

Curl up in a warm blanket, pop the popcorn and check out these great movies that depict leadership in a subtle way. Dr. Tim Elmore has identified the top ten leadership movies of 2021 shown in dramas, comedies, thrillers and action adventures. Check them out for some great entertainment and discussion! Please watch them before you discuss them with teens, as some are rated R and not appropriate for younger audiences.

King Richard (PG-13) This is the story of how tennis phenoms, Serena and Venus Williams, were raised by their dad and mom. Both parents attempt to balance between a life of *requiring excellence* and *offering ownership* to their daughters as teens. Together they illustrate the balance all great leaders must furnish to their teams, even if they are our offspring. Great discussion for leaders and parents.

Passing (PG-13) This is the story of Clare, a black woman who passes for a white woman during the 1920s while living in New York. It's an adaptation of Rebecca Hall's novel about a woman who quietly lives a lie, not because she is a horrible person but simply because she enjoys the perks of being white and not enduring the treatment minorities received a hundred years ago. The burden she carries inside becomes too heavy. She longs for a reality that isn't fully in her grasp and wants to lead a life of integrity, even if it means giving up her past. Great discussion starter on identity and honesty.

Free Guy (PG-13) This is a light-hearted family comedy. When a bank teller named Guy discovers he's actually a background player in an open-world video game, he decides to become the hero of his own story. Instead of merely fitting into someone else's ideas, he takes the reins of his destiny, making his own choices and maturing along the way. The conversation is about how ordinary people who decide to take responsibility for their lives and exercise agency can take charge of their own futures.

The Little Things (R) This crime thriller is about a deputy sheriff and a detective who search for a serial killer who is terrorizing Los Angeles. As they track the culprit, Baxter is unaware that the investigation is conjuring up echoes of Deacon's past, uncovering disturbing secrets that could threaten him as well as the case. This film is rated R, which may prevent you from discussing it with younger students, but it clearly sparks discussions about the role of integrity, honesty, and ethics in our lives as we face hard facts.

CODA (PG-13) The term *CODA* stands for Children Of Deaf Adults. Ruby is the only hearing person in her family of four. This teenage daughter of two deaf parents wants to learn to sing instead of working in the family business, catching and selling fish in a seaport village. Her parents need her as a translator for them to earn their living. She is torn between fitting into her family's tradition of sustaining their livelihood and breaking out to become who she feels she was gifted to be. Great discussion starter on using our gifts in the best fashion.

Citizen Ashe (Not Rated Documentary) This is the story of Arthur Ashe, the first black tennis star. According to Wikipedia, he is the only black man to win the singles title at Wimbledon, the Australian Open, and the U.S. Open. This story underscores the difficulties Ashe endured when he was forced to practice on different tennis courts than his white counterparts and his problems competing in certain matches. The leadership conversation is how one's talent can offer a platform for positive influence if we leverage it well.

American Underdog (PG) This is the story of Curt Warner, the undrafted quarterback of the St. Louis Rams NFL team. Curt didn't play college football at a Power Five conference school. He lasted one day at tryouts for the Green Bay Packers and was cut. He became homeless and was stocking shelves at a Hy-Vee grocery store when he decided he would not give up on his dream. He began playing arena football in Iowa and got noticed. Curt's leadership journey was a personal one. His reputation was about running from challenges, not being quick enough, and failing to make necessary decisions. He emerged not only as an MVP athlete but as a leader both on the field and at home. This will spark great discussion on what's required of a leader.

Tick, Tick, Boom (PG-13) Jonathan Larson is turning 30 and wants to make a difference with his life, to make a mark on this world. He is a leader in the sense that he tries to leverage his talent and relationships to do something that will impact his industry. The story illustrates resilience, and the first song in the film reveals the title. The leadership conversation is about stewarding our time and talents and how to manage them both.

Spider-Man: No Way Home (PG-13) Spiderman comes to believe if you have power, you have the responsibility to serve. Spiderman matures in his understanding of what he's to do with his influence. He must take on nearly all of his past villains and find a way to cure them (not kill them) of their evil. The leadership conversation surrounds doing the right thing, using your influence for good, and the motivation of revenge vs. responsibility.

Encanto (PG) This is a heartwarming animated film from Disney of how families are led and sustained. The magic of the Encanto has blessed every child in the family with a unique gift—every child except Mirabel.

Poor Mirabel is reminded she has no extraordinary gift while her sisters' gifts are obvious. Her journey leads her to discover why the magic is weakening and how her initiative and influence can save the day, even without an outstanding talent. The conversation is about gifts, influence, and how everyone plays a role on a team or family.

This article is adapted from Dr. Tim Elmore, CEO and founder of Growing Leaders, an international non-profit organization created to develop leadership and life skills in the emerging generations.

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Article Header

“Movie Entertainment Displays Leadership”

“Chasing Clovers”

By Patsy L. Maddy

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