

Dear Prof. Gordon,

Regarding your comments about the quality of the students in schools today, I wish to bring to your attention five movies about teachers and students:

*Miracle Worker* (1962), dir. Arthur Penn. Cast: Ann Bancroft, Patty Duke, Victor Jory. A young woman teacher breaks through the wall of silence surrounding her student, a blind and deaf girl.

*An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), dir. Taylor Hackford. Cast: Richard Gere, Louis Gossett Jr., Debra Winger, David Keith. A Navy drill instructor challenges a troubled flight student to complete his studies, with positive results.

*Dead Poets Society* (1989), dir. Peter Weir. Cast: Robin Williams, Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke. An English teacher inspires demoralized students to study poetry and revive a literary club.

*Renaissance Man* (1994), dir. Penny Marshall. Cast: Danny De Vito, Gregory Hines, James Remar. A civilian teacher inspires low-achieving soldiers to learn Shakespeare and excel academically.

*School of Rock* (2003), dir. Richard Linklater. Cast: Jack Black, Joan Cusack, Sarah Silverman. A musician disguised as a substitute teacher transforms a group of fifth graders into a rock and roll band.

The theme of all five movies is that students have potential and with proper guidance and encouragement from their instructors can succeed.

Phil

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