



Learning Guide  
for Kids and Parents

**Kane Miller**  
A DIVISION OF EDC PUBLISHING

## THE HAYLEY & KIRK WHELAN SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAM

Dear Parents/Guardians of Attendees,

Please find attached the Kirk Whelan Vacation Program itinerary for this school vacation. In it, you will find the movies and associated learning activities we have organized to give your children a deeper understanding of media, critical thinking and the world around them. Because Hayley has declared this summary “boring,” “tedious” and “DAD, nobody’s even going to come if you’re going to be like this,” I have allowed her to add a guide for adults after each movie so that there are topics for you to discuss with your children afterward if you would like to enhance their education further.

The Vacation Program is fully catered with healthy meals and snacks, much to Hayley’s consternation, and also involves outdoor activities such as obstacle courses, when we watch an action movie, or correct ways to interact with wildlife when we watch Disney talking animal movies.

We hope your child enjoys the program!

All the best,  
Kirk & Hayley Whelan

### **Ghostbusters (1984) (PG), Ghostbusters II (1989) (PG), Ghostbusters (2016) (PG-13)**

A group of friends do everything they can to save New York City from ghosts while driving around in a hearse with a siren. That’s basically the plotline for all of them, and they are *hilarious*.

#### **HAYLEY’S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

These can be a little scary for some adults who don’t like to be covered in goo or don’t like jump scares. Adults can learn from Venkman about how you can be a terrible person who electrocutes people but still be the main character everyone watching wants to get the girl. They can also learn that movies made with a team of girls can be just as funny as movies made with a team of boys, which was somehow not completely obvious.

#### **KIRK’S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Slimer – Ghostbusters’ best see-through ghoul – knows that making slime is great fun! Your parents will love finding it stuck to the couch, or accidentally putting it in the washing machine, or in their favorite shoes.

### **SLIME RECIPE**

1. Measure ½ cup of PVA glue into a bowl.
2. Add ½ cup of water and mix mix mix!
3. Once this is all mixed up, here is where you can put in a few drops of food coloring and a few shakes/handfuls of glitter if you want.
4. Add ½ teaspoon of baking soda. (A little less for gooier slime and a little more for thicker slime!)
5. Add 1 tablespoon of saline solution to the mix. If no one in your family uses contact lenses and there is no contact lens solution around, get a new family.
6. Stir like crazy!
7. Knead like bread!
8. And then play like a kid with slime!

Investigate the science behind how slime works! You might have to look up the words “molecules,” “polymer” and “ewwww.”

### **Honey, I Shrunk The Kids (1989) (PG)**

When a bunch of kids accidentally activate a shrinking machine, they are thrown out with the trash and have to make their way home across their dangerous front yard.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Next time you yell at your children for leaving toys in the yard, don't forget that one day they might need to use those exact toys to save their lives.

### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

While sadly people-shrinking machines aren't real, do you know you probably have a shrinking machine **RIGHT IN YOUR OWN HOME?** It's called an **OVEN**, and it can magically shrink objects. Specific objects, to be clear. Don't put Duplo in there to make Lego.

#### **HOW TO SHRINK A BAG OF CHIPS**

1. Pick your bag of chips. Make sure the bag is plastic and not one of those foil-lined ones – they're usually silver inside, or have it written on the bag.
2. Give your dad all of the chips to eat.
3. Preheat your oven to about 410 degrees.
4. Wash the bag out thoroughly with dishwashing liquid and water. Don't put it in the dishwasher. That's lazy and a bad idea. Dry it off.
5. Lay foil on a baking sheet.
6. Put your chip bag on top.
7. Bake in the oven for about two to three minutes. Keep your eye on it! It will happen pretty fast.
8. Very carefully, using an oven mitt, take out the now-tiny chip bag.
9. Wish that you had more chips.

### **Mulan (1998) (G)**

Nearly 2000 years ago, a young woman pretends to be a man in order to prevent her ailing father from being sent to fight the Huns. A useless dragon voiced by Eddie Murphy is sent to help her.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Honestly, there is almost TOO much to talk about here. Adults can use this movie to ask themselves if they are putting too much pressure on their children to be perfectly ladylike tea servers. They can also ask themselves whether they think conscription is a good idea. Adults can also make sure that they tell their children that girls don't have to dress as boys to do "boy" things and ALSO, that there are NO BOY THINGS, and it is the same the other way around and boys can do "girl" things because there are NO GIRL THINGS, GOT IT??

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Hua Mulan is part of a well-known Chinese legend. How does the original story of Hua Mulan differ from the Disney movie?

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE TO MAKING FIREWORKS**

1. I'm kidding!

### **The Mighty Ducks (1992) (PG)**

When a jerkjack lawyer gets a community service order that means he has to coach a mostly awful junior ice hockey team, he doesn't learn any lessons and everyone has a bad time. (I'm kidding, it's Disney! He learns HEAPS of lessons.)

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Don't drink and drive, EVEN if it means you end up with a great movie.

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Ice hockey can be a bit tricky to learn when you live in a

sunburned country like ours. Doesn't mean you can't have any icy fun though, right?

If you have a table that can deal with having ice on it (ASK YOUR GROWN-UPS FIRST, KIDS), try making little goals with cardboard and twine, set them up on each end of the table, then use spoons to bat ice around into the goals. If you scratch up the table, tell them it was Hayley's idea.

### **An Affair to Remember (1957) (NR)**

Two people in other relationships meet on a cruise and fall in love, then decide to meet up in six months' time if they have followed their dreams. Fate, who is always a jerk, gets in the way.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Adults need to know that you should not leave relationships for other people you met on a boat once, EVEN if that person is Cary Grant. In fact, never let your family go on cruises anywhere. K. and his family went on one once and they ALL got sick.

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Nickie wanted to be a painter but had a fear of failure. What do you want to do that you're afraid of? Do something today to achieve that dream. Ask an adult for help if you need it – or another kid if the adults around you are useless.

### **The Princess Bride (1987) (PG)**

Stuck at home one day, a kid has an adventure story read to him by his granddad. In it, a beautiful woman called Buttercup falls in

love with a farmhand, who is later thought to have been killed by pirates. Buttercup is forced to marry, like, one of the worst people in film, Prince Humperdinck, but is thankfully kidnapped and almost killed by some bad guys who might not be as bad as they seem. Though one of them definitely is.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Adults can practice saying the phrase “as you wish” to every demand their child makes. Failing that, adults should read to kids whenever they can, *even* if it is a kissing book. Because sometimes even kissing books are not so bad.

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

The Dread Pirate Roberts is not quite who he seems to be.

It's time to create your own secret identity!

Why do you need it? What will it be?

What will you use it for? (Please don't say “for evil.”)

Vizzini says the word “inconceivable” an inconceivable amount of times. What are five synonyms he could have used instead to save everyone from getting annoyed at him?

### **The Lego Movie (2014) (PG)**

Emmet, a generic Lego man living a boring, friendless existence, accidentally stumbles upon a magical Lego piece that makes him “The Special,” and meets a whole new group of people who think that he can do more than be a generic Lego man. But can he?

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Even though in this movie an adult learns to share his toys with his son, I kinda felt bad for the dad who spent all his time building

things that then got messed up by his kid. Like, I know sharing is good, but can't you have anything nice for yourself as well?

Basically, what I'm saying is that adults should actually realize that I don't *have* to share my Barbies with Jennifer even if I don't play with them anymore because she literally murders them.

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Lego is always fun!

Draw a design on paper you think you could make out of Lego.

Never build it.

Now you understand what it's like to be an adult, working human who doesn't get to hang out and play all day like SOME ... [*Hayley's note – this went on for a while. It was a bad day.*]

### **Citizen Kane (1941) (PG)**

A dying newspaper tycoon utters the word “Rosebud” in the Greatest Film of All Time\* and spends the next two hours going through the major events of his life to find out why.

\*Debatable, but it is *really* good.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

DRINK IT IN. LOOK UP EVERY TECHNIQUE THAT ORSON WELLES PIONEERED. WRITE AN 8000-WORD ESSAY ABOUT EVERY TECHNIQUE USED IN THIS FILM, THEN WRITE 8000 WORDS MORE. WATCH THE MOVIE EIGHTEEN TIMES A DAY. WRITE SIX ESSAYS ON WHY “ROSEBUD” WAS KANE'S LAST WORD. DISCUSS HIS REGRETS. THINK ABOUT HOW YOUNG WELLES WAS WHEN HE MADE THIS THE NEXT TIME

YOU TELL KIDS THAT THEY'RE TOO YOUNG TO DO THINGS. LOOK UP THE HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS. WHO IS THIS BASED ON? IN THE SCENE WHERE

[*Kirk's note – cut for reasons of extreme length.*]

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

Make a thirty-minute movie based on the word “Rosebud” and that time you fell into a bush while playing in the backyard. It's super easy and nothing will go wrong. Make sure you read this part before the entire book that happened before it.

### **Who Framed Roger Rabbit? (1988) (PG)**

In a world where real humans live alongside animated cartoon characters, someone is out to destroy toons once and for all. It's up to the goofy animated Roger Rabbit, who's been accused of murder, and private detective Eddie Valiant – a human who hates toons after his brother was killed by one – to save Toontown, and themselves.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

Adults should all be aware that while babies look all sweet and innocent, they are actually professionally awful. Somehow, adults forget this and sometimes have *more* than one kid! Don't they remember when the baby was in charge the first time? (Wait, I don't mean you should stop after the first kid ... maybe the second though.)

#### **KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS**

This movie did an excellent job of having live action and 2D cartoon animation happening on the screen at the same time –

something few movies ever tried (3D, of course, is another story).

How can you make a real person interact with something that isn't even there?

Go find a newspaper and see if you can find a picture of a person, or a group of people (or even some animals!). Using pens, pencils, markers or even paint, can you draw a cartoonish character to fit naturally into the scene? You'll have to think about other things in the picture – where are the people looking? Could your character be hiding behind a lamppost? They can be anything you want – *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* is full of ridiculous characters. Ghosts going through walls! Cakes with feet! Go nuts!

### **Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope (1977) (PG)**

The entire universe is in danger of being destroyed by Darth Vader and his ultimate, planet-sized weapon, the Death Star. But there is hope – in a young man harnessing an old power, a princess, a criminal, some robots, a Wookiee and the rebel forces behind them.

#### **HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS**

There's this great old parody of *Star Wars* made like thirty years ago called *Spaceballs*, and if you haven't made your family watch it, you really should. Princess Vespa is constantly underestimated by the people around her, AND made to marry a super-boring prince she doesn't love, but proves that you can be the type of girl who's into hair and makeup and still be better with a gun than everyone around you. Anyway, back to actual *Star Wars* – adults should *always* tell kids if they have secret brothers or sisters out there. Seriously. ALWAYS.

#### KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS

To hear more about my theory of why Chewbacca and the robots did not get an award for their actions in this series, please see my full-length academic book *Why Chewbacca and the Robots Did Not Get an Award in Star Wars*, pp17–293, Rolando Press, 2003.

#### **The Birds (1963) (PG-13)**

One of legendary director Alfred Hitchcock's best films. After a woman visits a small town to deliver a pair of lovebirds to a new acquaintance, she – and the entire town – is suddenly under deadly attack by flocks of birds.

#### HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS

Even though Hitchcock is pretty old-timey – some of his films were in black-and-white from a time when the world was old and colorless, and the kissing at the start of *Psycho* is wayyy too loud – he is really great at creating suspense. Sometimes you just need a long moment to create tension. Next time you think your kid is lying, try a very long, quiet stare. The tension will ruin them. I *guarantee* it.

#### KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS

While we've all heard stories about being swooped at by magpies (Samson once told me that's how he got his scar), most of the time birds are a lovely, friendly, chirpy addition to the neighborhood. Still, Hitchcock, and Daphne Du Maurier (who wrote a story Hitchcock loosely based the movie on), found terror in the mundane. Write a scary story about a usually placid animal becoming terrifying. Snails? Possums? (Actually brushtail possums are already a little terrifying.) Quokkas? Let your imagination scare the pants off you.

#### **Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (2006) (PG-13)**

The second in a series of swashbuckling pirate movies based on a Disney ride, with a governor's tough daughter, a blacksmith and a cantankerous pirate going on adventures on the high seas. Lots of curses, secrets, double-crossing and dead people who don't seem to be entirely dead.

#### HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS

For the millionth time, grown-ups, stop making your daughters marry people just to further their careers. AND don't make them wear suffocating fashion choices that almost kill them. Let them wear *shorts*. [*Kirk's note – that was the first movie.*] RIGHT, YES, I meant adults should also remember that gambling is terrible and to stop making bargains with people who have octopuses on their faces.

#### KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS

Now that compasses are easy to find (there's probably an app on your closest grown-up's phone), it's easy to find buried treasure, arrrrr! Get a bunch of gold chocolate coins (or real coins, if you have that kind of money), stick them in a sealed sandwich bag, and bury them somewhere in your backyard, or even hide them in your home. Starting from your front door, write down the instructions for where you've hidden your doubloons. Five steps northeast! Six steps south! And so on! Feel free to lead your crew entirely on the wrong path before eventually coming across your hidden treasure. Give the instructions to your friends, and watch them search for the booty. (Make sure you've saved half of them for yourself, because your friends probably won't share with you after you've sent them traipsing all over the place.)

## The Iron Giant (1999) (PG)

In 1957, a strange object falls from space into the ocean off America, where all space things in movies happen. It turns out to be a giant robot that likes to eat metal, can fix itself and is happy to make friends with a young boy called Hogarth.

When bad guys see the robot as a weapon, Hogarth has to try and save his new pal – or his whole town might be in danger.

### HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS

1. Why would you want to ever fight for weapons? They kill like 80 percent of all heroes' family members in movies. I mean, *Bambi*.
2. Comic books are GREAT and can save lives.

### KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS

When the iron giant reads a *Superman* comic, it changes how he reacts to things. Do you read comics? If not, ask a friend for one, or head to your friendly neighborhood library or comic book shop! If you already have comics of your own, pick your favorite.

Do you know that comics are sometimes more than just the big loud stories that they appear to be on the outside?

Take X-Men, for example. They're mutants, but they can't help it – it's just how they're born. People are cruel to them for being different. Do you think this could represent something else?

What about Superman? Is he just a hero? Include some history – what era were these characters invented? Do you think that made an impact on the character?

[Hayley's note – Dad, did you ... did you just make comics boring?]

## Some Like it Hot (1959) (PG-13)

A black-and-white comedy where two musicians, after witnessing a gangster shootout in Chicago, fear for their lives and have to go into hiding. They dress as women and join a troupe heading to Miami, where one falls in love with the band's lead singer – the amazing Marilyn Monroe – and another has to fend off a very interested, very rich man. Danger and smooches follow.

### HAYLEY'S GUIDE FOR ADULTS

Back when this was made in 1959, movies didn't really have ratings like G and PG, but were under control of this code nicknamed "The Hays Code," where movies had to follow strict rules where they couldn't be too rude/scary/gross/sexy. By the time this movie came out, the code wasn't quite so strict, which is good, because it has a man falling in love with a man in a dress and you just *know* that old-timey businessmen in hats would get real huffy about that. Anyway, now we have ratings and people\* can make their own decisions instead of a company making them for you. Hooray!

\*Okay, our parents or child locks on our iPads are still making decisions for us, but it's an improvement.

### KIRK'S GUIDE FOR KIDS

Have you ever had to disguise yourself? I'll assume that you're not a criminal and so the answer is probably not. But have you ever tried? What do you think you might need to do to your face to make yourself look very different?

You might be able to borrow someone's mascara to give yourself long fluttery eyelashes or brush some of the hairs on your upper lip to give yourself a moustache. Can you make your hair look completely different? You can use all kinds of stuff from your



house to change your appearance. Want curls? Wrap wet hair around empty toilet paper rolls and pin them to your head until they're dry. Want a tattoo? Use a fine line pen to draw something tough on your arm, like a butterfly with a mohawk. Try standing up straight or slouching more. Swap clothes with a friend (or someone in your family). If you've got a handful of change, take it to a thrift shop and see if you can't buy yourself a sneaky new look – some bejeweled grandma shirts, or grandad high pants, sunglasses, a hat. Imagine yourself as a whole new person. Can you fool someone you know into not recognizing you?

## HAYLEY'S LIST OF SPOOKY KIDS' MOVIES

**The Goonies (PG)**

**Hocus Pocus (PG)**

**Monsters, Inc. (G)**

**Labyrinth (PG)**

**Boxtrolls (PG)**

**The Spiderwick Chronicles (PG)**

**Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (PG)**

**Coraline (PG)**

**Frankenweenie (PG)**

(Or basically anything that Tim Burton has directed)

**The Mummy (1932) (PG)**

**Spirited Away (PG)**

**Where the Wild Things Are (PG)**

**Dracula (1931) (PG) & Bride of Frankenstein (1935) (PG)**

(Hard to get but classics!)

**Corpse Bride (PG)**

**Arachnophobia (PG)**

(Arachnophobia means fear of spiders. Don't say I didn't warn you.)

**Casper (PG)**

**The Nightmare Before Christmas (G)**

**Goosebumps (PG)**

**Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (G)**

(I don't find this scary at all, but Lucas told me not to put in here that the Child Catcher gave him nightmares.)

**Gremlins (PG)**

**Return To Oz (1985) (PG)**

(I've never seen it, but Dad made me put it in because it freaked him out as a kid.)

**Monster House (PG)**

(Some of the effects are patchy now that we live in The Future but this is an EXCELLENT horror movie.)

**HAYLEY'S LIST OF LADY DIRECTORS  
SHE MOST WANTS TO WORK WITH  
(AND HER FAVORITE MOVIES OF  
THEIRS)**

**Gillian Armstrong**

My Brilliant Career (G)

Little Women (1994) (PG)

**Penny Marshall**

Big (PG)

(Who doesn't love a movie where a kid gets to become an adult?)

A League of Their Own (PG)

**Betty Thomas**

Dr. Dolittle (PG)

Alvin & the Chipmunks The Squeakquel (PG)

(This made the list mostly because the word "squeakquel" always makes me laugh.)

**Agnes Varda**

Faces Places (PG)

(This one's why I spent six months thinking I'd be a documentarian.)

**Brenda Chapman**

Brave (PG)

(This could have maybe also made my Scary Movie list.)

**Mira Nair**

Queen of Katwe (PG)

(Girl vs. Chess, somehow VERY exciting.)

Amelia (PG)

**Vicky Jenson**

Shrek (PG)

Shark Tale (G)

**Gurinder Chadha**

Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging (PG-13)

Bend it Like Beckham (PG-13)

(I took up soccer for an entire week after seeing this.)

**Nora Ephron**

Sleepless in Seattle (PG)

(Or, as Lauren calls it, “Literally the Best Romance Movie Ever.”)

Julie & Julia (PG-13)

**Agnieszka Holland**

The Secret Garden (G)

**Nancy Meyers**

The Parent Trap (1998) (PG)

What Women Want (PG-13)

(My personal opinion: they want nachos.)

**Jane Campion**

Bright Star (PG)

**Sofia Coppola**

Marie Antoinette (PG-13)

**Penelope Spheeris**

Wayne’s World (PG-13)

(Perfect soundtrack for family trips in cars.)

[*Kirk’s note – not for the driver, though.*]

The Little Rascals (PG)

**Amma Assante**

Belle (PG)

**Ava DuVernay**

A Wrinkle in Time (PG)

**Lana & Lilly Wachowski**

Speed Racer (PG)

**Martha Coolidge**

The Prince & Me (PG)

**Sally Potter**

Orlando (PG-13)

## HAYLEY'S LIST OF LADY DIRECTORS SHE WOULD WORK WITH IF SHE HAD A TIME MACHINE

### **Lois Weber**

About a hundred years ago, Weber was super prolific. The first female director to own her own film studio (in 1917), Weber directed something like 135 films, including *The Blot*, considered her masterpiece.

### **Dorothy Arzner**

From 1927 to 1943, Arzner was the only female film director working in Hollywood. (At least in English! There was also Esther Eng, who was the first woman to direct Chinese language films in the US, but her movies are mostly lost now.) Arzner was also the first woman to direct a film with sound, AND also came up with the first boom mic (which was a microphone on a fishing rod).

### **Ida Lupino**

After being pushed into being an actress, she rebelled against her directors so much that she basically decided to become one herself. She directed a heap of different genres, was one of the only women directing in the 1950s, and used lots of sneaky ways to make movies on the cheap while still making them fabulous.