parents Guide](#)—it's a terrific introduction!

## What We're Watching: I'm Super, Thanks for Asking

Ms. Marvel, Shuri, Black Widow, She-Hulk and Supergirl are just a few of the female superhero protagonists to grace our screens in recent years. Historically dominated by men, the superhero genre has made huge efforts to diversify its superpower wielding main characters and we say bring it on. Though we've become accustomed to the big budget, high-tech special effects of blockbusters starring most of these powerful women, the superheroes in the stories we are recommending this week are perhaps less well known but are of course just as inspiring, brave, intelligent, and powerful as the DC and Marvel varieties. We hope you enjoy them both!

## This Week's Recommendations for Younger Viewers

### **Super Sema: "GPS: Goat Positioning System" (2021)**

*Recommended for Grades 1+*

[Available on YouTube](#)

Super Sema follows the world-changing adventures of an extraordinary young girl Sema and her twin brother MB on their mission to protect their African town of Dunia from the villain Tobor. In this episode, Tobor kidnaps Sema's beloved pet goat, and reveals that he literally has no heart. Sema is devastated. She must find Moyo! Sema looks to the stars for inspiration and uses her creativity and science knowledge to rescue Moyo.

### **Viewing Questions**

- What are Sema, MB and Moyo doing at the beginning of the episode?
- What does Sema tell Tobor about how it feels to be loved? What does he say in response?
- Why does he steal Moyo?
- How do the stars help Sema figure out what to do?
- What do Sema and MB "technovate" in order to save Moyo?

## Extension Activity: Design Your Own Superhero

Create a superhero you would want to see in a movie and then draw it! Use these questions to help get your idea started.

- What is your hero's origin story? How do they get their superpowers and name? What is their secret identity?
- What does their costume look like? How does it relate to their name and

superpowers?

- Do they have a weakness?
- Who is their arch nemesis?
- Do they work alone, have a sidekick (like Batman and Robin) or are they part of a super group of heroes (like the X-Men or Justice League)?
- What city or place do they protect?

## Additional Resources

### Read

*Lucia the Luchador* by Cynthia Leonor Garza

*The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl* comic series by Ryan North

### Watch

*Ada Twist Scientist* (2021)

[Bino and Fino](#)

*Moongirl and Devil Dinosaur* (2023)

*Zarafa* (2012)



## This Week's Recommendations for Older Viewers

### **Supa Modo (2018)**

*Recommended for Grades 7+*

*Available on Amazon (\$2 rental in SD)*

This heartwarming movie is about a girl named Jo who has cancer and only a short time to live. We find out right away that Jo loves superheroes and kung fu movies which she discusses with her best friend nonstop. Jo's sister and mother argue with each other about whether to indulge her fantasy about having superpowers during the final weeks of her life. Over the course of the story, Jo doesn't prevail over evil or defeat an enemy with force like a

traditional superhero; rather her ability to use her imagination is what triumphs over her illness and we see her win the battle against allowing it to define her life. She brings her village together, teaches her family lessons about the importance of believing in dreams, and never loses a sense of who she is. In this remarkable film, being a superhero is not about rejecting human weakness, but more about embracing it and believing you are one anyway.

### **Viewing Questions**

- When we first meet Jo, where is she and what do we learn about her? What does she talk about with her friend nonstop? What kinds of movies do they love?
- What superpower does Jo wish she had?
- Why do you think Jo's mother does not want to tell her about her illness? How does Jo's sister feel differently? What does she secretly do for Jo and how does it make Jo feel?
- Why do you think the whole village plays along to make it appear as though Jo has superpowers? What are the two superpowers Jo uses in these scenes? Do you think she knows they are pretending or not? Why might she play along as well?
- What happens to Jo eventually and what does the village decide to do?
- In what ways does the finished superhero film affect the village and Jo's mother? What do you think the main message of the film is?

## **Additional Resources**

### **Read**

*Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi

*The Gilded Ones* by Namina Forna

*Teen Titans: Raven* by Kami Garcia

### **Watch**

*Fast Color* (2018)

*Me Earl and the Dying Girl* (2015)

*Ms. Marvel* (2022)

*Phantom Boy* (2015)

*Wakanda Forever* (2022)

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

Happy viewing,

**Carlos Pareja**  
**Manager of Education**

**Rebekah Fisk**  
**Director of Education**



## NYC High School Students: Apply for a paid, media-focused internship

Teen Transmitters is a paid 100-hour summer internship for rising 11th and 12th grade students who attend New York City public high schools. This summer 2023 internship will last five weeks, meeting four times a week and is in-person at the Paley Center in Manhattan.

**Applications are due by April 16.**

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