

## Class Film Permission Slip

Our school suggests a parental permission for your student to view movies that are used in our curriculum, or that are selected by our teachers, which are rated PG-13 or R. Showing your son or daughter films or portions of films such as *13<sup>th</sup>* helps enable them to benefit from another medium as a resource in their study of history. I understand that in some scenes within these movies there are difficult sequences to watch, violence, vulgar language, and sometimes sexual situations yet if I were to eliminate every movie deemed to have something objectionable in it, I would lose the use of relevant tools for learning.

Movies, along with our hands-on activities such as reading, in-class discussion groups, trials, debates, and research projects, give students a well-rounded opportunity to enrich class. Movies go beyond dry facts and help bring events “alive.” U.S. History is at times jarring, depressing and sometimes heart wrenching, but the films help bring empathy to our students. It puts students in an uncomfortable position from which hopefully they can grow. Rest assured that I will use proper discretion when showing movies. Should you choose not to allow your child to watch any one of the films I have selected, please write Mr. Davey a note below and I will determine an alternative assignment.

Thank you for taking the time to read and sign this permission form. There are many excerpts of films that will be shown in class but the films that will be shown in their entirety include the following (brief description from IMDB or Rotten Tomatoes): Note, **we will not have time for all of these and some may instead be offered to watch for extra credit.**

***13<sup>th</sup>***, directed by Ava DuVernay (2016) Unrated, Common Sense Media parent rating 14+ (Rotten Tomato score 97%) This documentary explores the evolution of racial bias in the criminal justice system since the Civil War, and explores the reasons underlying the boom in the U.S. prison population.

***Blindspotting***, directed by Carlos Lopez Estrada (2018) Rated R, Common sense media 15+ (Rotten Tomato score 94%) *Blindspotting* is a mature indie dramedy about how two friends in Oakland -- one black and one white -- are affected by race and gentrification. As timely as it is overall impactful, *Blindspotting* blends buddy comedy with seething social commentary, and rises on the strength of Daveed Diggs' powerful performance. Common sense media says that this film should be age 15+ and “*Blindspotting* is the kind of film that provokes hours of conversation. Only masterpieces and memorably terrible movies do that, and this film is the former.”

***Bridge of Spies***, directed by Steven Spielberg Rated PG-13 (Rotten Tomato score 91%) “During the Cold War, the Soviet Union captures U.S. pilot Francis Gary Powers after shooting down his U-2 spy plane. Sentenced to 10 years in prison, Powers' only hope is New York lawyer James Donovan (Tom Hanks), recruited by a CIA operative to negotiate his release.”

***Dick***, directed by Andrew Fleming, Rated PG-13 (Rotten Tomatoes score 72%) A clever, quirky alternate history which farcically re-imagines the Watergate era from the perspective of two teenage girls. The two accidentally stumble into the middle of the infamous Watergate robbery and to keep them quiet, Nixon appoints them as honorary dog walkers. As they travel in and out of the White House, their seemingly innocent actions start a chain of events that may eventually lead to Nixon's resignation as president of the United States.

***Invasion of the Bodysnatchers***, directed by Phillip Kaufman, Rated PG (1978) (Rotten Tomatoes score 92%) “Employing gritty camerawork and evocative sound effects, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is a powerful remake that expands upon themes and ideas only lightly explored in the original. Besieged by an invisible enemy” that represents communism or the House Un-American Activities Committee Red Scare, the film employs symbolism to make social commentary.

***Just Mercy***, directed by Destin Daniel Cretton (2019) rated PG-13, (Rotten Tomatoes score 85%, audience score 99%) After graduating from Harvard, Bryan Stevenson heads to Alabama to defend those wrongly condemned or those not afforded proper representation. One of his first cases is that of Walter McMillian, who is sentenced to die in 1987 for the murder of an 18-year-old girl, despite evidence proving his innocence. In the years that follow, Stevenson encounters racism and legal and political maneuverings as he tirelessly fights for McMillian's life. The film values the death penalty in the USA in conjunction with poverty and race by following Bryan Stevenson’s launching of the Equal Justice Initiative.

***Matewan***, directed by John Sayles (1987) rated PG13 (Rotten Tomatoes score 94%)

“Filmed in the coal country of West Virginia, "Matewan" celebrates labor organizing in the context of a 1920s work stoppage. Union organizer, Joe Kenehan (Chris Cooper), a scab named "Few Clothes" Johnson (James Earl Jones) and a sympathetic mayor and police chief heroically fight the power represented by a coal company and Matewan's vested interests so that justice and workers' rights need not take a back seat to squalid working conditions, exploitation and the bottom line.”

**Platoon**, directed by Oliver Stone (1986) Rated R (Rotten Tomatoes score 89%)

Informed by director Oliver Stone's personal experiences in Vietnam, *Platoon* forgoes easy sermonizing in favor of a harrowing, ground-level view of war. Chris Taylor (Charlie Sheen) leaves his university studies to enlist in combat duty in Vietnam in 1967. Once he's on the ground in the middle of battle, his idealism fades.

**RBG**, directed by Betsy West & Judy Cohen (2018) rated PG, (Rotten Tomato score 93%)

Documentary that chronicles the career of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg that focuses on the legal reforms that have pursued equal treatment before the law of women in the United States from the 1970s to the present.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I give my son/daughter permission to view curriculum and school appropriate full-length movies rated PG-13 or R and selected film clips and documentaries.

\_\_\_\_ No, I do not give my son/daughter permission to view curriculum and school appropriate full-length movies of the types mentioned in this letter. I understand alternate learning experiences will be provided for my child while the movie is being watched.

If there is one particular film I am concerned with It is: \_\_\_\_\_ and would like my child to have another learning vehicle provided. Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ **Note to teacher:**